TEACHER LEARNING IN SCHOOL: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF TEACHERS

AND HEAD TEACHERS FROM PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEPAL

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

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

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Khim Prasad Kandel for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in Education (Educational Leadership)* presented Kathmandu University School of Education on 4 September 2022.

Title: *Teacher Learning in School: A Narrative Inquiry of Teachers and Head Teachers from Public Schools in Nepal*

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The research topic *Teachers' Learning in School: A Narrative Inquiry of Teachers and Head Teachers from public Schools in Nepal* sprouted from my involvement in the field of teacher training for more than a decade with public and private schools in different regions of Nepal. Over a decade of working with the various educational actors, my reflections sometimes leave me discouraged to observe the lack of motivation teachers' exhibit to learn new skills to instruct students.

In some cases, I also experienced that the junior teachers are afraid, uncomfortable, and shy to seek help from senior teachers. There was a lack of collaborative learning culture and a lack of passion for being a lifelong learner attitude among the teachers and school leaders.

This study aimed to explore how teachers learn from each other in their schools settings and how head teachers facilitate teachers' learning in public schools in Nepal. For this purpose, two research questions were generated: first, how do teachers narrate their understanding of learning (self-learning and shared learning) in

Nepali school settings? Second, how do head teachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools?

I applied narrative inquiry as a research method and adopted an interpretive paradigm relating to my ontological, epistemological and axiological stance. Information was collected using open-ended interviews over the phone from a purposeful sample of three teachers and three head teachers because of the effect of COVID-19 pandemic.

The participants belonged to the different socio-cultural background and had distinct experiences about learning as a teacher and facilitating learning as a head teacher.

The theoretical foundation of the research was guided by Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn. The key assumptions of this theory provided clear guidance for exploring how adults are motivated to learn. Furthermore, I got various insights from my research participants on how they learn and facilitate learning in their school's context.

I developed some key insights from this research journey. Firstly, I learned that teachers learn in formal and informal settings. Secondly, they learn through self-direction, Thirdly, they learn collaboratively, and finally, they learn when knowledge is applicable to the classroom.

Finally, I also learned from the narrative of the headteachers that they facilitate teachers' learning in three ways. Firstly, the head teachers facilitate teachers' learning by creating an academic culture through observing the classroom and providing teachers constructive feedback as well as encouraging collaborative learning to solve problems.

Second, head teachers facilitate the learning of teachers by partnering with various organizations to provide access and training for teachers.

Lastly, the head teachers facilitate the learning of teachers in schools by being role models as lifelong learners.

This study provides significant insights to the various educational actors such as teachers, head teachers, professional development experts and policy makers to understand and reflect how teachers as an adult learner are motivated to learn. At the same time, how can the principles of adult learning be integrated while designing and implementing the teacher professional development programme so that their learning is enhanced and made more meaningful?

………………………………….   4 September 2022

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Khim Prasad Kandel, Degree Candidate

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ACRONYMS

CDC: Curriculum Development Centre

DoE: Department of Education

GoN: Government of Nepal

DEO: District Education Office

MoE: Ministry of Education

MoEST: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

NCED: National Centre for Education Development

NISA: National Investment of Student Achievement

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SMC: School Management Committee

SSDP: School Sector Development Plan

TPD: Teachers Professional Development

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation begins with my reflection, where I have provided a setting of the scene for this study. As I carried out this study, I reflected on over a decade of my experiences in the field of teacher training in different parts of Nepal, where I observed teachers. I often witnessed them being reluctant to learn from each other. One of the reasons for this hesitancy to collaborate may be the hierarchical nature of Nepali culture, and others may reflect a general attitude of lack of interest in becoming a lifelong learner. Chapter 1 highlights the setting the scene of this study along with the statement of the problem, the purpose of this study, and research questions relevant to the topic to explore the knowledge in the main areas of interest. It further includes the rationale, delimitation, and organization of the study.

Setting the Scene

I selected this research issue to investigate how teachers learn from each other in their school setting. This may include learning through peer observation, discussing academic issues in the meeting, reflecting on their instructional practices, and seeking feedback from their peers and head teachers to enhance their learning. I have been involved in the field of teacher training for more than a decade. Over these years, I have had several opportunities to visit public and institutional schools in different districts of Nepal, located in rural and urban settings. I am also actively involved in training teachers, school leaders, and parents. This provided me with several opportunities to interact with them and observe how they are learning in their context. Over a decade of working with these educational actors, my reflections sometimes leave me discouraged to observe the lack of motivation teachers exhibit to learn new

skills to instruct students. For example, I observed on many occasions that senior teachers are less interested in passing on their experiences and knowledge to the junior teachers.

In some cases, I also experienced that the junior teachers are afraid, uncomfortable, and shy to seek help from senior teachers. There was a lack of collaborative learning culture and a lack of passion for being a lifelong learner among the teachers and school leaders. Additionally, those educators who attended the training we provide are not confident to apply the skills and knowledge taught at the training, despite ongoing instruction and follow up, including lesson observation with developmental feedback.

In light of my observation and review of the literature suggest the importance of these teachers learning from each other and transferring their skills and experiences. For example, Wood (2007) viewed teachers as learners and argued that teachers need to be knowledgeable and know how to use their knowledge, skills, and experiences to ensure the quality of students' educational experiences. Teachers need to collaborate and share knowledge because there are so many good, experienced, and skilled teachers with a wealth of experience. Therefore, their skills and experiences must be passed to other teachers before they retire or even before they die to promote a culture of retaining and transferring their valuable skills and knowledge in schools.

During interactions with teachers and observations of classrooms in Nepalese public schools, especially in rural Nepal, I recognized the lack of academic learning culture and a deficit of ability to transfer educational knowledge, techniques, and skills to other teachers. On the other hand, I also noticed that there are instructors who are passionate about teaching and always open to new ideas of teaching and learning but are not encouraged and supported by school leaders to be self-learners and share their skills with other teachers. As a result, some the instructors lose their passion for

learning. Some experienced teachers appear to be less interested in mentoring junior teachers and equipping them with skills to increase students' academic learning. At the same time, I have observed a lack of pedagogical culture among junior teachers to approach senior educators to learn from them. For example, they are shy and afraid to admit that they do now know and seek help. As a result, these teachers' wealth of skills and experiences are not passed on to the next generation. Despite these observations, I have encountered school leaders who are interested in creating a culture of collaborative learning at their schools but lack the skills and confidence to create a learning environment in their schools.

Traditional rote learning continues to be the primary means of instruction, teachers come to class unprepared to teach lessons, and there is a lack of motivation, teaching skills and strategies for classroom management.

I felt the factors that may be barriers and challenges to this problem need to be studied. During my work in the field of teacher training over the past decade, including interactions with teachers, parents, head teachers, students, resource persons, school inspectors, and other education actors, I hear expressions of pessimism concerning the state of education in Nepali classroom with the long list of problems that exist, particularly in public schools. These observations and conversations contribute to my scholarly interest in researching this topic to provide meaningful findings and recommendations to improve the academic challenges of the classroom setting for teachers, head teachers, and students.

In summary, after ten years of experience partnering with Nepali schools in training teachers and school leaders, I realize the need for teachers to be self-motivated to learn from each other, to share their experiences and skills to empower each other to create a passion and desire for teachers to be lifelong learners. These

strategies and skills inspiring teachers' professional development and increasing cooperative learning.

Statement of Problem

The Government of Nepal has placed great efforts into upgrading schools and education and made significant investments in training the teachers and improving the academic achievement of students learning at the community schools. Nepal aims to produce globally competent and skilled human resources (National Education Policy, 2019). Similarly, the Ministry of Education's School Sector Development Plan (2016) Promotes teacher management and professional development objectives to maintain high morale and motivation for teaching and to learn among teachers and students. An effective learning culture among the teachers in Nepali schools could be a potential solution to improve students' learning.

However, there has been little change or improvement. Teachers continue to use teacher-centered traditional approaches to instruction, provide few instructional resources, and fail to prepare and plan lessons (Department of Education, 2017). The data show that nearly 90% of basic level teachers in community schools are trained (Ministry of Education, 2016). In contrast, teachers are less engaged in shared learning because they lacked good role models when they were themselves as students (Department of Education, 2017). Although nearly all the Nepali teachers in community schools are trained, they still use the traditional rote learning 'talk and Chalk" method and lack preparation for their teaching (British Council, 2018).

Despite concerted efforts on the part of the Department of Education for over a decade, little impact has been made to affect change in the culture of learning among teachers in most of public schools. It is very discouraging to witness that despite these huge efforts to train teachers in public schools, the research reveals a

consistent decrease in learning achievement in public schools (MoEST, 2019) and

(Poudel & Bhattarai, 2018).

Additionally, the recent research carried out during the pandemic further

affirmed that Nepal is falling behind the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of

learning achievement (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2021).

Teachers are less interested in shared learning because they lacked good role

models when they were themselves students (Department of Education, 2017).

Despite concerted efforts by the Department of Education over the several decades,

little impact has been made to change the culture of learning among teachers in most

public schools.

These problems exist in the academic community of teachers concerning

ongoing learning and training. It is essential having strong collaboration and

teamwork among the head teachers and teachers to enhance student learning and

achievement. For example, when school leaders encourage teachers by providing

support and feedback and cultivating an atmosphere of trust, it encourages

collaborative learning within the school culture. Similarly, teachers who support one

another's a practice in professional learning communities feel more confident in their

teaching skills, develop a stronger sense of self-efficacy, and believe in their ability to

influence student learning and achievement (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014). Similarly, the

quality of students' educational experiences depends mostly on the quality of teachers

(Wood, 2007).

It is, therefore, crucial to provide an environment where teachers are

motivated to learn and grow professionally rather than view their roles as limited to

teaching within an isolated classroom. However, these practices are less visible in the

context of Nepali schools (NASA, 2013). Furthermore, there is a lack of a culture of

sharing knowledge among teachers and the absence of educators failing to see the necessity of continued training and learning in Nepali schools (Baral, 2018).

This study will offer meaningful insights concerning the importance of teachers learning from one another in a trusting, collaborative relationship and possible ways head teachers may provide opportunities and professional development for teachers in Nepali schools. The students in our public schools would get a meaningful learning experience.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to explore how teachers learn from each other in their schools' settings and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided this study as follows:

1. How do teachers narrate their understanding of learning (self-learning and shared learning) in Nepali schools?

2. How do head teachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools?

Rationale of the Study

Teachers who learn from each other are essential in solving educational problems and generating new knowledge. When teachers who work in an open, collaborative environment and are willing to share their knowledge and skills with their colleagues help create a collaborative culture in the school. Hargreaves (as cited in Shah, 2012), listed nearly a dozen of benefits of collaboration among the school staff, including (a) moral support; (b) increased efficiency; (c) improved effectiveness; (d) reduced overload; (e) synchronized time perspectives between teachers and administrators; (f) situated certainty of collective professional wisdom;

(g) increased capacity for reflection; (h) organizational responsiveness; (i) opportunities to learn; and (j) continuous learning.

Despite several benefits that collaborative learning offers among the teachers, head teachers, and students, I have found that there is very less narrative inquiry done on this topic. For example, I came across several studies carried out by the Education Review Office of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology focusing on the national assessment of student achievement for nearly over a decade. I found nearly all of them are quantitative research. For example, this research focuses on various factors such as how teachers and head teachers qualifications, gender, training the, parental involvement with their educational background as well as socio-economic and ethnicity of students' effects on the academic achievement of the students. (MoEST, 2019 & 2020) and (Chapagain, 2021). Additionally, there have been a few previous studies about how head teachers facilitate teacher educational learning and professional development in public schools in Nepal.

I found very few studies carried out in the form of narrative inquiry related to the research topic of this study. Additionally, although public school teachers have received a lot of training to enhance their teaching skills, the application of those skills in the classrooms is only partially achieved (NECD, 2009, as cited in Bhujel, 2019). Considering this gap, I was motivated to explore this study to bring the untold stories and lived experiences of the Nepali teachers and head teachers to contribute new knowledge through this narrative study.

Additionally, this study will provide a gap in practice concerning collaborative learning among the teachers and head teachers' role in facilitating such learning in their schools. From this perspective, the study will also discuss some barriers to

collaborative learning among the teachers and head teachers in public schools in Nepal.

Finally, this study has the potential for positive social change in the educational school system of Nepal because there is limited research on this topic.

Delimitations of the study

This study has been delimited to teachers' self-learning and shared learning in their schools, along with the role of head teachers in facilitating learning in schools. Similarly, this study is focused on a collaborative learning approach among the teachers and head teachers. Although students are one of the most important actors in learning process in school, the participants of this study include teachers and head teachers only.

This is a narrative inquiry on teachers and head teachers representing five public schools of Beshishahar Municipality, Lamjung, under the interpretative paradigm. It is therefore, that the findings of this study may not be transferred and generalize easily in the other context.

Organization of the Study

Chapter one begins with my reflection as an educator involved in the field of teacher training for over a decade, which inspired me to carry out this study. The main issue of the study is explored in the statement of the problem followed by the research purpose. Two research questions are developed based on the purpose, focusing on the two groups of participants included in this study. The possible contribution of this study is encompassed in the rationale of the study. The following section deals with the delimitations of the study. Finally, an overview of the study is described briefly in the organization of the study section.

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Chapter two includes review of literature relevant to the research topic and the purpose of this study. This chapter contains five sections. Starting with a thematic review, followed by a policy review aligning with the research topic, purpose and research questions. A discission follows each thematic review. For theoretical referents, this study is guided by Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn. Section four elaborates on the research gap of the study. The chapter concludes with the essence of Chapter two.

In Chapter three, I have discussed the methodology of this study. I used narrative inquiry as a research method under the interpretative paradigm. I have also presented my philosophical consideration. I have further discussed my participants' research site and demography, followed by data collection and analysis. I have also elaborated evidence of quality and trustworthiness by explaining how I ensured this study's credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Like previous chapters, I concluded it with a chapter essence in brief.

Chapter four narrates the experience of this study's first participants, including three teachers. I narrated their lived experiences and inserted their statements wherever necessary to substantiate my claims. I have also discussed the themes generated from the data of my participant with relevant literature and theory.

Chapter Five narrates the lived experience of the second participants of this study, including three head teachers. The discussion of themes from the narrative of head teachers along with the relevant literature and theory, like in chapter Four.

In Chapter six, I have summarized my research, including its key insights, and conclusion along with the possible implications of this study to stakeholders such as teachers, head teachers, policymakers and future researchers.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with the literature review for this study under five different sections. It starts with a meaning of learning followed by a thematic review, policy review, theoretical referent, and research gap.

The thematic review covers the collaborative learning among the teachers and the role of head teachers to facilitate learning from global to local contexts, including various books, journals, and empirical studies to fulfill the purpose and meaningfulness of this study in line with my research questions. I have reviewed a handful of policies related to my research topic and questions in the policy review. Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn has been adopted for theoretical referents. The research gap section shows the contextual and methodological gap between the literature and my research study. Furthermore, after reviewing the literature, I feel a gap in the research about practice exists concerning how teachers learn in schools and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools.

Meaning of Learning

Learning is more than simply memorizing information that requires recalling facts. Learning involves acquiring knowledge with an understanding to make connections between prior information and new facts. It requires independent and critical thinking and the ability to transfer knowledge to new and different contexts (Knowles, 1980).

Scholars described learning in different ways. Illeris (2009), as cited in Bryan et al. (2010), described learning as a cumulation, assimilation, accommodation, and

transformation process. Similarly, Knowles (1975) defined learning as using every resource, in or out of educational institutions, for personal growth and development. Kolb (1984) defined learning from an experiential perspective as learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.

These definitions help me to understand and reflect that learning is a social process where people share their knowledge and experiences with other in a social context that creates an opportunity to generate new knowledge.

Bandura (1977) developed a social learning theory that included four tenants that can be used in the educational setting. First is attention, which advocates lessons be built using hands-on activities and projects to help children focus and learn. Second, retention helps children recall information by focusing on how the student will internalize new information. Third, reproduction is the process of drawing on previously learned behavior and the ability to apply it in different settings. Fourth, motivation may be realized when children see classmates rewarded or punished.

Using the constructivist learning theory, educational learning is frequently envisioned in the classroom setting. Vygotsky theorized that learning is incurred in a social setting with social interaction between the learner and the instructor. Vygotsky's (1987) paradigm involved the zone of proximal development that enables a learner to perform more than one could independently attain when learning occurs in conjunction and collaboration with an adult or peer. "Instruction is only useful when it moves ahead of development. When it does, it propels or wakens a whole series of functions in a stage of maturation lying in the zone of proximal development" (p. 212). Essential to the ZDP is the process of how learning becomes internalized utilizing this collaborative social process.

These definitions offer insights into understanding concerning learning related to the purpose of this study concerning how teachers learn from each other in their school setting.

Collaboration in the School Setting

"Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves a group of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product" (Laal & Laal, 2012, p. 491). Collaborative learning offers social benefits such as helping to develop a social support system for learners and develop learning communities. Furthermore, its psychological benefits include student-centered teaching increasing students' self-esteem, reducing anxiety and developing positive attitudes towards teachers. Similarly, the academic benefits of collaborative learning include promoting critical thinking skills and actively involving students in the learning process that contribute to improving learning achievements (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012). Furthermore, "*Collaborative learning is organized around learners working and learning together through face- to – face interaction* (Damon & Phelps 1988 as cited in Freemon & Richards, (Ed.) 2002, p. 261)"

Collaboration and collegiality within schools and among teachers are vital to adult learning. In the early 1990s, Bath emphasized the importance of teachers learning from each other and argued that "unless adults talk with one another, observe one another, and help one another, very little will change" (Bath, 1991, as cited in Krovetz, 1993, p. 71). Similarly, cooperative learning increased self-esteem among teachers and students (Jacobs, 2004).

Findings from Singh and Manser (2002) research from African schools, in which situations reflect similar circumstances to public schools in rural Nepal, identified four essential elements of collaboration in an educational setting. These

include planning according to a shared vision, managing through participation and collaboration, developing the school as a learning organization, and drawing on support systems. These were the key components of collegiality.

These authors further suggested strategies for collaboration should include the participation of the teaching staff in strategic planning; identifying school goals and objectives; creating shared vision; and treating members of the teaching staff as partners rather than as subordinates help to achieve collaboration in schools.

Collaboration involves teachers working in trusting relationships to share ideas, knowledge, and instructional strategies. Learning in the school setting may occur when teachers with years of experience and education collaborate with other teachers to share their expertise. Wood (2007) argued that teachers are not just the implementer of someone's ideas but should be thinkers, inquirers, and conceptualizers. Experienced teachers must transfer and share their knowledge and skills with other novice teachers so that the experiences and expertise continue to pass to the next generation of educators. For collaboration and ideas to be shared, it is crucial to have a learning culture among schoolteachers.

Working together in an educational environment requires trust, respect, and a willingness to work together for a common goal. Salavin (1987) suggested six major components of cooperative learning strategies in elementary schools, which are relevant in Nepali schools. These techniques included collaborative learning in the classroom, integration of special education and remedial services with regular programs, peer coaching, cooperative planning, building level steering committee and cooperation with parents and community members.

These strategies seem to be relevant and applicable in Nepali schools. In cooperative learning schools, teachers should be responsible for helping each other to

use cooperative learning methods and implement other instructional practices improvements. Additionally, teachers should be provided time to plan, set learning goals, and observe each other teach to provide peer coaching input. Teachers and school leaders should work together to determine the direction of the schools. Finally, the representative of parents and community members should be included in school activities to build a sense of community. Collegiality among the teachers promotes a culture of collaboration as opposed to individualism and competition and encourages teachers to work as a team instead of operating in isolation.

Effective collaboration is an ongoing process; however, the benefits of a collegial culture are recognizable. Shah (2012) argued that collegial communities create cooperation opportunities that enhance the level of innovation and enthusiasm among the teachers and occasions for teachers to learn together. Ratts et al. (2015) found that as team teaching and collaborating on instructional strategies and programs grew from teachers' meetings, school districts began to see the value in teacher collaboration. Fullen (2010) stated the following:

> The power of collective capacity enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things—for two reasons. One is that knowledge about effective practice becomes more widely available and accessible daily. The second reason is more powerful still—working together generates commitment. (p. 72)

Furthermore, the professional development that allows teachers to investigate, experiment, reflect, discuss, and collaborate with other teachers can help them change their practice (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). These ideas are also supported by the study of Shrestha et al. (2021) that reforming pedagogy will help teachers to promote students - centric pedagogies such as collaborative learning, project-based learning,

and inquiry-based learning as opposed to informing pedagogy such as traditional telling teaching culture.

While emphasizing the importance of collaborative learning among the teachers, one cannot ignore the fact that students are also a major part of it. In fact, collaborative learning, was widely used and researched in primary and secondary schools during the era of 90s. It restructures the classroom away from the traditional lecture methods of teaching to more interactive learning and teaching in a small group which requires a lot of interaction between the teachers and students (Alberto, et.al, 2002). We can draw an important insight that when teachers understand and implement the principle of collaborative learning in their instructional practices, it ultimately benefits the students since it actively involves students in critical thinking and problem solving. This approach of learning appears to be more relevant in our Nepali schools since our instructional practice is still largely based on traditional rote learning and students are treated as passive learners.

Barriers for Collaboration

These transformational change concepts can be relevant in the context of Nepali school schools to increase communication between teachers and head teachers, provide enhanced curricular and academic processes, and expand teacher responsibility to students and the school culture. This review of the literature and the reflection on the adult learning theory offer evidence that teachers need to be treated as active adult learners rather than passive learners, increasing and enriching teachers' educational practices in Nepali public schools.

Collaboration is one of the essential 21st-century skills (World Economic Forum, 2015). However, ensuring effective collaboration among the teachers is not as straightforward as it sounds. (Gregson & Sturko, 2007) outlined some of the barriers

to collaboration in the context of American schools, including time constraints, attitude towards learning, and training not aligning with adult learning principle that discourages internal motivation of the learners. These barriers can be identified in most of our schools in Nepal where there are large numbers of students in a class a shortage of teachers. Such an unfavorable teaching environment does not provide enough time for teachers to collaborate with their peers and think beyond other than carrying out their day-to-day teaching duty in a traditional rote learning manner.

Additionally, effective collaboration among the teachers, head teachers and students requires teamwork. The absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability and attention to the results causes the dysfunctions of the team (Lencioni, 2002). Due to the hierarchical culture in schools, there is a lack of openness between the head teachers and teachers, creating a barrier to sharing their ideas because of the fear of conflict. Furthermore, Nepali teachers are generally shy and afraid to ask for help and share their weaknesses with their senior colleagues (Pandey, 2012). Furthermore, the experiences in public schools in South Korea affirms similar obstacles. For example, time constraints (excessive workload and difficulty in finding time for conversations), psychological barriers (hesitant to open one's classroom to peers), and the lack of a discussion culture (lack of getting constructive feedback) are a significant barrier to collaborative learning among the educators (Park & So, 2014).

There is an established assumption in our society that teachers, especially from public schools, are generally not open to learning new skills and knowledge. It was evident during the recent COVID -19 pandemic that many of these teachers could not adapt their teaching with technology even with online teaching access. They perhaps did not feel a need to learn technology and integrate it into their day-to-day teaching

and learning before the pandemic. More importantly, teachers were not trained on using digital technologies in pre- and in-service teacher training (Rana, 2022). Furthermore, training curriculum and contents made by ETC lack focus on teachers' real needs, lack classroom observation and giving and receiving constructive feedback (Bhujel, 2019). These obstacles limit effective collaboration among the teachers.

Furthermore, Rana and Rana (2022) highlight that the lack of spacious classrooms with many students further hinders effective teachers- students collaborative learning and teaching.

The finding from African schools affirms that teachers are motivated to engage in professional development focusing on practical and useable aspects of teaching and learning instead of predominately concentrate on theory. Therefore, professional development should include new ideas, skills, or knowledge that could be taken back to the classroom, emphasizing on using it every day in lessons (Dasoo & Muller, 2020).

Amid this pandemic, some encouraging stories show some teachers developed a positive attitude toward learning. "Earlier when teachers came for training, they were not very serious but now since in the virtual mode a lot of effort is taken at the self-learning they seem to be engaged more" (UNICEF & UNESCO, 2020, p. 31).

Furthermore, the learning culture in Nepal has been primarily focused on face–to–face starting from the "GURUKUL" system. However, with 21st-century technology, teachers are not only limited to face-to-face learning but can now enhance learning through digital collaboration via virtual classrooms, computer-based learning and so on (Pangeni, 2016).

This self–learning experience of Nepali teachers aligns with one of the assumptions of Knowel's learning theory that teachers are internally motivated to

learn when they see a need to learn and can apply the skills and knowledge immediately after learning. The alignment of teacher training with the principles of adult learning may contribute significantly to enhancing collaboration among the adult learners, such as teachers.

Leadership Role to Promote Teachers' Learning

The role of school leaders in promoting learning in their schools is paramount. The experiences from Australian public schools shared by Hilton et al. (2015) suggested that school leaders jointly participating with their teachers in the professional development programme also enhance the professional growth of the leaders themselves. Furthermore, this research described that the school leaders who (a) ensure opportunities to attend professional development, (b) provide school subscriptions to professional journals, (c) allow teachers to experiment with teaching strategies, (d) encourage engagement in discussions with colleagues, and (e) provide opportunities to share and reflect on one another's practice will foster a collaborative learning climate in the school. A study by Stein (2016) further affirmed that school leaders must be able to influence staff. Stein proposed a leadership style such as "lead by walking around" (i.e., leaders' presence or visibility) that promotes staff morale and encourages a positive learning culture among the teachers.

Furthermore (Taft, 2019), as the school leader, she shared her experiences on how teachers can be supported and empowered as adult learners and create a shared learning culture in the school. She highlights four key insights. First, be the change you want to see; change should start from the top. We often witness teachers as adult learners expected to work collaboratively, observe each other, and provide feedback for their growth. School leaders modeling what it meant to be an adult learner must do the same as they expect from their teachers. Secondly, promote a culture of learning.

Teachers often think observations are to find out their faults rather than affirming their good practices and encouraging them to try new things. Thirdly, create a space for personalization because each teacher has a different need and needs support to reach their fullest potential. Lastly, exercise patience. It is important to realize that change does not happen overnight. It takes time. "When you build a culture of learning for adults, where they have space to let loose and have fun, take healthy risks, fail forward, then get back up and try again – you will find a community of teachers who will serve as excellent models of what it means to become lifelong learners" (Taft, 2019, p. 57).

The leadership of a school requires creating a culture that is conducive to the education of both students and teachers. Townsend and MacBeath (2013) presented that the school leader is connected to the school through modelling, monitoring, and dialogue. Leader must be a good role model. The teachers observe whether their leaders' actions are consistent over time and whether their leaders do as they say. Modelling activities may include regular visiting classrooms to observe lessons, encouraging teachers to talk about success and concerns, and ensuring meetings for teachers that focus on professional learning.

Similarly, a report from Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009) argued that to meet the educational needs of the 21st century, school leaders must play a more dynamic role in focusing on their schools' instructional and learning processes and outcomes. The leadership role of a head teacher requires that they provide leadership to support an effective academic curriculum for students and promote the improvement of teaching standards.

Additionally, when head teachers model themselves as lifelong learner, it inspires teachers to imitate their leaders. Finally, it is highly beneficial if head

teachers create a collaborative learning culture for their teachers, emphasizing that they can find the solution of the problem they face each day in their teaching and learning.

One of the takeaways from there in the Nepali schools' context is that head teachers should promote a culture of appreciation for those teachers who are courageously taking a risk to try out new teaching ideas even though they may not do it perfectly at their first attempt because a genuine affirmation builds people up and help them to be successful.

Furthermore, teachers who reflect together can share their views and bring multiple ideas because it is important for teachers to discover new ideas, skills and knowledge that they can take back to the classroom and implement every day in lessons. In other words, teachers prefer practical and useable aspects of teaching and learning instead of a heavy focus on theory (Dasoo & Muller, 2020).

These studies emphasize the crucial role of head teachers in enhancing learning in their schools regardless of any geographical location in the world. Head teachers need to be aware and acknowledge that each adult learns differently. Their learning needs also vary depending on the roles they are assigned.

Policy Reviews

The Government has made several efforts in Nepal to bring positive changes in teacher education and teaching/ learning culture over the several decades by adopting various educational policies and collaborating with several stakeholders. Ajani, Govender & Maluleke (2018, as cited in Ajani, 2019) argued that *"The quality of the teachers cannot be greater than the quality of education system found in the country. Therefore, most developed countries have continued investing in teacher professional development activities" (p. 196).* The government of Nepal seems to be

committed to investment and enhancing its teachers' professional development through various initiatives.

Some of these initiatives include the National Education System Plan (NESP), the establishment of the National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) in 1993, the Education for All (EFA) National Plan of Action (2001-15), School Sector Reform Plan (2009-15) and School Sector Development Plan, (SSDP, 2016-23) and Teacher Professional Development Framework (2015).

NESP, (1971) put a policy provision that teachers had academic and professional qualifications to improve teaching and learning. Teachers were required to enroll in ten months of training courses (Pant et al., 2020). Similarly, the School Sector Development Plan developed for the years 2016/17 through 2022/23 of Nepal envisions teachers' continuous professional development and management. These interventions include diverse teachers' professional development programmes such as One-month in-service certification training, refresher courses, on-demand short training, and online professional development courses. The schools and Districts Education Officers are encouraged to implement school-based and cluster-based teachers' development activities ranging from mentoring to professional learning forums (Ministry of Education, 2016).

Furthermore, the recent Teacher Professional Development Framework (2015), emphasizes teacher education and teaching/learning culture. TPD training focuses on teachers' self- innovation and continuous learning (Bhujel, 2019). TPD training includes two modules, each of 15 days which are divided into two parts: First, ten days training workshop, which is face to face method conducted by the Education Training Centre. Second, a five-day school-based self-study exercise, a project-based, is when every teacher makes and implements their teaching improvement plan and

writes reports within the 45 days after receiving the training. There is also a provision of action research based on their needs and instructional counselling which is onsite support to the teachers (TPD Framework, 2015).

Similarly, the Teacher Service Commission Regulations (2000), 32, (Kha) provided additional marks for the promotion of teachers if they conducted research related to the subject they were employed to instruct. These initiatives offer positive incentives to encourage ongoing professional development that create learning cultures among school teachers. The Education Rules 2002 (94) also listed 31 responsibilities for head teachers at Nepali public schools. Some of the primary responsibilities of these leaders included financial management, human resource planning and management, coordination with various stakeholders, including parent-teacher associations, District Education Office (DEO), School Management Committee (SMC); and implementation of instructions from higher authorities.

Alternatively, these requirements lack important duties such as creating mission, vision, and values statements for schools and engaging various aspects of instructional practices rather than focusing on administrative and managerial roles. Research findings suggested that school leaders should perform leadership quality duties to foster the learning culture in the schools as an alternative to managerial tasks (Stein, 2016). The government of Nepal has introduced National Education Policy (2019) which highlights inclusiveness and quality teaching-learning experiences. It also aims to produce globally competent and skilled human resources. This policy has adopted a policy on continuous competency development of teachers and school leaders to enhance the quality of education. This policy further advocates that the promotion of teachers and appointment of school leaders will be based on skills, experiences, and performance.

Additionally, the Federal Education Act of Nepal is currently under review. There is still a provision of an Education Training Centre in all Seven provinces of Nepal that continues to engage with teachers and head teachers to enhance their professional development across Nepal. We hope this Act continues to ensure the provision that inspires teachers to become lifelong learners. At the same time, revisit the roles of Head Teachers and make provision for them to engage with teachers in instructional practices to create a collaborative learning culture in their schools. Similarly, Integrated Curriculum in grades 1-3 developed by (Curriculum Development Centre, 2019) has made provision for multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary. It demands teachers to teach thematically instead of individual subjects in grades 1-3. Teachers are expected to integrate soft skills along with the integration of technology in their teaching to these students. This means the new integrated curriculum provides more opportunities for teachers at the basic level to collaborate more and learn from each other to effectively implement this curriculum. With these policies in place, one can hope that school leaders and teachers will be motivated to model practices that encourage lifelong learning if implemented effectively.

Discussion

The existing education policies and various initiatives of the MoEST regarding the teachers' and head teachers' professional development demonstrate an excellent intention to enhance the learning culture among them. The challenge remains the transfer of the skills and knowledge in the classrooms as well as contextual as per the need of the learners. For example, the existing TPD programme is designed with the view that teachers are provided opportunities to share their best practices and seek developmental feedback. However, the passive lecture method is common in all

professional development sessions. Adult learners prefer different active and engaging activities such as group work, problem-solving, project-based learning, and developmental feedback rather than judgmental and ICT integration instead of just lecturing at them (Pokhrel & Behera, 2016).

It is encouraging to see the Ministry of Education has prioritized the collaborative culture in the Policy document of Nepal. "For example, MoE felt the need to create a collaborative, collegial, and purposive learning culture in the school" (Dhungel et al., n.d., p. 2).

Theoretical Referents

This study is guided by Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn. Knowles (1980) put the following key assumptions forwards on how adults learn effectively. For example, the self-concept of an adult learner moves from being dependent to being a self-directed person that takes control of their learning; they accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning, and an adult's readiness to learn is centred around learning new knowledge that may influence their social role. Additionally, in the orientation to learning, adults are motivated to learn if they see what they learn will be immediately applicable to their life and directly related to their classroom practices. Finally, adults learn what they need to know. They become internally motivated to learn new knowledge based on the desire to improve in a certain area.

Figure 1 illustrates Knowles's learning theory.

Figure 1

Knowles Theory of Andragogy
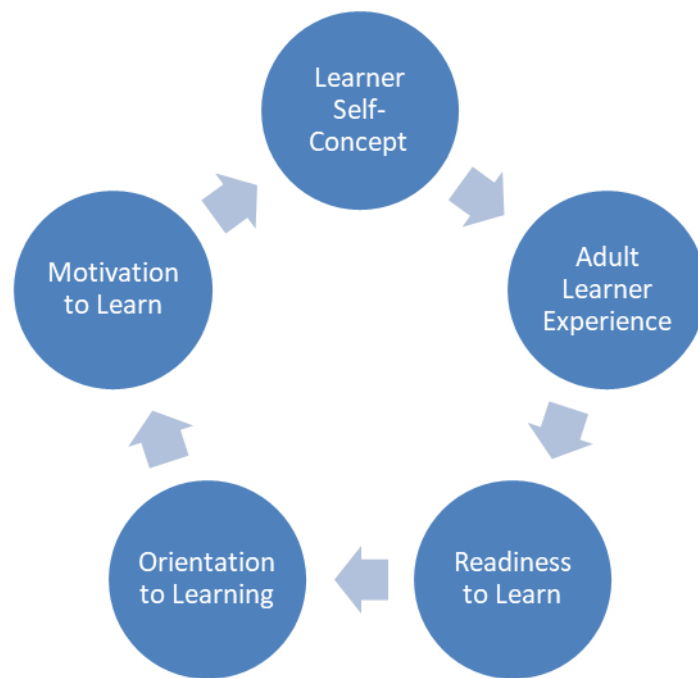
From Knowles's (1980) theory assumptions, four adult learning concepts were applied to how adults prefer to gain new knowledge. These concepts suggest that adults (a) like to be involved in the process of planning their learning as opposed to someone imposing instruction; (b) learn from experiences; (c) prefer learning to be experiential, problem-solving cases, simulation exercises, and field experience; and (d) learning should be developed to increase skills and competency and provide an immediate relevance to their tasks because adults are deeply motivated to learn new concepts that may influence their social role as teachers.

This theory also identified some barriers, such as time constraints, attitudes towards learning, and programmes that ignore adult learning principles that block the internal motivation of adult learners.

This theory guided me to explore and understand how teachers, as adult learners learn from each other in collaborative settings and some of their barriers.

Research Gap

I found that only a few narrative inquiries were carried out on this topic. The researchers are often more focused on teachers' formal professional learning but other aspects of learning, such as peer learning and observations, are less studied. Similarly, head teachers' role in creating a learning culture in schools has been less studied. It is therefore important to bring out the lived experiences of these teachers and how they are learning, along with how the head teachers facilitate learning.

A handful of literature I reviewed related to my research topic and questions highlight that teachers learn better when there is a collaborative learning culture in a school. They will be motivated and inspired to share their ideas and skills with other teachers. However, teachers lack knowledge and strategies about collaborative learning (Rana & Rana, 2022).

Similarly, the literature I reviewed regarding how head teachers facilitate learning shows that there is a huge expectation put on head teachers. They need to be a role model for being a lifelong learner that will inspire teachers to imitate their leaders. They should play a significant role in creating a collaborative learning culture by promoting staff morale and encouraging a positive learning culture among the teachers. One way to ensure it is through modelling, monitoring, and dialogue.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education of Nepal promotes ongoing learning for teachers and head teachers by advocating and disseminating policies that support and endorse quality education for all schools. The education policies have provided positive incentives to encourage ongoing professional development, creating learning cultures among school teachers. However, the role of head teachers is significantly limited to administrative and managerial roles instead of engaging various aspects of instructional practices.

The existing Teacher Professional Development Programme expects teachers to share their best practices, offer peer observation, and seek developmental feedback from their peers and head teachers. However, these practices are generally less visible in our public schools in Nepal.

Furthermore, there is often a gap between teachers' expectations from the TPD programme and what they are getting. For example, teachers are expected to use child-friendly teaching methods and integration of ICT, to refresh, strengthen and update the knowledge and skills of teachers so that there will be a visible change in the classroom and a lack of opportunity for teachers to share their best practices among the other teachers (Pokhrel and Behera, 2016).

After reviewing the literatures, I feel a gap in the research about practice exists concerning how teachers learn in schools and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools. I sought to fill this gap through my study.

Chapter Three provides details regarding this study's research design and methodology.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative narrative study aimed to explore how teachers learn from each other in their schools' settings and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools. This chapter introduces and discusses his study's methodological approach, research design and philosophical consideration. Furthermore, this chapter includes the details of participants' demographics, data collection procedures and analysis. I took references from Creswell's six phases of analysis to analyze the data that I collected through an interview over the phone with my participants. The details are presented under each section.

Additionally, I explain the quality standard and ethical issues concerning the research process by which I implemented best practices to ensure a trustworthy study. The chapter concludes with a brief schedule outline to complete the study with the timeline.

Research Paradigm: Interpretivism

The paradigm for this research is interpretivism, which is primarily concerned with constructing insightful understandings and meanings from individuals' perspectives, such as the ideas, beliefs, values, experiences, and worldviews of the participants of this study (Taylor, 2014). Interpretivism focuses on meaning-making, interaction, and engagement in inquiry (Taylor et al., 2012). With an interpretivism perspective, researchers tend to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and its complexity in its unique context instead of trying to generalize the base of understanding for the whole population (Creswell, 2014). Thus, meaning is

constructed through interaction in the cultural context that allowed me to adopt an emergent nature of my inquiry, thereby exploring the contextual and lived experiences that each participant brought to this study.

Philosophical Consideration

My study is based on narrative research with an interpretive paradigm. Epistemology seeks to discover the mind's relationship to reality. "Knowledge is symbolically constructed and not objective; those understandings of the world are based on convention; that truth is, in fact, what we agree it is" (Hatch, 2002, p. 15). Knowledge may be subjectively acquired; however, researchers must delve into social inquiry to reveal new information. I sought to expose the lived experiences and knowledge of the participants of this study based on this epistemological premise.

Ontologically, constructivists make assumptions that individuals construct their reality. As such multiple realities about the nature and being of existence are yet to be explored and new understanding may be learned. This study provides insights concerning how teachers learn from each other in the school setting and how headteachers facilitate learning within the educational site, which aligns with the constructivist ontological paradigm. The findings of this study provide implications for the educational setting in Nepali schools.

The axiology of this study is value ladden. The value of the study is the participants' shared experience, and literature, in addition to my own value regarding teachers' learning. I provided balanced axiology by acknowledging my experience in the research topic and by cognitively recognizing potential bias during the data collection and analysis of this study. Attention to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of this study provide evidence of the trustworthiness of the research.

Research Method: Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is the research method I used for this study. Narrative research is increasingly being used in social contextual educational settings. One of the important features of narrative inquiry is that it is the study of lived experiences as it is told (Caine et al., 2016). Narrative inquiry offers the human narrative of lived experiences as a source of important knowledge and understanding (Clandidin, 2013). Clandidin and Connelly (2000) stated that the narrative approach is both the phenomenon and the method. The narrative approach can also be placed within the social-cultural paradigm as postulated by Vygotsky (1987) and is an appropriate method for this study (Moen, 2006). A qualitative design with a narrative inquiry as my research method allowed me to engage in conversation with participants who shared stories of their experiences of learning (Clandinin, 2013). Teachers are natural storytellers who function in a social community together.

One of the strengths of narrative analysis is that human beings are a natural storyteller. Teachers have a wealth of experience, and knowledge, and gain learning from each other. The narrative inquiry enabled me to explore the stories of the teachers, make meaning of their subjective responses, and construct new knowledge. Atkinson (2013) stated that people reveal not only experiences but also identity through stories. Narratives are how humans can make meaning of their existence.

Furthermore, there are three basic claims about narrative research as postulated by Moen (2006) that humans organize their experiences of the world into narratives, narrative researchers maintain that the stories that are told depend on the individuals' past and present experiences, and there is a multivoicedness that occurs in the narratives (p. 60).

The focus of this study was to make meaning of how teachers learn from each other in their schools' settings and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools through in-depth interviews of the participants lived experiences.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher of this study, I remained a good listener throughout the interview. I developed the interview questions, conducted the interviews, and interpreted the data. To avoid bias, I withheld pre-conceived ideas and recorded the responses of the participants of this study without judgment. The participants' culture, customs and traditional practices were respected without any biased opinion.

One of the principles of the narrative method is minimal interviewing with an opening question as broad as possible (Bloor & Wood, 2006). I used an interview protocol and open-ended questions to solicit responses from the participants to answer the research questions. I used probing questions that emerged in the interviewing process to provide my participants further an opportunity to reflect on their learning practices (Creswell, 2014). I developed these interview questions based on the peer-reviewed literature I read and on my general knowledge as an educator and seeking input from my dissertation supervisor.

Research Site and Participant Selection

The research site of this study is located at a community school in Lamjung District. Selecting participants for a qualitative study is important because the people selected must be individuals who can answer the interview questions that answer the study's research questions (Creswell, 2014). I used purposive sampling to select voluntary participants for this study because they were knowledgeable and capable of contributing responses that would help me answer the research questions (Ball, 1990 as cited in Cohen et al., 2007). The most valid use of purposeful sampling is to obtain

expert opinion (Pant, 2014). Bordens and Abbot (2005) argued that ethical treatment of participants requires voluntary participation, informed consent, the right to withdraw, the right to obtain results, and the right to confidentiality. It is the researchers' responsibility not to cause harm to their participants.

Starks and Trinidad (2007) stated that "although it is impossible to predict what sample size will saturate. The sample size depends on the analytic objective and the data source" (p. 1375). I invited three teachers and three head teachers to be participants who represented different community schools in Lamjung. Participation in the study was voluntary.

Participant Demographics

The demographics of this study consisted of a range of participants with varying ethnicities, genders, experience levels, and education levels. Three head teachers volunteered to participate in this study, with a range of academic leadership from 13-19 years. Similarly, three teachers who participated in this study have teaching experiences between 2-20 years. In terms of gender, they were equally distributed with three male and three female participants. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym to keep their identity confidential. The details of each participant included in this study are presented below.

Among the teachers, the first participant is Rama**.** She has received a master's degree in Arts. She has been teaching for the last two years at the primary level. She is a permanent teacher. She teaches Nepali and Social Studies. She has been enriching her learning through training, reading books, self-reflection and learning by doing.

My Second participant is Bishal. He has completed a bachelor's degree in Arts. He is also a permanent teacher. He has mainly taught mathematics at Primary and Lower Secondary levels for the last 20 years. He has been enhancing his

professional development by attending Teacher Professional Development organized by the District Education Office. During the COVID -19 pandemic, he participated in a few online subjects-specific training.

Additionally, he has been enriching his learning by sharing his experiences with his peers at the school. He is also open to asking for some help from his colleagues when there is confusion and he is not able to solve the problem. The COVID -19 pandemic inspired him to start self-learning via the internet.

Binita is my third participant. She has completed a master's degree in Education. She is a permanent teacher. She has been teaching as a Primary Teacher for the last 15 years. Her school has introduced grade teaching at the primary level for the last few years. She has been assigned a role as a Grade Four teacher. The main methods she has used to enhance her professional development are formal training/workshops, collaborative learning with colleagues, learning by doing, self-reflection and reading.

My second group of participants is head teachers who are directly connected with my second research question. I have briefly described their background below.

Rajesh started his teaching career as a teacher. He has been in the teaching profession for over three decades. Out of which, he has been serving as a Head Teacher for the last 18 years in secondary level school with a total student of 350. They have 23 staff (twenty teaching & three non-teaching staff).

Similarly, another participant is Samjhana. She has been in the teaching profession for the last 23 years. She has completed her double master's degree with a master's degree in Arts and Education. She has taken the role of Head Teacher for the last 13 years in a secondary level school with 171. She has to manage 22 teaching staff and one non-teaching staff.

Finally, Binod is the last participant in this study. Like the other two participants, he also has a long career in the teaching profession with over 28 years. He has been Head Teacher for the last 13 years in his basic school (ECD to Grade 8). They have got 156 students with 12 teaching staff and one non-teaching staff. He has completed grade 12.

<div align="center">

Data Collection Procedures

</div>

Although data collection for a qualitative study is best obtained in the natural setting of the participant (Creswell, 2014), I interviewed the six participants of this study by phone calls. This process was mandated because of the global COVID-19 pandemic that closed all schools in Nepal during the data collection process. I therefore did not get an opportunity to make field visits and observe my participants in actions.

I began to collect data after obtaining approval from the Kathmandu University School of Education and after receiving permission from my supervisor to interview participants. I first contacted my participants over the phone. The interview dates and times were scheduled at the convenience of each participant. I used an interview protocol and open-ended questions to solicit responses from the participants to answer the research questions. I used probing questions that emerged in the interviewing process to provide my participants further an opportunity to reflect on their learning practices (Creswell, 2014). Due to the unanticipated COVID-19 pandemic, participants choose phone calls rather than face-to-face interviews. Other than that, I did not encounter any unusual situations during the data collection process.

Before starting each interview, I explained to them the purpose of my study, how their names would be kept confidential, and the procedure for maintaining data

privacy. I further explained to them that this interview would be voluntary, and they were free to withdraw if they wished. Each participant received the consent to record the interviews on my mobile phone before proceeding.

During the interview sessions, I attentively listened to their stories and experiences without being biased and with minimum interruption, only was necessary. It was a meaningful reminder that in narrative inquiry, it is important to listen with a nonjudgmental attitude and provide a sense of equality with the participants (Moen, 2006). The interview was conducted in the Nepali language so that the participants could express themselves in their heart language. I am thankful to my participants who offered their time to speak to me even after their working hours in the evening. Additionally, I was really impressed to all my participants for their enthusiasm to share their stories with me over the phone.

While confirming the suitable time for an interview especially with two of my participants Rama and Binita, I became aware of their multiple responsibilities at home and school. They both have young children. After working all day at school, they have different roles to play when they return to home. They are expected to cook meals, do the various house chores, helping their children to complete their homework. After a several efforts, we were able to find a suitable time for interview with both of them. This helps me to be aware of the different challenges of our female teachers in our Nepali schools who must joggle with multiple responsibilities to maintain a balance between work and home life. I truly empathize with them.

I was mindful that this study would benefit these participants by raising the profile of teachers and head teachers by raising awareness of the problems facing these educators as they seek to learn in their schools. After each interview, I thanked the participant for sharing their experience and valuable information to help me

research this topic. I conducted interviews over six weeks. The telephone interviews lasted approximately 35–45 minutes and were recorded so I could transcribe the responses with the consent of each participant.

I recorded each interview using my mobile phone and then uploaded the interview to my password-protected computer. The recordings allowed me to listen repeatedly to the discussions to familiarize myself with the data before beginning the content analysis process. Additionally, I typed their narratives into Nepali. I printed them to have a hard copy, which was more convenient for me to read and allowed me to make notes in the margins as I began to analyze the data. Subsequently, I scheduled a short follow-up interview with three participants to verify some information. To ensure confidentiality, I saved the transcripts on my password-protected computer and stored written documents on a locked study desk in my home when I was not using them. The collected data has been stored and kept for the time required by Kathmandu University after the study is completed.

Data Analysis Plan

The answers to qualitative research questions are provided in narrative form by the participants of a study. Therefore, the analysis of narrative data, using induction and deduction, provides the basis for the analysis process. Because the research approach is narrative inquiry, the focus would be on providing a narrative explanation, generating meaning from the interviews, and creating a theme from the participants' responses to create meaning from the data.

I took references from Creswell's (2014) six phases of analysis: (a) becoming familiar with the data, (b) placing the data into a management system (c) coding the data, (d) observing themes, (e) reporting the findings, and (f) validating the accuracy of the findings.

Step 1, Becoming familiar with the data: After I completed each interview, I translated the interview into English from Nepali and transcribed the data into a Word document. When each transcription was completed, I read the document for accuracy. I read and reread each transcript to familiarize myself with the contents and noted patterns emerging in the data. I made mental and physical notes on the transcripts. Creswell (2014) stated that becoming familiar with the data is an essential initial step in analyzing interview data.

Step 2, Placing the data into a management system: I organized the data by the two participant groups of teachers and head teachers. I used a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to organize and manage the data and placed sections of the raw data from the transcripts into the spreadsheet. This spreadsheet helped me to determine codes and patterns that developed at the coding stage of the analysis process.

Step 3, coding the data: Using an inductive process, I observed the data from the interview spreadsheet to inductively create codes. I used prior, open, and pattern codes for the teacher responses. I used open and pattern codes when examining the head teachers' data. I compared the codes to identify categories from the patterns I could observe emerging themes.

Step 4, Observing themes: Themes emerged from the coding process. I double-checked the raw data from the interviews to ensure that I did not misinterpret the data and that meanings were not lost in the coding process. I created sentences to reflect the meaning of the theme including words from the transcripts (Bengtsson, 2016).

Step 5, Reporting the findings: I organized the report by theme and addressed the study's research questions. Using direct quotes from the participant interviews, I provided evidence to support the findings of this study.

Step 6, Validating the accuracy of the findings: Creswell (2014) stressed the importance of creating a trustworthy study. I continuously analyzed the data to ensure interpretations were valid. Validation of this study is discussed in the following Quality Standards section.

In summary, while narrating research participants' lived experiences, my focus was to hear their voices, record them, and interpret them with great responsibility (Riessman, 1993). I listened to the stories of each participant without being judgmental or biased. Throughout the interview, I did not interject my thoughts or opinions on the studied topic. I used probing questions during the interview, allowing the participants to reflect on their learning practices.

Evidence of Quality and Trustworthiness

This qualitative narrative study aimed to explore how teachers learn from each other in their schools' settings and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools. Trustworthiness relates to the certainty of how data were analyzed, and the authenticity displayed during the research process.

It is also important to ensure that research is done ethically and performed principally and transparently. Trustworthiness in qualitative studies is established by an organized approach to the research design, the credibility of the researcher; confirmation of the findings based on other literature and the conceptual framework; and transferability (Rose & Johnson, 2000).

The standard qualitative study research processes were followed to ensure quality standards of the research as follows:

The title of the study reflects the central phenomenon being studied. The statement of the problem provides a meaningful gap in the research and the purpose of the study was clearly stated and articulated throughout the study for clarification. Similarly, I

worked hard to have an in-depth literature review of the research topic using academic journals, books, reports and policy documents as far as they contribute to meeting the purpose of the research. Additionally, this study was grounded in the research of Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn. Furthermore, sufficient time was devoted to selecting participants who represented the population that was studied, and thick and rich descriptions extracted from the participants' responses are provided in the narrative context (Rose & Johnson, 2000). Furthermore, detailed descriptions promoted the transferability of the study to possible applications in different contexts and locations (Creswell, 2014). I also contacted participants for member checking to ensure data were transcribed and described accurately to increase confirmability (Creswell, 2014).

Finally, I used Creswell's (2014) six-step data analysis process. I applied credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability practices to increase the trustworthiness of this study (Shenton, 2004). I discuss each of these components below.

Credibility

Credibility, similar to internal validity in quantitative research, involves a researcher transparently stating how the study was done credibly or believably (Creswell, 2014). I used two means to provide credibility to the study: (a) purposeful participants and (b) member checking.

First, I chose six participants in this study in a way that ensured gender balance as well as experience of the phenomenon under investigation. I asked each teacher and head teacher participant the same interview questions aligned with the research questions. All participants had experience as a teacher and head teachers at these schools to the research questions (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012.

Second, I used member checking to provide credibility to this study. Rose and Johnson (2020) suggested that member checking is an important method of building trustworthiness. Member checks are usually conducted with the study participants. I sent a draft report to all six participants individually and allowed them to have an opportunity to check the report to ensure that their narratives were not misinterpreted. Participant T1 offered a minor correction, which was incorporated into this study. I was assured by the other five participants that their narratives were accurately recorded in the report.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the applicability of the findings of a study to a different context (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012). Although the findings of a qualitative study may not generalize to another setting, I provided detailed descriptions of this study that may allow a reader to gain a proper understanding and make a judgement about the applicability of the findings within a similar context. Thick descriptions ensured the external validity of a qualitative study. I provided a thorough description of the steps used to conduct this study, including selecting participants, gaining permission to conduct the study, describing the setting, conducting interviews, collecting data, providing data analysis steps, creating trustworthiness, and reporting findings. By providing these details, a reader may determine whether the results are transferable to other contexts or similar settings.

Dependability

Dependability, the counterpart of reliability in a quantitative study, relates to assuring that the findings are consistent and can be repeated (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2012). To increase the dependability of this research, I practiced the interview protocol and questions with three individuals who were not part of this

study to ensure that the actual interviews would be carried out smoothly and data would answer the research questions. I also shared the data of these preparation interviews with my doctoral supervisor at the university and sought feedback and professional advice to increase the study's dependability. Audit trails also provide the dependability of a narrative qualitative study (Creswell, 2014). I included (a) the development of the interview protocol and questions, (b) the procedure by which I chose participants, and (c) detailed the methodological process in Chapter 3 and described the data analysis in Chapter 4 to provide the dependability of this study.

Confirmability

Confirmability relates to ensuring that the finding of the study can be repeated and is free of personal biases and prejudice (Shenton, 2004). To increase conformability, I prepared an interview protocol to avoid personal bias in the data collection. Additionally, one peer debriefer reviewed the developed categories and themes to provide feedback on content alignment and reliability. The peer debriefer assisted me in determining whether the developed themes aligned with the research questions and findings shared by participants, which helped reduce potential bias during the analysis process.

Furthermore, it is suggested that a researcher address the issue of three dimensions in narrative inquiry: temporality, sociality, and time (Clandinin, Pushor & Orr, 2007). A brief explanation of each dimension is presented below.

Temporality

In narrative inquiry, it is always important to understand that people, places and events are in process and always in transition (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006 cited in Clandinin, Pushor & Orr, 2007). This means events and people are influenced by past, present and future. Therefore, it was important to understand how my participants'

learning has been influenced in these temporal transitions. While generating meaning from narrative events in the form of stories and experiences of my participant, I attempted to find how their own learning as a teacher and how they facilitate learning as head teachers have been influenced by their past experiences and how they are envisioning their future learning. To do this, I maintained good rapport with my participants to bring out their real stories.

Sociality

In narrative inquiry, sociality concerned with both personal and social condition. The personal conditions refer such as the feelings, hopes and desires whereas social conditions include the environment, surrounding factors and people. It emphasizes for developing a good social relationship between inquirer and participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

As a result, I was mindful about my own circumstances and social circumstances. I was also careful while generating meaning of their personal stories in order to consider how their passion, feeling and moral conditions are shaped by each of their social interaction and surrounding measures to know their perception toward their own learning and facilitate learning.

Place

The place is defined as the actual, physical, and geographical bounds of the place where the inquiry and events occur (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Therefore, I was careful that my participants' memories and the experience were inseparably associated with a particular place. To maintain quality standard in the research, places guide us to events and experiences for meaning making. I was aware that all my participants' perceptions would be shaped by the places they had lived since their

early days. As a narrative inquirer, I need to think through each place's impact on my participants' experience in terms of their journey of learning.

Chapter Essence

I choose six participants by applying purposive sampling. I used Creswell's six-step process of data analysis. I then explained how ontological, epistemological and axiological standpoints guided my research.

I read and reread the data, study them carefully to make meaning and generate themes from the data. While narrating research participants' lived experiences, I paid attention to hearing their voices, recording them, and interpreting them with great responsibility. I attentively listened to the stories of each participant without being judgmental or biased. Throughout the interview, I did not interject my thoughts or opinions on the studied topic.

After completing the data coding, I compared the codes to identify categories from the patterns from which I was able to observe emerging themes. I applied credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability practices along with the three dimensions of narrative inquiry such as temporality, sociality and place, to ensure the quality standards of this study.

CHAPTER IV

UNFOLDING THE PACK

This qualitative study aimed to explore how teachers learn from each other in their schools' settings and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools. From the data collected using narrative inquiry, I identified categories and themes. The findings from this study offer a greater understanding of teachers' methods, techniques, and practices concerning how they enhance their professional development in their schools. This study also understates how head teachers encourage learning at their schools.

I answered the research questions by collecting data from teachers and head teachers' responses during interviews. I describe the details of the findings in Chapter 4 by highlighting the setting, data collection, data analysis, results, and evidence of trustworthiness. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Themes from the Narrative of Teachers

I developed four themes from the information of participants who took part in this study. These themes are teachers learn in formal and informal settings, teachers learn collaboratively, and teachers learn when knowledge applies to the classroom. I have discussed these themes with literature and theory below in detail.

Teachers Learn in Formal and Informal Settings

The first research question of this study was the following: How do teachers narrate their understanding of learning (self-learning and shared learning) in Nepali school settings? The first theme from the data analysis was that teachers are internally motivated to learn new knowledge to increase instructional skills by (a) participating

in formal training and (b) observing other teachers teaching in classrooms. Sattar and Awan (2019) shared their experience from their research with the teachers in Pakistan that formal professional development training regularly is necessary for becoming a good teacher because it helps to improve pedagogical skills. Additionally, trained teachers can adopt new teaching strategies in the classroom.

Formal Training

The first category of Theme 1 was that teachers learn new knowledge by enrolling in official training offered by educational agencies. All three participants of this study indicated that they were motivated to learn new skills through formal training. My Participant Rama shared,

> *I took two weeks training with Education Training Centre. The training focused on teaching methods to motivate students to learn. When I returned to school after the training, I composed a song to teach Nepali grammar, "BIBHAKTI" (case maker), to my Grade one class.*

The participant enthusiastically sang the song during the interview and indicated that she had also been trained to use locally available resources to make the teaching engaging and meaningful for students. Rama later applied these skills to teach creative arts. The classroom students made various models of animals and birds using locally available low-cost and no-cost resources rather than expensive plastic resources. These participants' experiences affirm one of the assumptions of Knowle's learning theory that adults desire to learn new knowledge when they can apply it immediately. Similarly, Participants, Bishal and Binita received several formal trainings with the District Education Office, various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs).

Formalized training offered to classroom teachers is vital for educators to gain new knowledge.

The participants of this study (teachers) shared that they are encouraged by their head teachers to attend the formal training organized ETC. They also expressed their contentment that the head teachers have been providing equal opportunities to all their peers to attend Teacher Professional Development training.

Peer Observations

The second category of Theme 1 for teachers revealed that classroom teachers are motivated to learn from observing other teachers. Peer observation is helpful as a professional development tool in which the observer teacher gains new knowledge of teaching methods or strategies they can apply in their teaching practice (Vincent, 2018). Research by Henry and Oliver (2010, as cited in Adhikari, 2019) found that while engaging in peer observation as a means for professional growth, the observer learns how to use new teaching strategies and develops the confidence to implement new skills. The participants of this study have enriched their learning experiences through peer observation.

My other participant Bishal shared that during the COVID-19 lockdown, to enhance training, observing math classes on television had an assistant in adapting child-centered teaching methods for instruction. He shared the impact of this new learning and stated,

> *I used to struggle to simply teach angles so my studentscould understand. I used to draw the angles on the board and explain them to the students. This TV teacher taught it by using resources such as making angles with paper. When our school returned to face-to-face in October, I tried to apply some of these ideas to my class. I made angles from cardboard paper. I showed them*

to students. We then together made angles from the papers. My students were very happy and engaged in learning. I learnt that using hands-on activity is a very effective way to make them understand.

This is a good example of the opportunity to collaborate among the teachers to share their knowledge and skills virtually. However, access to technology such as computers and the internet in most Nepali public schools is still out of reach.

Another participant Binita affirmed that they are enhancing their professional development through peer observation and articulated,

I observed their classes and gave them feedback. I also sometimes do demo classes for them [other teachers]. We have a very cordial relationship; we do not feel uncomfortable learning from each other. We do a lot of discussions; this is how we are also learning together and enhancing our learning and teaching.

Their experience of learning relates to how the learning used to take place under the "GURUKUL" as referenced in the Hindu ancient epic "MAHABHARAT" that suggests learning one quarter in a formal way such as from the teacher, another quarter from your friends/colleagues. Similarly, the third quarter should be learnt from the social expert. Finally, you need to learn the fourth quarter from your own experiences over the years, which helps to complete the learning (Koirala, 2021).

The finding from this study that teachers learn new knowledge to increase instructional skills by participating in formal training and observing other teachers teaching in classrooms is supported by one of the assumptions of Knowles's (1980) adult learning theory that adults desire to gain new knowledge and apply this information in direct ways that can relate to classroom instruction for students.

Teachers Learn Through Self-direction

The second theme developed in this study was that teachers become self-directed learners and take control of their learning journey by (a) being able to ask other educators for help, (b) creating a passion for teaching, and (c) becoming self-reflective.

Passion for Teaching

The first category of Theme 2 revealed that self-directed classroom teachers exhibit fervor and excitement for their educational career. Rama reminisced a memory of how reading a book translated into Nepali created the inspiration to learn new teaching techniques even before entering a teaching career. This participant shared,

The book touched my heart. I used to imagine like if I were a teacher, I would have done this and that [strategy discussed in the book]. Now, I am a teacher. I have applied some of the techniques from that book to engage our students in learning. I have also learnt that getting ideas from others is important but adapting them in our teaching and learning context. If you are passionate about teaching, the ideas will come up as you teach.

Maintaining a readiness to learn, as Knowles (1980) described in the adult learning theory, is vital for teachers because they influence not only the academic standards of the classroom but also impact their social role as an educator. Self-reflection is essential for teachers to use to gain new knowledge and continue to learn in the profession.

Becoming Self-reflective

The second category of Theme 2 was that teachers learn through self-reflection. Freemon &Richards (Ed.). (2002) highlight the significance of teachers

being a reflective learner. They state that reflection has the power to help teachers link their own experiences and theoretical knowledge. It was obvious in Binita's case. She shared an exciting story of professional introspection that occurred in a library class of students while reading a book called Últo Umesh, *The Upside-Down Umesh,* to the children. The main character of this book, Umesh, is a restless boy who struggles to pay attention and follow classroom instructions. Umesh did precisely the opposite of what his teacher asked him to do. For example, when his teacher asked him to sit down, he stood up, or when he was told to be quiet, he continued to talk. After finishing reading the book and at a later time, Binita began to reflect and relate how this book helped with an issue of classroom management.

> *This story helped me reflect and relate to my classroom management challenges. This book provided me the ideas on how I could relate well with my students in my class who struggle to pay attention and sit still. It also gave me ideas on how to draw their attention in the class. I learnt that sometimes, just reading a short story book at the beginning of the class is a great way to get the attention of the whole class before we move on.*

These participants' experiences in this study collaborate with the findings of Habib's (2017) research. Reflective practices encourage teachers to understand their learners' learning needs and abilities. Habib (2017) further stated that reflective teachers are more likely to develop reflective learners.

Asking for Help

The third category of Theme 2 was the importance of the ability to ask for help when needing to collaborate with other educators. Bishal also shared how collaborative learning in the school helped to improve classroom instructional practices and indicated,

We have also formed subject committees. I teach math at primary level but

when I am confused, I now ask for help from my colleague who teaches in the

secondary level. It worked quite well, but we had to close the school due to the

COVID-19 pandemic. We hopefully will continue to practice it [collaborative

learning] when we can teach face-to-face again.

Similarly, as a novice teacher, Binita described that most instructional practices used

in the classroom centered on teacher instruction and rote learning techniques. This

participant vividly recalled reaching out for assistance to learn new skills during

training with other teachers:

Some of us were new and others were very experienced teachers. We had a lot

of discussions about finding a solution to the problem we are facing in our

teaching. When I heard some problems and their solutions, I could relate them

to my classroom experiences and I would note them down and plan to apply

them to my class when I returned to my school. There was no sense of

insecurity or inferiority because every participant had a lot of questions and

problems and was eager to learn from each other. Those more experienced

and senior to us were very humble to share their experiences with us.

Teachers who can request help from colleges are self-directed learners who

can adapt their roles in the classroom to meet the needs of the students for

academic success.

Bath (1991) emphasized that teachers as adult learners must talk and help one

another improve their instructional practices (as cited in Krovetz 1993). This theme

aligns with Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy which illustrates that adults want

to choose how they learn and become confident in the knowledge they need to acquire

to improve their skills. This is affirmed by Pandey (2012) that reflective practices help

professional teachers to enhance their instructional practices. However, he stated that Nepali teachers are generally shy and afraid to reflect on their practices, ask for help, and share their weaknesses with their senior colleagues. In this study, all three teacher participants had positive experiences by being reflective learners and seeking help from others to solve their problems at their jobs. Each was passionate about being a self-directed learner who took control of improving their knowledge as a classroom professional.

It is very encouraging to see these participants being self-motivated and passionate about learning and collaborating with other teachers to enhance their learning. However, our schools lack a culture of sustaining these effective pedagogical practices long-term. When these inspiring and internally motivated teachers leave the schools, their skills and experiences are not transferred to other teachers.

For example, my participant Bishal also expressed a concern that they were doing quite well collaborating with each other's in their school, especially among the subject-specific teachers. But the, COVID-19 disrupted it since the schools were forced to close and they could not meet face to face and collaborate online other virtual medium is very limited due to the accessibility of ICT facilities in the schools.

Teachers Learn Collaboratively

The third theme of this study for teachers is that teachers bring prior knowledge and experiences that provide a foundation for learning to share knowledge collaboratively with other classroom teachers.

Each of the three teacher participants of this study stated that they were open to working with other teachers to increase their collaborative learning. All participants affirmed that a collaborative learning culture was profitable to enrich their

professional development and improve their instructional practices through collaboration with colleagues. Bishal shared,

> *I attended teacher professional development sessions. We were 30 participants sharing our experiences and challenges and learning from each other as we interacted with each other. We also learnt how to teach at the primary level through play and songs. I tried to implement these skills, particularly the songs, when I returned to my school. I learnt the song to teach the name of the days in Grade 2 and I taught them. The children were very happy.*

Similarly, Binita explained opportunities to attend a wide range of professional development over the years. While attempting to implement the knowledge and techniques leant at the training with students in the classroom, these new learning and skills are also shared with colleagues at the school. She described the following:

> *We have introduced grade teaching in our school at the primary level. I am responsible for Grade 4. I have developed a resource bank. I have made clocks, triangles, sample bills of money and coins, balancing scales, etc., to teach the concept of math such as time, geometry, and measurement. I let my colleagues teaching lower grades from 1-3 borrow them and use them in their classes.*

This theme affirms one of the assumptions concerning how adults learn based on Knowles's (1980) theory of adult learning. Adults have lots of experiences from which they draw knowledge. They take these experiences and learn from them. Similarly, as an educator gains experience in the classroom, they enlarge their skills and instructional capacity from which teachers can increase new knowledge and, in turn, share with others. Wood (2007) emphasized the need for experienced teachers to

transfer their knowledge and skills to other teachers, enabling the experiences and expertise to be passed on to the next generation of educators. For this, it is crucial to have a learning culture among school teachers. Additionally, Shah (2012) affirmed that when teachers work collaboratively, it creates cooperation opportunities that enhance the level of innovation and enthusiasm among the teachers and occasions for teachers to learn together.

Teachers who collaborate to learn new skills in the educational setting create a positive interdependence among the educators that not only enhances academic gains for students in the classroom but also helps to increase a positive learning environment for the school. Teachers learn in a collaborative setting with other educators Shah (2012).

Although the participants of this study shared their positive experiences and practices of their collaborative learning among their peers, the research among the Nepali teachers shows very different pictures. For example, teachers are less aware of collaborative learning, hesitant to welcome peer observation and constructive feedback, lack of discussion, confidence in teachers and students' collaborative learning and teaching, and lack of cross sections collaboration.

Teachers Learn When Knowledge is Applicable to the Classroom

Theme 4 is that teachers prefer task-oriented learning that may be immediately applied to improve classroom instruction.

These study participants articulated their passion for learning new skills and knowledge. At the same time, they were speedy in applying that knowledge and skills in their context. Rama articulated, *"I have also learnt that it is important to get ideas from others but adapt them to our teaching and learning context. If you are passionate about teaching, the ideas will come up as you teach."* This participant

further reflected those skills that can be used in the classroom may be learned and applied by using locally available resources and related an experience of developing problem-centered learning when teaching creative arts. Rama further shared,

> *I learnt some of these skills at the training but when I did it with my students in my class, we had so much fun. For example, our Grade 1 local curriculum taught students about local tourist places. It was a very difficult concept for me to teach them. After the training, I got many ideas. I chose one of the students and he pretended to be at one of the famous tourist destinations in our local area. I wrote the name of the place on a card and stitched it on his shirt. He sat in one of the corners of the classroom. The rest of the class then make a trip to this place. They pretended that they were visiting this place. They asked each other about this place, like, "Who lives in it?" "What kind of clothes do they wear?" "What food do they eat?" "What festivals do they celebrate?*

New learning gained through professional development and applied immediately in the classroom can increase students' academic learning and be an enjoyable learning experience for the teacher and children. Gupta and Lingenfelter (2006) affirmed that adults learn faster when they have hands-on experience. Therefore, the most productive adult learning comes from the analysis of adult experience and adults have a deep need to self-direct (Meziro, as cited in Illeris, 2009). These assumptions help me to visualize the learning practices of teachers.

Binita shared a similar experience, which illustrated that learning by doing helped increase the ability to apply lessons in the classroom as a math teacher. She said,

I went to attend 2-day math training for teachers a few years ago. The facilitator himself was a math teacher and trainer from Europe. He trained us to teach a math concept using locally available resources and hands-on activities. The training was mainly focused on measures, such as teaching primary students about centimeters, liters, kilos, and grams, etc. He brought solid objects in training, like a jug, bucket, measuring tape, etc. We did measurements of various objects, which were in the rooms. We were asked to guess and then find the result against our guess. For example, if we had a glass, we had to think how much water this glass could hold. It was a fun activity to learn a math concept. He also taught us some math games, such as math quizzes, to engage our students in the classes. These were innovative and new methods for me to teach math for more fun. I used mainly to teach them [students] by solving the problem on the board because I did not know how to do it effectively.

This theme connects well with one of the assumptions of Knowles's (1980) adult learning theory, referred to as orientation to learning. Adult learners are motivated to learn new skills or knowledge through problem-centering learning that may be immediately applied in the educational setting. Wood (2007) stated that the *"vision of teachers not only as users of pedagogical knowledge, but also as creators, disseminators, and preservers of it"* (p. 281). They are capable of applying new knowledge in classrooms. In other words, the role of teachers is viewed as a researcher, effective communicator, or transformer of such knowledge. The orientation to learning assumption of the adult learning paradigm (Knowles, 1980) incorporates a practice of teacher learning that is different from what the teacher may have experienced as a student or been trained to teach in their college curriculum.

Teachers learn by doing. This form of professional development provides hands-on

activities that may be used in the classroom using local resources. This is also

affirmed by the study of Gupta and Lingenfelter (2006) that adults learn faster when

they have hands-on experience.

CHAPTER V

CREATING THE ACADEMIC CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL AS A MIX BAG

The second research question of this study was how head teachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools. I developed three themes from the information of participants. The first theme from the data analysis is that head teachers facilitate learning by creating an academic culture through (a) observing classroom instruction and providing constructive feedback and (b) encouraging collaborative learning to solve the problem. The second theme is head teacher's facilitated learning from outside organizations. The final theme is that head teachers facilitate school learning by being role models. I have discussed these themes with literature and theory below in detail.

Classroom Observation

The first category of Theme one was that head teachers encourage learning by observing their teachers' classes and giving them constructive feedback. Headteachers play crucial roles in ensuring effective teaching and learning in a school (Leithwood et al., 2020). This would be possible when principals demonstrate instructional leadership qualities such as showing concern for the students and what teachers do by being visible.

Rajesh shared,

I received several pieces of training, which well-equipped me to become a good teacher. As a head teacher, I am committed to providing them [teachers] training opportunities so that they are updated with the knowledge and skills to teach the subjects they are teaching. I also encourage my teachers to grow

professionally by observing their classes formally and informally and giving

them constructive feedback. I have also formed subject-specific committees

where they discuss their challenges and share experiences. They also solve the

problem of classroom instruction by themselves. I learned this by attending

various training when I was a teacher and went through similar experiences

that my teachers are facing now.

The research suggests that head teachers should be visible in the school and classrooms to observe how teaching and learning occur and praise teachers when excellence is observed in a lesson presentation (Blasé & Blasé, 1998, as cited in Kabetaet al., 2013). All three head teachers who were participants in this study extended evidence in the narratives of promoting academic culture by their presence in classrooms and providing constructive feedback. Although the head teachers were classroom instructors themselves, they regularly observed their teachers and affirmed best practices.

Collaborative Learning Culture

Head teachers in this study shared leadership experiences by which they cultivated an academic learning culture for teachers and students. Visiting classrooms regularly to observe teachers presenting instruction provided opportunities for them to provide positive feedback to increase the teachers' instructional skills.

Samjhana experienced some difficulty in introducing a collaborative learning culture at the beginning of the school year; however, teachers are experiencing growth as they begin to collaborate and learn together at this school.

She further shared,

As a head teacher, I encouraged teachers to form subject-specific committees

such as Nepali, English, science and math so that there is an opportunity for

collaborative learning by sharing their experiences and learning from each other. It did not work well at the beginning because the teachers focused more on the negative. They did not feel comfortable sharing and discussing their weakness. They were not comfortable learning from each other. I then sat with Primary level Nepali teachers. We discussed and made a plan together to improve our instructional practices. It has been very successful and effective. I now see these students doing very well in Primary classes and will do very well in Secondary classes. Our English teachers are encouraged by this; they have started having meetings and putting into practice what we did among the Nepal teachers.

Binod revealed a positive experience of creating an effective collaborative learning culture and explained,

Two years ago, I learnt about various observation methods in a training organized by a local NGO for head teachers. After that training, I learnt new skills to have on objective classroom observation, affirming teachers for their good practices and giving them constructive feedback to improve their teaching. As I started to observe the classes, I realized that some teachers would not be comfortable being open with the head teacher. There were barriers and hesitation. I then encouraged them to have peer observations where they were more comfortable and open with their peers. I have two teachers Jiwan sir (pseudonym) and Maya madam (pseudonym). They are modeling a good example of peer observation to other teachers. They regularly observe each other's classes and give feedback [to each other]. They have inspired other teachers to do the same. The rest of our teachers practice

peer observation and enrich their professional development with a few

exceptions.

A study by Stein (2016) proposes a leadership style such as "lead by walking around" (i.e., leaders' presence or visibility) promotes staff morale. It encourages a positive learning culture among the teachers. Additionally, offering teachers support to encourage a collaborative culture that permitted teachers to grow and problem-solve instructional issues increased the capacity of the teachers to build relationships with other teachers and establish the school's academic culture.

Learning Facilitated with Outside Organizations

The second theme developed in this study from the head teacher narrative was that head teachers facilitate learning by partnering with various organizations to provide teacher access and training.

All three head teachers who were participants in this study mentioned building connections to external organizations that connected the school for broader opportunities to provide better educational settings for the students and provide access to training for their teachers. Rajesh and Binod shared that their partner local NGOs had set up computer labs in their schools. Teachers and students are now learning to use the computer and integrate Information, communication and technology (ICT) skills across the subject teaching.

Additionally, all three head teachers articulated that their partner NGOs had provided various training to their teachers in addition to the Ministry of Education's teacher training wing, the Education Training Centre. This professional development included subject-specific math, science, English, and ICT training. Other training included developing reading skills for teachers to help children progress in their learning, providing classroom management training, building creative and critical

thinking skills, and formulating child-friendly teaching techniques to engage students in learning. These NGOs also provide training to head teachers and parents.

Samjhana stated,

I have attended a few leadership and management training provided by one of our partner organizations. These training helped me to reflect on my leadership skills and practices. I realized I was not very good at bringing a team together, getting their input, and engaging them well in our school improvement plan. After the training, l learnt the skill such as how to affirm teachers, give them autonomy, and create ownership by involving them in decision-making processes. I value their advice and provide them with leadership opportunities through effective delegation.

Binod also shared experiences with outside organizations that facilitated learning in the school and stated,

I proactively seek training opportunities for my teachers, whether with government agencies or with NGOs and INGOs. I also attend the training. We have partnered with various NGOs in the education field, and they have not only provided training for our teachers but also helped us improve our facilities. I believe that training helps you to keep up to date. Without training, you cannot bring educational improvement to your schools. You become like a "KUWAAKO BHYAGUTA" (frog inside the, meaning; the one has become very narrow-minded and has not seen the life beyond the pond). I would instead choose to close school for a week and send teachers for the training. I believe it is worth investing in teachers to equip and empower them with new skills and ideas. When they are empowered and refreshed with new teaching

methods and skills, they can compensate in 2-3 days instead of 1 week of

teaching focused on traditional rote learning and lecturing the students.

This theme encompassed the necessity of reaching beyond the school setting itself to provide professional development and training for teachers in Nepali schools. A study carried out among the head teachers at Nepali community schools by Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (2004) revealed that head teachers have been successful in networking and to form a partnership with various NGOs, INGOs, Foundations and individual donors, mainly to fundraise to improve the physical improvement of school facilities. In some cases, these partnerships also provide an opportunity for the professional development of teachers. Interestingly, participants of this study shared similar experiences.

Head Teachers Facilitate Learning in Schools by being a Role Model

The third theme of this study is that head teachers facilitate learning in schools by being role models for lifelong learners. Headteachers used a variety of means to provide an example of continuous learning for teachers at their schools. Teachers observe head teachers and follow educational standards established in their lives. Binod reflected on the importance of setting a precedent as a lifelong learner to inspire teachers to pursue new learning and teach skills. He further proudly shared a recent new-learning experience that inspired teachers to learn computer skills and shared, with big laughter,

I managed to get several computers for our schools, but our teachers did not

know how to use the computers. They did not know how to type in a computer.

I did not know either. During the lockdown [of a current pandemic in the

community], in one of our weekly academic meetings, I challenged my

teachers that they should learn to type on the computer in both Nepali and

English. I told them I was already too old to learn computer skills, but they are better than me and should learn how to use a computer. I demanded that they should produce the question papers themselves by using computers this coming exam. A few days later, I realized that I had made a mistake. If I am not willing to learn new skills as their leader, how could I demand that [of teachers]? I realized that I should first learn it. So, I bought a laptop during the lockdown. I also bought a book to learn how to type both Nepali and English and its other features. I was able to type both Nepali and English within a few weeks. I then offered my help to my teachers to make their question papers. When I told my teachers that I taught myself to use a computer and started to help them, they were positively challenged and motivated to learn computer [skills]. Now, all our teachers can use computers. They all prepare their questions paper and print them from the computer by themselves. I am also teaching several classes since we are short of staff. I cover classes for my teachers. I learnt that being a role model is very important as a leader to inspire your teacher to be passionate about learning.

Samjhana expressed,

I also learnt that as a leader, if I am committed to growing and learning, my teachers will be motivated to learn new skills and knowledge. I am still teaching three to five classes each day. My teachers affirm that I am one of the head teachers in Lamjung who led the most classes.

Although all three head teachers expressed positive experiences concerning inspiring their teachers to be lifelong learners, Rajesh and Samjhana said the experience they had encountered with several senior teachers who were close to

retirement did not share an eagerness to learn new skills. However, Binod has not experienced such a challenge in his school.

Professional skills demand new knowledge to be acquired on a continuous basis. Nepalese schools' craft requires teachers to engage in ongoing learning to acquire skills to teach subject matter and manage classrooms. Headteachers in this study emphasized the importance of facilitating learning by modeling the learning process for their teachers. A study by Townsend and MacBeath (2013) also affirmed that leaders of schools facilitate learning by being role models for their teachers, creating a collegial environment, and encouraging professional development. It is, therefore, by providing professional development for teachers and participating in the training themselves, head teachers not only acquire self-confidence in the ability to accomplish new skills but also modeled lifelong learning for teachers. Similarly, one of the assumptions of Knowles's (1980) adult learning theory is that adults are ready to learn when there is a reason for their professional growth and development related to their work. The head teachers can play a crucial role in inspiring their teachers for their professional growth by being role models for lifelong learners.

CHAPTER VI

KEY INSIGHTS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL

IMPLICATIONS

This chapter brings my research journey to a conclusion. It contains key insights into my research, followed by a discussion. It then concludes with the major findings and pedagogical implications.

Key insights

This study aimed to explore how teachers learn from each other in their schools' settings and how headteachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools. As I journeyed through the reasons which motivate teachers to learn from each other, I discovered variations in their narratives. There is no uniformity of learning since each teacher has their unique challenges and learning needs. For example, the new teacher who has just started to teach in his/her first year their learning need may be how to manage the classroom effectively. Similarly, the Math Teacher may have a learning need to teach fractions to primary students in simpler and more effective ways.

Through their inspiring narratives, my research offered some new understandings in terms of how teachers learn in their school setting. I have divided these insights under the following headings

Teachers learn in formal and informal setting

Formal ways, such as attending teacher professional development workshops/ seminars organized by Education Training Centre and/ or NGOs and INGOs, are very common practices to enhance the learning of teachers in Nepal and many parts of the world. The narrative of my participants in this study also reveals that they regularly participate in various training, workshops and seminars organized by such educational

providers to improve their teaching and learning. For example, Rama, Bishal and Binita shared that they had attended various training such as subjective specific, child-centred teaching, TPD sessions, reading a loud, creative and critical thinking etc, which were organized by ETC, DEO and other NGOs and INGOs partnering with their schools. While participating in these formal training sessions, they had an opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge from their senior teachers, who were also participants and experts who offered these training sessions.

Similarly, the learning is not limited to taking place only in a formal setting. Teachers learn many skills and knowledge in an informal setting. It could be just conversing with their peers during the break in an informal social setting. It could be like asking for suggestions on how to solve a particular problem they are facing in teaching their classes. They may observe each other classes and seek feedback/suggestions to improve their instructional practices in a less formal way. These could be more effective in a relational Nepali culture because it breaks down the hierarchy and encourages them to be vulnerable rather than pretending to know everything. These informal ways of learning were expressed in the narratives of both Biniata and Rama. It is, therefore, both formal and informal ways of learning are important for teachers, and they complement each other.

Teachers learn through by being open and self -reflective

Besides learning from formal ways, teachers learn by being open, not being afraid to ask for help when they do not know how to solve the educational problem in their classroom. It could be like how to teach phonics. How to manage the classroom effectively, how to teach grammar etc. As I continued to analyze their stories, I became more aware that when the teachers are more open to sharing their weaknesses

in a trusting environment where they will not be judged and criticized for what they do not know. This kind of trusting environment among peers open the door to sharing their knowledge and skills and finding a creative way to solve the problem they are facing. The story of Bishal demonstrates how they learn from each other when they discuss the problem they face while teaching maths in their subject-specific committee of math teachers.

Similarly, from the narrative of Binitia, I also uncovered - how reflective practice helps them to learn new skills. For example, Binita read a book in her school's library. Later, while she was teaching the class, she could reflect on the story and apply some of the principles and insights from the book to her classroom management strategies. As a teacher, rather than being always busy moving from one class to another, if they take a break, having a moment of reflection can be very meaningful to get new insights to enhance their learning. Regular reflection on their instructional practices not only helps them to come up with many new ways of teaching and learning, also helps them to be more creative and critical thinkers.

Teachers learn collaboratively

Collaboration is considered one of the essential skills of the 21st century. In the school's context, collaboration is not only limited to the teachers, but it can also be practiced between teachers and students, cross-section collaboration along with school leaders, parents, and teachers to enhance teaching and learning and make it more meaningful. This is one of the skills teachers can model and their students can imitate so that when these young children become teachers, they can pass this important skill to the next generation.

Furthermore, in the bigger picture, it will also require effective collaborations among the interconnected group of policymakers, educators, education technology providers and funding agencies to transform instructional practices in our classrooms.

Integrating collaborative learning practices and skills in our existing teacher professional development policy and curriculum is important so that teachers are equipped with these skills as the research suggested that teachers lack skills and awareness about collaborative learning in Nepali schools.

The narratives from the participants of this study, both teachers and head teachers, affirmed that they had started collaborative learning culture in their schools by forming subject-specific committees, peer observations, and sharing their skills and knowledge after attending formal professional development training and workshops. However, there are still some cultural barriers among the teachers and head teachers to making it a sustainable learning practice. The two participants (head teachers) of this study Mr. Rajesh And Mr. Binod, shared that the teachers nearer to their retirement are less interested in this kind of new way of teaching and learning and transferring their knowledge and skills to their peers who are new to the jobs.

It is also important to acknowledge that educators should explore the various forms of digital collaborative learning methods. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us about the opportunity and needs for it. Although most of the public schools in Nepal do not have access to basic ICT facilities, the teachers have begun to realize the need for them to learn ICT skills and integrate them in their teaching and learning following the COVID-19 pandemic. It was encouraging that one of the participants of this study Mr. Bishal shared that he learnt new skills of teaching angles by watching a model class on television during the pandemic. Similarly, the head teacher Mr. Binod also shared that he learnt basic computer skills during the COVID -19 Pandemic and

encouraged his teachers to learn computer skills. As a result, all their teachers can now use basic computer skills.

Teachers learn when knowledge is applicable to their classrooms

It is important to realize that people are often motivated to learn new skills and knowledge when it is relevant to them. In other words, when it is applicable to solve the problem that they are facing. The adult theory of Knowles also affirms that adults are motivated to learn new skills when applicable and relevant to them.

As I more deeply read through the narratives of my participants, I was pleasantly surprised that they also had a similar experience. Those training and workshops they had attended where they had a lot of opportunities to have a demo class, brainstorming, contents and methods of training were relevant to their needs. They returned to their school after the training feeling more empowered, equipped, and, confident that they were not afraid to try those skills in their classrooms.

Rama's story testifies how she learnt to teach through a song when she first attended the training. She came to school feeling excited to compose a song by herself to teach 'BIBHAKTI' (case maker) to her class. It has been a similar experience for Binita as she shared her experience of attending math training where they had a lot of hand-on activities, locally made resources to teach the basic concept of maths with plenty of opportunities how to use them during the training, which gave her the confidence to apply in her classrooms. Additionally, she made many resources by herself, shared them with her peers and helped them to use them effectively while teaching maths to primary classes.

Their experiences provide an important insight that learning should be applicable and relevant to the need of the teachers, which will inspire them to

apply these skills and be motivated and confident to pass them on to their peers.

While the narratives from teachers provided some key insights which I have discussed above, the other participants of this study are three head teachers who are pseudonyms here as Rajesh, Samjhana and Binod. The second research question of this study focused on how headteachers facilitate learning in their schools. While exploring these questions, my participants offered some significant insights, which I have explained in three themes below.

Classroom observation followed by developmental feedback

One of the key roles of the head teacher is to regularly observe the classroom of their teachers, to be aware of what is happening in the classrooms, affirm good instructional practices that teachers are practicing and provide them constructive feedback so that these teachers improve their instructional practices, as well as they, feel valued. The study participants have been trying this practice with their teachers to enhance their learning. However, they all acknowledge that it was not easy at the beginning as teachers felt stressed, hesitant and even scared when head teachers came to observe their classes. Headteachers (Binod and Rajesh) reflected that due to the hierarchical culture in our society, teachers were not very welcoming and reluctant to have someone come and observe their teaching. The research from various scholars in Nepal also affirms that hierarchical culture in school creates a barrier to effective classroom observation and receiving and giving constructive feedback.

Additionally, they are expected to receive feedback on their shortcomings rather than affirming their good practices and getting developmental feedback. Samjhana also shared her experience that she also struggled to have formal and effective classroom observation of their teachers.

Furthermore, Binod shared some interesting reflections. As he was trying hard to observe the teaching and give constructive feedback, the teachers were not feeling comfortable and were a bit scared. He then came up with an idea to encourage peer observation. His narrative affirms that this was far more effective because teachers felt equal and there was no hierarchy. They felt comfortable sharing their weaknesses and getting feedback from each other as they started to do peer observation.

Facilitated learning through collaboration with outside organizations

The teachers can apply various strategies to enhance teachers learning in their school context. The participants' stories also revealed that they are partnering with various NGOs, INGOs and other educational providers to create an opportunity to provide training for their teachers. These initiatives brought some excellent outcomes, such as setting up a library, computer labs, science labs and regular training and workshop, follow-up of the training and feedback from the educational expert from outside. They articulated that their teachers preferred this kind of training since they were more relevant and focused on their needs.

Furthermore, the narratives of both teachers and headteachers confirm that those teachers who attended these workshops and training, when they came back to school after the training, they shared their skills and experiences with their peers. They were not afraid to implement some of these skills and ideas learnt at the workshop. The head teachers also shared that these partnerships were beneficial for additional professional development of their teachers and to improve the schools' infrastructures which contributed to improving the learning and teaching in their schools.

These experiences offer a good insight to headteachers collaborating with various organizations that can significantly contribute to enhancing collaborative learning among the teachers.

Head teacher being a role model

There is a common saying, 'our action speaks louder than our words. This can apply to our headteachers to inspire their teachers to cultivate a passion for learning. When the teachers witness that their leaders are passionate about learning, it will encourage them to imitate their leaders. The participants of this study also shared similar experiences. All three head teachers (Rajesh, Samjhana and Binod) have a heavy teaching load like their teachers, in addition to their leadership roles in their schools. They are also sharing their skills and experiences with their teachers. They have also demonstrated an attitude of being lifelong learners who are truly appreciated by their teachers.

Binod recalled an incident where he took the initiative to learn typing on computer and other basic computer skills. His learning attitude indeed inspired other teachers to learn typing. As a result of this initiative, all his teachers have learnt typing and can now use basic computer skills.

This is evidence and insight for head teachers to become role models for their teachers to inspire them to become lifelong learners.

Discussion

There is a general assumption that public schools are not doing well. The teachers and school leaders are not professional and lack the motivation to learn. However, the study from this study has painted a different picture. It is encouraging to hear from the participants of this study that they are trying their best to ensure collaborative learning in their schools. However, it is important to discuss some

reflections. This study was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, where teaching and learning in these schools were not happening on-site and they were significantly disrupted. The teachers and school leaders were trying to do their best to learn virtual collaboration despite the limited access to ICT facility.

Some of the collaborative learning initiatives they have taken before COVID-19 have not been enhancing it further. For example, the participants of this Study, Bishal and Samjhana shared that we have formed subject-specific committees, and they have started to learn from their colleagues and implement with other subject areas. Still, COVID- 19 has affected us since we are not able to meet face to face.

Both groups of participants (teachers and head teachers) articulated that there is a collaboration among the teachers by forming subject-specific committees, sharing their learning at their regular staff meeting after they had received the training along with sharing some of the teaching resources they had made with their peers. These are good practices. However, the collaboration should not be limited only to specific subject teachers. The other potential collaborative approaches suggested by Dhungana et al. (n.d.) could be beneficial in Nepali schools. They include Cross- professional collaboration, teacher-student collaboration and cross-sectoral collaboration. The narratives from the participants revealed these gaps in terms of implementing wider approaches of collaboration. The use of digital collaboration was also found to be very minimal because of the lack of access to ICT facilities and teachers were not trained well so they lack confident.

The importance of collaboration among the teachers is further emphasized by Knezevic & Scholl (2002). They state, *"collaboration is a powerful vehicle for exposing and developing knowledge of teaching* (p.79).

In a hierarchical society and culture, the school leaders have to play a significant role and demonstrate a model to break the barriers and create openness to enhance collaborative learning cultures so that each of their gifts and talents is brought out to enhance learning and teaching in the schools. Furthermore, Nepali school leaders and teachers are less aware of collaborative learning.

Additionally, the high student's and teacher's ratio, lack of spacious classroom further restrict to effectively implement collaborative learning for those teachers even if they want to try some strategies (Rana& Rana, 2022).

However, the hierarchical leadership practices in our Nepali schools creates barriers to ensure the effective collaborative learning culture because it is very hard for teachers to be open and share their ideas and opinions to their superiors due to the fear of being wrong, condemned as well as their ideas are not even listened to. This kind of rigid hierarchy eventually discourages creativity, critical thinking, teamwork and problem solving among the teachers. The participant of this study Binod (head teacher) identified himself with these experiences as he started his role as the head teacher. He later changed his approach of leadership which helps to minimize the hierarchy and enhanced the strong teamwork among the teachers and head teacher.

This study was grounded in Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn. Knowles (1980) put forward the four key assumptions concerning how adults learn effectively. Each of these principles applies to teachers. For example, the self-concept of an adult learner moves from a dependent state to a self-directed person who takes control of their education and accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning. An adult's readiness to learn is centered around a reason to learn. Adult learners are especially

ready to gain new knowledge when it is directed towards professional development and growth.

Additionally, the orientation to learning for adults is that they desire to understand the need to learn new knowledge and how they can apply it immediately to their everyday lives. They are also interested in learning practical skills that help them solve problems and increase work productivity. Finally, adult learners become internally motivated to learn new knowledge based on the desire to improve in a certain area or boost self-esteem (Knowles, 1980). The narrative of Binod testifies this assumption that he wanted to learn typing skills so that he can prepare the questions papers on computers rather than writing them in a paper. As he saw the need and he was motivated to improve his skills, other teachers were motivated to learn to type on computer. As a result, all the teachers ended up learning basic computer skills.

These themes confirm the findings of Bath (1991), who suggested that "unless adults talk with one another, observe one another, and help one another, very little will change" (as cited in Krovetz, 1993, p. 71).

Addressing the first research question of this study, the findings revealed that the teacher participants of this study were found to be self-motivated to enhance their learning. They were keen to learn new skills to solve the educational problems they faced in their classrooms. This finding is in unity with one of the assumptions (orientation to learning) of Knowles's theory.

This assumption relates very well to the experiences of Bishal. He shared that he was struggling to teach angles effectively so that his students understand easily. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he watched someone teaching angles on T.V. and he learnt new strategies on how to teach angles because it gave him new skills to solve the problem that he was facing in his classroom.

Although there is well-established assumption about teachers from public schools are not motivated to learn new skills, they are not open to sharing knowledge and skills with their peers; this study revealed the different pictures. All three participants (Rama, Bishal and Binita) in this study showed that they were motivated to learn new skills to teach using child-centered skills. Binita said, "The TPD training boosted my confidence and gave me th*e enthusiasm and skills to teach math with more child-centered methods."* Additionally, teachers are open to learning from each other by sharing their experiences and skills and engaging in peer observations.

Although this is a very encouraging finding, the challenge remains to maintain the sustainability of this kind of collaborative learning culture. It is evident that when the school leader and/or some motivated teachers are changed or leave the school, the whole school culture is also most like to change significantly. When teachers and school leaders are turnover, it is important to ensure these good practices are not ignored and become a less priority.

Furthermore, the participants of this study showed readiness to learn because they could apply, adapt, and contextualize the skills and knowledge learnt at the training. Binita further shared her reflection after implementing the skills learnt at the training. *"I have also learnt that getting ideas from others is important but adapting them in our teacher and learning context. If you are passionate about teaching and learning, the ideas will come up as you teach."* These practices are congruent with the assumptions of Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy, which postulates that the self-concept of adult learners moves from being dependent to being self-directed as they take control of their education. Similarly, Wood (2007) stated that the "vision of teachers not only as users of pedagogical knowledge, but also as creators, disseminators, and preservers of it" (p. 281). The participants of this study also

revealed that they created their instructional techniques and methods suitable to their context. These teachers were passionate about transferring these skills and knowledge to their colleagues.

In summary, although Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn is over 40 years old, it was found to be aligned with my study, especially regarding answering the first research question.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that the research from other scholars is disconfirmed (Bhujel 2019, Baral, 2018, Poudal & Bhattarai, 2018, UNICEF & UNESCO 2021). Their study uncovered that Nepal Teachers Professional Development curriculum, delivery and practices are not aligned with the assumptions of adult learning theory. These professional development sessions and learning are very much based on the lecture method and provide less opportunity for self-reflection of the learners; there is no system in place to share their best practices with their colleagues when they return to their schools; the training is not designed as per their needs since each teacher as adult learners have a different learning need. Lastly, these teachers are often treated as passive learners rather than active adult learners (Pant, Luitel & Pant, 2020, Bhujel, 2019, Dhungana et al. (n.d) & Pokhrel & Behera, 2016).

The second research question of this study addressed how head teachers facilitate learning at their schools. The finding from the analysis of data revealed three themes that head teachers facilitate learning by creating an academic culture through (a) observing classrooms and providing teachers with constructive feedback and encouraging collaborative learning to solve problems, (b) providing professional development for teachers using external organizations, and (c) modeling the role of a lifelong learner.

Teachers require and welcome head teachers in their classrooms to observe lessons. Teachers value constructive feedback from their head teachers that allow them to provide engaging lessons to increase student academic achievement. This finding supports the research of Blasé and Blasé (as cited in Kabeta et al., 2013), who that found when principals demonstrate instructional leadership qualities, it creates an inspiring learning environment among teachers. Headteachers must provide leadership practices that include showing concern for the students and what teachers do in classrooms, being visible throughout the school, observing how teaching and learning occur, and providing feedback and praise to facilitate teachers' learning.

Similarly, this finding also affirms the results of the study by Stein (2016), which asserted that school leaders could influence staff by adopting a high-profile leadership practice by providing a visible presence throughout the school that promotes staff morale and encourages a positive learning culture among teachers. The head teachers of this study practiced these principles. The participants shared that they taught classes and did not remain in their offices but were available to observe their teachers, praise them for their good practices, and train them to improve their instructional practices. Principals must practice the leadership skill of being available to teachers.

However, the head teachers articulate that they still lack effective skills and strategies to create a sustainable collaborative learning culture in their schools.

Headteachers need to explore possibilities to provide training for teachers at their schools by partnering with interested organizations willing to support ongoing education for instructors. The finding of this study revealed that learning could be facilitated when the head teachers partner with various organizations to provide access and training for teachers. A study also supports this finding carried out by the

Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (2004), which revealed that head teachers forming a partnership with various NGOs, INGOs, Foundations and individual donors provided an opportunity to fundraise to improve the physical improvement of school facilities as well as provide an opportunity for professional development of teachers. Interestingly, participants of this study shared similar experiences.

The head teachers of this study appear to be very proactive in providing an opportunity for professional development for their teachers by sending them to attend various formal training and workshop. They need to realize and encourage them to create an environment to learn within schools by sharing their skills and experiences in a different collaborative setting.

The third theme of this study observed that head teachers must continuously engage in new learning and be role models as lifelong learners to facilitate learning for the teachers at their schools. Townsend and MacBeath (2013) found that the school leader is connected to the school through modelling, monitoring, and dialogue. Headteachers in this study engaged with their teachers by encouraging collaborative learning during subject-specific teachers' committee meetings that permitted teachers to solve the problems they faced in the classroom. These head teachers practiced a participatory approach to stimulate the culture of learning in their respective schools. When the teachers observe leadership practices on the part of head teachers who expend time and energy that facilitates new learning, skills, and knowledge, a positive environment is created that encourages teachers to exemplify their head teachers. These practices are also affirmed by the study of Fahey (2013), who suggested that

Finally, the assumptions of Knowles's (1980) theory of andragogy concerning how adults learn are also relevant for the head teachers to reflect on their learning concerning how to facilitate learning in their schools.

Although there are different themes emerged from the narrative of teachers and head teachers in this study, they are interconnected in term of how teachers are learning, and head teachers are motivating their teachers to learn. For example, when teachers are learning in formal setting, there is a plenty of collaboration opportunities, sharing their experiences and knowledge with their peers. These experiences were well articulated by all the participants in this study. For example, they all went to attend formal TPD sessions organized by ETC. When all the teachers came from different schools to attend these professional development sessions, they had a lot of opportunity to discuss, brainstorm and micro teaching that helped them to reflect on their instructional practices and find the solutions to their educational problems.

Similarly, collaboration also takes place in informal learning environment. For instance, when teachers are discussing and brainstorming to find a solution to a particular problem that they are facing in classroom. This could be how to teach a grammar effectively, how to teach concept of fractions to grade one student or it could be how to manage classroom. When teachers discuss these issues in their staff room, it is a great example of informal collaboration. These kinds of informal collaborative learning offer more relax and less intimidating learning experiences as they also reflect on their instructional practices. They do not always need to have formal setting of learning.

Furthermore, the themes emerged from the narratives of head teachers' congruence with the themes of teachers because the head teachers are also engaged in learning and teaching with their teachers. For example, they are observing classroom,

giving developmental feedback, they themselves are teaching serval periods a week. They are also willing to learn new skills which inspired their teachers to imitate their leaders to become a lifelong learner. This was evident in the narratives of all three participants (head teachers) in this study. It is therefore collaboration does not need to be practiced in an isolation separately among the teachers only, but both teachers and head teachers can collaborate togethers to make their journey of learning more meaningful and fruitful.

Conclusion

The study intended to explore the various reasons regarding to how teachers learn in their school setting along with how head teachers facilitate the learning in their schools. These are the two research questions that, as a researcher, I have focused on answering through the deep study of the narratives of my participants.

Based on their experiences, along with all the discussions and insights, I am presenting my conclusion that there are four main ways that teachers are enhancing their learning which I have shared as follows:

Firstly, teachers are internally motivated to learn new knowledge to increase instructional skills by participating in formal training and observing other teachers teaching in classrooms. The classroom teachers are particularly motivated to learn from observing their peers.

Another aspect of learning is that teachers become self-directed learners and take control of their learning journey by being able to ask other educators for help, creating a passion for teaching, and becoming self-reflective.

The research also indicates that teachers bring prior knowledge and experiences that provide a foundation for learning to share knowledge collaboratively with other teachers. Finally, teachers as adult learners prefer task-oriented learning

that may be immediately applied to improve classroom instruction. They are more likely to be motivated and persuaded to learn new skills when the learning environment is designed with many practical activities relevant to their needs and they have an opportunity to reflect, share their ideas and brainstorming opportunities.

Similarly, in the quest to answer my research question on how headteachers facilitate learning, I have drawn the following conclusions.

Firstly, head teachers encourage learning by observing their teachers' classes and giving them constructive feedback. They cultivate an academic learning culture for teachers and students as they regularly visit classrooms, observe teachers presenting instruction, and provide opportunities for them to share positive feedback to increase the teachers' instructional skills.

Secondly, head teachers facilitate learning by partnering with various organizations to provide teacher access and training. This kind of collaborative partnership provides opportunities for teachers to interact with experts from much wider backgrounds to enrich their learning experiences.

Finally, this study concludes that head teachers facilitate learning in schools by being role models for lifelong learners. Headteachers used a variety of means to provide an example of continuous learning for teachers at their schools. Teachers observe head teachers and follow educational standards established in their lives.

Pedagogical Implications

My insights of research on how teachers learn from each other in their schools setting and how head teachers facilitate learning in Nepali schools can be applied to teachers, school leaders, and policymakers. I have discussed each of them below in detail.

Implications to Teachers

There is a total of 325,519 teachers teaching in both community and institutional schools in Nepal (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2017). The findings of this study reveal that teachers prefer task-oriented learning that may be immediately applied to improve classroom instruction. This theme connects well with one of the assumptions of Knowles's (1980) adult learning theory, referred to as orientation to learning. Adult learners are motivated to want to learn new skills or knowledge through problem-centering learning that may be immediately applied in the educational setting.

It is important to bear in mind some of the principles which make meaningful learning experiences for teachers as adults. Some key principles include creating a climate in which participants feel respected and treated as active adult learners, building new knowledge on their experiences, and providing collaborative inquiry. Finally, empower participants through reflection and guide learning that is applicable immediately in their context.

These findings provide evidence and implications for change concerning how Nepalese educators obtain training both in preservice settings and in-service training. The professional development teachers should be designed to encompass training that offers hands-on workshops, includes problem-solving activities, encourages opportunities to reflect and share their practices, and offers micro-teaching opportunities. This training style appeals to adult learners and would benefit teachers. Teachers could learn instructional skills and gain knowledge, which can be immediately transferred to the classroom to engage student learning. Opportunities for this type of training relevant to teachers' needs will motivate teachers to actively implement new skills and knowledge after the training in their classrooms.

The other implication of this study for the teachers is that they need to have access to learn in formal and informal settings. The participants articulated that although gaining new knowledge through outside training is important, valuable learning can also be obtained in an informal manner from other teachers, which can be adapted in their classrooms. Professional development training provided to teachers regularly is necessary for educators to become effective teachers because trained teachers can adopt teaching strategies in the classroom. Teachers must be provided ongoing learning opportunities throughout their careers.

Similarly, teachers need to work collaboratively to facilitate new learning. The findings from this study indicate that teachers bring prior knowledge and experiences that provide a foundation for learning that can be shared collegially to build knowledge with other classroom teachers. This finding affirms one of the assumptions concerning how adults learn based on Knowles's (1980) theory of adult learning and have implications for Nepalese educators. As an educator gains experience in the classroom and becomes self-directed, they enlarge their skills and instructional capacity from which teachers can increase new knowledge and, in turn, share learning with others.

Implications to Head teachers

School leadership is a complex cognitive task. Principals must think like coaches, strategic planners, visionaries and community organizers (Fahey, 2013). In the context of Nepal, the Education Rules of Nepal (2002) expect head teachers to plan and manage human resources. This is one of the very important yet challenging roles for head teachers in Nepali schools. Headteachers are expected to motivate and encourage teachers to be life-long learners to increase their educational skills and practices. The findings of this study reveal that a culture of trust and affirmation,

instead of fear and control, encourages teachers to seek help from each other and enhance their learning through peer observations. The head teachers can play significant roles in creating this positive learning culture in their schools by being role models. The teacher must continue to work collaboratively to enhance their learning and improve their instructional practice. Pandey (2012) stated that Nepali teachers are generally shy and afraid to reflect on their practices, ask for help, and share their weaknesses with their senior colleagues. Reflective practice should be encouraged in schools to enhance teachers' instructional practices. Head and senior teachers need to create an open, less hierarchical learning culture where junior teachers believe they can share their instructional challenges and ask for help when needed.

Furthermore, this study revealed that headteachers must facilitate learning by creating an academic culture by observing the classroom andproviding teachers with constructive feedback. Headteachers need to locate and encourage the cooperation of outside organizations to provide access and training for teachers. Additionally, head teachers must create a practice leadership style to communicate a commitment to learning alongside their teachers.

Implications to Policy Makers

The participants' narratives of this study show that teachers learn from both formal and informal settings. It is therefore important that education policymakers are always aware of providing ongoing professional development opportunities to the teacher and head teachers. It is encouraging to see a provision of an Education Training Centre in each province under the Federal Government of Nepal that provides professional development opportunities to the teachers and head teachers.

The findings from the study further revealed that teachers learn collaboratively. Furthermore, teachers are motivated to learn when their knowledge

directly applies to their classrooms. The Federal Education Act of Nepal is currently under review. This Federal Education Act must incorporate provisions that inspire teachers to become lifelong learners and encourage all educators to learn collaboratively. Adult learners acquire new knowledge from experiences (Knowles, 1980) based on collaborative learning approaches. A study carried out by Taft (2019) revealed that when head teachers began modeling what it meant to be an adult learner, it inspired other teachers to open their classrooms and collaborate to provide solutions for each other's challenges. The findings from this study corroborate Knowles's and Taft's assert that teachers learn new skills and practices when shared in a collaborative setting. This information provides information and recommendations for the Education Training Centers in Nepal. At the same time, it appears essential to revisit the roles of head teachers and make provision for administrative leaders to engage with teachers in instructional practices to create a collaborative learning culture in their schools.

Similarly, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2019) has introduced an integrated curriculum in Grades 1-3 to provide multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary practices. It demands teachers to teach thematically instead of presenting isolated individual subjects in Grades 1-3. Teachers are expected to integrate soft skills in their teaching to these students. This means the newly integrated curriculum must provide more opportunities for teachers at the basic level to collaborate more, learn from each other, and apply their knowledge and skills to implement this curriculum effectively.

Furthermore, it would be beneficial for education policymakers to reflect on the assumptions of the theory of andragogy about adult learning which views teachers as adult learners rather than expecting them to be passive learners. It is important for

policymakers to formulate a teacher professional development curriculum in alignment with the adult learning theory's assumptions, which will motivate teachers to learn new skills and knowledge. Developing training for teachers that is relevant, contextual, and applicable to the educational practice and skills required for classroom instruction will increase the learning of all teachers.

Finally, the education policymakers in Nepal can play a vital role and advocate at appropriate levels to increase teachers' investment in professional development so that learning opportunities can be enriched and meaningful for classroom instructors. This implication will further contribute to the achievement and aims of Nepali education policymakers to produce globally competent and skilled human resources.

Future Direction

I believe this study will be useful for various educational actors such as teachers, head teachers, curriculum developers, education policy makers, and teacher trainers to reflect on their practices. Additionally, the insights I have gained through this study will definitely enhance my teacher training skills, especially in designing and conducting training and workshop based on the principles of how adults learn more effectively and make their learning more meaningful and enjoyable. Furthermore, this study has opened my eyes to the need to treat teachers as active adult learners. I have often witnessed them being treated as passive learners in many workshops and training sessions. I must also confess that I am also sometimes guilty of giving them similar treatment. I hope this study may inspire others to conduct further research on these issues. I also hope my research will add value to academic research. Further research on this topic may contribute to the other aspects of how

teachers learn as well as how head teachers facilitate learning in their school's

context.

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