BEING AND BECOMING A FEMALE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER:

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Manda Pokharel

A Dissertation

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Manda Pokharel* for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in English Language Education* presented on 3rd November 2021. Title: *Being and Becoming a Female English Language Teacher: A Phenomenological Study*.

Abstract Approved: _____

Prof. Laxman Gnawali, PhD

Dissertation Supervisor

The phenomenon of my interest began with my experience of being a female English language teacher since I started teaching. Reflecting upon my experiences as an English language teacher had a huge impact on me as that it made me look into the life of the self and other female English language teachers and explore. With the joy of being in the world questioning the existence, experiences, and the expressions as to why teaching? marked the beginning. This final output considering to understand the nature of their phenomena is believed to help us understand how the primitive stage leads to the developmental antecedents of the later phases. Additionally, the attempt to value my and their experiences and give them some meaning through the process of reflection and rewriting motivated me towards this attempt.

I problematized this issue with other English language teachers, observed the change, the development from being to becoming with the sense of belongingness to the English language teaching field. This context of observing these female English language teachers has set research questions to explore the issues of English language teaching through their process of becoming an English language teacher.

I used hermeneutic phenomenology as the philosophical and methodological inferences of my inquiry. My discussion of being and becoming was based on their upbringing, success/failure/achievement stories, updated to internet and technologies, and involvement in academics developed as themes after the interviews were transcribed, coded and themes derived. Regardless of domination in every field how being female become English language teachers and are making their space into the fields of English language teaching is my concern.

The insights I have gained from the research work is that the initiatives for active learning develop the sense of belonging to the teaching field and enable one as a self-regulated and self-determined being. I also was informed that the teachers exposed to different professional development strategies differ from the teachers working with their common sense. Additionally, they also differ in terms of position and performance. Hence, the exposure that the female English language teachers get from the beginning of their life to the beginning of their professional life determines their position and perception towards teaching; and those phenomena of being from the very beginning helps to shape the becoming of the self.

…………………….   November 3, 2021

Manda Pokharel

Degree Candidate

<div align="center">DECLARATION</div>

I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree.

…………………….   November 3, 2021

Manda Pokharel

Degree Candidate

Master of Philosophy in English Language Education dissertation of Manda Pokharel

entitled *Being and Becoming a Female English Language Teacher: A*

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APPROVED

--   3rd November 2021

Prof. Laxman Gnawali, PhD

Dissertation Supervisor

_____

Dr. Madhu Neupane   3rd November, 2021

External Examiner

------------------------------------   3rd November 2021

Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD

Dean/Chair of Research Committee

I understand that my dissertation will be part of the permanent collection of the

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Manda Pokharel

Degree Candidate

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I, since the beginning, have heard teachers as the change agents, and therefore, I begin the chapter with my experiences of becoming an English language teacher and establishing teaching as giving birth to my existence. In this process, I further state the rationale and the problem leading my purpose and forming research questions for researching female English language teachers in an attempt to know their process of developing themselves as English language teachers.

Teaching: Birth of my Existence

I began teaching immediately after my higher secondary level, and I can proudly say that teaching is my oldest friend after an education that I see as the foundation of my existence. Now, I am one of the female teachers of a public school in Nepal. Reflecting on my past, before I entered into the teaching profession, teaching as established in the society was an appropriate profession for females, and also for my academic qualification. Education began right after my birth whereas teaching instigated me after learning to share what I know. On the other hand, teaching became my career as it also helped me during the times I went through the financial crisis, when money was scarce, as a result, teaching as a profession began as my qualification also supported it.

Conversely, after getting into the field of teaching and reflecting on those time, space, person, I reminisce the early days of teaching which I began after my higher secondary level and can feel the fear of going inside the classroom and guiding the small kids of kindergarten level with different other subsequent experiences as

gradually got into this profession. This teacher induction phase was filled with challenges as well as the most demanding and difficult time in my teaching career (Luft, 2007; Saka et al, 2009). I remember the principal, an old man with white hair and a white beard, as in the story 'The Recurring Dream', scolding everyone. I was scared to be scolded. Additionally, he used to say giving job opportunities to the children like us was his generosity. He didn't pay us in time and on top the salary we got was meager. In this regard, Laverty (2003) says that psychology plays a vital role in building one as a professional as it deals with living subjects who are not simply reacting automatically to the external stimuli but rather are responding to their perception of what these stimuli mean. The stimulating factor to me here was salary.

Gradually, with the increase in my qualification and the better opportunities, I shifted to another school where I taught to the students of primary level. I, being an English language teacher, tried to replicate myself as my school teachers in the classroom trying to maintain discipline among students. This effort gradually developed in me as a strict, and autocratic teacher.

It was the second period and I was teaching in class two. I asked my students to read question answers. When the bell was about to ring, I assigned them homework and asked them to learn question answers by heart. Additionally, I threatened them that if they could not do so, the next day they would have to sit-ups for 500 times. The very next day, during the first period, I could hear some loud noise from my class where I was a class teacher. It was class four. My class was next to the administrative office. However, I was busy teaching.

After the class, I was called to the office by the principal. They asked for a clarification. Then, I came to know the fact that they were the parents of the students of class two. Two of the students who were also siblings denied coming to the school

because of the threatening of the punishment that I gave the previous day. To my surprise, those parents came to school for the demand of 500 times sit-ups from the teacher as they seemed very livid but one way or another the school administration settled the case, and I was saved.

My journey continued with not much change. I began teaching at the lower secondary level by the time my bachelor's level degree was completed. The journey took a slight turn after I came to Kathmandu for my further studies. Along with the study, I thought of continuing my teaching profession. As a result, I began looking for a teacher vacancy in schools. Meanwhile, one of the uncles informed me about the school and a vacant position at the school.

I remember the walk I took with my father that fine morning and we reached the school, I was putting my walking pace with my father as he was used to going on a walk every morning. I remember my nervousness on that day. My father was encouraging and motivating me for not to be nervous. With the turns of similar type, passing by the Bagmati river holding our nostrils tight and inhaling in between we reached a place.

There was a small building with two rooms as an office building. I was wondering about the school because there were no school-like buildings on either side. It was a small galvanized house-like structure below the road, under a Peepal tree beside the small temple. We got down the stairs into one of the rooms. Two men were sitting opposite to one another, one among them asked our purpose for being there and my father responded instantly. As soon as the principal was informed about our purpose, he gave mocking smile towards me and said I looked like a student junior to the students I was to teach. I was quiet but his laughter was vexing.

My father inquired further about the school, and he responded pointing to the other side of the road. We headed towards the location. The laughter of that principal was still annoying me since it haunts me time and again. My father and the principal took the lead and I followed them. We climbed up the stairs, crossed the road, and walked through the small paved line. After a while, there was a one lined the galvanized house with five rooms: from class 6-10. The school structure surprised me. I had never seen a school of that sort. Later the suspense was disclosed as it was a morning school that ran from class 6-10. My father when looking at the building and was in the mood of unlikely to send me there. It was so because I had to walk for 20 minutes early in the morning to reach the school and the school was not of good quality. As I insisted and persuaded my father, he approved but the mockery of the principal at the first meet made me unrest.

After I joined the school, I found the principal's unusual way of talking and behaving with the girls in the school. Such behavior of him was disturbing me. So I started avoiding him as far as possible keeping myself engaged with the students, even during the breaks. I realize that I could not raise my voice and fight against the discriminatory practices and behavior against women, though it's necessary against the dominations (Thapa, 2012).

The journey took a different mode after my marriage and motherhood. The roles, responsibilities, and expectations have changed gradually. The family was now the center of my priority and because of family, I postponed my teaching career. After my first child was eight months, I continued teaching with the support of my family. It was at the higher secondary level I started teaching for the first time in my professional career. I was in a new environment, with new shoes of roles and responsibilities in both personal and professional life.

When I began teaching there, I was the only female amongst other male teachers teaching at the secondary level, and altogether there were three English language teachers. . One of the English teachers and I had the same thing in common. His son and my son were of the same age, i.e. eight months and I made a comparison between himself and myself. This helped me to develop rapport with an English language teacher who was a male. After that, these questions came to my mind: Were we two in the same size shoe? Did gender play any role in the way the principal treated him and me? Are these aspects of gender roles analyzed while talking about teacher development? Do they matter somehow or noticed during making plans and policies?

The role of an English teacher is to encourage students' active participation in the classroom discourses, engage them in group work and pair-works, use ICT tools appropriately, and make the class a smart classroom. I used to teach using the English language but I had to shift to the Nepali language predominantly and my favorite teaching method used to the Grammar Translation Method. During that time, I used to teach five classes in a day besides addressing administrative disciplinary issues.

The more we read, the more we explore, which has been meaningful in my context. When I was researching during my MPhil degree, I came across the ground reality of my students whom I have been teaching. The experience was the opportunity to realize their pains and understand their contexts. Being aware of their issues I found myself as a changed being, bringing change in my entire behavior. This change in me has let me grow well in a professional way. This, in turn, developed my capability to mingle with my students and understand them which leads to change in the way I teach.

The term 'Teacher' reminds me of a change agent and the difference-maker in students' academic careers. I believe in teaching as touching the lives of children. It was the day of November 27, my birthday when I was in my class. I got a card from one of the student-written "*....when I grow up I want to be just like you mam*". Looking at the line made me emotional and I realized teaching to touch lives forever. This thought added value to teaching and making difference in the child's life every day. The love and expressions of my students that day made me emotional. They were the ones saying English was the most difficult subject.

Intending to Grow

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploration

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time.

T. S. Eliot, extracted from 'Little Gidding': Four Quarters, 1943

As Eliot in the poem above reports that exploration should never stop and starting the exploration from where we started, we have to question the way we experience the world (van Manen, 1990). Doing such will let us better understand the place where we stand, create an inseparable connection of the world with ourselves being a female English language teacher. The studies on language teachers indicate that there is a strong relationship between language students' achievement, their attitude, and motivation towards language learning and the gender of their language teacher (Lavin et al., 2012 as cited in Taqi, et. al., 2015). It shows that teachers play a very crucial role in the success of every student.

As mentioned in the earlier section, different experiences of mine and remarks by my students gave me the rationale for doing this research trying to understand the

experiences. This made me question the way we experience the world. I had realized that our past life determines what we are now and there's a need to unearth it. As that definitely would help to shape the future of female English language teachers.

This guided me to explore further making me scan plans and policies, where I found gender impacting them. Like, to increase female participation in secondary educationSSRP (2009-2015) mentions there are certain provisions offered to female teachers as maternity leave, infant breastfeeding, provisions for substitute teachers, and reduced eligibility period for disadvantaged groups including females. This shows that gender matter in professional development and learning achievement has some special provision for female teachers.

I had three main concerns in conducting this research. First, being a Nepali female English language teacher I wanted to understand and give meaning to my experience. Second, I want to understand and interpret other Nepali female English language teachers' experience of teaching and how they were tackling the situation to become English Language teachers. This understanding, I believe, helped me explore the phenomenon of being and becoming female English language teachers through their lived experiences in the context of Nepal. On the other hand, I believed that with the changing time and trends of society, there can be demand for researches from the perspective of females and, unspoken and unnoticed issues which we might have been taking for granted. Hence, drawing phenomena with their lived experiences helped me look into those voices showing directions to address them.

The issue I have raised is a general one that we have heard of but not well explored. Likewise, issues of female teachers have been addressed explicitly but only a few researchers have tended to look into the female English language teachers' issues, and the way they experience it to be. In doing this, I believe this work has

come up with some new insights regarding female teachers that have added to the understanding of the phenomenon of female English language teachers of secondary level of public schools in the local context of ours. Hence this research work, I believe, leads to a new era of researching the educational field. The findings from the research can help see female English language teachers from a different perspective, needs that are not addressed yet, their situation and, ensures its inclusion, and solutions from school level to policymaking.

In the Process of an Uphill Climb

Life is a journey in which one undergoes ups and downs periodically. Balancing the responsibilities of professional and personal life and meeting the expectation is like the two banks of the same river. Such experiences of life made me explore more about the situation of other female English language teachers. In doing so, I wanted to look into their lives through the lived experience to understand the process of becoming a female English teacher. Going through different documents and research reports, what I saw is there are multiple questions like, how female teachers decide like choosing teaching professions, what attracts them, what is the situation initially, and what is it later.

The issues in English language teaching for males and females are found to have been explored but to my surprise, not many explorations have been done regarding the phenomenon of being and becoming an English language teacher. Different researches have been conducted in the areas of female teachers (Duwadi, 2009; Thapa, 2012; Paudyal, 2013; Pradhan, 2013; Kafle, 2015) but most of them are quantitative and this study is an attempt to study their being from the qualitative lens.

Making Me Alive

Getting into the issue, reflecting, reading more, and reflecting again onto those days after listening to the experiences of my participants made me feel alive. I was reading the chapters of my life through reflection raising and realizing awareness that was locked for very long, which I had never looked into. As I was interested in their sharing, I could see myself in them. The rationale above and talk, sharing, and reflection gave me a purpose to explore through their lived experiences of being a female and their phenomenon of becoming into the profession of English language teaching.

Being an English language teacher myself, I have attempted to unearth the ways female English teachers have been experiencing their teaching careers through a question that helped me understand and give meaning to my and other female English language teachers' experiences. Their sharing and my reflections mounted in me the belief that who we are is the outcome of who we were. I now claim that our past has a prominent role in framing us as an individual. Additionally, with the change in time, the society and values of/towards society and education keep on changing. Therefore, educational issues, teacher development issues, and gender perceptions need to be researched as they are mobile and thus keep on changing, there is a need for researches from female English language teachers' perspectives. Therefore, rather than generalizing English language teachers, I looked into the life journey of female English language teachers in an attempt to draw phenomena through their lived experiences.

Questioning the 'Self'

1. What is it like being and becoming a female English language teacher?

Setting the Line

As all the areas cannot be covered within a single attempt, my research work was focused on the female discourse referring to female English language teachers' lived experiences. It is prominent to say that though I am looking into female teachers, it does not look into the social perspectives of gender issues.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I clarified teaching as the birth of my existence with a background that helped me problematize and identify the issue. This facilitated me further to derive my purpose for showing interest in the area of female English language teacher with the claim that history matters and so who we are is the outcome of how and where I was, that interested me to explore further the situation of other female English language teachers in Nepal and other documents based on the lived experiences of them. This enlightened me with the realization and awareness through reflection that was locked for very long, and I was unconcerned. Now this made me easy to frame my questions setting the line, as everything can't be achieved with a single attempt.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review the relevant literature on the issue raised. Thematically, I explore different works on female teachers, English language teachers, and women as the issue, and introduced an appropriate theory that supports my theoretical grounding. Finally, after reviewing the related scholarly works, I come up with the knowledge gap that has made my research work more significant.

Reflecting on the Phenomenon of Change

I have been teaching English subjects for the last 15 years from private pre-primary level to Secondary level (+2), and from a private to a public school. It has been five years I have been working in this public school. After I started teaching in this school, I found a very different scenario because in this school the classroom environment is completely different than others. Students in this school come from diverse backgrounds with diverse aspects of religion, culture, geography, and ethnic community, economic, professional, and family background. My classroom, in this school, is like a garden with varieties of flowers with different colors and specialties-variations with their abilities and language learning process.

These students regard me as a role model, and once I find so, many questions sprout in my mind like- Is teaching an art? What made my students love me as the teacher now and then? Am I doing well with the pain and pleasure of my life? How do students perceive other teachers? How do other teachers perceive teaching? What is their way of teaching and how are they viewing their teaching career? How did they come to this position? How are their relationship with the students, their family

members, and the people around them? What is their perception of being a female teacher? How are they experiencing their teaching life?

I explored the aspects that lead teachers in the case of secondary-level public school English language teachers through their life experiences and saw how these factors - environment, status, family, gender, and ideologies frame them. My own experiences on the process of being and becoming an EFL female teacher and different kinds of literature related to female teachers made me explore the female EFL teachers and produce a new understanding of female teachers, her struggle, and understanding of power (Hawkeshworth, 2006). During my 15 years of a teaching career, I have gone through different changes in me, from strict disciplined to empathetic democratic EFL teacher.

Furthermore, how teachers are treated and what sort of working environment is provided matters. It is because the work of teachers worldwide is becoming complex, and also the traditional boundaries in educational fields are being redefined or are being vanished (Sirk et al., 2016). Therefore, how the teacher can be motivated and what the teachers might find motivating should be the concern for their better achievement. Brophy (1985) states that a teacher's willingness is requisite for an effective teaching environment. In the case of female teachers, the issue of motivation is even more critical.

The policies and practices are other factors for a female teacher. The step taken by the government to include as many participatory numbers of female teachers as possible is appreciable. The presence of female teachers' numbers in schools, the security, and the respect they are given are a few factors responsible for keeping them motivated for better professional life and career. Bernaus et al. (2009) state, "Teacher motivation is the most important variable because if teachers are not motivated, the whole

notion of strategy is lost" (p. 29). However, the needs of male and female teachers vary and it is not being taken seriously. Thus, in the teaching-learning process, both teachers and students are responsible for effective learning outcomes. When the students are passive, the teacher too is not motivated. Therefore, the higher the motivation, the better the teaching-learning performance would be which is possible if we see teachers as a change agent (Johnson et al., 2002, as cited in Ushioda, 2013) rather than a mere object of study.

Remembering being awarded for the good results by the president-signed certificate was a matter of honor and pride to me. This motivated me to do better in the days to come, pointing to how the experience takes center stage and is underpinning for learning. We knowingly or unknowingly are motivating others to get the job done, which is not exceptional to the teaching field, but teachers might not be aware of it. This is because we lack reflecting upon the past happenings and incidences.

Learning is not necessarily the outcome of readings, it is possible anywhere and anytime. Learning is also the application of experiences. With the development of educational pedagogies and methodologies, different pieces of training are given to enhance teaching-learning skills. But as methodologies matter, students' and teachers' motivation is another factor that matters the educational process. This has been proved in many of our contexts as teachers are teaching without any sort of training as teachers in my workplace have witnessed the same.

Positionality: Existence of Self

While accepting the surroundings dominated by male society, I came into a different world of teaching where the environment was feminine as being driven by female teachers and a female leader as headteacher. This happened after my shift from

private to public school. This shift made me believe that a female teacher is not just the content-loaded individual rather she is the blend of kind heart, wise mind, brave spirit, and bold faith. Seeing female teachers leading an institution and taking it to a different height gave me a reason to look for the policy level provisions for female teachers. The roles and responsibilities of female teachers have been changing from the past to now. However, the importance of female teachers and their effectiveness was not realized till 971 as the plans did not make any impact in terms of increasing the number of female teachers in the schools of Nepal (UNESDOC, 2006).

It was in 1971 that the role of female teachers was realized expecting the enrolment of the girls in the schools to be increased by the project named "Equal Access of Women to Education Plan (EAWEP)" that was implemented with the assistance of UNESCO/ UNICEF, which mentioned that 'there should at least be two female teachers in the schools where there are four teachers in the policy (CERID, 2004). This was the beginning where female teachers began to be noticed being under the moonlight yet still more to be explored. This EAWEP program later was named EGWN in 1983 which mentioned that female teachers had to be recruited from rural areas because urban women would not agree to move to rural areas to work. As a result, 68% of the female teachers were trained as teachers (CERID, 1991) then and as UNESCO reports, the percentage of secondary level female teachers now in Nepal by 2020 is 78% (26.25).

The teacher is taken as a unisexual term when it comes to facilities and workload but when work allotment and quality concern comes, female teachers are seen as inferior and incapable, as gender has been defined in terms of status, sex roles, and stereotypes (Hawkeshworth, 2006). Looking at myself and comparing between present and past, how I was treated when was surrounded by male society; and now

when given more roles and responsibilities believing in what I do have brought differences in me. This shift of me made me think of gender roles and understanding of power (Hawkeshworth, 2006), as a result, I explored the issue and saw how other female teachers are going through the phenomenon of being and becoming female English language teachers.

Nevertheless, the need for the inquiry on female teachers' identity has been realized, many types of research are taking place from different perspectives. As Duwadi's (2009) "*Female Teachers at Schools in Nepal: Cats on the Hot Tin Roof",* a qualitative study with the conclusion showed that Nepali female teachers working at schools have to do a tremendous struggle to manage their home, fulfill social obligations, and develop their careers. It makes meaning upon reflection as if I was not supported by my family, I would not be in the position I am now. Similarly, Thapa (2012) researched "*Women, their Space and Educational Opportunities in Nepal*". In the study, she found that what women suffer is because of stereotype knowledge that society constructed about them. Likewise, the status of working women and their family status mattered a lot. Finally, she reported that males are given priority over females for everything and also in education there is no exception. To some extent, the family status matters but in the case of teachers that is less prioritized. Rather, in the case of teachers, I feel that the personality of the female teachers matters much for other male teachers. Likewise, Paudyal (2013) researched "*Being a Women Teacher in Nepal: Experiences of Social Inclusion and Exclusion in Nepal*". Her research revealed that multiple motivations contributed to a woman choosing teaching professions. Not only positive but also negative forces generated the motivation. Easy handling of domestic roles and enthusiasm to do something after education remained the most dominant motivation among the subjects of the research.

Similarly, policy provisions, socio-cultural values, and the working environment at schools also played a vital role in the construction of perception towards the teaching profession, however, it changes with life experiences. A woman teacher is not always included or excluded, there are relational and contextual matters. She further states that the women teacher's caste, ethnicity, settlement, locality, marital status, family structure, the background of the family members, socio-cultural values, physical ability, experiences, personal, relational, and communal power made their position different from others.

Similarly, other research works on female teachers and different methods of exploration helped me look for the existence of female teachers. Pradhan (2014) researched "*Teacher Motivation of Teachers of Institutional Schools of Lalitpur*". In the study, the researcher found that the teachers of secondary level of this area were found intrinsically and extrinsically motivated and it did not depend on their age, gender, marital status, and training. Intrinsic motivation had no relationship with their academic qualifications. However, their extrinsic motivation depended on their academic qualifications. Qualification rarely becomes a matter of intrinsic motivation until it is related to the monetary aspect to most of the teachers.

Where these research works were done within teaching professionals, none of them were conducted centralizing female English language teachers with the phenomenological lens of looking into them. Thapa (2019) has used hermeneutic phenomenology to explore the "*Lived Experiences of Secondary Level Students with the English Language Examination: Low Scorers' Perspective*". In the study, he has revealed the learners' perception towards the English language education, the hardship they have faced, and the pain they have lived after scoring low in the English

language examination. This research work has enriched me with insights on conducting phenomenological research to meet the purpose.

Panta (2018) in *"Exploring Learner Autonomy/Q3 Capacity in Secondary EFL Classroom: An Interpretive Study"*. The study employed a qualitative approach and found that complete restriction of punishment is quite difficult and it is a long way to go to reach there. Though, showing positive remarks towards the possibility of forming a child-friendly environment, they say students might be ruined due to more freedom.

Sharma (2018) in her research work *"English Teacher's and Student's Perception of Knowledge and Power Relation"* has shown her interest in looking into the perception of teachers and students regarding knowledge and how that affects their relationship with each other. In the study, she has attempted to experience their stories as they have lived or experienced rather than looking for the finding. What I align with her is looking phenomenologically doesn't wait for the findings or analysis. Phenomenological works help us explore and look into the life of others through their stories and experiences. Additional inclusion of reflection has put light on her work.

Therefore, understanding female teachers, not being judgmental or with prior knowledge, there is a need for the researcher to focus on being critical about the participant, understanding the process of change, locating meaning in broader- social, cultural, and political spheres (Lather, 1992) which would help understand the present status of female teachers.

Reflecting on my life had I not been supported then, I would not have been able to join for my further study with the family structure I am living with. The roles and responsibilities we are given and the cultural transfer of family as the priority is the impact we are brought up with. So, judging a profession based on generalized

theory is a bias that leads to falsified policymaking, as the context where a being a male and a female differ. Additionally, there is a power relation between males and females in our society where persists gender inequality in everyday life which also perseveres in the teaching profession ignoring their issues and problems. We have agreed to empower female teachers but have neglected to look into the issues from every perspective that let us know how far we have come in our journey and how far we have to go (Heyzer, 2000, as cited in Beetham & Demetriades, 2007). Similarly, in our contexts too policies on a quota system and leave policies for female teachers have been made, but yet there are many needs and issues of female teachers that need exploration. There is also a need to measure how far we have been and yet to go. Based on the findings further improvements and reframing of policies and planning are to be done.

There is a need to see achievements of female teachers, their success and failure, and be critical which means to stand at a distance from the prevailing order of the world and ask how that order came about where they are (Cox, 1980 as cited in Schouten, 2009), what they are lacking and seeking for, what else can be done to upgrade and empower them. What motivated one is no more connected only with pedagogy, it has been taken into consideration in a further broader term. Motivation has been connected with language, culture, identity, gender, age, digital age, technology, and many more.

Theoretical Underpinnings

My study is focused on exploring the phenomena of being a female and becoming an English language teacher, to do which I went into dialogue form and established the use of two theories: Experiential learning of Dewey, (1925) and Self-Determination Theory (1985/2000).

Experiential Learning

I have used phenomenology as the means to understand their change and professional development as it helps to document the changes, how they felt, how it looks like, and also how the actions foster teacher professional development helping to look into the journey of PD of the participants. With the belief that 'experiences can be made intelligible' (Sloan et al., 2014) and from John Dewey's (1925) *Experiential Learning* I argue that the transformation within lies through experiential processes that fosters teachers' professional development.

Experiential learning gives chance to acquire knowledge, skill, and feelings and apply them in the relevant setting through experience. Here learning is supported by the learners than by some formal educational institutions. Learning is influenced by the learning environment of person and place (Wilson & Beard, 2013). Thus, experiential learning was found as a key tenant to the language teachers' professional development in the local educational cultural and contextual setting (Jiang, 2017) as experience plays a central role in ELT's process (McCarthy, et al., 2017). Their learning from life and work experiences bringing personal growth and self-awareness are what was explored, realizing the need for making sense of the concrete experiences. Thus learning from experience has been established as one of the most ultimate and accepted means of learning available to each person (Beard & Wilson, 2013).

Kolb, 2005) says experiential learning is based on the comprehensive theory of learning and development is said to be based upon six propositions of Kolb (1984): Learning as a process, not in terms of outcomes; All learning is relearning; Learning requires the resolution of conflicts; Learning is the holistic process of adaptation; Learning results from a synergetic transaction between the person and the

environment; Learning is the process of creating knowledge that seems to be relevant in the experiential learning journey of my participants.

Self Determination Theory

Teaching is human and I believe language teaching is bridging the gap between two different languages. Language teacher is the one who helps bridge the gap through sharing social, emotional, mental, and cultural contexts. In a context like this, I take teacher motivation as a pathway for professional development whereas teaching is the process of establishing a psychological connection between humans and language learning and teaching is a process that is closely related to human psychology (Ozturk, 2015). This establishment of connection goes strong when there is motivation in between to connect, as a learner and also as a teacher.

For me, motivation energizes a person to achieve the set goals of a particular endeavor. Different scholars define motivation in many different ways. Hull (1948) sees motivation as a need that causes the drive to develop, whereas I see motivation as energizing factor that keeps people moving ahead. I could remember 2018, the 7th of June, the blissful day around. The school was decorated with balloons and curtains. Army officers were around, students were ready to welcome the guests on both sides of the red carpet and honorable guest Bidhya Devi Bhandari, the president of the country was to come as chief guests. I was busy with the preparations. The program began after she arrived and we teachers were called up on stage. I was called for honoring for the 100% results in major English subject, which was a newly made record in the school. This incident motivates me to keep working and making efforts even today to keep myself moving (Ryan et al., 2000). These moving factors are what I tend to explore with my participants' reflections of their lived experiences.

English language teaching (ELT) is the process of dealing with the students through the English language, and in doing so the activity of teaching and learning is a matter of motivation as both the teachers and the students need it most. Along with various other factors as economic, family background, environment, friend circle, extra activities, etc., are needed for effective teaching-learning activities; motivation can be another factor the teachers need in their professional career.

In the case of teachers, motivation serves as energy to keep them working even in a stressful environment. I wanted to explore the aspects that lead to teacher motivation in the case of secondary-level public school female English language teachers and see how other factors as a society, status, family, gender, and ideologies frame teacher motivation. According to Barbara and Pope (1998), looking at the theory of motivation from past to now, we start with Behaviorism remembering Sigmund Freud, B. F. Skinner to many others who believed motivation and learning could be controlled by managing behavior through external rewards and incentives as a token, prizes and even grades. With the introduction of these various theories, I have concentrated on self-determination as my theory on motivation driving my theme on motivation.

Reflecting on my journey, the developmental process I have been through has made me concerned with self engagement autonomy, competence (Ryan et al., 1985/2000). My focus now is on effective self engagement with teaching-learning. Deci et al., (1985/2000) talk about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the theories. Intrinsic motivation means the desire to learn from inside when one truly wants to achieve the goal. The teacher is also intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Teachers who want to become good teachers and uplift the quality of the teaching-learning process will engage in teaching-learning activities and do their best to

incorporate various methods and strategies relevant to the students. On the other hand, if the teacher knows the good percentage of students results will be awarded, be recognized, they will give their best to improve their teaching. The ones motivated internally and externally are different as the individuals have different goals to achieve. Intrinsically motivated does look for enjoyment and satisfaction, whereas extrinsically motivated look for instrumental values.

According to Ryan et al. (1985), Organismic theories of motivation give importance to the structure of people's experience and are so concerned with the psychological meaning of stimuli. Therefore, questions like why is one engaged in that particular behavior, what made him/her do that? What goals do people seek to attain? How do people show they are self-determined? For what reason shows intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, which means if one is engaged in certain behavior autonomously for self-satisfaction or because of some driving force or pressure (causality). The second 'what goal' looks for what the teacher is trying to achieve (teaching goals). The goals put by the teacher matter as they result in the quality of action and learning. The third question is 'how', which is concerned with the specific skills and process one focuses on to their goals. How they keep themselves on track focused on their outcome. Thus, the process of engaging also deals with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Looking at the other way, the extrinsically motivated one heads on to intrinsic motivation. That means the one rewarded prior, pushes one to the process of self-determination. These rewards make them satisfied, build up confidence and thus make one autonomous. As the participants' share about the experiences of being mentored, praise from the school department, friends, and students have motivated them to keep themselves going which ultimately has made them self-determined. This process of

intrinsically motivated ones leading to self-determined being is the result of taking challenges and experiencing the world.

Measuring the Distance

After going through these scholarly works on motivation and female teachers what I found is that a countable number of researches have been done under female teachers, and no researches under qualitative study using phenomenology as the research approach have been done so far. This shows the experiences of female teachers, their attitude towards English language teaching, and their perceptions developed are taken for granted to date.

However, Paudyal (2013) on "*Experiences of Social Inclusion and Exclusion*" concluded that multiple motivations contributed a woman to take teaching as a profession she talked about motivation, in general, to make them choose teaching as a profession. She didn't talk about teaching and professional development and factors and issues within it that would motivate her as a teacher. Likewise, she didn't talk about the lived experiences of female teachers, how it matters to their engagement, and how they perceived it as it was a quantitative study.

Conceptual Framework

Svinicki (2010, as cited in Thapa, 2019) stated conceptual framework as an interconnected set of ideas about how a particular phenomenon functions. In this regard, I plan to accomplish my work. My research on female English language teachers is guided by the following conceptual framework. It has been presented in the form of a picture that elaborates my research process in the process of understanding my participants' phenomena of being and becoming an English language teacher. The following figure depicts how my research work is guided by the interpretive paradigm using hermeneutic phenomenology.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│       Being a Female and Becoming an English      │
│               Language Teacher                    │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Being: Daughterhood;
Education; Learning
Environment; Responsibility
Switch

Experiential
Learning
Theory
        +
Self
Determination
Theory

Methodology

Qualitative

Becoming: Mentoring; Training;
Technology

Interpretive

Hermeneutic
Phenomenology
Text generation:
Interview;
Reflection
Text Interpretation:
meaning making

Drawing Phenomena
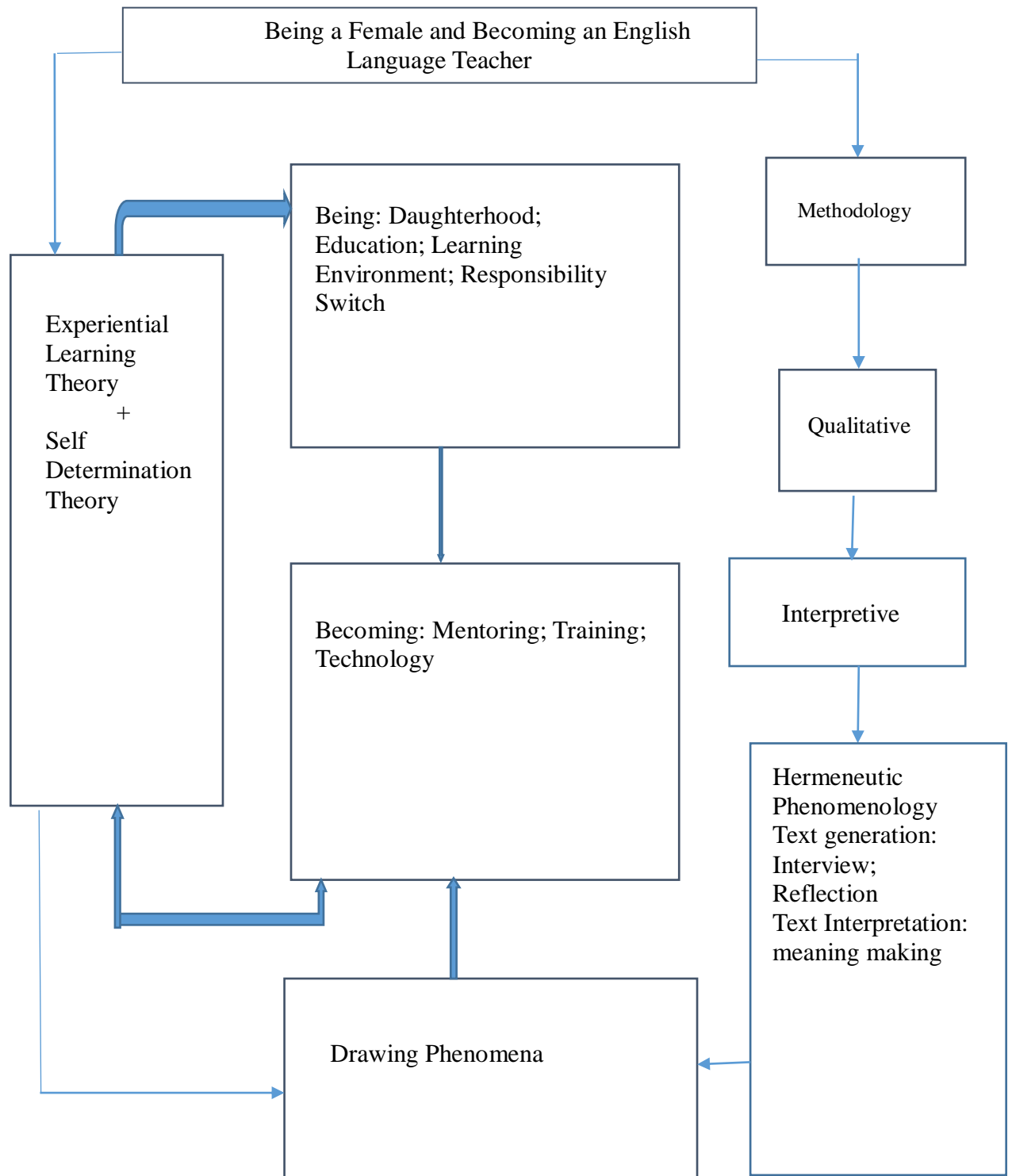
Chapter Summary

The review of literature drew on a strong foundation for further including the concepts like counting the phenomenon of change among females; change that began with my reflection of realization of transformation in me to other female teachers. Then I tried looking for space for female teachers at the policy level measuring the change from then to now with regards to female teachers. Then I tried to explore with the help of further studies that were conducted among female English language teachers. But to my surprise, I found few qualitative studies on female English language teachers.

By now, I was much clear to generate the research gap and informed of what I was clear with and what I was wondering about. This made me confident of my issue and generate a gap that was to look for the situation for other female English language teachers' phenomenon of change they might have been through in the process of being and becoming a female English language teacher. With the hope that this research might shed light on the taken-for-granted area/issue among female English language teachers (as no researches done in this area to my access), I set to look for answers to the question. Likewise, I hope that this study could inform the situations of female English language teachers, how they learn with experiences, and the area for improvement and considerations in that regard.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes my philosophical consideration in doing this research that includes my ontological, epistemological, and axiological premises. Likewise, it talks about my way of conducting the research and thus selection of research paradigm selection. First, I have created my position in this research and research design which is followed by the philosophical assumption of Hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry.

Philosophical Understanding

This section covers the world view of the researcher regarding the research. I believe that research on language learning has been influenced by both the social and cognitive theories (Li et al., 2019, as cited in Garton & Copland, 2019), though that might vary from an individual to another. The philosophical perceptions of female teachers of secondary level English teachers of public schools have guided my work and have allowed me to define the templates of truth and knowledge as the result of experiential sensing (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) that has been presented below.

My Ontological Assumption

I believe in multiple realities which are context-dependent. It is because being a female English language teacher my context and the contexts of other female English language teachers could be different. Like Heidegger (in van Manen, 1990), I also believe in the co-existence of individuals' experiences and. Likewise, the context is interpretive because when I look at my classroom, I can describe and is constantly negotiable. On the other hand, I believe the female teachers and their lived

experiences are the central factor for effective teaching-learning activities to take place. Their present and future are the outcomes of their past. Therefore, my focus is more on the understanding mode of being and becoming (Manen, 2014) female English language teacher interpreting lived experiences and exploring factors in becoming a teacher to the teaching profession.

My Epistemological Assumption

I believe that realities are formed from the constructivist approach as every individual have their own set of experience in their day-to-day life. The meaning-making process emerges through interaction and discourse. How knowledge about some specific content is developed might vary in the case of males and females. My knowledge of female English language teachers has been constructed through seeing, reading, and facing and thus constructed locally in the consciousness of the individuals (Laverty, 2003). Likewise different social constructs guide the thought and perception of an individual. As the clay products vary from the porter to porter, their art and skills vary based on where they belong to and what sort of ideologies they hold regarding their making and profession can be associated with the teaching and the teachers. Teaching is believed to be an art. Therefore, female teachers being an artist have different skills, different issues, and situations. They have different world experiences and situations that they might not have been able to come up with and speak openly.

My Axiological Assumption

I believe that the role and situation of female English language teachers are eclipsed. This research is based on my experience as a female English language teacher, thus, lived experiences add value to it with the inner feelings and phenomenon of developing as an English language teacher being explored and

understood in co-existence with other female EFL teachers. My lived experiences as a female English language teacher have added value to this research. As phenomenology makes us aware to be critical and philosophical to how our lives are socially, culturally, politically and existentially affected (van Manen, 2014), my value and motive behind exploring being a female English language teacher are to make the shift from 'self' centered to 'other' selves.

Interpretivist Research Paradigm

The research purpose and questions drive the selection of the research paradigm and the paradigm is the set of beliefs that guide the researcher's action (Guba, 1990). As my research purpose is to explore being a female and becoming an English language teacher through their lived experiences of secondary-level public school, I chose the interpretive paradigm using hermeneutic phenomenology as my research approach to look into the issue. Based on my experience of teacher interaction and female teachers' participation in it, I have explored their development/shift from past to now, inquiry on the issues they have been facing, how they are treated, what issues they have, and what they value as an English language teacher that keeps them moving.

I believe the interpretive paradigm supported me to explore lived experiences of female English language teachers as interpretivism tends to understand the interpretations of the individual surroundings (Cohen, et al., 2011). It focuses on understanding the subjective world of human experiences and believing in relative realism. With belief in the subjective world of human experiences, I have attempted to understand the participants within by involving directly with the participants or being within the participants' situation keeping their behavior in the focal point. Therefore, I

have explored and interpreted the lived experiences of secondary-level English language female teachers of public schools.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

I have followed the Hermeneutic phenomenological approach because it is especially relevant to researchers in education (Smith et al., 2009 as cited in Sloan & Bowe, 2014) that has proven to be effective to interpret and empower as a phenomenological inquirer to understand the life events of my participants (Taylor et al., 2011). The Hermeneutic phenomenology is the study of direct experience that one sees as a phenomenon. I chose Hermeneutic phenomenology because different phenomenologists are often inspiring for thinking about teaching (van Manen & van Max, 2014). Additionally, after going through many resources on phenomenology, I have found that many phenomenologists have differentiated phenomenology as phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology, and many more. But after going through phenomenologists as Kvale (1994), Vagle (2018), and Laverty (2003), I believe that hermeneutic phenomenology includes it as existential phenomenology.

I attempted to understand the meaning of events and interactions to my participants, in particular, situations (Bogdan et al., 2011). I have used phenomenological design as my plan to study my participants' lived experiences, to describe how they experience certain phenomena, my participants describing their development, life experiences in teaching, issues, and the shifts from their birth to now. It was entirely based on the lived experiences rather than physically described focusing on how the change came to where it is now, how it was then marking phenomena as they have experienced them. It means how the teachers' concept of English language teaching came to what it is now, how it was then, what happened that brought the changes.

As Hermeneutic phenomenology demands, I have interpreted my participants' actions and interactions together with the social and cultural context in this study. As Vagle (2018) mentions in-ness and through-ness as the phenomenon keeps moving in and through different subjects and objects in the lifeworld and the contexts. Similarly, phenomena do not only belong to the intentional consciousness of the experience, they belong to the intentional relation circulating in the lifeworld of which the experiencer is the part (Vagle, 2018). But, what appears as an experience of my participants was more prioritized than the socio-cultural structure. However, meanings were also given to the experiences through the reflexivity of my experiences.

I have tried my best to get into the life of my participants through the sharing and interaction as far as possible because the whole validity and authenticity of my research process is dependent on the close relationship I have with them, as validity is marked upon the researcher's sustained engagement with the phenomenon and the participants experiencing the phenomena (Vagle, 2018).

The meaning of our experiences that constitutes reality is generated through interpreting the experiences (Bogdan et al., 2011). In this world of multiple realities and subjectivity, reality can be elicited through interaction. My experiences as a female English language teacher can be different than my female participants. Their phenomena of lived experiences can be a matter of subjectivity for me. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to get into the perceptions, perspectives, understandings, and feelings of being and becoming phenomena of secondary level female English language teachers of public schools.

Hermeneutic phenomenology is the method of study focusing on the process of being human through reflection (van Manen, 2014) and interpretation of lived

experiences. I have intended to explore female English language teachers' sense of being as an English language teacher as Heidegger (Laverty, 2003) focuses on the mode of being human or the situated meaning of the human in the world (Laverty, 2003), I have decided to go with hermeneutic phenomenology. For doing this I have also followed van Manen (1991) and so the methodological features forwarded by him:

> *Phenomenological research begins with wonder at what gives itself and how something gives itself. A phenomenological question explores what is given in moments of pre-reflective, pre-predicative, or lived experience. Phenomenology aims to describe the exclusively singular aspects (identity/essence/otherness) of a phenomenon or event. The epoché (bracketing) and the reduction proper are the two most critical components of the various forms of reduction- though both are understood differently by different leading phenomenologists. The reduction is not a technical procedure, rule, tactic, strategy, or a sequential set of steps that we should apply to the phenomenon that is being researched. Rather, the reduction is an attentive turning to the world when in an open state of mind, effectuated by the epoché. It is because of this openness that a phenomenological insight may occur.*

(van Manen, 1991, p. 614)

Therefore my research design was carried out in three phases as pre, while, and post-field and based on these phases research was conducted. As for writing exercises, the ability to see (van Manen, 1989) writing is my basic methodology as a priority to enhance textual reflection and interpretation. Using Hermeneutic methodology I was guided by the Hermeneutic circle shown in figure no. 1.

Figure 1: Hermeneutic Circle, Adapted from Sebold, et. al., 2017
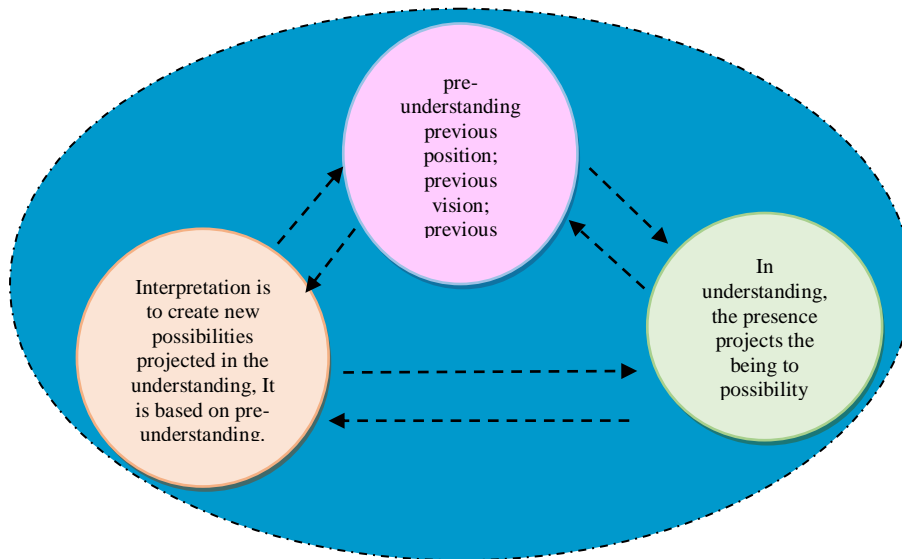
Selection of Participants and Research Site

From the very beginning of this research work, I have mentioned that my position as an interpretive researcher is to explore the phenomena of being and becoming a Nepali female English language teacher based on my situatedness in my context as the researcher's background shapes the interpretation of meaning in research journey (Grover, 2015 as cited in Subedi, 2020). Being a female English language teacher triggered my interest in learning more about other female teachers' experiences. I earned my degrees, obtained a teaching license, and was considered as an educated person to teach English at the secondary level (10-12), which enabled me to relate to teachers of EFL.

I selected the participants for my research purposefully to get enriching, in-depth text from their experiences, and tried to move from 'I' to 'We'. All participants were teachers who have experienced the phenomena as being Nepali female secondary level English language teachers. My role as a researcher was to construct the meaning of participants' experiences to illuminate the phenomenon under investigation (Fallata, 2016). I expected participants to be excited to share their

experiences through in-depth interviews to help provide information that might help improve the understanding of female English language teachers. I expected them to describe the experiences they faced in the process of being and becoming an English language teacher that has shaped them into who they are. I considered my participants' experience regarding the issue I was to explore and to do so, I engaged myself in the process of discovery as an interpretive researcher to see the participants' world from their viewpoint (Williams, 2007 as cited in Subedi, 2020). In doing so, I formed a guideline for selecting participants: a purposive sampling technique looking for Nepali secondary level female English language teachers from public schools teaching for more than 10 years as the primary criteria.

The participants for my research were three secondary level English language female teachers of public schools of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur districts. 'How many participants in the study is not a good question in phenomenology (Englander, 2012) and there is no magic number (Vagle, 2018) because the purpose of research is to see if the participants have lived experiences, as a phenomenon is more valued. I contacted them with a call to fix the meeting and then met them physically in their schools. I remember the first time I met them. Three of my participants were in school uniform, pink dress with Nepali Dhaka embroidered Kurtha Salwar. Two of the school headteachers were cooperative to introduce me to them, but one of the head teachers I remember said, he had no concern with the research I was doing. So, I had to wait for her once her classes were over. On the other hand, I chose these two districts to get easy access with my research participants. The participants were of varying ages and experience in their field (10 years above of experience in teaching).

Additionally, I chose these participants for my study because they have different reasons for becoming English language teachers being females. The first

participant came with specialization with a different subject but got established as the English language teacher. My second participant's actual aim was to get into the medical field, but her accidental journey into teaching led her to be an English language teacher. My third participant was an introverted, and shy person, but chose the profession that demanded speaking and interaction.

Hence, I was interested in the phenomenon of developing themselves being female and becoming an English language teacher. My motive for doing phenomenological research on female English language teachers is to make them sparkle, as a phenomenon means to bring something to brightness making it visible (Gaulin, 2019) and, by sparkling, to make them noticeable by making them visible through their experiences. Through this difference, I would like to see what changes have come from their life experiences and their perception of teaching. Doing this, the participants were made aware of the research purpose, and with consent taken, and they were chosen as the participants for the endeavor.

Text Generation Process

The text generation techniques I followed are based on Moustakas (1996) as it suggests and uses phenomenological study drawing upon the work of phenomenologists such as van Manen (2014) and Vagle (2018) guiding the process. This study was grounded on interpretive hermeneutic phenomenology to provide a rich description of the lived experiences of Nepali female English language teachers as phenomenologists are often inspiring for thinking about teaching (van Manen & van Max, 2014). Therefore, following them I have selected female EFL teachers of public secondary school as my participants, and their discourses are used for the generalizing text.

I provided clear instruction to my participants on the nature and purpose of the investigation. I, then, developed an agreement that included obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and listing outlines on my responsibilities as a researcher and that of my female teacher participants being consistent with the ethical principles of research.

My text generation process was guided by interviews (van Manen, 1990 & Kvale, 1994). I developed a set of questions to guide the interview process. In-depth interviews were conducted multiple times by recording physically and online with the consent of the participant that focused more on topics that I pre-set to ask on. I was receptive to what they said, but I also added my statements and my experiences in between, so that my participants would be more open to me and see me at their level. The process of in-ness and through-ness continued. On the other hand, this made me confident to lead the dialogue and give it a form of conversation. Then, writings and rewritings were done until satisfaction was met. I interviewed them regarding their process of being and becoming a female English language teacher. I questioned the way the experiences can be extracted in the dialogic form and helped me create stories. After each interview.

After each interview, I did journal writing. The second step was transcribing the text. The moment I sat for transcribing, my participants' faces, and their expressions were in front of my eyes, as everything was being recorded. I did not write anything the moment they were sharing, I was keenly interested in their sharing and listened to them carefully. I noticed their expressions and gestures which helped me notice if they were free to share if they were telling true, and so on. But I used a diary to write down my observations and speak my mind out and later typed the notes the same evening.

Sometimes what happened is I did an audio record of my reflection after the interview when there was no time for journal writing, that I later transcribed. While transcribing I also noticed that the emotion my participants' intended to share was not met by English words or sentences. Hence I have written it italicizing in Roman script form in the bracket. Additionally, I was careful to use the recorder during the interview which was also transcribed before the other interview. Transcribing every interview helped me lead further with questions to validate their sharing and make my research reliable and valid.

As my ontology says understanding the mode of being matters, my efforts was to communicate with the participants rather than making them derive stories. This process was further accompanied by several and rigorous readings. When I was transcribing, the phenomenon was generated that helped me join the dots later helping to thematize. Furthermore, while was a deriving theme going through the coding process by joining dots of phenomenon of my participants, the audio recording of my participants and their sharing helped me derive poem. Mudroch (1953 as cited in Henrikson et al., 2009) says, the poetic reflection tunes us in toward the inner disturbance and interference of existence and "directs attention to the things of the world, [it] alters courses of action, [it] arouses feelings and conveys information" (p. 47).

Henrikson and Saevi (2009) also state that in addition to analytic, interpretive, and methodological skills, a phenomenologist needs a skill of the sense of the value of words. Reflecting on the interview and my context of experiences developed as a poem, in my attempt of becoming creative and representing the whole world of meaning.

As my research is based on phenomenology, the basic tools I used for data generation are in-depth interviews and reflection writing. Interview schedules allowed for open-ended responses and to be flexible enough for me to note and generate texts on unexpected dimensions of the topic (Bogdan et al., 2011). Thus, in-depth interviews, focusing on the questions I had listed before the interview, were conducted that were long, open-ended, and detailed, loaded with the experiences of the participants, unfolding life experiences keeping the privacy and sentiments of the participants in the basic priority. As phenomenological interview involves an informal, interactive process and utilizes open-ended comments and questions (Moustakas, 1994), I conducted interviews approaching participants on the need base and dialogue-based; interview as conversation (Kvale, 1994). This process of rigorous interviews and transcribing is also supported by further reading that helped in the process of interpretation.

There are some hurdles or obstacles to doing interviews online. I must say that managing time for the online interview was really tough for my participants. I also noticed that when the participants were given an online interview, they were not free to speak as they were surrounded by their relatives. On the other hand, different household chores, kids, and family responsibilities did not allow them to speak online for hours. I realized the difference because I have interviewed them both physically and online. When I interviewed them in their schools after the classes were over, they stayed and we talked for an hour with and off the recordings. Female participants get involved and active, expressive when they are alone and away from others. This was what I realized with these participants' selection and site since they have hesitation to speak in front of others. The site plays a prominent role in how expressive your participants would be.

Similarly, I must say that it was sometimes very difficult for them to share the reflected experiences. I remember the time my participants did not being able to do eye contact with me; they with smiling faces swallowed their tears. The moment they attempted to hide the emotions, was revealed by multiple expressions. Those expressions made it difficult for me to control mine. I then had to twist our talks with some fun sharing.

Meaning Making Process

Interpretation and meaning-making is the main part of doing research. I used a modification of the van Manen's (1966, as cited in Moustakas, 1994)) method of analysis of phenomenological data. I framed my interpretation process as listening, reflecting, and interpreting; and reading, reflecting, and interpreting, and these were accompanied by the reflection of my experiences. My role in this process was not to impose my understanding but to help construct that meaning since it is revealed through an interaction between me and my participants (Fallata, 2016). Thus as the phenomenological researcher, the layered understandings have occurred from the complex process of experiencing and reflecting engaged in both by the researcher and the participants (Finlay, 2006).

During this process, I kept asking the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of this phenomenon for the person, which has also exactly been asked by van Manen (1990, p. 178). Using phenomenology, on the other hand, has given my participants' a chance to reflect on their experiences (Boksz, 2012 as cited in Fallata, 2016), which has encouraged and empowered them with their own experiences of being and becoming. My role was to make them reflect and gather their experiences, and remain open and sensitive to the phenomenon being studied (Vagle, 2018).

Thematizing, for me, is the form of capturing the phenomenon one tries to understand (van Manen, 1990). While drawing the phenomena, I was attempting to give shape to the shapeless, so I went frequently with the audios and transcribed notes throughout the process because listening to me was more pleasing than reading. I was also reading different materials. During this process of listening and reflecting, my participants came in front of me, their talks and expression were there while I was in the process of interpretation of thematizing. I sometimes asked through audio messages and transcribed their sayings, this was the other benefit of doing online interviews. Some short confusions or misunderstandings were sorted.

I also used the One Note Windows app to jot down what I was reading, and what come to my mind. I collected the details and references of the book here to validate my writing and avoid plagiarism. As my research question intends to look for the being and becoming of Nepali female English language teachers, I divided these two aspects into two chapters and sub-themes under them. I went through listening, re-listening, and listening again to the audios, whereas, reading and re-reading the transcribed files as they were also translated in English. This process was continued when I was reading the related texts, books, and articles and further while reflecting upon the moments, the time, and the place we interviewed. Therefore interpreting the text I would say is a rigorous process, where the reading took place in different forms: reading the entire text, reading line by line, follow up questions, line by line reading again, the third line by line reading, subsequent reading (Vagle, 2018).

Relevant texts were listed horizontally which is a prioritized listing of useful texts, however, each statement was considered with respect, ensuring nonrepetitive, and nonoverlapping statements (Moustakas, 1994) I analyzed every minute phenomenon of lived experiences available while interviewing that helped me

understand it. I tried to make text interpretation as economic as possible by avoiding expressions that don't meet my requirements. I tried to validate my data with enough reading and referencing. For this, I made a tree diagram taking relevant incidences from my participants' experiences that later helped me develop the theme. I analyzed every minute phenomenon of lived experiences available while interviewing that helped me understand the phenomenon.

Quality Standards

Research being a rigorous study, I maintained quality standards of my research following quality standard of qualitative research based on Lincoln et al., (2011, as cited in Treharne & Riggs, 2015) for defining and investigating quality in it. On a similar note, I followed the quality standard criteria put forward by van Manen (1990) as organization, strength, richness, and depth.

Organization: The transcribed text was horizontalized and the meaning or meaning units were listed. These units were then clustered into common categories or themes which, then, were developed into the textural descriptions of the experience. These structural descriptions and integration of textures and structures were used to generate meaning and finally, the essence of phenomena was constructed.

Strength: texts need to aim for the strongest pedagogic interpretation of phenomena. We should use our orientation as a resource for producing pedagogic understanding and strengthen it with the practice of research. I, thus, ensured the quality of strength by not treating it only as a phenomenon rather as a rigorous process.

Richness: A rich and thick description is concrete, exploring a phenomenon in all its experiential complications, using the dialogic quality was engaging, involving, and requiring a response. Thus, dialogue in the form of the interview was engaging

and rich in terms of texts that also helped in creating a friendlier environment and relationship with the participants.

Depth: It means giving meaning to the experiences. Getting in-depth makes things look distinct leading to the openness to understand in an in-depth nature, and I was deep into their thought of experience through dialogue. This, undoubtedly, ensured to touch "the secret" of the participant.

Apart from the above-mentioned criteria, in an attempt of assuring credibility and maintain trustworthiness, after generating text, I contacted the participants and verified the data. When my participants agreed upon or verified the pieces of information, then I went through the interpretation process. I also talked to them about the codes that were later to be developed into the theme.

Reflexivity: Established as one of the prominent aspects of qualitative research, I felt without some degree of reflexivity my research would be blind and without tenacity (Flood, 1999 as cited in Mann, 2016). Therefore, I followed reflexive analysis right start from the moment the research was conceived. I treated qualitative interviews like a professional practice where I involved myself in critical reflection that helped me raise sensitivity to the speech act as well as aspects of language uses and choices made. In my research, I have been involved in two forms of reflexivity: positional reflexivity and textual reflexivity (Vagle, 2018).

Elaborating the terms, Macbth (2001, as cited in Vagle, 2018) states positional reflexivity as a means for the researcher to position himself or herself in the world and articulate his/her promises to question such positioning. This interrogation indeed has helped me notice the unnoticed aspects throughout my research process. This positional reflexive practice has also acknowledged me as a primary researcher. Similarly, textual reflexivity as another practice of reflecting is very important in the

process of understanding phenomena as lived because written expressions of these phenomena are prominent ones. Supporting the line, Macbeth (2001) states reflexive textual practices involve the reflective observing of the text while producing it. Therefore he uses the northern hemisphere as containing edited narratives of participants' voices and the southern hemisphere as the author's reflexive voices mentioning their position and interest.

I recorded the actions and their role in the research process and interrogated them systematically. I also focused on self-knowledge and thoughtfulness and got engaged in a process to understand the role of self in the creation of knowledge, belief, and personal experiences on the research and tried to maintain a balance between the personal and the world.

Apart from these efforts, I have shared my research work with our professors to validate the process and outcome, which I consider criteria to meet the quality standard.

Ethical Consideration

As a part of ethics, I have tried to maintain the ethical standards of qualitative research with established clear agreements to the research participants following the norm of confidentiality and informed consent. As a researcher, I tried not to be personal in any way and follow the ethical theory throughout the research process, rather through writing using the hand I wish to give voice to that which experience speaks of: memories of moments lived through (Henrikson et al., 2009).

Inexperienced researchers like us have dilemmas in ethical considerations. However, the dilemmas were lessened as much as possible through establishing a good relationship with the participants and developing a sense of trust, confidence, and confidentiality. Remembering my first meet with my participants, three of them

were quiet and less speaking. I was wondering how I could make them free to talk or how I would get a text from them. But the first thing I did was, I clarified my research project, my purpose, but I was very careful using heavy words that might distract or disturb them make them hesitate to respond. For example, I did not even use the term phenomenology. I simply talked about my issue and what I was looking for.

I clarified their role in this research work and why it was being done. I also assured them that their identity in no ways or words will be revealed. It will be disclosed with the given pseudo name and location and identifiable notifications will be deleted. Their right to privacy was maintained through the promise of confidentiality. As my research would also demand them to be personal, I assured them that I would share incidences of mine as well as it would no longer be an interview but a conversation between two friends who belong to the same ground. With this, the participant's consent was taken before conducting the research work.

However, being a female it was comparatively easier for me to question female teachers, but they were made clear that they were free not to answer if they did not like it. During the online interview also, I first did text messages or used Viber or messenger to communicate. Then only I called gave them ring to fix the meeting.

As I have mentioned earlier, my participants' were in an environment surrounded by family members, they were uncomfortable speaking about their family life. Therefore, I switched the topic to professionalism and professional development. I was sensitive to their environment. I accompanied them with a smile when they were sharing a joyful moment and cracked funny incidences to make them laugh. I stayed quiet as an active listener when they were sharing some challenging moments. Asking the same question twice if they did not respond well, I did not force them to

speak on that very topic. I was concerned and conscious of their autonomy and right to speak.

Additionally, in an attempt to verify if they are eligible, I introduced myself first with basic info inserting my criteria of research, so that they would not be disappointed to be rejected for the reason. For example, I have been in this profession for more than a decade as an English language teacher.

To sum up, I made sure that I followed the ethical considerations strictly while doing my research work: not harming, respecting my participants' experiences and perceptions, values and decisions, confidentiality, and self-esteem. I was alert with becoming biased and was always equally after each participant whether it be in giving time or asking questions.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I began mentioning my philosophical understanding to explore the being and becoming phenomena of a female English language teacher, which helped me decide the approach: hermeneutic phenomenology. My writing then continued with my understanding of hermeneutic phenomenology and why I chose it for my research. The chapter further talks about the research design, participant selection, and research site I followed in detail. Moving on with text generation and interpretation, as an important aspect of phenomenological research, I have clarified the steps, medium of writing, and theory that were implemented. Towards the end, I have mentioned the very important and sensitive aspects of qualitative research: quality standard and ethical consideration.

CHAPTER IV

BEING A FEMALE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER

MANKIND likes to think in terms of extreme opposites.

John Dewey (1997)

The analysis part addressing my research question has further been divided into two sub-research questions: 'What is it like growing up being female in Nepali society?' and 'What are the experiences of being female English language teachers?' This chapter dealt with the first part: What is it like growing up being female in Nepali society to become an English language teacher? This theme explores the experiences of being female English language teachers in their surroundings. In doing so, I present their upbringing, family, education, and responsibilities that appealed to them to get into the field of English language teaching. I have put the phenomenon that created the context for joining English language teaching as their profession and their challenges and issues faced with the collection of lived experiences.

I explored through this chapter that female teachers now do not bother much about the gender issue (Fallata, 2016) in the teaching profession. Likewise, the background setting of the female teachers that their personal life and family responsibilities seemed to play an indirect role in getting into teaching as their profession. In the study, two out of three participants said that their personal life does not hamper their professional one, the other said it matters. Although they claimed that their personal life does not hamper their professional responsibilities, an indirect impact on their professional growth was being noticed. Likewise, I found my participants' experiences were guided by the experiential learning theory (Dewey,

1916) and self-determination theory (Ryan et al., 2000). Their phenomena of growth as an English language teacher that are discussed in detail below show how their learning with experiences leads them as a self-determined beings.

Breaking the Ice: WHY?

The unseen alliance between the body and spirit is seen somewhere between function and observable expressions as the joy of being in the world (Buytendijk, 1988). This functioning and expressions define the joy of being when questioned as to 'why teaching' and replying to it for the joy of teaching (with mixed emotion) continuing for more than a decade, that will make sense only if we understand the essence of being through the mode of being (Manen et al., 2014). This makes us seek for what this joy of teaching consists of or this stimulation consists of as we need to see what is joyful within that, how functional it is, what movements are there, how joy is an expressive act and what it expresses, which is possible with being, as all modes of being in the world (van Manen et al., 2014) are the ways of understanding the world (van Manen, 1991). Hence, this needs to be clear that scientific analysis is only possible when we start with understanding the nature of being or an individual that is experienced as knowledge is constructed locally in the consciousness of the individuals (Laverty, 2003). As all the organisms have a certain mode of being and significance, there is an essence to see the meaningful significance of being a female English language teacher.

The act of female teachers can be understood from the dual mystery: a biological and psychological viewpoint. SHE is part of living nature within the male and female domain, and the psychological viewpoint sees her with responsibilities, prestige issues in herself (by self), and immature, sensitive human by others. Thus, the phenomenon of being female English language teachers demands to inquire their

significance and meaning of being in this world. Hereafter, there is a need to understand the nature of their phenomena that will help us understand how the primitive stage leads to the developmental antecedents of the later phases (Buytendijk, 1988). Something happened in that primitive stage that transformed us, made us different but the same being. Based on my experience and sharing with the participants, I believe that factors such as failure, fear, success, responsibilities, or expectation seem to be some of the key elements that play role in transformation. This made me claim that history matters. As Laverty (2003) marks, it is the personal background of an individual, that includes the culture one gets from birth and that matters the understanding of the world. As a result, I realized that understanding a mode of being would be unjustified if I ignore the historicality of my participants. This belief in my participants and me made me choose hermeneutic phenomenology which as Manen states is an art of writing, and teaching is believed to be an art itself which has been proved to be an effective way to interpret and empower as a phenomenological inquirer to understand the life events of my participants (Taylor et al., 2011).

One might suppose that the significance of being an English language teacher can be answered based on other male English language teachers because teaching is what we all do too. That is why to look into the issue from the perspective of female English language teachers' aligning it with their experience of English language teaching, and there is a need for providing lived meaning of being a female English language teacher. With the need to explore the condition under which we find joy in teaching and what we express by it, this research has come up with the finding that 'being' is the backbone for 'becoming'. It revealed how the observable nature of all teachers appears to be similar, but they, in essence, are quite different. As with my

research participants, two of them believed gender has nothing to do with teaching, it's only the environment that needs to be improved. On the other hand, one of the participants sees gender as a responsible factor in teaching effectiveness. These concepts were seen to have developed with their experience. The ones helped by male teachers had a positive attitude towards gender and the one with not much help received, has the concept of her own.

I as the phenomena of change / Diving into self

'Change begins from you' a quote often used by Sadguru pleased me after transformation was introduced to me afterward my short exploration about my students showed that they were in a different situation than I had assumed them to be. This transformation from a strict to an autonomous and democratic female English language teacher made me explore the situation of other female English language teachers in their context. I used to be satisfied when my students remained quiet in my class as I could preach the contents easily, without any challenges since the English language was not much of a big problem to them. It was easygoing until I was in a public school where English language learning was a nightmare. I am the same teacher in both contexts - a public and private school where the students were in two different situations. It was a hard time for me. Many factors such as students' discipline, working environment, parents' response, and accountability, colleagues' support are some of the challenges I have been tolerating. Additionally, I am a pre-service trained teacher who has never attended any training during this decade-plus teaching journey. Hence, with the collection of my experiences and looking further on how other female teachers were surviving in their teaching boat, I here present the phenomenon of them giving my voice.

Born into a middle-class family as the second child and the first daughter, gave me a position with unexpected joy to the members as I was the first girl in the family after my father, his four brothers, and a brother of my own. The male-dominated family got the princess. However, I was like the senior-most children having a brother before me. I remember my mother made me cook when she was in her periods when I was in class 3. My brother, on the other hand, did not pick even the glass from the floor. I was said that I must do it because it was my duty I needed to learn for the future. The sense of bias had stricken my head then. I grew up taking care of an elder brother and a sister younger than me. I was the first earning member among my siblings as I started teaching immediately after my higher secondary degree as I reflect in the vignette below:

> *It was Saturday morning, a holiday. I was nine years old then. My mother sat at the corner beside the kitchen area, aloof, and untouched instructing me how to cook: the beginning of a cooking journey. I still remember lighting the stove for the first time but could not pin it. She took the stove and did the pinning. She had expected me to do this earlier and tried showing, but who cared. Although I was raised as the second child in the family after the elder brother, that very day I was no more a younger one, I had to cook, and my elder brother was busy playing. I used to play with him and his friends before. She made me cook vegetables and I had burnt my hand in the hot pot. I did not like that at all as my brother was playing and I was cooking. The pain of not getting to play and seeing my brother elder to me playing was more painful than the burn. My younger sister, on the other side, was busy studying.*

Nonetheless, a person's history or background includes what the culture gives a person from birth and is handed down presenting ways of understanding the world

(Laverty, 2003), now I thank for these sorts of challenges and opportunities that enabled in me an independent being to prove my worthiness as I capture my feelings in the poem below.

He was sleeping, I was sweeping

He was loved and I was loved too

But the emotions matter!!

I was crying, he was lying

I was eating, he was eating too

But the tastes matter!

But I thank and I must do,

That crying made me determined,

That burn made me stronger

Because self-standing matters!

Being in the World: Dancing with the beat

What is life how it's going!

Is it running or yet to begin?

I wonder how far I will go

But my pledge says I have a thousand miles to go!!

While and post-interviews with the participants gave rise to this stanza. When I was looking at them, talking to them, analyzing their expressions, watching them remembering memories or trying to remember their experiences, masking the expression with laugher, wanting to express but trying to hide, processes went side by

side made me write for them. When I begin my writing, what came strikingly is the changes, the transformations, and the experiences. Perhaps these are what we call *anubhav* (experiences) and as Laverty (2003) mentions that Heidegger too claims that nothing can be claimed without understanding the background or *anubhav,* makes hermeneutic research an interpretive concentrating on historical meanings of experience (*anubhav*) and their developmental and growing effects on individual and social levels. Listening to the participants and reflecting on my journey of myself gave the feeling of dance. It feels like we are dancing with the beat. Dancing, being one of my passions, I could see us dancing passionately, and cheerfully with broad smiles on our faces. As dancing refreshes, the experiences we have as being in the world do the same. Looking into life as the changing beats different stages come to mind which I see from the lenses of daughterhood: The beginning of being, education, learning environment, and modeling. Based on the revealing facts and common patterns showing a phenomenon in the experiences, in process of understanding their 'being' that Heidegger (1990) says 'represents the present, the manifesto, what is perceived, understood and known' (Heidegger, 1990 as cited in Ormiston & Schrift, 1990) helped generate these themes.

All the participants have different stories and lived experiences in the background and with the belief that to know something is to uncover its being (Henrikson & Saevi, 2009), I have intended to look into the being aspect of Nepali female English language teachers as Heidegger (1990) focused more on the mode of being. There are many twists and turns in the process of their development. When I first met them, it was in their school. I could see only an English language teacher standing with their uniforms in front of me. But after talking to them and exploring their life experiences with interviews and sharing helped me draw a phenomenon.

Talking to them and looking into their journey I could see the passion, modesty, and obedience that reflected the features of three mythological female characters of Mahabharata *Gandhari*, *Kunti*, and *Draupadi*. As Subedi (2020) presents *Kunti* and *Gandhari* as the leading figures, I could figure *Draupadi* as a compassionate protagonist (Singh, 2015) regarding their passion, calmness, and determination. I could see my participants' aspiration to become successful teacher and their efforts in achieving it, transforming themselves, accepting challenges and obstacles. Apart from their interest, area, or challenges in their lives, they have been determined with their profession and going on with the professional development dancing with the beat.

Experiencing Daughterhood: The beginning of being

Aa/ma my angel!! my love at first sight

You nurtured me with passion, tolerance, and light!!

You lived for me, you taught me to read

You fought for me, you empowered me to lead!!

Your love and care is all my strength

The present is what I live in and you are my resting bench.

You are my sun you are my tree

You quench my thirst and excel me.

Talking to my participants and seeing them aspiring their mother, gave rise to the above phenomenon. Their mother is and was there with them in every up and down. Their sharing show that what they received in their childhood is related to their mother and they are her reflection. While listening to them and their sharing, daughterhood is seen as the existence of being (van Manen, 1990). Their talks made me reflect on my earlier days of daughterhood as the pampered daughter which is the

collection of happiness and recollection of beautiful memories. Talking to the participants about when and where an aspect of their birth and connection with the family brought smiling faces with joyful memories with them. All the participants agreed that they were the loved child among their siblings, where two of them were the youngest and one was the elder one. One of the participants later got a sister younger to her nearly after 10 years of her birth. They recalled their family as the happy family directed by the male member in the form of a father or brother. They shared that parental connectedness has a prominent role in making girls empowered (Grotevant et al., 1998), which I found even more crucial in the case of daughters born in Nepali society. As the proverb says the morning shows the day, the beginning of being as a daughter plays a vital role in the later developments in shaping who you are. A phenomenological framework helps shift the focus from top-down to bottom-up exploration of how they made sense of experience and transformed that experience into consciousness, both individually and shared meaning (Gaulin, 2019). With these scenarios in mind, I claim that the beginning of daughterhood leads us to a different other 'hood-ness'. So, regarding this first phenomenon let's get into their world.

Children are always precious for the parents and especially for the mother, daughter is more than a friend which is proven also when my participants said they were more close to mother compared to the father. A mother and a daughter have a very close connection as Paru experienced *being youngest I was more connected with my sisters and mother than with my brother. I was scared of him.* Similarly, Aaru said *my mother was alone to look after my old grandfather, two children, and the entire household work. I was close to her compared to my father. I was scared of talking to him.* They remembered their mother with much love and affection compared to their father. Aaru's affection for her mother seems to be affected by witnessing her mother's

effort as the only female caretaker of the family. Similarly, Saru when remembering her childhood days she said, *during the beginning days of my school, I preferred staying home so I used to cry. Therefore, my mother stayed with me for six months at school, and after I was used to it, and things were normal later on.* The mother, as the symbol of love, shows their connection with her hence proving why the mother is so connected to her children. On the other hand, daughters when witnessing the hard -a labor of their mother, made them feel soft and sensitive for them.

Saru never seemed to count on her work and duties, s*he was always busy with household chores and other kinds of stuff so I had to help her, and I did everything I could from cooking to helping with shops* shows of her informed domestic chores. Like Aaru, she was too informed of her parents' workload, problems and stress. As Ullah and Naz (2017) have portrayed that the world of girls has been filled with obedience, confirmation, and domesticity, Saru seemed to be overwhelmed with the expectations as responsibilities, and Aaru though was not involved was concerned. Aaru saw helping her mother but not bothering and disturbing her during her childhood days, *I never disturbed her when I was small and did what she wanted me to do, whether with study or other things. My mother always wanted me to read, it was by reading that I helped her.* Paru was a silent nature girl and she obeyed the instructions of her sisters saying *regarding my education my sisters guided me and I followed them. My mother helped me with my professional development supporting me in need, as a result, I was always able to give my best.* We get from their sharing that they were very close to their mother.

Aaru, on the other hand, has a different type of connection with her mother. When I met her for the first time, she was a very introverted lady who was hesitating to interact, but as the days passed by and as we continued meeting and talking

(rapport building), we became good friends. I remember her mentioning her mother in our first meeting saying her mother had raised them with much difficulty. In her talks later days, she mentioned:

> *I didn't speak much but whenever I had to, it used to be with my mother. My empowerment is also because of her. I have seen my mother crying many times. The reason used to be scolded or quarreled (buwa le aama lai gaali garda namitho laagdo raichha k bachha lai) by her father. I thought, as my father was the only one earning source and mother didn't, she was scolded or made to cry.*

While Aaru says so, Paru, on the other hand, has a different story. Losing her father in childhood days, and being brought up in a different environment supported by a brother, mother, and sisters, spotlight on the factors that bring a daughter and a mother even close as she said *My father expired when I was 9. So we all were brought up by our mother.* Her bonding with her mother has different circumstances. We can see mothers playing an important role in the development of their daughter's self-esteem. My participants were bought up in a lovable environment as their mothers were letting them be engaged with what they were interested in. Like Saru's sisters were not compelled to work at home, *the eldest sister was married and the middle sister had college and training. She had no time and was busy studying only.* The likely support provided by her mother existed also in the case of Aaru and Paru. They were able to study and were engaged in taking pieces of training also. This gives us an idea of that connectedness and inter-dependency among mother-daughter relationships as important to daughters' self-esteem (Fithriyah, et. al, 2020). Additionally, Saru said that she never thought of revolting when asked to work having elder sisters and brothers to her, showing her connectedness and obedience.

Saru has been taking care of her mother after her father and brother. She remembered her responsibilities during the beginning of college life Saru said, *I remember my days after SLC. That day my friends went to get admission to study science but I didn't go because I needed to prepare the meal for all my family members. This is why I wouldn't get time for morning college. I had to study during day time, I had to help my mother.* She easily decided to join day college and continued her study. Mother and teenage daughter relationships are often reported as conflicted and argumentative (Creese & Blackledge, 2017) which is falsified by my participants' relationship with their mothers. Aaru said, *I wholeheartedly admit that what I am today is the effort of my mother*, remembers giving her first salary in her mother's hand and was happy to see the smile on her face. Paru was motivated to see her sisters always help their mother. On the other side, reflecting on my childhood days when my mother made me cook while my brother was playing, I was not happy. I revolted saying 'but why me?' I was satisfied by Onayli et al. (2013) who stated "ex-generations lived in more control, however, the last generations are more autonomous" (p.330). Though the responsibility as a daughter stopped Saru from joining her friends in the same school, it didn't stop her from getting her achievements in her life. Therefore, their cooperating mother, guiding brother, and studious sisters encouraged them to study. As a result, they never let them down in the daughterhood chapter of their life.

The beginning of Aaru's being as an elder daughter in a middle-class family having a grandfather, father, and a mother in the capital city was easygoing unless she mentioned that her brother only a year younger came into the family, *my schooling started very early because my brother was born after a year gap (Barsiune).* Simkhada (2006) shows that maternal mortality is the key indicator of the status of

reproductive health and women's status in society. This shows that the women in Nepal are still not independent of their reproductive health. Her sharing showed that it was difficult for her mother to look after the two male members and two kids with the household chores being only a woman member. This shows the need for men's involvement in improving the maternal improvement of women (Simkhada, 2006). On the other hand, while Saru was sharing her childhood days, she was smiling and was happy to reflect on the moment. The family environment she said made her keep going *they never said don't read. Rather would scold me if they saw me sleeping. I never had to revolt or even thought of that*. She said her father had a shop and she used to help him bring the kinds of stuff he needed. Her father and brother have expired now. One of her sisters is unmarried and so she has her sister and mother in the same building with her. She has been taking care of her mother. Though she is biologically forbidden from motherhood, she has been rearing her elder sister's daughter *what thought is I am in the phase of my retirement and don't have a child, my sister's daughter is my daughter. She takes care of me. I have reared her with these hands*. Hence, the sense and feeling of motherhood and daughterhood have been defined in a different notion by her.

In this phenomenon of life, they despite having various struggles and challenges, lead a journey as English language teachers in their teaching profession. They always accepted the duties as their responsibilities that made them responsible and understanding. Therefore, it can be said that the understanding nature developed in them is the outcome of parental connectedness that has an important role in decreasing the risk of negative psychological and behavioral outcomes on adolescents and increasing power of the girls (Grotevant et al., 1998 as cited in Onyali & Baker, 2013). They got ample opportunities for pieces of training, teaching, and study

because of their mothers' support. They were free to work on their own. Paru said her brother spoke very less and she too, as a result, her mother was everything to her when she said *my mother is the very innocent type who doesn't control or scold (Maya laagdi hunuhunchha, with a smile).* Akgün (2008, as cited in Onyali & et al., 2013) states that the mother is the main caregiver having a prominent role compared to the father in upbringing a child which seems to be the favoring statement. Paru's relationship with her mother is deep and intimate supported by the love of her older sibling, *I remember going to school with my sister holding her hands.* While sharing the moment there was a gentle smile on her face. She shared the incident interestingly showed that the memories were pleasing to her. Their mother was the source of their independence. Aaru's attachment with her mother, according to her, is so much like a friend that she sometimes used to scold her (mother) for speaking too much as she (Aaru) was a silent person by nature, *we fight sometimes and I scold her as well. She understands my silence.* It would be justifiable to say that among all other family relationships, a mother-daughter relationship is the important one even when major life changes occur (Bojczyk et al., 2011) as after marriage also Saru has been taking care of her mother. She said *even now my sister lives on the upper floor with my mother, me, and my husband on the down floor.* Paru and Aaru said that their mother is proud of their achievements and even today they share any success stories with her, *my mother's hard work and support are behind my success till now from being a student to the teacher to mother. If I have anything new to say, I share it with her first (Paru).* Similarly, Aaru shared:

> *I remember giving my first salary in her hand and seeing her smiling face. I told her about my selection in TSC as a permanent teacher at first and she was happy. She praised my position and is proud of who I am.*

While reflecting on these memories and lived experiences, she got nostalgic and said she is in the position because she got support from her mother

> *Even after the delivery of my first child, when I had passed the TSC exam, my posting was to Nuwakot. I was determined to quit. But my mother was there with us for a year-long probation phase of my job as a permanent English language teacher.*

Aaru sharing a similar experience shared:

> *Um….when I had started teaching, the school bus used to pick students from my village, my mother used to pack my lunch and send it via the bus. She has always been supportive in all the aspects of my life whether it was my education, life decision, or profession.*

Their expression and description of their mother reflected their intimacy and respect towards her. Hence, this support made them easier to travel the journey as a female English language teacher. Like the teacher induction phase as beginning in the development as the good teacher matter in the journey of teaching, I see daughterhood of the similar importance in the journey of professionalism of female English language teacher generating a sense of empathy and passion for learning.

These different struggles and experiences of my participants throughout their lives have made them stand and continue in their journey of English language teaching. Other than their mother, my participants valued earning and admitted that earning on their own is the added source of empowerment after mother. The recollection of different stories narrated by them confirms how important the daughterhood phase is and it determines and controls the further developmental stages of the female English language teachers. Their sharing showed that the psychological support matter and daughters depend on their mother's aid (Thompson et al., 1984 as

cited in Onayli et al., 2013) regarding the further developmental stages. Their story showed that responsibility as a daughter and attachment with their mother has made them responsible and self-determined, which experiences as a daughter has guided them in the latter days of their life marking the value of experience leading towards learning.

Experiencing Education: an in-life Training

How did I choose to be where I am?

It's my destiny or my passion?

Who bothers what it be, or how it's like?

I got a job and earn some isn't that enough?

How I teach how do I behave?

Is it determined if I am a male or a female?

I am a wanderer, keeping myself onto the floating boat

Still, I need to be a wheel of others' hope.

The idea of writing this poem was planted when I was transcribing the interview where I was noticing how my participants valued education for their personal and professional growth. On the other hand, their connectedness between their academic and professional life encouraged me to think and give the shape. Their sharing made me think of the term 'learning', having concepts forwarded by many scholars, but seeing learning among teachers can be aligned to folk theories or folk psychology (Olson et al., 1998) also termed as 'lay theories' (Furnham, 1988), which means conceptions that we are not necessarily aware of but that are likely to impact the ways we see situations or practices as teachers (as cited in Bryan, et.al., 2010). Now looking at learning from the point of view of experiencing education, we say

'education begins from the cradle and ends at the tomb' a very famous quote that marks continuous development, creating the essence for educational development to look into the life phenomenon paving the path for learning. Looking into education and its purpose as Dong (2003) says is to develop knowledge, skill and, character, showing the relevance of education to be seen as a phenomenon in the life of an English language teacher. This shows that learning or education is an important aspect of life in developing an act of compassion (Dong, 2003) shaping you into who you are. Hence, to delve into this phenomenon and to have a secure understanding of the process of education and its relationship to English language teaching, let's get into the participants' sharing with Bishop Mandell Creighton's saying, the real object of education is to leave a man in the condition of continually asking questions.

The educational journey of my participants elaborates their context of transformation or transformational learning as experiential learning (Dewey, 1934). Regarding educational beginning, Saru shared:

> *During that time the situation was not like studying 1,2,3. We studied 1,2,3 but next to my home. There was a guru and he had a Montessori, in today's term. The term was not there then. I was fond of playing and so didn't like to go there. We used to say, Guru! Guru! to our sir. He had three rooms saying classes 1, 2, and 3. So I had studied primarily like that*

Her sharing marks learning as an informal educational start, which helped her get into the track of formal education showing interest in her school life. She further says, "*For lower-secondary schooling, I went to Bhaktapur by school bus. Finally, I completed my secondary level in Kathmandu.* Aaru also showed interest in her study as she mentions herself as an average student in her class. For this, she shared:

Studying during my childhood has never been a problem for me. I was good in my study. At that time in our village, there was one private school recently started, that is now established as one of the well-known schools there. As my brother and I had started school very early we enjoyed it; we got friends in school so we studied. As the school shifted to Thimi, the school was replaced by the new one and we started studying there. I got admitted to public school and completed my 9-10 from there. I completed my SLC with the first division.

She says her educational journey was good, though she was transferred to public school during her secondary level. Paru on the other hand, mentions the similar experience of having easy-going childhood concerning education being guided by sisters. She says:

When I was small my sisters took much care of me. They watched and were concerned about if I was reading or not. My elder sister had admitted me to the public school. I had clicked photo for admission with my sister (laughs). I remember. I was not much fond of school but my sisters were always regular. I was inspired slowly and in later days was as regular as them. But I was scared of my teachers. I was frightened of putting my voice. I completed my secondary level from the same school where I had started my primary level.

She says looking at her sisters and with their guidance helped her create in school that paved the path for her educational journey. Dewey (1938) in his book Democracy and Education describes interest as the active individuality of the self that keeps moving with a certain purpose.

My participants' continuation of formal education was seen as static and unchanged till they were in the secondary level. However, Saru shares *I took an English language learning course and completed it which I say has a great role in*

improving all the skills of English show how experiential learning matters and we realize as we involve with the phases of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting (Kolb, 2005). On the other hand, her nature of not sitting ideal and occupied with some activities during leisure time has established her as an active learner, as she remembers her experience as *I have taken training in cutting and tailoring. I always used to do something during leisure. I never liked sitting ideal. I spent more on these sorts of things that have taught me many things and kept me active always.*

All their activities point toward their attempt to be developing, learn to be human, making meaning through selective engagements with the physical and human environment (Greene, 1998). Their interest in change got a track during their intermediate schooling. Saru says:

> *I went to the field with other boys while doing geography. I did their cartography as I was good at it. This helped me become outspoken and independent as I was the only girl in the group. Education then was of so much value that I forced myself to continue.*

She further reflects onto her intermediate days and struggles there to join the level:

> *I joined RR College for an intermediate level with Geography and economics as optional subjects during day time as I couldn't join science for I didn't pass entrance. However principal sir had assured us to write an application for further process, I couldn't as the classes were morning. I had to help my mother.*

Saru admits that she was always affected by her friend's decision *none of the subjects I have chosen are from my interest or choice. I decided as per the suggestions I got from friends or as the situation demanded.* Even though, she decided

to continue with geography and economy in her intermediate level, apart from being alone in the class leaving her friends among the boys after her only friend joined a job and got transferred to another college. Aaru remembers her struggle by looking into teaching as an accidental journey:

My English language was better, not bad. I was good in mathematics and science too and wanted to study medicine. But the offer by one of my cousins (tika laaunedai) to work in his school till class 10 made teaching my profession.

She started teaching just after her SLC (School Leaving Certificate) level. Paru, an introvert as she calls herself, began questioning and presenting when she started her intermediate level:

Talking about me, I progressed as I went to higher classes I started my intermediate level at Bhaktapur Campus with education and English as my specialization. When I joined Ed. I had to present in front of the class, as a result, I was expressive and outspoken actually after I started doing my intermediate level and teaching at the same time.

Their experiences point towards the role of school in promoting development (Olson et al., 1998) which began after they joined intermediate level, which fueled a passion for developmental psychology leading to transformation. This transformation of learning or experiential learning is also an art, and the works of art refer to what human beings made of them (Dewey, 1934).

Having good educational background I would say, seems to have developed confidence in Aaru and Paru to teach at that small age, however teaching Aaru says, in the beginning, was not much easy for her:

I started teaching after 4 days of completing SLC. I was dedicated to my profession but nervous as students were of similar age and height. I had to be

careful about my looks and height as I was very young. Looks matter (laughs).
So I used to wear a saree as my uniform. I have been continuing to teach since
then, though contents were not a problem.

She had no issues regarding the contents, it was only the other factors like looks and height that were challenging. Saru, though didn't get into the teaching field then, reflecting on her educational journey during her intermediate level says:

My parents had given me the freedom to choose the subject I liked. However,
after looking at my marks principal of RR College then said, English would be
difficult for me as I was also looking after my house wouldn't be able to give
much time. Therefore I shouldn't take English. He suggested economics. I
chose geography and economics. For selecting geography there's a reason
(laughs). One of my friends said that it was the subject in demand and would
be easily employed in the future days. Moreover, we would get to go on an
excursion with government funding (laughs).

Education as the means for employment shows my participant's determination for independence and determined. As Paru says, *the education that I have received, is all on my own, m*y *parents paid till I Ed. after that I have been earning for myself. S I think the monetary aspect is also connected with our independence.*

Similarly, Saru's family promoted education and always prioritized education first to earning reflects, *I remember my time when I wanted to join a job as my friends did, my brother scolded me saying to complete education first (laughs).* Their valuing education made them active learners (Dewey, 1916) and taught them to value learning. Aaru on the other hand admits not buying books and not studying seriously, *I was more a teacher and less a student. Honestly speaking I studied and completed my bachelor's level without buying my book. I didn't even buy a single book.*

However, it didn't stop studying and learning, as she says *I used my friends' notes, which I regret now. The education helped me not only in earning but also in becoming an active, confident, and independent learner.* Her learning rather was supported with her implication of theories and methodologies practically in her classes later days *the education I was getting helped me tackle the challenges, as being a student of education I was taught techniques and methodologies; that helped me, especially the subject psychology.* As Gaulin (2019) says two experiences of the same event by two different persons are never the same, experiencing struggle during the induction phase though similar in all the participants, the way they experienced were completely different. This clearly shows that the generalization of a situation based on assumption is a matter of injustice. Paru remembering her initial days of teaching says *I started my teaching career when I was in I. Ed and teaching were not much difficult for me as I implemented what I read and was taught. It was practical to me as it was then I started asking and presenting.*

Aaru regretting her struggle to adjust to the teaching profession during the induction phase remembers how she balanced her teaching and study. As teaching was also connected with earning, she says she was very loyal towards her job, as a result, she couldn't give much time to her education for which she regrets now, *I did I. Ed., B.Ed. and Med. From I Ed. to masters I attended classes morning shift, bunked two classes (laughs), then went school to teach. Had I been given little time I could have scored with good marks. I have first division though.* The relevance of education with her profession kept encouraging her to keep studying. The other factor was associated with classroom management related to handling the students and counseling them, which she says was helped by the subjects she studied. She shared:

Umm….I started teaching, I started enjoying and it was believed that children should spend much of the time reading that in playing. But I used to say to parents that playing should be there and is equally important as studying to the growing child. I said that after I knew about psycho motor skills, that I learned by reading. Saying playing is as important I started counseling the parents who used to come to the school asking to make their child read more than play.

Saru similarly utters w*hen I had joined B.Ed, I passed my Teacher Service Commission (TSC), the course helped me a lot.* Wang (2009, as cited in Chu, 2020) agrees that when there's value and relevance of learning task with their learning needs, that promotes individual accountability as a result when my participants felt financial help or need and when they started earning, that met their value and need, which empowered them to learn and earn.

Aaru's desire/dream was supported/enhanced with the training and educational degrees. Like Aaru, Paru's educational and financial relevance was one of the factors that kept her studious, as she also used to implement what she read practically in her classes. Aaru takes reading novels as for other aspects of training, that she says gives her situation and environment to analyze her activities based on reading, *I read novels and look into the situations and struggles of others in different contexts. This helps me in decision-making. Education is not only for professional growth as a teacher, rather it's also for personal growth and satisfaction.* This shows that not only formal but informal education equally helps us become trained in the life journey and this learning based on experience makes us exist and visible. Learning through extensive reading is another way of analyzing self when she says, it reveals the horizon of experience, as stories and novels open the windows from the imaginary world to the

real (Güngör et al., 2017). As the characters are in the situation the reader imagines one in the similar one, as a result, it helps one to get insight into decision making regarding right or wrong helping with self-analysis. This realization of my participants seeing education as one of the means for active life leading to independent and self-determined ones has also made them value education as Aaru says, *I am also thinking of continuing further higher education as my growth will never stop with that. After some years I will join MPhil.*

Experiencing Learning Environment: Where you are matters!

Where am I? Where is my being? Where do I search?

When they hunt me in their position, value, and worth!

I chuckle, I giggle and I thrill on,

But my circle stares at me as a non-person.

What are my success and what failure?

Did it ever bother anyone about my career?

My smiles hide the pain I have gone through

I hide them with laughter coz I care for you.

It's you who I feel have made me reach here

It's you only you who I can't think of staying away coz I fear.

I fear for love, I fear for hatred

I fear for trust, I fear for getting betrayed.

Oh my lord forgive me for this,

The illusion I'm having is confusing me with it.

You point my mistakes, correct them and make me feel free,

You are my shadow that walks with me.

I bestow my success on to you,

I feel incomplete without you.

You are the source, you are the inspiration,

You are the passion and you are the source of aspiration.

It's not just I or it's not only You,

It's we that make the world.

The experiences of my participants, their reflections of their past, and the expression in their faces gave this structure as a poem. The expression of my participants came in front of my eyes, their mixed emotions that were trying to say many things. Their experiences were so beautifully crafted in the form of memories into their mental territory. These crafts bring into nearness the nature of being. Unveiling this beauty of being with experiences becoming 'a passageway' (Heidegger, 2001), guides us to an open space where the credible being of a teacher is at work is found.

Their sharing about their process of learning developed this phenomenon as Gaulin (2019) says that phenomenology is used in the meaning-making process through lived experiences working as a theoretical framework to investigate how FEL teachers constructed their experiences and how these can be used to inform of their practices in a new way. Being a phenomenologist, when I was trying to derive themes, the learning environment was found to be one of the prominent phenomena among them. They made me go back into the recordings and listen to them carefully. So, I also went thoroughly into the transcribed text. It did not stop here, I started reading articles about the learning environment and came up with the idea that the environment has been considered as the factor in the overall development of a human being, and the learning environment cannot be ignored.

As I believe phenomenological engagement is always personal engagement to how we understand things, how we stand up in life, and how we understand ourselves as educators (Manen, 1990), my participants' experiences talk about the learning environment as a phenomenon and the prominent role they played, which are presented below. When I sat analyzing, my participants were in front of my eyes. I could see their eyes, blabbing lips of their own life with different expressions time and again. Additionally, the silent environment among us during the time of the interview helped me connect to their world. As important as a silent environment for the interview where I could notice every movement of my participant's action with gestures or babbling lips, I found the learning environment of the same importance in flourishing my participants' life journey.

Zimmerer (2000, as cited in Head, Trigger, et al., 2005) claims that your being is the reflection of your culture and environment, my participants' nature of how they were and how they stand at their being can be related. Where Paru and Aaru viewed themselves as quiet and less speaking people, while Saru views herself as more sociable and friendly speaking out her mind. Likewise, Paru and Aaru can be related to their psychological threat of being expressive to the threat or scared with brother/father to some extent as both have admitted that they spoke very little because they were scared with their father/brother and their source of communication was their mother/sisters. Aaru said, *my father speaks very less and I was scared of speaking with him.* Additionally, Paru's nature of being quiet can further be related to her threat of being expressive since her school days were restricted speaking environment, restraining her freedom to learn as she shared:

> *I can exactly remember how English classes used to be then we had to mug up*
>
> *meanings in the primary level. By the time we were in secondary level, the*

Direct Method was used and the teacher spoke English. He used only English and we were quiet. We understood but it was one way. We were quiet throughout the class. Nobody made even a single noise. Those days students were scared of teachers. I remember one of the English teachers and everyone was scared of him. The restricted environment in class regarding speaking promoted becoming silent.

It is supported by her saying that teaching gave her an environment for free speech (Osman, 2013), which permitted her to speak and ask questions that helped in a free exchange of ideas to flourish and support the idea that teaching gave her the right to free speech. Saru said d*uring my diploma, I joined my English language course and that helped me a lot in improving my listening, handwriting, and speaking skills.* The course was not compulsory as part of formal education which helped her in her life journey to choose English language teaching making it a profession from her mere interest. Therefore, it can be claimed that freedom of speech (Malcolm, 2021), currently a burning issue, plays an important role in developing yourself, whether it be in the family or school.

My participants' sharings showed the family environment as the prominent aspect of learning. Saru shared that *my mother I created the environment for learning, whether academic or personal. I was supported rather than being forced.* Aaru on the other hand said, *my mother never asked me to help her. It was her effort that created an environment to learn.* Where Paru said, *I was not punctual to school in the beginning days but later, I started becoming as I have learned to learn from my sisters.* As Güngör et al., (2017) assure pre-school being an initial stage in which pre-knowledge is learned and the foundation of personality is created, the family and the environment we get from them play a vital role in our being that has an impact on our

personality, who we become as a being. Furthermore, Saru shared that *I was independent to choose a subject of my interest. I never chose a subject from the perception of a pass or fail. That never came to mind*. It is a display of an independent environment she was in regarding decision-making about her future. Aaru's decision of choosing to teach, and choosing education as a stream through having an interest in medical science showed the similar independent environment she was in. Likewise, Paru's decision of choosing education as a stream was her own that was supported either. This shows that all the participants had grown up in an independent environment where their thoughts and interests were respected. Additionally, her sharing that she could not join morning college like her friends did, because of family responsibilities and household chores, showed that household responsibilities also impact our learning environment. However, when she said she these household responsibilities are part of our culture and this acculturation process covers knowledge, skills, and moral elements (Güngör et al., 2017) helping children develop into social well-being. It is families that teach values to the children and this value becomes the key aspect of the educational system. This sharing, on the other hand, shows that family responsibilities matter in our physical, mental, and psychological development making an impact on our decision-making capacity. This clearly shows the role of experiential learning keeping experiences at the center of learning (Kolb, 2005) as they were growing up, and they were taught by their experiences out of their responsibilities to feel, reflect, think and act as Kolb's (2005) four-stage cycle of experiential learning.

All my participants shared that they were brought up in a supportive family environment that was positive for their learning, creating interest and motivation towards their study since their childhood. As an outcome of the good environment

with 'a function of the social conditions in which they develop and function' (Ryan & Deci, 2000), they were doing well with their academics. Aaru uttered, *because of financial issues, I was transferred to public school, so English was not much of an issue for me there*. In Nepal, public schools are cheaper compared to private ones and so Phyak (2013) terms private schools as 'middle-class elites'. This is because private schools have adopted English as the medium of instruction putting 'English as a quality myth' (Sharma, 2016 as cited in Karki, 2018) among the parents. As a result, she assured me that she was good with the English language as her educational base was from a private school:

> *Amm.. when I started teaching, first I was very nervous. Though contents were not the problem, there were other things making things difficult like height, being a young girl, and how I looked. I used to wear a sari when I started teaching. That helped me feel confident and concentrate on teaching-learning activities.*

Apart from content knowledge, her looks and being female identity were creating difficulties for her. Where her academic achievement motivated her, competency in basic English was empowering for getting employed. This reveals that the economic aspect controls the learning environment we get. The financial struggle seemed to have played a prominent role in her being. The experience of financial crisis empowered her to earn at a young age when she witnessed her mother cry because of that and established her an active learner handling study and profession side by side. Hence, the environment you get seems to have a deep impact on your experiential being and illustrates behavior to be determined by the phenomena of experience (Cohen et al., 2007).

Paru, however, was inspired to study education faculty to become a teacher from her female science teacher:

My decision of choosing education as a profession is a passion that was developed since my school days. I was inspired by my female science teacher and my sisters too who used to take home tuitions and I used to guide them in her absence. This developed in me an identity of a teacher.

In this regard, DFID and Save the Children, (2014, as cited in Morley, 2019) report that keeping female teachers in school serves as a better role model to girls. Paru's desire to become a teacher was inspired by a female teacher that was further promoted by the teaching environment at her home. Smith et al., (2001, as cited in Aziz 2016) claim, that growing social structures shape our mind, experience, identity, and embodiment. Her experience as a teacher while guiding her sisters' students promoted developing teacher identity that encouraged her to come into this field of teaching. Additionally, as she said, *my parents paid till I. Ed. after that I have been doing for myself, I've never asked for financial help from anybody. If ever I have to ask I would, but that's not going to be easy (laughs)*. This shows that the financial aspect has driven her to make self-determined. Like Paru, Aaru articulated, *since the beginning of teaching till date I have been earning and looking for myself on my own. My educational expenses are also of my own.* This marks responsibility as another prominent factor for independent self. Social interaction as a teacher seems to have played role in developing interest in the teaching field. Therefore, the environments we get decide a lot in what happens next. This demonstrates that the learning environment trains us to become social, independent, and empowered self. Learning through the environment becomes experiential learning that teaches an individual to feel, reflect, think and act shaping one into social well-being.

Paru said that the initial days used to be challenging but later they were easy. This shows that the more familiar the learning environment, the more fruitful learning is. Saru was taking steps in her life as per the situation demanded rather than with any kind of planning. Her decisions were influenced by her friends' circle. However, she was determined to do what she desired to as she was encouraged by her sisters and brother. She remembered an incident:

> *During my bachelor's level, I was nominated as vice-chairperson of a political party in my college. It was Saturday and I was busy with my washings in front of my house. My friends arrived asking for votes around and wanted me to go for an advertisement of the election that was to be held soon. My brother heard that and he peeped out of the upstairs window saying, no no, she won't continue. He told them to look for somebody else. I couldn't speak and my friends went away. He used to say it's time to study. So concentrate on that (laughs).*

She was obedient and when her brother scolded she didn't think of making a second attempt because her brother had warned saying education first. Paru remembered her initial days of teaching and told *when I started teaching, I was confused about what to teach and could not make any judgment about the students since everything was difficult for me at that time, but the school helped me. The in-charge in the school I joined helped I would say.* Talking about the present status of learning opportunities she said, *learning never ends, however, compared to the past I feel like the opportunities to learn for our professional growth have lessened. Or maybe not much encouraged!* Their need and quest for learning point towards professional development opportunities which they reported have been lessened

compared to the past days and private institutions. Paru remembered her master's level and revealed:

> I wanted to explore classes of TU because some teachers used to be the same and they mentioned the name of some expert teachers there. So, I used to go for the lectures during holidays, or strikes or anything like that. It is what arouses interest in me to attend the classes of those teachers. Thus, the teachers helped me link up.

Hence, their desire for learning seemed to have been boosted up by the environment they were in, whether it be home, school, college, institutions, pieces of training, or classrooms.

Saru felt her need to parents. She reflected on her responsibilities, thought of how she could help them and how she needed to act, and finally acted accordingly. She further emphasized the importance of the role of the husband in empowering the wife. She said:

> In the past female supported their husband to achieve their goals. Now it is their turn. A Female needs to be supported by her husband and family after marriage to keep her moving and determined. Like a brother-in-law (dewar) she said, you must pass Nijamati Sewa (public service commission). Though I didn't know what it was, some background was set from there. So, if there was no support, I wouldn't be in the place I am now. My husband consoled and advised me a lot on decision-making and other affairs. He truly helped me come out of these mental tensions. He always encouraged me to keep doing.

Likewise, Aaru and Paru also admitted that their husband and husband's family played a prominent role in female English language teachers as they are in this position because of their support.

This decision was further supported by her brother and sisters being studious in creating the environment for her. The parents' positive attitude towards study gave her ample opportunities like the experience of leading the group during her master's level teaching enabled her to take the lead that was useful to handle the school with the position of principal. However, some negative environment has made her believe that gender discrimination matters and plays a prominent role in one's professional development. She remembered the incident:

> *Once in one of the schools, a new principal was to be appointed with the retirement of the other, I was one of the eligibles amongst. But they were planning to place another male teacher instead. I opposed the administration and claimed myself eligible for the post. Few teachers and a school management committee members consoled me positively asking not to give up (ma'am khutta na kapaaunu hai). I saw their dislike and less interest in seeing a female teacher as a head teacher. Seeing this, I felt disappointed (garera pani jass na paaune, voli liyera k garnu? Additionally, when the resource person played a negative role, I quit.*

This incident has demotivated her and as experienced she believes that gender bias is still there turning her passive from an active teacher. She has witnessed a similar incidence while electing SMC members in one of the schools where others were not ready to appoint females. Seeing this, she opposed and asked the question that how can you decide about her abilities and determination without giving her a chance based on gender and she left the room. Experiencing these sorts of gender-biased situations and environments have made her believe that gender discrimination persists whereas the other two participants believed that gender roles do not exist with teaching the English language, but it exists with role-taking and working under female

teachers as Aaru told, *the egoistic feeling of superiority does come from the male teachers especially regarding work allotment by female teachers that demotivate from being familiar in the context.*

Self-efficacy, as a responsible factor for 'job satisfaction and emotional intelligence' (Alibakshi, et al., 2020), was found among the participants. Aaru remembered an incidence and uttered:

> *Culture, on the other hand, has one expectation and mentality for daughters-in-law (Buhari vaye pachhi ghar dhandai gara, gareko ramro hunchha). I have heard my mother-in-law expressing dissatisfaction with the guest at home (padheko buhari paayeramaile dukha paaeko chhu). I felt like my efforts all were in vain. So the cultural expectation has a prominent role in shaping you and your mind.*

This incidence of her was related to her wellbeing and efficacy. However, saying in school there is no discrimination being male and female when it comes to English language teaching. Saru similarly mentioned *when I was struggling to become the headteacher, or when I was a headteacher, I struggled a lot. As an impact, the activities as such I think made me not want to do anything and feel lonely. From there, I have started getting health issues. I did not t like going out and getting involved in something active as I also worked in the NELTA branch earlier. Otherwise, I was so energetic in the past.* Her sharing showed that the negative work environment matters the self-efficacy of the teacher that also seems to matter the teacher's wellbeing. This also means that teaching can be challenging due to its complex nature (Collie et al., 2015).

Similarly, Aaru shared that the *egoistic feeling of superiority from male teachers was the demotivating factor from being familiar and intimate friends within*

the male or female teachers in the school. This reveals that the work environment for teachers (relationship among teachers) is of high concern and matters in promoting job commitment and teacher well-being (Spilt, et al., 2011). In addition, Aaru and Paru believed that the praising and motivating attempts from the school keep teachers motivated. Teachers' self-efficacy has positive consequences for teachers' instructional behaviors and strategies (Alibakshi, et al., 2020) as a result Aaru and Paru were motivated to implement strategies or methods and techniques they learned from any pieces of training and after they were praised by the mentors and the principal of the school. Aaru remembered her mentor praising her teaching techniques as teachers praised the way she taught or the principal praising her when found her students satisfied with her class *that trust and respect are what I can never forget. That is what we work for, it's not only money*. Paru like Aaru remembered being awarded by the school giving frame and by the PABSON as the subject topper teacher twice. Paru highlighted:

> *Being a female has never been an issue or problem apart from the personal responsibilities as a female, as they play an important role in every aspect of life like daughter, wife, daughter-in-law, mother, and a teacher. (Ramrai maannu hunthyo sabbai le). There was respect wherever I went. Among family members they praised. Likewise, as I said the previous school I was teaching was also one of the reputed schools of Bhaktapur, so after knowing that I was from that school, people started respecting me. Such things persuaded me to be one of the English language teachers.*

From her sharing, I came to understand that the work environment is one of the prominent factors to the participants for job satisfaction and self-efficacy.

Modeling: Experiencing Responsibility Switch

Oh my lord! Oh my god!!

Who am I to call when I am wayward?

I am searched as a mother and a wife

But I ramble, who I am in my own life.

Why do you dream to fly so high?

You have come to this point, now focus on your family life.

Don't your child value you?

Isn't your beloved's love enough for you?

Isn't it that makes a female whole?

When I think of them I go cold…

What is it that I am looking for, is it love, fear, trust, or care?

I can't decide if it's serendipity I am surrounded with?

Or it's the misery I am scared of?

Beginning to write, taking my participants in my mind and seeing through their eyes made me reflect on the interview time and location demanding to go through the transcribed notes again and again. Deriving this theme was a challenge to me as other themes above cover most of the content. Still, when I was seeing them I could relate them to the model: a person who is bought among the mass onto the ramp and is asked to smile facing the audience with the collection of emotions inside her; excited, thrilled, scared, nervous, etc. Like the only presence of them in the ramp with the designer, the cloth is valued, my participants' stories are of a similar worth here. Experiences might have been repeated but the value they put into my participants' existence is valued. My participants were seen to have been trying to fit under the flag of responsibility. Looking into my participants' state of responsibility shift, I could

relate them to a radio: an instrument that is used as per one's purpose and time carrying a meaning. The radio is played and the stations are changed as per the time, context, and need. Hence, let's look into the stories from a different perspective as to know my participants draw them closer to me and explore from all sides and perspectives as far as possible.

As shared earlier, Saru's role as the daughter in the family with two elder sisters, and one younger made her responsible since she had to help her mother with household chores and her father with his work. The responsibility she got at that very age empowered her to make her decisions like choosing her subject for study or deciding her faculty after her school with her friends' help. She told *let's join geography. It has scope in future and also we will get to visit many places without spending our money. I was fond of visiting and I got admitted (laughs).* When her friend told her about the subject and the scope in the future days with chances to visit around Nepal without spending their pocket money, she decided to join with her interest. On the other hand, the same girl who enjoyed her friends' company agreed to join day college without any complaints where she would be nearly alone among the new mass there. Belonging to the family with elder sisters studying in morning colleges, she never revolted:

> *I never revolted or demanded morning classes because my sisters were going to college, they had been studying too. My brother went to college in the morning and other places in the day. Even if was a student, I had to cook. At that time other things didn't come to mind. So, the thought of joining the morning class didn't come to my mind as I had no option then. But yes, I was sad as my friends were apart.*

Hence, the realization of responsibilities made her responsible as well as empowered her to make decisions on her own. This was an outcome of her rearing, environment, and freedom of speech (Malcolm, 2021) to put her thoughts. Additionally, she was encouraged to study and be involved in extra activities as her sisters were engaged in. This shows the importance of exposure in terms of learning and motivation to learn. She further shares:

My sister was attending pieces of training. She was always busy with some works or books and she had no time for taking care of a home. She further told me *I was never idle. After school, I attended tuitions, cuttings, or painting sessions along with my study of geography as a major subject.*

Her works and responsibilities in and out of home kept her busy as a result she was engaged every time. She was self-regulated in many aspects of her decision-making as a result of individual freedom in her education. Experiential learning emphasizes the freedom of the learner making a connection with the education (Dewey, 1938) making them responsible for their learning.

As I was not much good at English, I used to take tuition classes. I also did an English course that time at an institute that used to be led by a couple of native speakers of English that was in Lainchour. You won't believe I with my friends went to Budhanilakantha on foot for painting classes (laughs). I did this and that, floated with the wind, wherever my life took me. Like when I was about to get married, I had received a scholarship to study in China. But as I had to marry, I couldn't go. My brother had insisted for study, but as my husband wanted me to get married first, so we got married. However, he had promised to take me for visit to different parts of the world and also took me. But nothing is like going on your own, I miss that flavor in each visit. He

motivates me to keep trying for other scholarships, but time and tides wait for

none (laughs).

As Brophy (2004) asserts motivation to learn refers primarily to students' cognitive engagement in a learning activity, her attempt to get engaged with whatever the situation came in front of her like attending an English course being a student of geography, showed her motivation for learning. She was self-regulated to decide whether to continue study or marriage as Ozhiganova (2018) writes that self-regulation is related to social relevance and self-realization, professional success and family happiness as well as for spiritual growth and advancement to personal development. Though she was not determined of achieving any specific goals, she was not idle either. Her saying that she floated with the winds shows that her responsibility shift kept her moving. She told me:

Yes…, my father had a shop and I used to help him bring the things he needed to the shop also. It's not only that I used to help, even now my sister lives on the upper floor with my mother, me, and my husband on the down floor, I have been helping them too. She has been taking care of my mother as well. We do it together and make a happy family. In the patriarchal society where a daughter is expected to look in-laws, my participant was with her unmarried sister and an old widow mother which also proves her as a responsible being.

While they were reflecting upon their experiences, the way they were delivering and reflecting upon the past experiences showed how they were enjoying the moment. Though virtual meet it was, their expressions were not artificial. It was noticed that whatever the learning we do is always useful in our lifetime. Saru said that the English course that she took made her confident in English regarding all the skills. The handicrafts made her confident with her skills and helped her grow with

her friend's circle. As Ayish et al., (2019) opine that the students are active agents of their learning and that directly affects the action of peers, Saru was involved in the activities of her friends and was benefitted.

After her marriage, the pressure of financial stability and a secure future made the couple work from morning to night. Her husband helped in every step of her life. She told to me:

> *There is a woman behind the success of every man, now there's a man behind the success of every woman. He helped me adjust and adapt to the environment very easily, helping with house chores or be my professional decisions. It's very difficult to find a supportive husband in our context.*

The support provided by her husband empowered her to work hard and do her best to fit the situation. When she was appointed as principal, she had to look after her house and school simultaneously. But she never showed the sign of stress or any problems with her duty rather she said *we have to be busy unless we get tired*. Women empowerment as put forward by Babu et al., (2017) as a change assisting one to fulfill life needs in the context of women's life. This change is seen in her self-confidence and self-awareness as well as areas like education, status in the family, decision-making, and many more. They also said that work-life balance is one of the greatest challenges for working mothers which was shown in Saru's voice that now it is their (husbands') turn to empower women as we did in the past as the success of wife is dependent on the support of the husband in whatever the profession she is. Her experiences taught her to act according to the situation like teaching field demanding teachers to have a degree in education motivated her to complete her B.Ed enabling her to pass Teacher Service Commission (TSC). She said:

Umm… joining the private school as principal helped me a lot. This was also an area created by my husband as he had a share in that school and I was to look after it as the principal. I felt the need for English or lacking English as an English teacher of a private institute made me join B. Ed, which helped me pass TSC which again helped me join M.Ed with a scholarship in English at KU. Similarly, that also opened door to NELTA as it helped me a lot in academic and professional development.

Experiential learning has played a key role since the beginning to help her decide on a choice whether it be related to academic career or life (marriage). She told that her life is a floating boat that floated with the wind (time), but what made her float appropriately is the quality that was developed in her with taking responsibilities, empowering and motivating her as 'progressive education' (Dewey, 1938).

When she had been working as the principal or as a teacher, she faced many obstacles in the name of being female for the post or in the name of recruiting others for being strict with teachers and management. She fought back and remained as a principal for 21 years in the same private school or claimed her position as the head teacher in public school when a junior male teacher was offered that position initially. She continued her study, attended training and conferences for her professional development. These shifts in her responsibilities and her being able to cope up with all of them showed her readiness for taking responsibilities positively which kept her motivating and empowering throughout her life.

Responsibility is a matter of realization. One can not be forced to be responsible, Aaru says. *Since my childhood, I have seen my mother accepting orders. She couldn't raise her voice. Sometimes I have seen her crying and my*

father yelling at her. Since then I decided that I would never let this happen to me. Her mother was in this situation because she did not earn. So I have to be financially strong and stable. I was determined that I would never ask for things with my husband. I would do it on my own.

Supporting the line Aaru said that early childhood has critical importance in all the aspects of development (Güngör, et al., 2017) since her childhood seeing her father scolding, ordering, and her mother crying made her realize that it was because her mother was not earning. That made her determined to never be in the position of her mother making herself realize the need of being employed. As Kadarisman (2013, as cited in Norainum, 2016) defines empowerment as an effort to provide autonomy and encourage to be creative to give one's best. This incident of seeing her mother cry because of financial shortage empowered her to become financially strong. The experiences during the initial period in which prior knowledge is learned to form many behavior and foundation for personality (Güngör et al., 2017) develop the sense of responsibility.

Ah… My brother and I have a birth spacing of one and a half years (barsiuni ka hou). My mother was the only female in the family with me, my brother, my grandfather, and my father. She was busy with domestic chores and taking care of us, as a result, my and brother started schooling very early and I had to take care of him. We continued there till class 8 and then, I was shifted to the government school from where I completed my SLC. Three days after SLC, I accepted the proposal to teach and decided to join the school as a social and math subject teacher.

The above-given vignette displays that starting from birth to becoming a teacher, Aaru has changed different roles from a daughter, sister, student, and teacher

finally. The experiences during each phase have their value in making her a responsible being. She further added that the value of money changed her role from a student to an employed, being teacher. *After a month I got my salary in hand which was a big amount, my money (laughs) and after I reached home, I handed it to my mother's hand not knowing what to do with it, I was excited. That moment of holding money was something different.* When she handed the money and saw her mother's smiling face gave her satisfaction and a sense of responsibility being a daughter. This further motivated her effort and kept her empowered, self-determined being 'being' to becoming 'being'. *Since then I have never asked for money from anybody. I have been looking for myself on my own. I am well paid that I can look after my children and my family myself.* Her value for earning was rooted in her with her development and responsibility changed from a daughter to a wife, a daughter-in-law, and most importantly a mother. Her well-paid salary also made a sense in that she can contribute to any role with her effort; her display of strength, capability, power, and the sense to overcome something (Suparno, 2014, as cited in Norainun, 2013) is the symbol of the empowered self.

Normal young children are curious (Ruffin, 2009 as cited in Güngör et al., 2017), the meaning she gave her mother's cry was unemployment with her curiosity to understand why she (mother) was crying and why her father was shouting at her.

> *With the beginning of my professional life as a teacher, my schedule was changed. I became more of a teacher than a student. When I was working in another school, I had to leave early in the morning for college and then for school. Therefore, she (mother) used to send my lunch box via my school bus that used to go nearby my house to pick students. I never felt like quitting the*

job though my mother used to say to pay attention to my study and leave teaching.

By the time she began teaching, she had understood the value of money, time, love and affection, and empathy. All these changes have come with the role shift and shift in responsibilities. *On the other hand, culture does not seem to have been encouraging me that much. I have met a different culture after I was married. Individual encouragement is different like my husband encourages me to do. Culture, on the other hand, has one expectation and mentality for daughters-in-law (Buhari vaye pachhi ghar dhandai gara, gareko ramro hunchha). It was one afternoon when I reached home early from school as my mother-in-law had open-heart surgery a few months back. I had school so had to be there for teaching. But I cooked for the morning and kept everything ready for the daytime also. During the initial days, I took half leave for one and half months. I went home on time and fed her. Even though I was doing my duties faithfully, one day to the visitors, she was saying I am suffering getting an educated daughter-in-law (padheko buhari paayeravmaile dukha paaeko chhu). I felt like my efforts all were in vain (mero efforts tah sabbai paani mai gayechha). So, the mind shaping is with culture. I was disappointed with my mother-in-law's mentality. So it mattered a lot to me.* The support she got from her mother encouraged her to work, but, on the other, that encouragement changed into empowerment when the environment she was exposed to after marriage was completely different regarding expectation and responsibilities. The salary that brought a smile to her and her mother's face gave her the feeling of a responsible being, developing in her a sense of independence. On the other hand, that raised her consciousness alarming her of the importance of earning and independence, as a

result, even the negative environment didn't stop her. This shows that the family plays a key role in developing a sense of responsibility and empowerment.

> *When I was in college, I was more devoted to my profession (as a teacher) than my study. Which I regret now. It is because had I paid little attention I would have scored distinction. Nevertheless, I scored first division. I was trying my best to make a balance between my profession and my study.*

Reflecting on her experiences made her analyze what she could have achieved as the learning environment factor plays a key role in influencing student learning and achievement (Ning et al., 2012). The crisis that she had seen in her family made her focus more on earning that later became her profession. For this, she shared:

> *I wanted to get into the medical field but after I started earning, teaching remained my profession and passion. Additionally, the positive environment like trust and response from the management team I got from the institution made me responsible for my job, I guess. The training helped me keep active and motivated and kept me aligned with my profession. Such helped me become more responsible, as a result, I was also given the responsibility of the junior head of the department and later teacher coordinator of block B. I was not satisfied with teaching and copy-checking only. I wanted to grow not only as a teacher but also as a human being. And, growing is not possible by sitting being idle. You must be active as well.*

The teaching started becoming her source of income, the school environment she was getting kept her motivated that helped her get empowered with the responsibility, and promoted her from just a teacher to a teacher coordinator accompanied by training programs. Similarly, her desire to become active made her accept different responsibilities in the school besides regular teaching. As a result, she

has thought of introducing scout in school for her students as she believed that it keeps one active. Being responsible for learning makes one an active learner.

> *After marriage, I was introduced to more expectations. However, I think I have never let my professional and personal responsibilities mixed up. I am a total housewife when I am home. I don't expect anybody to work for me or bring any school work home not even paper checking. I finish them during my leisure or few time after school. Likewise, I am a total teacher at my workplace. I never bring my domestic chores to school. When my family wants me to take leave for unnecessary kinds of stuff, I refuse. Sometimes there is some extra expectation from our members, I have replied saying I have to secure my future as a good and competent teacher because I never know what's gonna happen in the days to come. So what if I have to live alone someday, how would I and my children survive then? These are the questions I asked my family. I do not expect anything from others, and nor do I like being suggested onto what I am supposed to do. Though I am departed from the study now, I will join for further study after my sons will grow up and be able to take care of themselves.*

Aaru as a female teacher is bound with the double-fold responsibilities as a teacher and household wife simultaneously. However, being employed and independent has given her the freedom of speech to put her voice. Family adjustment is the indicator of empowered women's attitudes (Babu & Fathima, 2017). On the other hand, it can be said that self-regulated learning leads to academic achievement. Self-regulated learning is seen as the practice process of learning to acquire academic skills (Zimmerman, 2008). Her self-regulating nature has kept her motivated and responsible for what she does. She shared as:

Umm… As I am an introvert, I am reserved in my world. My other source of motivation is also novels, that share different contexts and I take them as my source to determine if I am right or wrong with my deeds. It brings different contexts of other women like me around the world. Therefore, what I do is also partly determined by what I get to read, which drives me to decide if the activity I am doing is correct or incorrect.

Pleasure reading is a personal experience making an impact on academic success (Whitten et al., 2016) that an individual enjoys through reading literary texts that share context and society and extend the horizon of knowledge. Also, it helps us to reflect on our context if it matches with ours as well. In this connection, as Wilhelm et al., (2014, as cited in Whitten et. al., 2016) mention that reading for pleasure is found to have an impact on the understanding of others' mental states. They are the mirrors for watching social events. Hence, the books are the other sources for her expression and empower that correct her, advised and suggest her, make her admit and promise. These responsibilities are one of the biggest sources of empowerment. The responsibilities help us become autonomous and encourage us to be more creative to work making empowerment a reality.

My brother used to say or encourage me to fight for Bi. Ni (school superintendent). But as the government employees as Bi.Ni, could never get to stay in a place or have to visit different districts, so I did not feel for competing on that post. (ghar chhodera kata pugnu parne jaagir ma, malai tyai vayera man parena) (laughs). So not I was not interested to compete for that post. Once, the time when there was like fashion to go abroad, my brother had already been there. As we were two and if I also went my mother (aama) would be alone. So, I didn't do that. But after marriage again, we

couple planned as other friends to go to the UK, that was in fashion then.

Many of my friends have gone. But here also my parents and in-laws opposed

and we gave up the idea of going abroad. (laughs).

Had the family accepted their proposal to go abroad, she wouldn't have been here as my participant. Similarly, had she not respected her family or her parents' emotion, she would not have been there with the existing position. This shows that development in women with the responsibility of changing their circumstances, and empowering themselves (Morley, 2019) maintaining balance with one's family and personal life is a sign of empowerment.

Paru, on the other hand, had exposure to different surroundings and environments than Aaru's. She stated:

I am grown up with my mother and sisters from rearing to educating and all. I

was an average student. I must say that I was inspired by my sisters towards

my study. I started teaching after my I.A. degree and I was inspired by my

sister who then used to take home tuitions and I guided them in her absence.

Likewise, my science teacher in school; was a female, she had studied

education, and had become a teacher.

Responsibility, as an instrument for empowerment, enables one to act or deal with something as their duty. Paru, apart from seeing herself as sister and daughter, was exposed to being a teacher that affected her and created in her the sense of teacher's identity as female teachers are constructed as role models for girls (Morley, 2019). This responsibility was established in her as a passion leading to English language teaching as her profession. She further stressed:

My role as a teacher began from the private school where I got lots of

exposure. I started seeing myself as a teacher. I dressed up as a teacher in a

sari. I was shy and introverted, who started speaking only after teaching. Starting teaching also made me speak and ask questions openly. I enjoyed attending training and implementing them along with learned theories and methodologies in class. As a result, I was soon promoted to teacher coordinator.

Her sharing shows that female English language teachers should not only be seen as resource person but also as a learner who is always in the phase of learning. She, when got the responsibility of teaching, was empowered making her outspoken, asking questions, and doing presentations in the class. She says teaching taught her to speak more. Her sharing showed that with the responsibility shift we become more responsible and get empowered. She further shares:

Personal life, and the environment you are in, matter a lot. Talking about my life before marriage, everything was easy. I was a daughter. I left everything and went for the job only. I used to work since morning. I used to teach in colleges. My routine was like studying the college, going home for lunch and going to school, and teaching. So it was like that easy. I didn't have to do household works. After marriage, we have responsibilities. The added responsibilities are doing household chores, looking after children and all (bachha sachha and all). And that makes us feel drawn back (pachhadi taaniya jasto) (laughs).

Paru's determination to achieve a goal in her professional life has driven her to continue her study despite challenges and struggles. It is this determination that has regulated her. She has a child who became ill frequently and she knew he needs her. However, she has been coping up with different challenges. There is a family and they

take very good care of him (son) and her, nevertheless, she is a mother. She shared her experience as:

> *I have a room rented in my own house which I use for study and professional use. We have said that the room is on rent to him(her son) (laughs). If I have to take any classes or make any preparations I lock myself in. My son was not healthy. He has different health issues and I have to give him time. My study is in the final stage of completion, but I am not being able to give time. I have a supportive husband and helping mother-in-law, however, I am not being able to manage time. I have been giving virtual classes for distance learning managed by CDC.*

Whereas Paru can be seen with triple-fold responsibilities as a teacher, mother, and educator who has been struggling with her positionalities within different responsibilities since the feeling of empowerment helps advance teachers in every aspect of their personal and professional life (Babu et al., 2017). Similarly, the next participant shared:

> *For me, at first teaching journey was a passion. Gradually, I got an identity as an English language teacher additionally. That also gave me happiness. With that, I got some money. That added power as when there's money you can sustain yourself, you don't have to rely on anyone, and you don't have to ask for or look for others' help. I can spend it for myself. So until this journey, up to now, everything has been fulfilled.*

Therefore. it is crucial to see female English language teachers' status, independence, presentation, and responsibilities in a broader term. Ignoring to understand or taking the responsibilities and development of female English language

teachers for granted will lead to failure in policy directives to address local pressure and condition them.

My participants were not only teachers but also a learner in their journey of teaching the English language. Whether they have come up to this level of English language teaching accidentally or as passion, they have developed professionalism in the course of the professional journey. They have unique interests and capabilities embedded with their culture, family structure, and social system. Research conducted by Babu et al., (2017) concluded that "educational qualification, nature of the institution, locality of the school, service, working hours, and subject taught cause some differences in the family adjustment of the female teachers" (p. 452). Therefore, looking into the personal and professional growth of my participants, it can be assured that being responsible for one's learning is essential for academic, personal, and professional growth and success. Similarly, my participants' sharing align with Kolb's (1984) comprehensive theory of learning and development that is said to be based upon six propositions (Bohon, et al., 2016). Learning in my participants is seen as a process, rather than seeing learning in terms of outcome. In the same way, it seems to be establishing learning as re-learning, which requires resolution of conflicts, establishing learning as the holistic process of adaptation. Additionally, the learning environment as a phenomenon in the learning process substantiates that learning results from a synergetic transaction between the person and the environment, leading towards the process of creating knowledge that seems to be relevant in the experiential learning journey.

Chapter Summary

This chapter consists of the interpretation of the first part of my research where I have intended to make meaning of the being aspect of female English

language teachers through their lived experiences. I begin my writing with why I chose to look into the being aspect, showing its relevance with understanding the phenomena of being a female English language teacher. Then I further write introducing myself with the reflection into my being that has further helped me understand myself and my experiences in an attempt of meaning giving. Likewise, in an attempt of making my writing artistic, I have created poems in process of meaning-making.

The chapter now is concentrated on interpreting the generated texts in the form of a theme: experiencing daughterhood, experiencing education, experiencing learning environment, and experiencing responsibility switch. Here the participants were seen to have experienced these phenomena differently. But the phenomena were found to have a prominent role in shaping who they are. Like my participants' self-determined nature is found to be the outcome of experiences they had during these phenomena. Their learning and realization with the experiences showed experiential learning shaping their existence as female English language teachers. It is their 'being' that had and has been influencing becoming female English language teachers.

CHAPTER V

BECOMING A FEMALE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER

This analysis part addresses the second sub-research question 'What are the experiences of becoming female English language teachers?' which is based on the responses of my participants' that have been collected through interviews. The process of understanding the process of English language teaching involves becoming. After looking into the being aspect of my participants' existence, I felt it would be an injustice if I would not look into the becoming aspect of female English language teachers. The totality of our being can be brought into the light of existence by understanding the real-life process. As a result, the themes explored through the experiences of these female English language teachers showed their status, struggle, and determination to become English language teachers in their surroundings. In doing so, I have presented their professional growth under the themes training, mentoring, relation with the school family (environment at workplace, support by colleagues, and relationship with students), use of technology in the digital age of teaching, and teaching as an accidental journey/passion (floating with the boat). I found motivation played a prominent role in the growth among the English language teachers in the English language teaching environment. These growth factors are often ignored aspects of our life that we have taken for granted, and it is phenomenology that helps to generate meanings from these sorts of forgotten or ignored aspects (Laverty, 2003). And what else can be favorable than phenomenology, being the science to study phenomena (Zahavi, 2019) to draw meanings from these lived experiences as they can be understood in common sense (van Manen, 2017b).

Appearance and Reality

Sitting to look at my participants from different perspectives, now I am shifting or moving my eyes from what was there as being in front of me towards becoming. Gradually, that vision of being a female English language teacher started vanishing from my sight. My entire body movement was focused on exploring the becoming aspect which did not happen at once since it took time. I believe that I now can see the change in my participants' state of being to becoming. I have realized that it is not only the spatial (space) aspect that helped me understand the difference by studying these lived experiences (van Manen, 1997) rather it is also the temporal aspect (time) that has made the difference with the changing present, past and the future. As I have been claiming that our present or future is never untouched to the past rather they stand on the ground of past experiences. Hence, through the lived experiences of my participants, I wanted to make their experience private to the public, so that others can observe their phenomenon of change, benefit, and learn from their learning (Zahavi, 2019). In other words, I wanted to bring their experiences to light and helped me an inquiry for understanding life experiences through reflective awareness as 'I and the world' (participants) were a unified duality for me (Langeveld, 1984).

Looking into the phenomenon of becoming an English language teacher questioning 'how' over the existence and decision making is like appropriation of the situation in which understanding is rooted (Heidegger, 1985). Rather than looking into what aspects of existence, phenomenology intends to look into the how an aspect of how it appears by joining the dots of the phenomenon of becoming and creating a basis for justification. There are important differences between the ways how an individual presents herself and other presents. When I met my participants for the first

time in their schools, they were all just English language teachers in their uniforms.

At the same time, they were more than an English language teacher only. As I started

exploring, I could notice that different aspects behind them seemed to be absent then.

But these absent aspects value more to what is present in front of me that played a

vital role in my perception though they are presently absent. Without them, they are

not what they appear in front of me as what we see is never given in isolation (Zahavi,

2019). These absent aspects developed as phenomena through their lived experiences

generated as themes have created a basis for justification. Now, let's get into the

phenomenon of joining the dots.

Experiencing Mentoring (Mentor: An artist)

> *Oh! My mentor, guiding with my work*
>
> *Help in need is all that's worth!*
>
> *You affirmed, inspired, and challenged me;*
>
> *That encouraged growth-producing experiences in me*
>
> *The teaching techniques you demonstrated to me;*
>
> *You observed my class and provided feedback to me*
>
> *You gave me time, listened to my thought*
>
> *Corrected me adding onto it putting your effort.*
>
> *You listened probed and advised;*
>
> *That promoted to grow by your side; in between your eyes.*
>
> *I see the change in me and you,*
>
> *I appreciate the help I get from you.*
>
> *The day is not as it used to be,*
>
> *I find me in you and you in me.*

This piece of writing was an outcome during my interview transcription and translation process that I obtained from the participants that elaborate how valuable is mentoring to them. Having said, mentoring is a form of personal and professional partnership which generally involves a more experienced practitioner supporting a less experienced one who is usually new to the job, organization, or profession (Butcher, 2002 as cited in Hismanoglu, 2010), I found my participants' valuing mentoring as it made much difference in their process of becoming an English language teacher, especially during their induction phase, creating phenomena giving existence to it. Additionally, looking into this modern education system where teachers are expected to adopt technological and digital demands, teaching is very rare to be attracted as the professional journey. As a result, what struck my mind was that there is an urgent need to better understand the professional life of female teachers, their wellbeing, and its impact on their teaching-learning nexus. The famous quote of William Shakespeare says, eyes see not itself but by reflection. Likewise, I could see through my participants' eyes and words sharpening their professional development with the support from their mentor reflecting those past days. On the contrary, I never had the experience of being mentored to reflect upon, it was only in books and theory for me. Listening to the voices and seeing them valuing the phenomena of being mentored helped me derive this theme.

Mentoring is a widely accepted notion in terms of teacher development and teacher induction phase. While talking to my participants about their process of becoming an English language teacher, I could perceive how they connected their being with the teaching profession by their educational degrees on the one hand, and the educational connection of practicum with their learning to become a teacher on the other. Such prepared the background for professionalism in English language

teaching as teachers are developed through pre-service training to equip with required knowledge and skills (Nawab, 2017).

Seeing humans as communicative beings, I believe they enjoy a dialogic form of interaction or interchange of ideas. In this process of seeing the human as a communicative being, my participants seemed to be in the hunt for this opportunity of interaction during the initial phase of becoming English language teacher that was satisfied with the opportunity with their mentors. They seemed to be valuing mentoring as one of the prominent aspects that affected their professional journey as an English language teacher as Aaru reflected:

> *I tackled the problem, on the one hand, and on the other, in that Everest school, there was a good environment for professional development. There was a mentor. There was one sir named Hari Raja. I am still in contact with that sir. He has been doing his Ph.D. with a full scholarship in America. He was there. He gave so many skills for a teacher's professional development. Not only to me but to all the teachers working there. So, that helped a lot in my professional development. That mentoring helped sharpen the creativity that I was known for in that school. He was a very good mentor.*

Her reflection showed how valuable that time was for her when she was mentored by a guide on her teaching journey (Dalzon, 1983) which also proved its effectiveness particularly during the induction phase of teacher education programs (Kerry & Mayes, 1995). The time when she was eager to learn, she was equally supported. Mentoring might differ situationally and might have different definitions, however, in her case and others guidance that teachers get during their induction phase can be termed as mentoring. In the same line, Paru stated

Getting into the field of teaching directly during the initial phases, I had theoretical knowledge, but actual field experience on how to deal with the students was not there, and I didn't know the course. So, how to move on with the course and how to deal with the things that were helped and guided by the senior teachers in my school. Methodological ideas were not a problem and additionally the teachers there were seniors from the education faculty with a major in English. They also taught me many things about teaching and learning. Let me give an example, it might be a poem, they summarized it. (kharra description vandine yesto ho vanera). If I was confused with any answers or words, they used to say about it. When I asked anything, they used to explain. Consequently, I would call them my mentors (yesto kura yeseri garne vanera sikaaunu vayo).

The participants' reflections, especially Paru and Aaru, shared the value of help during the induction phase that has an important role in establishing them as an English language teachers. As Kerry et al. (1995) put classroom knowledge as the four 'Ss'' 'student, situation, subject matter, and strategies', these are the area that teachers need help from the mentors, they were guided by the senior teachers in these regards. As Paru said earlier in the homely environment where her sisters used to take tuitions and in her absence, she used to guide those learners. This gave her exposure to see herself as a teacher and created her identity as a teacher. Standing on the same line, as I have mentioned in earlier chapters that I used to guide my sisters and gave tuitions to them, she must have given the exposure to create teacher identity in her sister's professional life. As the finding of the study by Brizammin (2003, as cited in Prabjandee, 2019) revealed that teachers' identity was developed before attending

teacher education as it was reflected in the participants' biographies and teacher education helped to promote that.

The realization of the value of time was seen in Aaru's reflection where she mentioned time and its value after sinking back down into life that guided her to make efforts in later days, as she told

After becoming a teacher, if some students don't pay much attention in the class or are not regular, I feel very bad. Probably my teacher then also might have felt bad for me when I was not active or absent. So, I feel bad when I reflect on those days as a student. I feel like I have not done justice to my teacher then. I might not have paid attention when my teacher wanted to make us understand. Thus, I feel like I have disappointed them. I would call myself a bad learner then. Apart from that, I would say I always did well with my part of the work. After the presentation, my friends used to comment, why are not you regular in class earlier, you are an excellent presenter (timi yeti ramro present gardo raichhau, class ma kina regular na vaako). Even sir used to give me 'good' remarks. This feeling has made me determined to study further. So, I would join MPhil after I can give good time for my study and when my sons can take care of themselves to some extent.

Aaru's sharing, sinking back down to her lived experience gained in the classroom, bringing it with the recollection of present, past and future show that the becoming process involves one's past, present, and future set in dynamic tension (Brizammin, 2003, as cited in Prabjandee, 2019). This sense of injustice and disappointment has arisen in the form of transformation. This realization can be a result of her reflection enlightening her in the process of becoming an English language teacher. Aaru's reflection and the realization made me think of my

experiences with mentoring and being mentored. But I did not have any experiences as such during the induction phase. Whatever I did, whoever I am is entirely the outcome of teaching practicum as my academic progress I would say whereas Saru said '*I was a floating boat'* (*samaya le jata jata bagaayera lagyo tyatai tyatai bagera gaiyo).* Her statement indicated that the time and her experiences taught her, and guided her.

Though not then recently I have been mentoring a group of English language teachers in terms of doing exploratory action research which I completed last year myself as a mentee. The experience of being mentored as a teacher-researcher is relatable with being mentored as a teacher, guiding the path, feedback and motivation are the processes involved anywhere in the form of 4Ss' as mentioned above. When said mentors, inspire, affirm, and challenge. Conversely, what I realized is though not having the experience of being mentored during the induction phase, there was a teaching practicum that was guiding me with bringing balance between my theoretical and practical knowledge. In this connection, Britzman (2003, as cited in Prabjandee, 2019) described the notion of learning to teach as, the process of becoming where one gets transformed with experiencing and doing that lead to who one can become.

Remembering my teaching practice journey during my master's degree was an impact of peer observation on English language teaching. In it, I had observed one of my peer's teaching and provided feedback after her classes and vice-versa. This observation experience now I relate with mentoring since that helped me and guided me when I was teaching the 11th and 12th grader students for the first time. All suggestions and feedbacks mattered and were responsible for my learning during that time. I also got an opportunity to observe how others were teaching and dealing with the classroom environment. That experience I would say helped me during the initial

days of my teaching English to the same level after completing my master's Degree. My job as an English language teacher in the new school after I completed my master's. On the other hand, being a hermeneutic researcher, I also believe that to understand the becoming experiences, I do not need to have the same experiences on my own since experiences can be made understandable and intelligible (van Manen, 1998). My participants' input indicated that mentoring has allowed becoming professional English language teachers. It has helped them create a professional learning community where they participated in the dialogue, reflection, interaction, and shared interpretation of meaning (Comoglu et al., 2020) which led to transformation making them confident in their teaching-learning practices.

Experiencing Training (An artistic beauty)

I exercise for my identity,

I look for some when it becomes a necessity.

I update with readings or with sharing

If I don't get anywhere am I to seek for?

Educating and education both my need,

train me, teach me or I will speak.

If you can support

I can adjust,

If you can't it's not going to work.

After deriving the theme with the talks in mind where I saw my participants valuing training as a source for uplifting themselves from the traditional ways of teaching, training motivated teachers and updated them. Remembering my personal and professional online talk with my participants compared to physical meets, there was a difference. The difference was in terms of freedom of sharing. I noticed that

they were not open to discussing during online meetings compared to physical interviews. It was so because of different factors like time constraints, relatives around, and piled-up tasks to manage. However, to mitigate such issues, online meetings were shifted into physical meetings. This, on the same hand, also made me reflect on the initial classes as an English language teacher which was nerve-racking.

It was a bright sunny day in Terai, I reached school sweaty and rushed my bicycle after my college. The assembly was to the end so I parked my bicycle and joined. The very first period, class 4 with the mass of around 25 students next to the principal room, was going all well until the first few minutes. Later on, I could hear someone yelling and shouting in the principal's room. The sound was disturbing me and my students and they started laughing and making noise. I was also trying to get the words and be informed of what was going on there. With the disturbance, I got back to the book and did what I was there for. But I was still occupied with the incident. The bell rang and the noise also converted to silence. As I was passing by, I was called into the room by the principal and the coordinator sir. They asked me if I made students do sit-ups, to which I replied that I did not make but was about to make them do so the other day if they do not do their assignments. It was just a threat to the students of class 2 that if they didn't finish their homework, I would ask them to do sit-ups. Then, the coordinator explained in a smiling face that one of the guardians had come to the office angrily demanding the teacher who had promised to punish the child with sit-ups 500 times. The parent was threatening us saying he would make that teacher do the same 500 times. I was so scared and thrilled at that moment thinking if that child recognized me somewhere out after school what would I do. But the principal

and the coordinator persuaded me and convinced me saying that they have talked to the parents and had sorted the issue. I was cold and the entire day went a disaster.

The reflection shows the picture of me which was because during the initial days I was trying to be strict with my students imitating my teachers. This reflection made me realize that it was so because I was not updated practically with the 'how an aspect of teaching' or I had no exposure to any training or seminars or any other events as such. Britzman (2003, as cited in Prabjandee, 2019) described the notion of learning "to teach as the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become" (p.31). Thus becoming the process that one is transformed into.

With the need and in process of understanding the route of becoming an English language teacher, the participants' reflection on their lived experiences marks training as one of the phenomena that have helped them in choosing or deciding to grow as an English language teacher enhancing in them the art of teaching. In this regard, I see teaching as an art, and when said art we understand beautifying. Beauty, though is subjective and the object of judgment by an observer, I see beautifying teaching is related to expressions, whether facial, gestural, or oral. Therefore beautifying is the art, that can be developed as a skill, and that can be enhanced in different ways. Regarding teaching, as an art, the actual work of art is what the product does with and in experience (Dewey, 1938), it needs to be beautified with the help of training, which I say is artistic beauty. The trainer as an artist sharpens the teaching skills of the in-service teachers, affecting their beliefs and assumptions about teaching that is based on their experiences which are reflected in my participants' voices as Saru said:

I never sat leisurely, neither when I was a student as I attended different pieces of training, nor after I joined my journey as a teacher as I attended different pieces of training to sharpen my English language teaching skill. On the other hand, is a permanent teacher, pieces of training help in the promotion too.

Saru has also earlier shared that her elder sister used to attend different pieces of training when she was in school. The perception towards training and valuing it also seemed to be related to the environment as Saru's sister used to take pieces of training when she (Saru) had been studying in school. As a result, she got exposed to an active learning environment, and as Ayish et al., (2019) state that the students are the active agents of their learning, and their actions affect other peers. The environment Saru was in had a deep impact on her learning process. This was also seen with her involvement in different vocational pieces of training as stitching and painting other than her academic ones. This connection and exposure towards the need and importance of attending training can be related to arousing interest and promotion. Apart from that, as soon as she started teaching, she attended pieces of training and also gave her teacher staff in need as she shared:

When I was the principal, I did many things for my teachers like class observation, giving suggestions, conducted training myself. The principal's sister and I used to go to conduct training together. She was the chairperson and I was the joint secretary of the NELTA. So I had done during that time.

The post and responsibilities seem to have kept her involved and enhanced her skills. She further added:

Later on, I didn't do anything. In the beginning, days of training used to be interesting and refreshing as well, but these days as the things are repetitive

they are boring to me. I have attended so many pieces of training since the beginning of my career, and now in the phase of retirement, they are less interesting. However, educational degrees, refreshment pieces of training, or TPDs are still going on and have helped me most in the areas like to control students, how to do warm-up activities or pre-reading activities, and so on.

She said that she attended enough training sessions and at the time she was not much interested. So, she said that they are repetitive and now they are for refreshment than for learning. I, on the other hand, was bound to rely on my common sense tactics and instincts based on my experiences, unless I attended and conducted webinars, seminars, and pieces of training myself. The individual experiences and responsibilities given made me perform and grow (Ayish et al., 2019). Aaru shared the value and experience with training in a different way

It sharpens your skills or builds up your confidence in teaching. It is important to be updated and so if you aren't updated with pieces of training, you need to continue your study. Either you be in access to training or keep studying. You must be within these for your professional growth. So that helped me update.

Aaru's connection of training and academic journey showed her relevance to learning and professional growth. Training is one of the richest sources of teacher development and professional development for her. Her sharing marked education and training at the center to professionalism that spotlight on the field experiences and teacher education. Learning to swim in a swimming pool versus learning to swim in the sea with the tides is a different experience. One gets drowned if not informed of the changed circumstances of the sea than what one was used to at the pool. Likewise, training in the case of teacher development help informs the swimmer (teacher) about the changing state of the water as well as its level (changing theories and

methodologies, innovations, and researches). Equally, I see the growth of the teacher is relatable to the human growth such as that after a baby is born, it struggles for survival from opening eyes into this new world perceiving the new environment. This time of inexperience and rawness (Öztürk et al., 2012) keeps growing with time as the baby starts crawling and walking. The beginning walk of the child can be compared with the teacher induction phase. But the child does not stop here, the growth keeps on, and development keeps happening till the end (death). Likewise, the teachers keep teaching, get exposed to the new curriculum, new students with new and different abilities, new challenges, and achievements. Hence, what can be said is that the teaching experiences need to be supported by such programs or teacher training and these can be important opportunities for English language teachers' professional development. Paru and Aaru have experienced in a similar way, where Aaru told:

> *The teacher training sessions I took are almost all from that one private school only. From the school, there used to be publication training. I used to find pieces of training exciting (ramailo laagthyo malai). Other teachers in school tried their best to ignore, but that surprised me 'why?' (laughs). I wish I could go (laughs). That's why maybe as I was enthusiastic and excited also, I was mostly sent by administration saying 'go-go, you go' (laughs). The children also liked me. Or say I was popular among the students. I went to the pieces of training and learned new things. My main focus was after learning new strategies and methodologies I used to share among the students. So students loved and enjoyed that. Thus, to bring new things for the students, where will I go? As a result, I went to training sessions at different times. That is how I enhanced my teaching skills.*

Paru experienced the way Aaru did and also agreed that publication training helped her grow professionally. She also agreed with Aaru and believed that *training sessions only become successful if you implement the learned things in the classroom.* She shared that she implemented and got a positive response from the children that motivated her. Their hunger to attend training was motivated by their craving for creativity that kept them active and longing for attending training. They implemented what they learned and their children appreciated the effort that motivated them. Learning and applying teaching principles were keeping them self-regulated and determined in their professional fields. It shows that the effectiveness of training sessions is based on not only the quality of pieces of training but on the devotion, application for bringing change, being creative and playful. As Aaru, Saru also experienced and has not participated in any training after she joined the public school.

On the other hand, Aaru focused on the English environment and accent and said:

> *In pieces of training as the TPD English environment and English accent used to be lacking. When we say English language training there has to be English speaking environment and accent also. In international training sessions and publication training, authentic personalities (native speakers) are used to conduct training. That phonetic tone I think gave more exposure. I don't know why but if said foreigner we get more motivated or what, but that motivated me and gave much exposure to me.*

Besides that Aaru's focus on English speaking environment and accent indicated what more she was seeking. She articulated that, *as language means speaking, there are different accents, and which accent they are using or how much of what they speak I can/cannot catch matters in terms of personality. Therefore, I have*

to speak according to that. That's why she enjoys sessions with foreign speakers (native speakers). It verified that our beliefs guide our needs and expectation. She enjoyed the sessions by foreign (native) speakers saying that their language is authentic and their tone has interested her. Additionally, she desired newness, innovative teaching also pointed to the experience outside the classroom as an important part of the learning process (Barbara, 1981) which plays a prominent role in guiding you. Her determination to explore and learn made her curious for learning. Paru, on the other hand, has no specific reservations for accent or medium in which training is conducted. Admitting training as the key point for their professional growth, especially during the induction phase they value it the most.

On the other hand, Paru told that she has been doing virtual classes for distance learning at CDC (Curriculum Development Center). Other than that during this pandemic, she has been taking classes from television for different classes. Saru and Paru got the professional development opportunities from pieces of training and their self-initiation to learn, and this motivated them a lot. Paru told that *training works only if you are interested to learn.* Adoniou (2016) states that the transition between teacher education and being a teacher as the challenging phase is supported by induction and mentoring program which is not found in the case of my participants (except Aaru). They believed in becoming active learners as a result they kept on learning and exploring. Aaru got training and mentoring facility that she says has sharpened her skills and helped her in teacher development which was when she was in private school. After she joined the public school, she has not attended any training except one TPD. Two of the participants admitted that they have not attended training sessions for so long (except TPD once) after they enrolled in public school. In this connection. Saru added *in the past there used to be some pieces of training but these*

days there's not much comparatively. Public sector teacher training institutions do not cater to the in-service training needs of the rapidly growing teaching force (Ali, 2013, as cited in Nawab, 2017) in Pakistan seems to be relatable here as well. What can be inferred is the lack of training magnifies the challenges being faced by the teachers who are providing ELLs with the support they need to attain proficiency in English and meet the set curricular standards (Collins et al., 2012 as cited in Murphy et.al. 2019). As the demands of teaching keep on changing from time to time, developing teachers only through one-time training may not prepare them for the whole professional period (UNESCO, 1996). This indicates that my participants as English language teachers preferred training as an effective strategy for their PD and no one doubts the contribution made by training to the development of all kinds (Lynton, et al., 2011) unless practiced. From this and with my own experience what can be said is, teachers are in search of pieces of training as a medium for updating and refreshing that they believe has a prominent role in the professional development and quality of teachers, and their development should be the concern for educational reformers.

Experiencing black and white with technology

> *My laptop, my tab, and my mobile,*
>
> *keep hoping and bouncing here and there.*
>
> *the time and the destiny, make me futile,*
>
> *My self staring at me wondering at my fare!!*
>
> *Still, I don't give up,*
>
> *Still, I do what I can,*
>
> *Still, I keep pondering,*
>
> *Being a human!!*
>
> *Becoming a teacher*

loaded with expectations,

undecided with destiny and or passion.

Becoming self, being a female

heart and soul get connected

believing in my worth

moving ahead.

With the change in the environment around, the current speed of new advances may be a new reality facing any educator (Felice, 2012). As a result, teachers are required with the new skill sets to address the change and challenges brought by it. This has been happening with the teachers now and then regarding the use of the internet and technology. All the educational institutions have planned to manage education by mapping out their available resources (Shrestha, 2021). Technology in this 21st century is the highly used term and with the spread of COVID-19 the educational practices are compelled to hop, and the term has become more relevant and visible. One of the most significant changes and challenges bought by COVID is online classes as running online classes is one of the options (Shrestha, 2021). The teachers who were relying on the traditional teaching techniques suddenly had to shift to online teaching. Teachers now have been using their digital skills in an emergency as physical teaching has been halted - private or public schools are in the same boat.

My experience of gathering students of secondary level (+2) online for remote learning after the first outbreak of the virus was challenging. The students and parents having mere knowledge of countable social sites were in perplexing situations to manage educational crises then. On top of that, bringing them to access to e-learning with phone calls and messages responding 24x7 was like daydreaming. UNESCO

(2020) has estimated nearly nine million (8,796,624) students in Nepal were affected due to school/university closures in response to the pandemic (Dawadi et al., 2020), which shows the educational crisis created by the virus. The effort for crisis management was being undertaken using different digital platforms. Talking about the time during normal days, Saru shared

> *I have used my tablets and shown them in the class as material when there was no computer in class. On the other hand, talking about technology and digital knowledge in earlier days I didn't know about YouTube being used as learning and teaching material. But, friends did that. They went to different places, bought materials, and showed as male teachers kept attending different programs compared to female teachers. That is what happened as male teachers mingle with friends by talking too much, female teachers in that place… especially I could not.*

Saru's sharing showed the shifting interest of the teachers. The demand seems to have made them look for other sources and resources. The outgoing opportunities and quick mingling nature of male teachers have made them active and kept informed. Interpersonal skill, according to her, seems to be an important aspect of communication. Additionally, her interest in resource uses seems to be connected with the resources available around her. Paru, on the other hand, stated

> *I showed video materials and used the smart lab frequently. I also showed them the virtual classes of related content. Technology was part of my teaching to make it effective.*

Paru seemed to be updated with the technological use that verifies her access and use. She told that technological use makes the teaching-learning process very

easy. This asserts that the resources are also the source of motivation for using technologies in the teaching-learning process.

However, Saru's nature of being is hindering fine-tuning with the changing demand i.e. adopting online talks and chats. The nature and beliefs, expectations and culture, regarding teacher and students' relationship might have been the reason for making them not competent enough as male teachers. This phenomenon made me think of female English language teachers' empowerment. I did not know which/what training could fill this gap or bring change in the perception and conception. Aaru, on the other hand, shared that

> *Telling the truth I did not like technologies after I was 25 (laughs). Before that, I used to use it, but nowadays I feel like technologies have created distance between us. However, I take mobile in my class as teaching material. Apart from that, I use Google as a search engine and use social sites very rarely. Presently, after Covid, we have been using Zoom the most for teaching and learning purposes. I don't have much knowledge of technology. However, we are somewhat digital literate and so we don't need instruction to use Zoom, for example. When we start using it happens after we follow the instructions.*

The involvement and interference of technology have created frustration and dislike for the technology which indicates Aaru's preference for using it. But when she said *we are digitally literate and can use basic apps by following the instructions* highlighted that there is no time to plan and implement, rather it is time to start to cope up with what teachers know (Shrestha, et. al., 2021) as relevant. This did not allow me to question her eligibility. Rather, it can be said that in need or per required as material she can use it, though not by her choice. Similarly, she also mentioned that

…beyond class, I use Facebook and there is an international English language teachers' group that shares different experiences and success stories there. Sometimes I also do, and if there is anything I could share I would use them as well. So, in these sorts of things, it helps somehow.

Her sharing showed that she appreciated the help of technological use. There can be various reasons for her rejection of using technology less but somehow it seems to be connected with her personal life as a family time when technology was not part of the profession as a compulsion. When she shared that *we don't have much access to a computer with the internet and the number of students is also big so it is not much practical. Making see from mobile is not practical either with that big mass* showed the reason she was not much connected to the technology.

Regarding the present pandemic scenario and technology use Saru shared

Talking about online classes, I saw in the group, students chat with the teachers. I did not like to chat. Maybe we should do that, but I did not like it. I never chat with anyone (Laughs). Their chatting and sending unnecessary thumbs frequently make me angry so I left groups many times. Students were sent a link for the class there (in the group) and then they join the class by clicking the link.

Saru's irritation with the techno-communication was the result of teachers' sudden exposure or use of technology and the internet that was forced as a solution to the present crisis. The teachers like her are not ready for this emergency landing. She further said, t*here were some days when I was insisting my husband buy a mobile; when the mobile was just in the market. He refused to say that she can't be in a queue for so long. The time is now when you have everything in that mobile (laughs).* The shift then and now for her is not acceptable or is too late to accept. Whereas Paru told

When there was lockdown very few students were connected online and they started running school physicals because of the students' less access to the internet and digital technology. When there were online classes, we connected through messenger and I used Google Meet for academic purposes.

Though the teacher here seem to be techno-friendly the students were not ready for that. On the other hand, it also indicated the dire need for updating teachers with the basics of computers and technologies as teachers were not ready yet with the online teaching and learning process. The sudden outbreak of COVID-19 has put us in difficulty as well as in challenging situations. Everything seems to have changed quite opposite from the teacher-student role to the how and what aspect of teaching. The pandemic has put teachers in a real crisis, especially for the less techno-friendly teachers.

I remember a day of my virtual interview with Saru where she said when my link did not work, how her nephew helped her get her id and password from the link. So, this pandemic has compelled us to be techno-friendly, which, one or another way, is in demand.

On the contrary, Aaru remarked that:

Students have just begun to use messenger and Facebook. Chatting was a new experience for them. So they were finding it fun. (ramailo laagyo, k k na vaako jasto vaako thyo). However, when asked not to use it unnecessarily as its group and for study purposes, politely they obeyed. I had said if you wanted to chat, do it in your group or id, not on this group. They were not that much of disobeying.

The chats by the students were unacceptable for her though she did not enjoy using it much. Her respect for students' interests pointed to her democratic nature of

teaching. This also showed that a limited skill set of teachers to cope with emergency and remote teaching (Shrestha et al., 2021) are compelled to use technology beyond their interest. Thus, my participants' experiences are evidence that the self-motivated ones are not stopped by the external or internal barriers when comes to their professional growth and responsibility.

Ertmer, (1999, as cited in Laudari et al., 2019) mentions two types of barriers against the effective use of digital technology as external and internal. The first one is an external barrier which is a lack of resources and training. The second is internal barriers which are related to teachers' beliefs and motivation and attitudes towards technology The second barrier is becoming more influential among teachers. Moreover, regarding barriers, with the experience during this pandemic what can be said is technology can help minimize barriers to education in the name of resources, space and time unless there are controlled resources like devices, the internet, and so on.

Chapter Summary

This chapter interprets the second section of my research work, becoming a female English language teacher. As the first section, this section too uses the help of the poem in the meaning-making process. The chapter begins with the gradual shift from being to becoming, generating realization in me of the appearance and reality. Time and space were found to be very important in making difference. Hence I have attempted to make their experiences private to the public so that others can observe their phenomenon of change, benefit, and learn from their learning.

In the process of meaning-making, I have come up with the theme, experiencing mentoring, experiencing training, and experiencing black and white with the technology as the phenomenon of becoming an English language teacher. These

phenomena in becoming English language teachers were explored that have been

shaping the professional development of female English language teachers among my

participants.

CHAPTER VI

INSIGHTS, REFLECTIONS, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I looked back to my research journey. I remember the first day where I was asked about my interest area for research, I was bound to reflect on my teaching journey. This process made me analyze my situation and look into the black and white aspect of the field of English language teaching. The present status demanded to reflect onto the earlier day guided by research questions, arising query to explore the situation and phenomena of their development gave me the reason for it. In an attempt at the meaning-making process, the interpretive paradigm was employed which helped me create phenomena using phenomenology. One research question guided by other secondary questions related to the being and becoming aspect of female English language teachers guided me. I believed that no research design better than hermeneutics phenomenology can help me live my experiences and give them meaning. On the other hand, this would also make me count the experiences of other female English language teachers too.

Reaching this chapter, I integrate key issues discussed in the research. In brief, I reflect upon the insights I experienced listening to the interpretations made by other female English language teachers and draw conclusions based on experiential learning and how that matters in terms of my study. Concurrently, I reflect upon the grey and white experiences, like innocence, clearness, sensitivity, and freshness bring balance, on one hand, and as moody, traditional, formal, and conservative, on the other. This research aimed to understand the journey of female English language teachers with

the belief that history matters and the different aspects of life since the very beginning play a prominent role in marking your positionality.

There has been a huge change in the field of education and, the covid context has made it even more complicated and critical which has created a need for various ranges of researches and interest in the taken-for-granted aspects of learning, i.e experiential learning. The study explored the perception and practices of female English language teachers of community schools regarding their status, struggle, and beliefs. With this prolonged engagement the significant insights have been derived that are not generalizable, however.

Key Insights

I am the shadow of past

I matter,

I stuff

Materials and memories

In the form of experiences

time and place.

I am judged on what others think and say,

I am nothing nor are my experiences.

My understandings and familiarities

are on my way

No similarities, no commonalities

No way!

I am at my own and in myself,

look at me my way if you can,

Don't put me in your shoes, nor do I ask you to be in mine,

I just share here, what I went through

no offense no defense,

you are open in your

sky, mind, and you

fly

high, high, and high

of your own kind

and me

of my own kind !!

In these lines, I recite the expectations, understandings, and perseverance of the female English language teachers who were selected as the participants in the study. These understandings and acceptance are the results of my participants' passion and determination. How their initiatives for active learning has developed in them the sense of belonging to the teaching field and has enabled them as self-regulated and self-determined being has enlightened me to understand my positionality resulting in perseverance in me. This internalization helped me define the positionality of female English language teachers.

The teachers exposed to various strategies of PD differ from the teachers working with their common sense. They also differ in terms of their position and performance. Like different beginnings of life resulted into three different female mythological beings: *Draupadi, Kunti, and Gandhari,* the various social, psychological, cultural, emotional, educational, and professional environments; female English language teachers are exposed to since the beginning of their life to the beginning of their professional life that determined their position and perception towards teaching. My participants in no way were seen only as of the struggling class

or craving for sympathy rather they were moving ahead without complaints and negativity applying different strategies for development and establishment as independent individuals holding the ability to bring change in variable aspects like a classroom, student psychology, school environment, family life, personal life, self-satisfaction and many more. I have brought this insight with the research question with two forms as being and becoming throughout my research.

In the first section looking into the being aspect of these female English language teachers, I have explored that the different stages of these teachers played a crucial role in who they were and how they stood where they were. Additionally, their position, status, responsibilities, and expectation play a prominent role in their existence and being.

I tried to look from the gender roles and beliefs with regards to English language teaching to explore the effect through the experiences. In doing so, though gender roles are socially learned in interactions with others that govern the place and social standing of manhood and womanliness in society (Ullah & Naz, 2017), my participants' confirmed such orthodox gender roles do not exist in the teaching-learning context with them. But some institutional practices with the male co-working teachers sometimes showed some supremity of being male and working under female some sorts of discomfort and ego hurt were found. This was understood when the participants unintentionally spoke off the context. Their belief that male or female English language teachers can perform equally showed their determination and readiness towards their profession as English language teachers.

Additionally, probing upon the being aspect, I was interested in the phenomenon of being Nepali female becoming an English language teacher my participants shared how the mother-daughter relationship helped them nurture and

empower. The mother-daughter bonding seemed an important aspect in making one a confident and regulated being. Education further seemed to be ongoing training that one preferred throughout life. Participants also marked education as an empowering factor either for their professional or personal development.

The sense of being in my context is not much different than that of them when I say regarding teaching compared to becoming. I realized that the others' concerns with gender roles and expectations are beyond control. However, that perception of others towards self is controlled to some extent with the skill and coordination we get with the experience. Reflecting on me as the scared and innocent female teacher, now I see is because I lacked skill, training, and competency to speak. This made me realize the value of education and experiences with time. The same me would not have changed, had I been in the same state. Therefore, I see why my participants valued education and experience very much. The active life one lives with will undoubtedly generate regulated and determined ones resulting in a self-regulated and determined being. While going through these different attempts and understandings, experiential learning was explored as the prominent factor in teacher development.

As the interference of the biological and environmental factors in the development of a child, I see the 'she' in the female with her biological parents and environment whom she is grown and nurtured as. Likewise, the other 'she' is the after marriage life in her spouse's house with environmental parents and environment which determines and controls who you be or develop like. Like the experience of tickling bring emotional change in the facial structure, the good or bad experience likewise brings emotional instability in how we react. The encounter of disruptive behavior in the past shows the anger or dissatisfaction in how they express it. Likewise, the sharing of good experiences reflects calmness and cheerfulness. The

outcome of who we are is the result of who I was and how I was treated in the past. Similarly, the joy of sharing unpleasant experiences with laughter and pleasant experiences sharing with laughter is not the same. They have different meanings and essence.

The second aspect looking into the becoming phenomena of an English language teacher what was explored is the teachers in public schools are not getting training and they think it is eminent for teachers' professional development. My participants expressed that the training they received during their induction phase in institutionalized schools has helped the most in shaping their profession as English language teachers. Phenomenology, as the mode to an inquest into the world of being to understand life through reflective awareness (Gaulin, 2019), my participants expressed mentoring and technology as other aspects for their development.

Hence, the life of female English language teachers is like the onion and its layers. The layers matter as the size of the onion depends on how good biological and environmental factors they get. If any layer gets ruined or destroyed, the quality of the onion would be at risk.

My Reflection

Don't pretend,

Be real to yourself,

Start imagining, value your past as your biggest wealth.

I might be insane, crazy, and silly for you

I love the way I am, I can't change for you.

I am who I am,

this is me in the form of words

Don't get mistaken, it is not all me,

How can you posit all me in your limited words?

My life is the world, my experiences an ocean,

The more you dive into,

The more you find me misplaced.

Born and brought up in a middle-class family as the second child and elder most daughter to a family which lacked daughters since the generation of my father. This gave me the environment like a princess. However, sometimes regarding some orthodox principles, my brother was advantaged. I used to speak since childhood about them. I joined education after SLC, not by conscience or informed career-oriented. I continued and began teaching after +2. I gradually kept teaching higher levels without any pieces of training but with educational awareness, I kept moving. Starting teaching empowered me financially and helped in making me feel independent and responsible as I, to some extent, was able to help my mother. I being the second child after a brother was the first earning member among the siblings, I continued my study during the morning and teaching during the daytime.

My journey of doing research began after joining MPhil, which provoked the issue, giving me the area for research-based upon my experiential learning. This scenario giving the purpose to research on female English language teachers choosing phenomenology as a research design to explore the situation of other female English language teachers helped me complete my work. This knowledge has helped me a lot in my way of pursuing my experience in respect to other female teachers developing in me the sense of perseverance.

Being a Nepali woman handling major non-negotiable roles (Paudyal, 2013) as a teacher, mother, grand/daughter-in-law has been very upsetting sometimes especially during the online work and pandemic periods. However, with the support

of my husband, two little sons, and a mother-in-law, I could achieve this success. From a limited role as a teacher and house maker, this research has appreciated me for realizing my existence, valuing my experience, and understanding other female teachers concerning their experiences.

A piece of my reflection in the form of journal writing is here:

30th April

I am worried about my research work. I am not getting the idea of how to begin and feels like I am lost. I am not getting to go on the field. On asked others say I can continue the online interview, but being a novice researcher, I am not confident enough with that. If I could go to the university, I could ask the professors and proceed. But I don't know. I am like a blank. I don't know what I am looking for and where I am or where I am to go. I am not being able to concentrate on reading also. This is so frustrating. I am like lost somewhere in the middle of the sea seeking help!! When will this pandemic end!!

Reflecting on my research experience, I divided it into three phases: before doing research, while doing research, and post research.

Before doing research: In this phase, I valued myself and felt like my experiences are countable, valuable and others can't have been experiencing as I do.

While doing research: After defending my proposal, when I went to the field, I had a reservation and was judge-mental when I saw them for the first time. When I started talking to her, I started getting into their world and could see them through their expressions and descriptions. Their description and gestures, selection of words made me flow with their sharing. I found many stages of my life relatable with other female English language teachers like in the form of daughterhood, education,

responsibilities, and responsibility switched. While I sat for coding and thematizing, I was putting their voice and was becoming the source for bringing their voice.

> **26th Jan**
>
> Today while I was talking to her, I found a bold, self-regulated, and determined lady/female in her. The way she defined the word dominance was different from my previous participant. Likewise, her answer to her family about her career and empowerment shows that she is a strong lady. She sounds happy within her family life, but not much comfortable in a controlled environment regarding her in-laws. Reading novels and singing and dancing with her children make her feel happy. That seems to be her source of refreshment. The environment within her family has positively empowered her and the so-called controlled environment for daughters-in-law with cultural expectations has also motivated her to keep her independent. The boldness to speak for oneself must have come from the experiences she had and witnessed happening with her mother and herself before and after marriage.

Post research: By the time I completed explicating the data, I realized that there are many things within the experiences, I was on the horizon of the ocean where I was just taking a bucket of water out. Incorporating all of them within a single work is impossible, some of the areas like workplace environment, student-teacher relationship, support from the colleagues, teaching journey in the form of passion/accidental journey are some other areas that can be explored. The horizon of experiences limited by words and sentences would be an injustice. As a result, what I think is the female English language teacher is a researchable area that needs to be

explored and looked at from different perspectives. That additionally would help to

work for the female English language teachers in different levels as well as change the

lens female English language teachers are viewed.

> **15th Feb**
>
> After completing fieldwork and in the process of text explication, I was carried away by some realizations. We Nepali female English language teachers have been struggling with time management and expectation, which though is not the obstacle. We have developed a sense of perseverance with time and experience. It was very difficult for me to get time for an online talk with my participants as they were at home surrounded by multiple tasks and expectations, so was I. At the same time, I and my participants also realized that our family, especially our husband and mothers-in-law, has a prominent role in our development. The workload doesn't hamper our profession rather it matters experiences she had and witnessed happening, our wellbeing, to who and how we are. It is the emotional aspect with the realization of our responsibilities that make us tired, weak, and less confident in what we are. The something or nothing-ness in females is dependent on the environment we are in.

Making process or becoming an English language teacher plays a prominent

role. However, the socio-cultural and economic status cannot be disregarded. The

expectation from the female, the social norms that are 'compelled to do/must do

norms/jobs/responsibilities' also seem to be guiding female teachers in becoming

professional. A female teacher's journey and experiences can be seen as the layers of an onion, i.e. each layer plays a prominent role in their development. As the inner layers determine the quality of onion, these layers in female teachers' life determine their personal and professional development. [*bhitri layers ramro vayo vane matrai onion saprinchha*]. I also could see that the obstacle teaches you to struggle and develop resistance and defending capacity.

Conclusion

I could not approach this study of female English language teachers without the participants. I intended to create the portrait of female English language teachers and sketch out my place amongst these groups. I have tried to extant free of bias judgment, and emotion whenever possible. Nonetheless, there is a need to describe my intimate involvement during the journey. Therefore, I have used this section to acknowledge the implications of this study as it concerns the discussion of female English language teachers' phenomena particularly in the light of being and belonging with the emerging shift to becoming English language teacher to orthodox gender roles regarding professionalism. I hope to present an outlook on the ways this shift may affect the educational and psychological/professional features of English language teaching.

To begin with, it is important to make explicit the following text surrounding the female English language teachers. It is very important to note that the female teachers now do not show much concern about gender roles regarding teaching. Nevertheless, the working environment with male teachers taking the central role is not satisfactory. They undergo some suffering due to the family structure, variety of experiences as teachers, and female teachers. However, it appears that the teachers I have worked with, have been able to manage their professional life and personal life.

They also expressed that all the subject teachers are equally important and give equal effort. Nonetheless, English teachers are socially privileged. Though female teachers say they keep their personal and professional life apart, both are seen as interrelated and thus matter their professional growth.

Additionally, they are not seen to have received pieces of training since 2072 at the latest. They require professional development opportunities. However, they seem to have been self-regulated and determined with academic proceedings. Furthermore, the teachers seem to value background experiences that matter in terms of shaping one's present. As experiential learning demands activities beyond the classroom that helps create actions leading to experiences, training and mentoring seem to be an important aspect for teacher development. Despite being acknowledged as females in many policy documents, research documents, female English language teachers are not part of the research, which shows the dire need for further researches in being, becoming, and belonging to English language teaching.

The learning takes place through the transformation of experience. After my prolonged engagement with the participants, as my focus was on the learning process rather than the gender roles I came to know that the gender roles were not manifested as determining factors for learning, as it is not such a meaningful contribution to shape the experiences and professional development among my participants. This brings to my central argument that apart from being male or female, experiential learning brings one to the phase of professional development. This, in turn, makes experiential learning with reflection one of the prominent sources for professional development which is followed by self-regulated and determined being. Therefore, when our being is transformed, changes occur which is key to deep learning, self-awareness, and the ability to know oneself.

Saying this, as the nature of experiences is unique in itself, the experiences of males might differ from that of females. I have taken female English language teachers as my participants and they shared that past experiences are the source of learning and professional development, making experiential learning the foundation of professional development for the female English language teachers. This experiential learning, thus, has helped the being and becoming aspect of the female English language teachers as the sense-making process of active engagement between two forms of their environment: inner world and outer world; inner world of the person and outer world of the environment.

Finally, my research concludes that the female English language teachers are experiencing their world in their way of being female and becoming English language teachers which have different phenomena. Similarly, the resulting transformation is from the powerful negative emotional experiences and positive feedback or responses they get that take us from one comfort zone to the edge emotions empowering for active engagement which is the basic code of belief for experiential learning. Hence, this made me realize that being a unique individual in ourselves, it is just the time we take valuing any theories for the learning process as there are many theories and we have different likes and dislikes or various methods of learning. Therefore it is phenomenology that makes us mindful, to be critically and philosophically aware of how our lives are socially, culturally, politically, and existentially fashioned.

Implications

I cannot claim that my research is the first one to work on female teachers, but yes, I can say that this area is the less researched area after the extensive review of related literature was done. There are studies on female teachers, but I have hardly found studies on female English language teachers with phenomenological research design. As other studies showed power relation and stereo gender division of roles, I have tried my best to craft the passion and aspiration of female English language teachers for professional development and learning, keeping the power relation and gender impact aside regarding professional development. Nonetheless, as everything cannot be covered within a single attempt, I realize the need for more studies and researches to better explore the other aspects of being and becoming which my research could not cover.

While going through my research journey, I came across participants' perceptions towards professional development strategies among which training is one of the essential factors. They have shared that after they were appointed as permanent English language teachers, they have not received any pieces of training except one TPD till now. Moreover, they considered training as one of the important landmarks for becoming a successful English language teacher. This shows the need for concerned authorities to address their craving for effective training sessions.

Mentoring considered as another important PD strategy by the participants seems to be lacking in the public school teaching environment. This needs to be taken into consideration.

The other ignored aspect in studies is the 'being' and 'becoming'. The advancement in technology resulting in the change in society makes it eminent for researches in a female English language teacher. Like the act of tickling breaks into

the laughter as it is the act we cannot help with or resist, the unpleasant experiences that female teachers of English gain in the journey of teaching they share with laughter or smile have different meanings. But that does not mean it should be understood as the symbol of joy. For example, the same inconvenience caused by online teaching and the noise in the classroom had different meanings for the participants: some take it calmly as the process of development whereas others find it irritating regarding how they behave and talk and next find it because of their age factor and change. This shows that all the acts and activities have their essence and significance. This results in the self and being matter. Additionally, gender roles not being taken as a prominent factor, family help and support have been regarded as the important aspects for the development and identity; instead, it shows the need for further researches in this area. With the changing norms and values, the change in the concept that is based on experiential learning, decentralized research on female English language teachers is promoted.

Besides other factors, the family environment, learning environment, education, and responsibilities were seen as the prominent aspects in developing being, which is the basis for becoming. It shows the effort to be made at the policy level regarding the policies for daughters that could support in her later upbringings resulting in the independent, self-regulated being.

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Appendix A

Research Interview Consent Form

Purpose of Interview

This interview is a part of research for the award of MPhil Degree at Kathmandu University.

Certificate of Consent

I have been asked to given consent to participate in this research study which involves completing one to several interviews. I have been informed that there is no risk in participating and identity of the participants will remain confidential and is available to the research committee on the MPhil programme at Kathmandu University and UGC only. I fully understand the interviews may be included as a part of the final dissertation or written paper or books but only with pseudonyms of the research participants. The researcher will uphold research ethics as mentioned.

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content.

Signed with name (Interviewee) …………………………

Signed with name (Interviewer) …………………………

Appendix B

Questions Asked to the participants

1. Can you tell about yourself?

2. Lets begin with the birth: when and where.

3. Your experience as a student of English language learning.

4. What sort of person would you call yourself?

5. When did you start teaching? can you remember some pain or pleasure moments?

6. Was it your decision or somebody motivated to study education? How did you get into the field of teaching?

7. Experiences about curriculum and text books?

8. What changes do you see in the process of becoming teacher of English language (in yourself)?

9. What difficulties do you think you have been facing being an English language teacher?

10. What do you think is utmost for empowering and inspiring female English language teachers?

11. What else do you think can be done from the side of teacher herself/ administration/ policy/ training and materials to motivate female teachers like you?

12. Does your personal life shape your professional life? What do you think?

13. Were you ever guided by anyone during your induction phase of teaching?

14. Was there the provision of supervision from the principal?

15. Can you share your experiences regarding challenges you face at school or family being a female?

16. Did you ever get praise, privilege in the family or school or anywhere as an English language teacher?

17. How do you see the word 'dominate': by teacher student, teacher, colleagues?

18. Are you satisfied with what you are/have?