CONSTRUCTIVISM IN CLASSROOM: NARRATIVES OF BASIC LEVEL
TEACHERS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN LALITPUR

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A Dissertation

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Anjana Malla* for the degree *Master of Philosophy in Educational Leadership* presented on 22 January 2025 entitled *Constructivism in Classroom: Narratives of Basic Level Teachers of Private Schools in Lalitpur.*

APPROVED BY

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Prof. Mana Prasad Wagley, PhD

Dissertation Supervisor

Through various roles and experiences, I have recognized several issues with the pedagogical approaches used in Nepalese schools to teach and learn. Most of the time, child-friendly teaching and learning methods are undervalued. Teachers are expected to set the standard, and students must follow their instructions. Recently, many schools have emerged claiming that they are providing better education opportunities, and this research is done to find the existing practices in the field of education in Nepal.

The study featured a qualitative approach with an exploratory study to identify constructivism in the classroom through narratives of the teachers working in the two private schools of Lalitpur. Using a semi-structured guiding question, an individual interview session was conducted with four teachers from the private schools of Lalitpur in three to four stages. Along with collecting teachers' narratives, a focused group discussion was conducted among five students at the study schools to generate their experience in the classroom environment. The following conclusions were drawn from the data's analysis and interpretation:

It was concluded that learners-friendly pedagogy was a comprehensive strategy that included several elements about the roles and duties of teachers and students. First, the classroom environment was a key element of learner-friendly constructivist teaching, where appropriate arrangements of the classroom's physical amenities were considered essential. Second, the teaching-learning activities in the constructivist classroom complemented the student-centered pedagogy, which placed

more emphasis on the needs and interests of the learners in terms of their individual and sociocultural backgrounds.

Third, the learner-friendly approach's main component was student motivation. In this sense, a student's motivation is defined as the inspiration and support that helps them become more involved students. The study's finding can be implied in multiple areas related to scholars and stakeholders such as students, teachers and school management. The conclusion of this study might encourage the students to discover the enjoyable part of their learning. Also, this study might motivate teachers to consider teaching pedagogy as a comprehension depiction of the learner's lives. The study will even be helpful to the school administration in determining the learner-friendly type of teaching-learning pedagogy.

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शोध सार

शैक्षिक नेतृत्व तथा व्यवस्थापनमा दर्शनशास्त्रको स्नातकोत्तर डिग्रीको लागि अन्जना मल्लको शोध प्रबन्धको शीर्षक "कक्षाकोठामा रचनावादः ललितपुरका निजी विद्यालयका आधारभूत तहका शिक्षकहरूको कथा" ९ माघ २०८१ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो ।

. . . .
प्रा. मन प्रसाद वाग्ले, पीएचडी
शोध निर्देशक

विभिन्न भूमिका र अनुभवहरू मार्फत, मैले नेपाली विद्यालयहरूमा सिकाउन र सिक्न प्रयोग हुने शैक्षिक दृष्टिकोणका साथ धेरै समस्याहरू पहिचान गरेको छु। अधिकांश समय, बालमैत्री शिक्षण र सिकाइ विधिहरूलाई कम मूल्याङ्कन गरिन्छ। शिक्षकहरूलाई मानक सेट गर्ने अपेक्षा गरिन्छ, र विद्यार्थीहरूले उनीहरूको निर्देशनहरू पालना गर्नुपर्छ। भखैर, धेरै विद्यालयहरूले आफूले राम्रो शिक्षाको अवसर प्रदान गरिरहेको दाबी गर्दै आएका छन्, र यो अनुसन्धान नेपालमा शिक्षाको क्षेत्रमा विद्यमान अभ्यासहरू पत्ता लगाउन गरिन्छ।

यस अध्ययनमा ललितपुरका दुई निजी विद्यालयहरूमा काम गर्ने शिक्षकहरूको कथावस्तु मार्फत कक्षाकोठामा रचनात्मकता पहिचान गर्न अन्वेषणात्मक अध्ययन सहितको गुणात्मक दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो। अर्ध-संरचित मार्गदर्शक प्रश्न प्रयोग गरेर, ललितपुरका निजी विद्यालयहरूका चार शिक्षकहरूसँग तीन देखि चार चरणमा व्यक्तिगत अन्तर्वार्ता सत्र सञ्चालन गरिएको थियो। शिक्षकहरूको कथावस्तु सङ्कलन गर्नुका साथै, कक्षाकोठाको वातावरणमा उनीहरूको अनुभव उत्पन्न गर्न अध्ययन विद्यालयहरूमा पाँच विद्यार्थीहरूमा केन्द्रित समूह छलफल सञ्चालन गरिएको थियो। तथ्याङ्कको विश्लेषण र व्याख्याबाट निम्न निष्कर्षहरू निकालिएका थिएः

शिक्षक र विद्यार्थीहरूको भूमिका र कर्तव्यहरूको बारेमा धेरै तत्वहरू समावेश गर्ने एक व्यापक रणनीति शिक्षाशास्त्र थियो भन्ने निष्कर्ष निकालियो। पहिलो, कक्षाकोठाको वातावरण विद्यार्थी-मैत्री रचनात्मक शिक्षणको एक प्रमुख तत्व थियो, जहाँ कक्षाकोठाको भौतिक सुविधाहरूको उचित व्यवस्था आवश्यक मानिन्थ्यो। दोस्रो, रचनात्मक कक्षाकोठामा शिक्षण-सिकाइ गतिविधिहरूले विद्यार्थी-केन्द्रित शिक्षाशास्त्रलाई पूरक बनायो, जसले विद्यार्थीहरूको व्यक्तिगत र सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक पृष्ठभूमिको सन्दर्भमा उनीहरूको आवश्यकता र रुचिहरूमा बढी जोड दियो।

तेस्रो, विद्यार्थी-मैत्री दृष्टिकोणको मुख्य घटक विद्यार्थी प्रेरणा थियो। यस अर्थमा, विद्यार्थीको प्रेरणालाई प्रेरणा र समर्थनको रूपमा परिभाषित गरिएको छ जसले उनीहरूलाई थप संलग्न विद्यार्थी

बन्न मद्दत गर्दछ। अध्ययनको निष्कर्ष विद्यार्थी, शिक्षक र विद्यालय व्यवस्थापन जस्ता विद्वानहरू र सरोकारवालाहरूसँग सम्बन्धित धेरै क्षेत्रहरूमा निहित हुन सक्छ। यस अध्ययनको निष्कर्षले विद्यार्थीहरूलाई उनीहरूको सिकाइको रमाइलो भाग पत्ता लगाउन प्रोत्साहित गर्न सक्छ। साथै, यो अध्ययनले शिक्षकहरूलाई शिक्षण शिक्षाशास्त्रलाई विद्यार्थीको जीवनको समझदारी चित्रणको रूपमा विचार गर्न प्रेरित गर्न सक्छ। यो अध्ययन विद्यालय प्रशासनलाई विद्यार्थी-मैत्री प्रकारको शिक्षण-सिकाइ शिक्षाशास्त्र निर्धारण गर्न पनि उपयोगी हुनेछ।

....   ९ माघ २०८१
अन्जना मल्ल
उपाधि उम्मेदवार

This dissertation entitled *Constructivism in Classroom: Narratives of Basic Level Teachers of Private Schools in Lalitpur,* presented by *Anjana Malla on 22 January 2025.*

<div align="center">APPROVED BY</div>

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I understand and agree that my thesis will become a part of the permanent collection of the Kathmandu University Library. My signature below approves the release of my thesis to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

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Anjana Malla

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DECLARATION

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

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Anjana Malla

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DEDICATION

TO

My Supporters During my Journey

Special thanks to

My Husband, Suman Krishna Shrestha and Sweet Daughter, Sahisna Shrestha

My Loving friends and caring family members

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Anjana Malla
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CCA	Co-curricular Activities
ECA	Extra-Curricular Activities
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
HSEB	Higher Secondary Education Board
IB	International Baccalaureate
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IP	International Primary Curriculum
KU	Kathmandu University
KUSOED	Kathmandu University School of Education
LA	Language Arts
NEP	National Education Policy
PBL	Project Based Learning
PE	Physical Education
SEE	Secondary Education Exam
SESP	Nepal School Education Sector Plan
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

LIST OF FIGURE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

After working in the field of education for the last 15 years, I have realized the need for a curriculum that not only addresses the requirements of a learner but also helps them to develop the skills, attitudes, and knowledge required to face the challenges of the 21st century. The constructivist approach to teaching could be a boon for educational institutions and educators, as it works as a bridge to overcome the gap between the learner and the concept they need to perceive. After working relentlessly in various schools, I need a curriculum that is not limited to contextual ideas but provides a real-life experience to the learners for practical learning. As an educator, I have witnessed the charm and enthusiasm among the learners when they are taken out of the four walls of the classroom to explore, investigate, research, observe, and identify the issues prevalent in society and work in groups to find a suitable solution to the problems. Thus, 21st-century education should not be limited to contextual matters but must contain an enriched curriculum for the holistic development of learners through a project-based approach.

This chapter starts with a brief background on classroom practices in the constructivist approach. During the process, I share my experience as an educator to explore the topic. Simultaneously, I have clarified why this issue is important in my inquiry in the statement of the problem and the purpose of my study. Then, I articulate the research question to explore the problem of my study. Likewise, I describe the rationale of the study followed by the delimitation of the study.

Background

The conceptual framework of this study is based on integrating different learning theories. Constructivism states that learning takes place in contexts, and those learners construct meanings from much of what they learn and understand as a function of their experiences in situations (Schunk, 2000). The constructivist teacher chooses more reliable tasks and presents more critical thinking questions to address ill-defined problems and create new knowledge linked with existing ones (Applefield et al., 2000). The teacher must shift their paradigm from a lecture method to active learning with a learner-centered approach. They are supposed to create a learning environment that consists of group problem-solving activities, the construction of

knowledge based on prior knowledge, and various engagement opportunities (Naroth, 2010).

Constructivism is an alternative to the traditional teaching-learning approach with several positive aspects. It provides a real-life experience and focuses on developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes among the learners. It incorporates an authentic application of content that covers current affairs and issues. It makes learners brainstorm about their effects and consequences and then find a durable and practical solution to the problem (Jia, 2010). This type of learning enhances the students' performance at a higher level and in their jobs. It also helps develop practical problem-solving techniques using local resources and a long-term solution. The constructivist approach enhances communication and collaboration through group work and projects and encourages socio-emotional skills through group collaborations (Alzahrani & Woollard, 2013).

This requires trained and skillful teachers followed by rigorous training, feedback and improvisation in the teacher's lesson plan. It consumes a lot of time for planning, designing, and implementation and requires a lot of trial-and-error processes to get fruitful results. Also, poor attendance of students leads to a communication gap, and the child will be left behind with no clue about the topic (Jia, 2010). At the same time, the disengagement of the participants could mislead the project, and the objective may not be accomplished. If anyone lacks self-efficacy, it might frustrate the group members. The evaluation needs to be continuous, and sometimes it is difficult to assess, thus leading to less accurate results (Naroth, 2010). According to Sharma and Rathi (2024), applying the constructivist approach in Nepal is done at a minimum level, and only a few schools in Kathmandu have been implementing this approach at a basic level. Only a few teachers start a class with a discussion linking the lesson with the students' prior knowledge, and the social collaboration among the students to co-create the knowledge is barely seen in our country. According to Sharma and Rathi (2024), education is still limited to textbooks and schools in rural areas, and teachers are unaware of a constructivist approach to teaching and learning.

With the new emerging teaching pedagogy and andragogy, there is an urgent need to investigate the knowledge, planning, and implementation of the constructivist approach in various schools in Nepal. Due to the lack of a proper curriculum, students seem to have short attention spans (Kim, 2005). Hence, to eradicate the attention span issues among the learners and to make them interested and involved in learning, it is

essential to implement a constructivist approach that works as a framework to understand a concept with the development of skills through hands-on activities for lifelong learning. Thus, there is an urgent need to investigate the planning, implementation, and challenges educators face when implementing the constructivist approach in the teaching-learning method.

<div align="center">**Statement of the Research Problem**</div>

Basic-level students have recognized the importance of learning through social interaction, but the practice is still inadequate in the classroom while teaching and learning.

From the lens of social constructivism, learning should emphasize the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding (Derry, 1999). I agree with Kukla (2013) that reality is constructed through human activity, and the members of a society together invent the properties of the world, which is an important aspect of social Constructivism. For the social constructivist, reality cannot be discovered and does not exist before its social invention. Also, constructivists believe that learning is a social process that is not confined to an individual, and it is not a passive development of behavior shaped by outlying issues (McMahon, 1997). Actual and objective-led learning occurs when learners are involved in social interactions.

Despite the agreement amongst educators for the need for a constructivist curriculum and pedagogy, as I retrospect, I could not experience such during my schooling, nor do I see such a constructivist approach adopted by the schools in my vicinity. Why is it being neglected? Is it because teachers are unaware of the usefulness and possible impact of constructivism in the classroom, or is it costly to implement? Or those teachers are not prepared (teacher preparation courses did not prepare them to engage in constructivist teaching) or have problems transferring the training skills, if any.

We could witness a huge context and methodological gap in implementing the practical and skill-based teaching-learning process where the learners can develop skills based on their learning. There is a lack of teacher preparation on proper implementation of the curriculum. Moreover, there is hardly any evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in Nepal. In my observation (and as studies show), teachers have been aware of constructivist classrooms (they say constructivist classrooms are important for making teaching-learning more meaningful). However,

they do not seem equipped or motivated to make their classrooms follow constructivist pedagogy when it comes to practice. Why is it so? Is it because teachers are not open-minded, or that they do not have the necessary skills and training to implement? Is it because the teachers take their jobs for granted and stick with their old teaching methods? Is it that the teachers in private schools get less motivation? On the contrary, some teachers are adopting a constructivist approach. However, little is known about how they adopted such an approach and how they learned while implementing it. Therefore, a study is needed to unfold teachers' experiences and claim to implement a constructivist approach in the Nepali context.

Purpose of Study

This study aims to unfold the experiences and narratives of private school teachers in Nepal about their practice of constructivist pedagogy in their classrooms. This study also analyses the experience of the students studying in private schools and how they have been guided and monitored by their teachers. It also critically analyses the existing teaching practices in the schools of Nepal.

Research Questions

1. How do private school teachers and students in Lalitpur narrate their experiences of implementing a constructivist approach in the classroom?

Rationale of the Study

Constructivist teachers play a vital role in delivering education among the learners in the basic-level schools of Nepal. This is evident through the various literature reviews conducted in Chapter II. The training, planning, implementation, reflection, and improvisation that a teacher goes through are reflected in the classroom, where we can see children taking charge of learning using their prior knowledge and constructing new ideas based on their previous knowledge. According to Kim (2005), teaching-learning through the constructivist method is more beneficial than the traditional approach. If positively motivates the learners and manages their anxiety when they go through the self-learning and assessment processes. Being in education for over a decade, I have seen students struggling to gain knowledge and lacking interest in their studies. I have also witnessed modern technology taking over the concept of schools and teachers where the students get information with a click of a button. Hence, I wanted to figure out the situation of the teaching and learning practices in the area I live and work.

Secondly, after studying the literature, I came to realize that it is still a tough task for Nepal to include all the children in the program of delivering education and to dream of a constructivist approach in the classroom is an area that the government yet needs to work on.

In ancient times, the education system was generated from the concept of Gurukul, where the bond between students and teachers was respectful, and they equally worked hard to gain knowledge (Bhattarai, 2016). During that period, the guru was considered a person who allowed the learners to create a bond with the universe for deeper understanding and realization. According to Bhattarai and Basnet (2022), sneaking into Nepalese classrooms and looking into the teaching process conducted by the teachers, teachers seem to control the students in the classroom, which is against the practices suggested by a constructivist classroom. The teachers in Nepal seem to lack the knowledge, skills, and understanding to provide better learning experiences for the learners; thus, they practice the traditional way of teaching that suggests that a child learns only when the teacher punishes him/her. This showcases the strict attitude of the schools, which creates a barrier for the students to enjoy and understand the teaching content.

Thus, the requirement of conducting this research is an urgent need to identify the issues related to implementing the constructivist approach that will help us flourish with adequate training and supervision in many schools in Nepal. This research identified the underlying issues and the areas a school needs to dig into to implement a constructivist approach for a better student learning environment.

Delimitations of the Study

I have collected the stories of basic-level teachers implementing the constructivist approach in their classes. I have investigated the learning generated through social interaction occurring inside the classroom, where teachers conducted brainstorming sessions for discussion and group work activities, also outside the classroom, where the teachers conducted physical and nature activities such as nature walks, games, etc., and not looked into the curriculum or assessment part of constructivism. I have delimited theoretically to "Social Constructivism" and didn't go about cognitive and radical constructivism. Under social constructivism, I have looked into socially situated child development and the construction of knowledge through human interactions. The study is limited to the thematic and methodological

gap in implementing the Constructivist approach. It doesn't examine the study's theoretical, policy, and empirical gaps.

Organization of the Study

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. In Chapter I, this study discusses the introduction of the entire study. Chapter II discusses the relevant literature review and the theoretical framework's presentation. Sequentially, the details of the research methodology have been discussed in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, the narratives of the four teachers from the two study schools have been presented. Similarly, this chapter also presents the teachers' implementation of the constructivist approach in their classes. Chapter V of this study presents the students' narratives while conducting focused group discussions on their point of view of the classroom and its effectiveness. This chapter also presents the sharing done by the students based on their classroom experiences. Sequentially, chapter VI presents the key findings and discussion. Finally, chapter VII presents this study's summary, conclusion, and implications.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with me talking about my experiences teaching and learning at the primary school level and my main disappointments. I then talked about the various scenarios I had as an early childhood educator. In it, I talked about the many educational strategies I used back then, how they evolved with time, and the experiences I gained. I've also talked about the instances in which pupils were unhappy for various reasons, including their time. Subsequently, I talked about how my previous experience with research agenda sparked my enduring ideas and interests in education. I developed a research topic based on my experiences to investigate Nepalese teachers' perspectives on the constructivist method. I also talked about how my work will benefit the stakeholders in the education community and myself as a researcher. I mentioned the limitations I placed on myself for the research study in the final portion.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND SETTING ARGUMENTS

This chapter covers some reviews of the literature related to my study. To support my study, I articulate related themes, classroom constructivism, and teacher perceptions. The chapter further carries empirical studies, policy reviews, and theoretical stances. My literature review is also further followed by identifying the research gap.

Theoretical Review

I have reviewed Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory. Since the whole research is based on implementing the constructivist approach, these theories will provide insight into the areas to guide the research work.

Vygotsky is well known for being an educational psychologist, along with a social constructivism theory. This theory suggests that social interaction guides a child to gradually bring change in their thoughts and behavior, which differs from one culture to another (Doe, 2024). The second element in the theory is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). In ZPD, it is believed that in any pedagogy, the learning process varies from child to child, and the level of development is derived by problem-solving under adult supervision or collaboration with better-performance-level peers. As a result, children become more socialized in the exposed culture and gradually develop their knowledge through scaffolding. Thus, this theory will support me in creating meaningful research tools to know a child's prior knowledge, followed by its implementation in developing current learning.

According to Mvududu and Thiel-Burgess (2012), constructivism is mostly known as a method to enhance children's level of understanding. Their understanding level can increase, and they can become critical thinkers. Hence, constructivism describes the way learning and higher levels of thinking work. The theory talks about the strategies the children use to learn about a concept and the effective way of teaching the concept. While taking the constructivism theory in the classroom, a teacher should be aware of the learners' prior knowledge and learn new concepts based on the prior knowledge. It advocates that children should be encouraged to create their own ideas and knowledge rather than imitating other's ideas, whether it is from their teachers or a book (Kanselaar, 2002). Social Constructivism theory is a part

of constructivism that identifies the learners' co-created knowledge and ideas of the world. Social constructivism theory states that a concept's knowledge, understanding, meaning, and significance are formed in collaboration. There are two major components of this theory. One is the concept that people justify their experiences with the help of a model of the social world and the process of its operation created by them. Another component is trust in the language, which is how people create their reality (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). Recent studies emphasize the significance of modifying Vygotsky's theory to fit various cultural and educational situations. This entails recognizing the differences in socioeconomic circumstances and educational practices that affect how constructivist methods are applied and experienced in various contexts (Sharma & Rathi, 2024).

By incorporating this idea in the interview questions with the teachers, the study looks at how directed interactions, collaborative learning settings, and the teacher's position as a facilitator might improve student comprehension and retention. Additionally, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), a concept developed by Vygotsky, examines how scaffolding helps students reach higher levels of competence through social collaboration. Ultimately, this theoretical lens adds to the larger conversation on successful teaching techniques in various educational situations by enhancing the examination of pedagogical methods and emphasizing the crucial role that peer relationships play in fostering deeper learning.

<div align="center">**Constructivist Classroom**</div>

A constructivist classroom is not considered a place to handover knowledge but a concept where each child participates actively in an inquiry and research-based method to solve real-life problems. According to Sfard (1998), in a constructivist classroom, students learn through interaction using the objects and people around them. The classroom, where learning happens with active participation, enhances critical thinking and develops how students solve real-life problems since the learners collaborate through the learning-by-doing process. In such a classroom, a facilitator will challenge the learners with real-life situations and individual skill-building problems, which will be resolved by the learners in collaboration step by step to come up with a concrete solution to the issues being discussed. Learners will not only find possible solutions to the problems but are also encouraged to develop a product prototype, showcase their findings, and publish it for their targeted audiences (Carbonell, 2004). The constructivist classrooms are constructed so that the students

can explore real-life experiences and get involved in meaningful discussions, collaboration, inquiry, action, invention, imagination, creativity, and individual sharing. Furthermore, this method works especially well in diverse educational environments because it can be modified to accommodate students' different requirements and backgrounds.

Constructivist Teachers

The main objective of a constructivist teacher is to provide a democratic environment to the learners where they can explore, work in collaboration, and participate actively in the inquiry going on in the classroom. For such experience, the classroom design should be developed so that the learners can freely interact, explore, and create their own meaning with active participation based on their real-life experiences. They will work together to create meaning and solve the issues discussed in the class, arousing an enriched learning experience (Gray, 1997). Here, the teachers are expected to evaluate and observe how learners use their prior knowledge, understanding, and experiences from their social environment to create new knowledge and understanding of the discussed concept. The main objective of a constructivist teacher in a constructivist classroom is to create independent learners in a nurturing classroom that offers effective learning experiences. A constructivist teacher comes with expertise in the classroom to create productive interaction among the learners and with their teacher, where the teacher has the potential to manage ambiguity in the process and develop complex problem-solving skills (Gray, 1997). This literature review attempts to shed light on the effects of constructivist teaching methods on student outcomes and their implications for professional development and teacher preparation by examining the roles and tactics of constructivist educators.

Constructivist Approach to Teaching Learning

Constructivism is a part of philosophy in teaching learning based on the principle that learning occurs by thinking about our learning experiences, and it's up to us how we create our knowledge based on our experiences and things around us. Everyone is different, and we have our own way of interpreting and generating rules and models to relate to our experiences. Therefore, learning occurs when we balance our mental statements to generate new learning (Bhattacharjee, 2015). Learning generally starts with thought-provoking questions, a situation, or an issue in this approach. In these types of classrooms, usually, the students work together to solve an issue, and a teacher generally works as a mentor or facilitator to support the learners

in their learning. The teacher usually throws questions or problems, and the students solve them among themselves using the available resources (Cooperstein & Weidinger, 2004).

Constructivism is said to have two basic principles, psychological and epistemological (Windschitl, 1999), and it also emphasizes that knowledge is impossible to keep unknown. The first principle agrees that knowledge is about building up by combining various subjects rather than being a passive listener. It is impossible to put ideas in the heads of the students; rather, they are supposed to create the knowledge on their own. When communicating, our attempts may not reflect direct or correct meaning. However, our expression directs the meaning in other ways, varying from person to person. Another principle says that it is possible to adopt the function of cognition and support the organization of the experimental world by extracting itself from the belief of realities of ontology. It is impossible to see the truth, but we can construct possible descriptions of our experiences. We may not view the real world like God, but we can understand the world with the evidence of our experiences.

Wilson (1996) explains that there are alternative instructional activities such as role-play games, simulations, IT-based learning environments, story-telling sessions, case studies, scaffolding and support, design learning, peer/group/individual learning opportunities, holistic development activities, and these activities are vividly seen in a constructivist classroom. Along with these strategies, it would be beneficial to incorporate mini/micro lessons, journal/diary writing, hands-on activity, project-based tasks, real-life based learning, library resources, brainstorming, thought-provoking activities, drama, counseling, graphic organizer and Venn-diagrams could be used as a part of learning activities to implement constructive learning in the classroom (Windschitl, 1999). This method questions established pedagogical models by supporting learner-centered tactics that encourage inquiry, teamwork, and reflection. This strategy adds to the conversation on cutting-edge teaching strategies and how they affect curriculum development and teacher preparation.

Student-Centered Approach

By concentrating on each student's unique requirements, interests, and learning preferences, a student-centered approach to education highlights the active role that students play in their own educational process. This method guides students as they investigate, ask questions, and build understanding by using the teacher as a

facilitator rather than the main source of information. By promoting cooperation, introspection, and independence, the objective is to develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities (Weimer, 2013). Personalized learning experiences are given top priority in student-centered learning, which empowers learners to take charge of their education and participate in worthwhile, practical learning experiences.

In a nutshell, the reviewed literature also revealed how knowledge, skill, and understanding could be achieved through social interaction and connecting with prior knowledge. The literature also highlighted how social interaction practice excels in children's learning. The reviewed literature also stresses that the proper holistic growth of a child completely depends on the school environment where they spend most of their active time. Thus, these themes provide me as one of the strong backups to uncover my research phenomena.

<div align="center">**Policy Review**</div>

Several educators and intellectual figures have advocated child-centered and practical learning-based education in Nepalese education. Several reforms and steps have recently been implemented to make education more practical, problem-solving, and skill-oriented. There was an emphasis on Education for all in the 1980s and 1990s. To achieve its mission of universal primary education, Nepal conducted the following important steps: free primary education, free textbook distribution, scholarship programs, the requirement of one female teacher, a continuous assessment system, removal of gender disparity, decentralized planning and piloting of free primary education to make it compulsory according to Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (Education for All national review report: 2011-2015 (Nepal)). This policy took our country one step ahead in implementing constructivism, where the children felt equality and safety in their schools.

Nepal has implemented the national curriculum for ECD since 2005. Based on this curriculum, the national minimum standard was created in 2010 and was revised in 2018. The National Curriculum Framework (2018) suggests an integrated curriculum from grades 1 to 3, and slowly, it will be extended up to grade 8 basic level education (Curriculum Development Center [CDC], 2018). The integrated curriculum combines the concepts of all the subjects for a better learning experience. Somehow, the policy tries to connect with constructivism to have more social interactions and collaborative projects while integrating the subjects. The classroom

in Nepal practices rote learning by memorizing facts rather than focusing on experimental learning. The curriculum couldn't reach out to the diverse society of the country. Also, the teaching-learning materials are limited, cannot be used in the local resources, and are available in commonly used languages. These are seen as the challenges of the Nepalese education system (Bhandari, 2015). Our education system has focused only on cognitive areas rather than focusing on holistic development.

National Education Policy 2019 emphasizes compulsory and free basic education for all and technical education for all. NEP 2019 aims to organize counseling services for teachers and claims that teachers' performance will be assessed by considering the learning ability of learners. This policy has provided teachers with training and allowed them to plan their curriculum to benefit the learners. SESP 2022-30 is the Nepal School Education Sector Plan launched in 2021 and extends until 2030, which focuses on gaining equal access and participation for all learners in school education, enhancing the school's educational quality, and improving the school's management (Ministry of Education, Science & Technology[MoEST], 2022). This practice automatically connects with all the learners and allows them to learn in a healthy and friendly environment.

While reviewing the policies, I realized it is vital for the country to create a child-friendly classroom where they can learn and groom with their peers and have the freedom to inquire, collaborate, and learn from their mistakes. I also found that even though the integrated curriculum has expanded in most of the country's places, the program cannot address the requirement of children to learn from social interaction, where they could learn by bridging with their prior knowledge in a friendly environment. However, a well-designed policy on the constructivist approach is yet to be implemented in our country. If the policy addresses the requirement of the learners to learn through social interactions in a friendly environment, our children will reach the optimal level of development.

Empirical Review

The constructivist approach is an inevitable part of delivering education among the learners in the basic-level schools of Nepal. This is evident through the various literature reviews conducted in this chapter. The training, planning, implementation, reflection, and improvisation a teacher goes through are reflected in the classroom, where we can see children taking charge of learning and constructing new ideas based on their previous knowledge.

A Constructivist Approach in Learning Chemistry: A Case of High School in Nepal is a study conducted by Subedi (2021), and from the studies, it was found that Constructivism teaching significantly improved academic achievement compared to the traditional method of teaching class XII chemistry students. The Constructivist Approach has a positive effect on the achievement of students in chemistry. It is evident from the analysis that the students taught by the constructivist approach scored higher than those taught by the conventional method in the control group.

Another qualitative study was conducted by Sharma and Rathi (2024) on "Vygotsky's Constructivism and Its Contemporary Implications in Nepalese Classrooms." Recent developments from 2024 are covered in the article, including the use of mobile educational apps and digital learning tools customized for local settings. With the help of culturally appropriate information, these innovations enable higher engagement and offer customized learning experiences. The paper also highlights how constructivist methods can be more effective and applicable in Nepalese schools by embracing cultural factors and local educational practices. In addition to recognizing Vygotsky's foundational achievements, the paper critically analyzes his Social Constructivism. It recommends integrating contemporary technologies and making contextual adjustments to solve Nepal's educational issues.

Research conducted by Martinez (2022) on "Developing 21st-century teaching skills: A case study of teaching and learning through the project-based curriculum" investigated secondary school teachers' experiences in learning to teach 21st-century skills through the design and implementation of a Project-based (PBL) curriculum. This research has opened the door to several other research works on the shortcomings related to PBL curricula that current teachers face, like absenteeism, collaboration, use of technology and resources, etc. Research by Shah (2019) on Effective Constructivist Teaching Learning in the Classroom identifies that the students in the constructivist environment demonstrated more enthusiasm and interest in the subject matter, and a teacher creates a community of learners in their classrooms in which they are an integral and dynamic part. Thus, in a class with a constructivist approach, a learner has ownership of their learning.

Another study by Doe (2024) on "constructivism in the classroom: Revisiting Vygotsky's social constructivism with contemporary insights" clarifies that it thoroughly analyzes show Vygotsky's social constructivism still influences educational methods while addressing new criticisms and developments. The essay

examines more recent ideas for 2024, like combining cutting-edge teaching resources with AI-driven adaptive learning systems. By providing individualized learning experiences and instant feedback, these innovations may overcome some drawbacks of conventional constructivist methods. Furthermore, newer studies highlight the necessity of applying constructivist methodologies with a more nuanced understanding of cultural and contextual aspects, implying that Vygotsky's theory needs to change to keep up with the demands of modern education. After studying the literature, I came to realize that it is still a tough task for Nepal to include all the children in the program of delivering education and to dream of a constructivist classroom is an area that the government needs to work on.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework
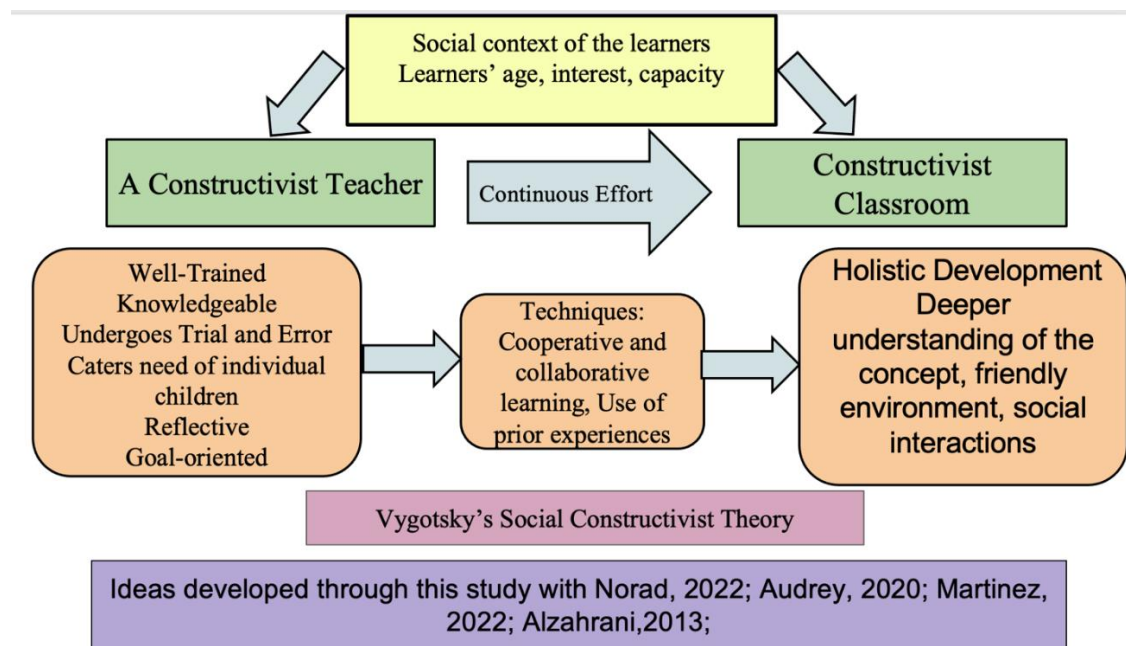
The role of the teacher in a constructivist classroom, based on Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, is to facilitate learning by helping students progress from tasks they can complete on their own to ones they can complete with assistance. This is done by offering scaffold support as they move through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). A constructivist teacher has to be knowledgeable and goal-oriented. The teacher facilitates social engagement and collaborative learning through discussion and group problem-solving, allowing students to develop knowledge jointly. The teacher helps students internalize new ideas and build higher-order

cognitive skills by using scaffolding tactics, which include modeling problem-solving processes, asking probing questions, and providing constructive feedback. Additionally, by fostering introspection and active participation, the teacher fosters critical thinking, metacognition, and self-control while enabling students to connect newly learned material and existing knowledge. Through these exchanges, the teacher fosters an atmosphere in which students acquire the holistic development and social and cognitive abilities required for lifetime learning in addition to the subject matter.

Research Gap

I do not claim that I approached all the national and international studies regarding the current issue. However, studies related to the constructivist approach and quality education reviewed so far are focused on descriptive and correlational studies. A study by Ghimire and Sharma (2022) examines how constructivist learning affects students' academic paths in the long run. According to the findings, students exposed to constructivist environments tend to retain information better and gain a deeper comprehension of concepts over time. Very little research related to cause-and-effect relationships was found. Moreover, most of the research was focused on the outcome of the constructivist approach but not on the process and background of the students. Also, much of the research was from developed countries, not Nepal. Thus, the requirement of conducting this research is an urgent need to identify the issues related to implementation that will help us to develop this approach in many schools of Nepal with adequate training and supervision. Filling in these gaps may offer vital information on modifying constructivist pedagogy to improve learning outcomes in Nepal's educational setting (Sharma & Joshi, 2020).

Methodological Gap

A few previous studies on education in Nepal have seen less focus on teaching in the classroom using a constructivist approach. According to them, the concerns around student empowerment and critical thinking skills receive less attention in these studies. Some studies have addressed student participation in teaching and learning, and their main objective is to enhance students' knowledge, skills, and capacities through interactive practices, group discussions, and cooperative activities. Most teachers consider activity-based learning to be extracurricular rather than a component of their regular curriculum. Since lecture-based instruction makes up the majority of Nepalese practices, teachers typically do not view activity-based learning as a way to foster learning and skill development.

Context Gap

The purpose of this study was to discover teachers' behaviors and their practices in their activities related to enhancing students' learning and comprehension. By using interactive activities and student-centered instruction to empower students' learning and knowledge production, my research study aims to address the gaps in previous studies. Inquiry-based learning can be presented as a transformative method of teaching and learning based on the study findings and conclusions.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I explored various topics and theories directly relevant to my study objective. Along with discussing Vygotsky's social constructivism as a guiding theory for my research, I've also looked at how it relates to my research agenda and affects the processes of meaning-making and drawing conclusions. I have examined four previous studies on applying constructivism in the classroom as part of my empirical evaluation and discussed how they relate to my research project. Additionally, I talked about the research gap and highlighted a few points that support the need for my study both among research participants and on the research agenda.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I have outlined the methodology that I used to narrate the experience of the teachers in implementing constructivism in the classroom. As my research journey was mainly focused on the narration of participants, I have kept how I carried out my narrative inquiry. Thus, this chapter includes procedures I have carried out to accomplish my research. The chapter explains my philosophical foundations: ontology, epistemology and axiology, research paradigm, research design: narrative inquiry, fieldwork process, study instruments, and meaning-making process. Quality standards and ethical considerations further follow this chapter in my research work.

Philosophical Foundations of the Research

This research aims to explore the implementation of constructivism in the classroom and enhance the quality of the education delivered. According to Honebein (1996), a constructivist paradigm argues that knowledge, skill, and understanding are built in the people of the world and its components by being involved in various experiences and reflecting on the aspects they witness. In my study, teacher constructs knowledge through their experiences while working with their basic-level children. According to Kim (2005), people can create new knowledge by aligning with their choices while adopting a certain change and assimilation. In my study, teachers and students co-create new knowledge while doing group work and during interactions; thus, a philosophical stance guides my study to move on. My philosophical stance allowed me to bring out the experience of teachers during my field visit, which is based on the foundation of interpretivism.

I agree with Goertz and Mahoney (2012) that 'Ontology' may look like a complicated aspect of research on concepts and measurements. However, most concepts are intended to represent phenomena in the empirical world as they exist. As Goertz and Mahoney (2012) mention, in my study, the reality is subjective, and the data will vary from person to person based on their beliefs, values, society, political, economic, cultural, religious, and many other aspects. Hence, my ontological belief is based on multiple realities of my research participants, which helped to figure out the effort teachers have put into educating their learners in the classroom using their skills

and resources by sharing their own stories of success and failure with the learners. In my research, through interaction and sharing, I have interacted with multiple participants with multiple realities. My knowledge is subjective, and I have created knowledge through interactions/dialogues with the participants with a constructivist approach to teaching experiences. Thus, this process of being close to the participants is my epistemology for the research.

While doing the research, I ensured that the values between me and the participants would be maintained throughout and after the research since I visited the site after the research work to share my findings. Hence, the axiology of my research was value-based, including the researcher's values and mine. I respected each participant's values and explored my participants' emotions, feelings, and opinions when they shared their experiences on their way of teaching.

Epistemological assumptions relate to how knowledge can be created, acquired, and communicated. Specifically, it amplifies what it means to know. Goertz and Mahoney (2012) explain that epistemology asks the relationship between the would-be knower, i.e., researchers, and what can be known from the participants. Hence, I will work closely with my participants, specifically teachers, and listen to their stories and experiences regarding their ways and methods of taking life skills through classroom learning.

Axiology addresses what is valued and considered desirable or 'good' for humans and society. Therefore, while doing the research, I will maintain the values between me and the participants throughout and after the research. I value my participants and respect their views, ideas, and opinions since their values will affect their answers. Hence, the axiology of my research will be biased. I will respect each participant's values and explore my participants' emotions, feelings, and opinions when they share their experiences in their way of teaching and learning. While teaching, a teacher experiences various teaching traits such as balance, adaptability, resilience, caring, versatility, etc., that will be transferred to their students through a constructivist teaching-learning process.

Since I have multiple realities as my ontology, creating knowledge through interactions as my epistemology, and respecting participants' beliefs and values in my axiology, my research paradigm is Interpretivism. A paradigm offers a structure to the research framework to look into the issues and find out the solution to the concerned problems along with the values and understanding shared by them with a researcher

related to the ways to understand and resolve the issues (Kuhn, 1970). Interpretivism refers to the ways that enforce the meaningful nature of people's characters and participation in both social and cultural life (Chowdhury, 2014). It denotes that the research methods adopt the position that people's knowledge of reality is a social construction by human actors, so it distinctively rules out the methods of natural science (Eliaeson, 2012). It has its roots in the philosophical traditions of hermeneutics and phenomenology, and the German sociologist Max Weber is generally credited with being the central influence. This research paradigm looks for meanings and motives behind people's actions, like behavior and interactions with others in society and culture (Chowdhury, 2014). My research paradigm tries to identify the experience of teachers in their teaching-learning process in their classrooms. I will work closely with all my participants to interpret their points of view and find the way they see the world and the teaching-learning practices. The in-depth interview conducted with the participants will help me to get their part of the study and interpret them to find out the relevance of their practice with constructivism

Research Design

According to Jurs and Wiersama (2009), research design is a framework that guides a researcher by providing a whole set of plans to conduct their research. "Social scientists are scholars who engage in the study of social phenomena, seeking to understand the structures, processes, and patterns of human behavior in various social contexts (Jurs & Wiersama, 2009). As a social scientist, I have looked into the perspective of teachers and students through interviews and discussions. Hence, my research paradigm is interpretivism, in which I have explored the subjective world of human experiences. Thus, my method of research is qualitative. In my research, narrative inquiry assisted me in collecting the data through the interview sessions and collecting sufficient data to interpret the story shared by the teachers. I also believe that narrative inquiry provided an enriched framework with the help of which I could explore how humans experience the world exhibited through their stories (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Thus, using narrative inquiry in my research design, I explored and then narrated my participants' stories and reflected on their experiences.

Interpretive Research Paradigm

According to Willis (2007), a research paradigm is the underlying theory or framework that directs all research procedures. A research process's paradigms offer

the blueprint for creating, carrying out, managing, and finishing the investigation. My research focused on interpreting non-positivist paradigms because knowledge can take on multiple genuine forms and is subjectively constructed. The humanistic paradigm of interpretive research attempts to comprehend people's inner cultures. According to this paradigm, researchers spend much time interacting with individuals to learn about their cultural practices. Researchers can examine research participants' real-world experiences and classroom practices in educational research by using an interpretive research design (Taylor & Medina, 2019).

My research goal was to produce a reflective comprehension of "the other" in context using an interpretive paradigm. Thanks to this paradigm, I developed a local understanding of research participants' lived experiences and environmental experiences. As an interpretive researcher, I tried to view the three worlds as actors. I made every effort to comprehend and interpret the participants' actual experiences while keeping the natural environment as much as possible in mind. I was more interested in learning about the participants' inner beliefs, perspectives, and real inquiry-related activities during the interviews than in learning about what they would have assumed to be external knowledge.

Narrative Inquiry as a Method of Study

Narrative inquiry is a research method that aims to put forward people's stories while conducting interactions. According to Saldana (2015), narrative inquiry accounts for events created through stories and an overall representation of people's knowledge and experience. Similarly, Clandinin et al. (2016) define narrative inquiry as a coordination between researchers and participants, due course of time, in a place or various places who conduct social interaction to gain new knowledge. It was a crucial part of my study to use narrative inquiry so I could identify how teachers narrate their teaching journey in a social learning context with learners; as Lindsay and Schwind (2016) say, narrative inquiry is a process, relationship, and process opening the door to the experience of people through inquiry, thus covering the ways assumptions, values, and beliefs shape the way we look at the world. In my research, narrative inquiry assists me in collecting the data through the interview sessions and collecting sufficient data to interpret the story shared by the teachers. I also believe that narrative inquiry can provide an enriched framework with the help of which I can explore how humans experience the world exhibited through their stories (Webster &

Mertova, 2007). Thus, using narrative inquiry as a method in my research design, I explore and then narrate my participants' stories and reflect on their experiences.

I have captured participants' actions and emotions to go deeper into my research and brought their worldview. Also, I have compiled all the spoken and non-spoken representations while interacting with teachers, enriching my research to relate constructivism practice in basic level education. The arrangement process that I have used to organize narrative inquiry in a thematic thread has unfolded the hidden gap and brought new insight; hence, I have written participants' narratives as my research inquiry.

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Participants and Site

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Being my hometown, it was convenient for me to visit the schools in the Lalitpur district with ease, and I could spend maximum time visiting the school, which has enhanced the quality of my research work. I used the purposive sampling method to choose the schools to have a fair study of the teaching methodology used by the teachers to maintain quality education in the school. Purposeful sampling involves selecting a sample group or place for a certain purpose (Cohen et al., 2007). Two private schools were selected from the Lalitpur district for the study, and they have operated for around 30 years. I selected the schools that have involved at least five teachers or coordinators in the 3 months of child-centered training from a registered training center in Lalitpur. Since I have been working in various private schools for the last 18 years, I have seen the rigorousness of the teachers in planning and implementing the constructivist approach. Through my personal observation, I have selected only those schools that have implemented constructivism in their classes. Two participants from each school working from 6-10 years were selected from the two schools for the interview sessions. I selected five students from the study schools for a Focused Group Discussion after getting consent from their parents in written form to know their level of interest and satisfaction with their classes. The FGD was conducted in the conference room of one of the schools, where other people were requested not to enter. A Focused Group Discussion (FGD) allows qualitative researchers to interview multiple participants in an organized and systematic process (Babbie, 2011). The discussion was conducted naturally, so the participants did not hesitate to share and felt comfortable participating in the research (Showkat & Parveen, 2017).

Among the four research participants from teachers, Sarita Shrestha is an educator by profession and has been in this field of education for the last 25 years. She has already worked as a vice principal in one of the renowned schools of Kathmandu. She loves to be around the students and is dedicated to her work and students. Similarly, Pooja Sharma has taught for the past 12 years and enjoys working with young students. She has been working in the same school for the past 8 years since it gives her satisfaction as a teacher. She shifted from her job as an in-charge to teacher since she loved being around the students and teaching inside the classroom.

Another research participant, Sonee Neupane, is a cheerful teacher who has taught for the last 10 years. She has completed her Master's degree in education and is always passionate about teaching-learning methods. She enjoys her profession and thrives with the learning in her classroom. Finally, Arpana Pradhan is the mother of a 14-year-old daughter who lives with her family in Bouddha. She has been through various ups and downs, starting from moving to Kathmandu from Darjeeling and shifting her job from mother to teacher and now as a coordinator. She is open-minded, always calm, and has a lot of patience.

Among the five research participants of students for FGD, Aarav Basnet, a 13-year-old student in the 7th grade at a private school in Lalitpur, is an outgoing and energetic child who thrives in both academics and sports. Known for his proficiency in mathematics, Aarav also shows a strong passion for physical activities, particularly football, where he is an active member of his school's team. His enthusiasm for extra curriculars extends beyond sports; he enjoys drama and music and regularly participates in school performances. Aarav comes from a supportive family with a younger sister who is also enrolled at the same school. Another participant, 12-year-old Swostika Shrestha, is a student in grade 7 and she is an average student who is more inclined towards playful activities rather than academic areas. She is good in English and Social studies but struggled to achieve good grades in Math and Science. The third participant, 12-year-old Richa Jha, is a student in Grade 6 and is interested in both academics and extra-curricular activities. She was a brilliant student of the class and she also enjoyed the company of her friends and teachers.

The fourth FGD participant, 12-year-old Bhawana Panthi, is a Grade 6 student and is good at her studies. She was interested in reading books and taking art classes. Her teachers appreciated her good performance. She also enjoyed the extra-curricular activities conducted in the school. The fifth participant for FGD 11 11-year-old

Shreeansh Poudel is a typical sixth-grader who showed less interest in extracurricular activities and more interested in academic subjects. Since he doesn't particularly appreciate his music or extracurricular classes, Shreeansh had a different viewpoint. Because he concentrates more on ideas and theory, which helps him grasp math even more, he likes taking regular classes like science and math.

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Data Collection Tools and Processes

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Every research requires proper study tools to conduct the research smoothly; thus, for my research work, I used an in-depth interview method to gather the teachers' opinions, views, and experiences based on their teaching experience and performance. For it, I had open-ended questions that made the teachers think deeply while reflecting on their teaching-learning experiences. As suggested by Ryan et al. (2009), the guiding questions for the interview were prepared based on the research purpose and questions. The questions mentioned in the interview were related to the topic, i.e., based on the teaching experience and performance of the teachers. They were simple to understand and easy to answer. The questions were ethical and didn't talk about sensitive or threatening areas. To track the feedback, I used observation performance, which helped me organize and understand the feedback.

After rigorous planning and finalization of instruments for the time, I listed down the requirements of a field visit, starting from selecting the research area to obtaining permission from the concerned authority to visiting the field to get authentic and genuine information relevant to my topic of study. It is necessary to get permission from the respective schools to maintain courtesy and reflect the study's requirements. These people are called gatekeepers. According to Singh & Wassenaar (2016), a gatekeeper is considered a person who controls access to an institution or an organization, such as a school principal, managing director, or administrator. Research conducted in spaces like shopping malls would also require gatekeeper permission because such spaces are generally privately owned or managed. Gatekeepers are also responsible for keeping the organization safe and organizing and filtering the flow of people. For my research, after getting permission from the gatekeepers, i.e., the school's front desk officer, I had to work closely with the teachers, students, and staff of the organization, so I needed to develop a good rapport with the people involved in the study to get authentic and genuine information. I had a lot of informal conversations with the teachers and school staff to develop a good rapport for the research. Hence, it was convenient for me to conduct interview

sessions in the field of study, i.e., classes within the schools. I have maintained good rapport in the pre-study phase, during the study, and post-study with the gatekeepers and the participants for future feedback and interactions.

As per the nature of my ontology, epistemology, and research paradigm, I recorded the teachers' teaching style and interviewed them to collect their opinions, views, and experiences regarding using constructive approaches in the classroom and providing real-life experiences. They were open to sharing their stories, and the ones who were hesitant at the first meet opened up during the second meet. The teachers proudly shared their stories related to their teaching experiences. I also conducted a Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with the students to determine the effectiveness of the teachers' strategies in the classroom. After obtaining written consent from the parents, I requested their teachers to send the students at a certain time, and we had an informal talk initially where we introduced ourselves well. The students were glad to talk about their experiences and challenges at their school. My research is based on a qualitative method using purposive sampling and in-depth interviews, and questionnaires were used to analyze the quality of education delivered in the school. Regarding the in-depth interviews, I developed a good rapport with the interviewees so they feel comfortable sharing their information and experiences without fear and hesitation.

Data Analysis Process

I transcribed the audio recording of the interview. I used the naturalized transcription method. In this specific kind of transcription, I transcribed what was said and how it was said. Also, I preserved the different elements of the interview besides the verbal content, such as non-verbal language, contextual aspects, and the interaction between me and the participants. After returning from the study sites, I categorized the narrative sunder the interview questions. More precisely, I considered four fundamental components for analyzing and interpreting the narratives: thematizing, coding, categorizing, and patterning (Cohen et al., 2007).

Coding is considered a process of labeling and segmenting text to form broad themes and descriptions in the data (Creswell, 2020). I used coding to extract concepts from unprocessed data through several coding steps. I connected codes through categorization to form a unit or category. I could recognize recurring units (patterns) from the provided categories through pattering. I was able to develop themes that represented comparable patterns by thematizing. To address the research

question, I then developed a subheading for each theme and included the narrative as supporting information under each one. After that, I discussed the story and connected it to the theory, other pertinent literature, and my reflection (Creswell, 2020).

Quality Standard of the Study

In research, quality standards refer to the caliber of data gathered and the conclusions and discoveries drawn from it. They give validity and reliability to study findings. The strategies used to extract the true substance of participants' perspectives determine the research's quality. To ensure that this study met the required levels of quality, I used three distinct criteria. The following subheadings are described in conjunction with these criteria.

Moreover, the three common places of narratives: temporality, sociality, and place (Connelly & Clandinin, 2012) have been considered in the research. Temporality refers to those experiences of present context that are interlinked with memories and, at the same time, have expectations for the future (Cunliffe et al., 2004). In this research, I explored how participants presented their stories on implementing social constructivism to shape their perception of how the past structured it and how it will be remembered. My research question is about the narratives of the teachers' perception of teaching; hence, the teachers shared the way they started their teaching career, how they struggled to become better teachers, and how their training and experiences have polished them. Hence, this experience acted as a bridge for the teachers to meet their standards, and with time, they have emerged as better teachers. It was not easy for me to get into the teachers' past, present, and future, but with my slow and steady conversations and good rapport building, I was able to connect the experiences of the teachers and students.

Sociality indicates the social conditions under which people gain experiences and events unfold. The multi-dimensional narratives of the participants support gathering narrative texts. Narrative inquirers take note of both social and personal conditions since they exhibit participants' own struggle to structure their experiences (Clandinin et al., 2016). I kept in mind both the social and personal interactions of my participants since the fact that the people have the place they lived in, and it reflects the person they are and the struggle they have faced in their life assisted in creating narratives in my study. While taking the narratives, the stories shared by the participants were in different parts, and I combined those parts to organize their ideas and thoughts. I have included the background as well as the travel story of the

participants. During the interview, the participants connected their experiences with the place they stayed, which reflected their sociality.

Under place, this study provided a place or space for the teachers to share their achievements, problems, and stories related to their teaching experiences. As we know, people have a strong relationship with their own experiences and memories in their own place, and we, as humans, share our stories by connecting the space and our own experiences related to the place (Clandinin et al., 2016). During the study, I was aware of the connection of my participants' experiences with the place in their social context, and the strength of the bond with their place certainly enriches their narratives to unfold their hidden stories. I choose the professional and personal setting to talk with the participants so they don't hesitate to discuss their social and personal conditions.

Cladinin's narrative analysis strategies were used in my research, where I created stories of the participants using their temporality, sociality, and place. This strategy allowed me to look into the narratives of each participant based on their past experiences, how it has shaped their present, and how they set their expectations for the future. It assisted me in linking the participants' stories with the themes generated through their stories based on the implementation of the constructivist approach in their classroom.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an essential component of any qualitative study. I spent much time interacting with the participants to gather all the necessary data. In a qualitative investigation, trustworthiness supports the claim that the investigation's conclusions are "worth paying attention to" (Cropley & Cropley, 2021). Furthermore, it is imperative to be truthful and open about the biases and shortcomings of researchers (Cropley & Cropley, 2021). Therefore, being sincere is essential when tackling quality difficulties in qualitative research.

To make my research work trustworthy, I have tried my best to maintain the quality of my work from the initial phase till the end. I visited the research sites at least 4 times to get my participants' narratives so that they felt comfortable with me sharing their narratives from their hearts, not their minds. This allowed me to get the narratives from the participants that they obtained from their trial and error experience. Since my method is qualitative, I was confident that I had prepared relatable and suitable research questions that provided justice for my topic of study. I

have tried my best to keep the questions simple and ensured that my participants understood them if they were not getting them. I ensured the research findings were well-analyzed, descriptive, and articulated by transcribing the interview and narrating the teachers' experiences through storytelling. Once I had made a rough draft of my research work, I conducted a review to get valuable suggestions from my peers and to make my study more realistic and of better quality. Participants are the key elements of the study; thus, I tried my best to maintain positive relationships with my participants and also had regular follow-up sessions after the research work. This event contributed to the quality of the work since maintaining a positive relationship with the participants resulted in a collection of actual information.

Authenticity

The quality of the researcher-participant interaction is a key indicator of a research study's authenticity. It is focused on non-munificence, beneficence, and fairness. It helps the researcher to clarify and offer evidence that the data are real. According to Taylor and Medina (2019), the following criteria are considered authentic: fairness (the fairness in the representation of information), educative (if the participants benefit from learning from their social world), catalytic (if the participants benefit from knowing about the problems in their social world), and tactical (if the researcher empowers the participants to improve their social situation). The researchers reassure the reader that the research is truly evaluated and unwavering in the face of social, political, and educational circumstances by demonstrating authenticity.

I have always been cautious when choosing participants so that they are knowledgeable about my research and aim to preserve fairness in the study. In addition, I've always been careful only to pose questions that encourage individuals to share their thoughts and characteristics freely. Additionally, I concentrated on building trust and fair relationships with the participants so that they would feel comfortable sharing their true responses. The interviews and discussions were held in a way that was as natural as possible for these reasons, respecting each participant's sense of self-worth. They were meant to be inspired by all of this to give me the real answers.

During the interviews and discussions, I also paid close attention to the reciprocal exchange of conversational dialogues and cross-questions, assessing the veracity of their opinions. I didn't advise them to adopt my views or those of anyone

else. I have spoken for their opinions and viewpoints; they are not disregarded or misrepresented. Additionally, until the research study is published, I will retain the spoken and textual data. I have conducted a thorough discourse analysis of the data gathered with them to uphold educational catalytic and tactical standards. I have also helped them comprehend the practices in our/their context more deeply. Additionally, I shared the research findings from my study on their local social situations with them.

Credibility

In a qualitative study, credibility can be established by various techniques, such as extended fieldwork, participant interpretation verification, and open-ended or emergent inquiry (Taylor & Medina, 2019). I had established appropriate communication with participants, paid them regular visits, and conducted several in-depth interviews to get the data I needed to keep my research study credible. I had also kept up the conversation till there was too much to absorb. I was mindful of preserving a natural environment and inspiring them to share their experiences and tales.

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Ethical Considerations

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According to Dooley (2007), "the study of right and wrong conduct is a component of ethics. "Research ethics are just as important as the study's findings; insufficient ethical considerations might call into question the study's validity and its conclusions. The data/information gathered during the research cannot be considered trustworthy unless readers are reassured regarding ethical issues. A researcher conducting a study must exhibit certain behaviors. As Dooley (2007) stated, "Ethics is concerned with the attempt to formulate codes and principles of moral behavior" (p. 59).

All the research works are grounded in moral values and ethics so that no people involved are harmed physically or mentally. Proper courtesy was maintained by the participants and the people in their workplaces. Regarding the participants, I have maintained confidentiality of the information they shared and did not let anyone tamper with the collected information. Also, I kept the participants' hypothetical names so they could narrate their stories to maintain anonymity, and the participants' personal information was not revealed. At the same time, a few participants wanted to receive recognition for their contribution to the research by letting their information known. I respected their autonomy and honored their wishes, but at the same time, I

communicated to my participants any privacy risk linked with it. Before conducting the interview observation sessions, I ensured that the participants knew the research work's objective and essence. In fact, I took their informed consent and then engaged them in the research interviews. The data collected is purely for research purposes and will not be used for other personal purposes.

To conduct FGD with the students, I called the parents of individual students who were my research participants over the phone. Since the students were under 18, I met their parents to get written consent to conduct the FGD by clarifying my research objectives. I was equally conscious of the originality of the information, and I accurately studied the information and ensured that the collected information was well-organized and carefully studied. I followed Kathmandu University's Ethical Review Committee's considerations while conducting my research. I filled out the KUSOED ethical guidelines form and submitted it to the Department before beginning the research work. I respected and followed the KU research committee's guidelines throughout the research period.

Chapter Summary

I began this chapter by reviewing the philosophical tenets that guided my research work, then moved on to the procedural technique. I've discussed my ontological, epistemological, and axiological presumptions for researching philosophical orientations. Regarding the procedural approach, I have provided details about the research location, participant selection procedures, and information-gathering methods. I've also talked about the nature of information and the methods used to analyze it. I wrapped up by discussing the ethical and quality-related concerns I have continuously considered while researching. I have addressed many sub-issues related to ethical considerations and quality standards in distinct sections.

CHAPTER IV

CONSTRUCTIVIST PEDAGOGY INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

In this chapter, the narratives of four teachers provide insight into their experience of implementing constructivism in the classroom over their work period. Each of the four participants provided meaningful details of the knowledge construction in their classroom, how the students learn, the importance of active participation, and ways students enjoy their learning, take ownership of their learning, and solve real-life problems. According to Jia (2010), a teacher is responsible for designing the classroom environment, guiding the students to learn, and becoming an academic counselor. Also, the students reflected on how they were taught inside and outside the classroom. They also discussed the effectiveness of the classroom through social interactions and practical activities and shared their challenges while learning. I discussed teachers' narratives on the implementation of constructivism in the classroom. In this chapter, I discussed and interpreted teachers' narratives. That is, I discussed how the teachers who worked as participants in my research perceived and explained the ways of making teaching-learning learners friendly. While narrating participants' opinions and perspectives, I developed the themes by addressing the research questions. As Ryan et al. (2009) mentioned, one-to-one interviews are an important method to generate individual perceptions, values, and norms on a certain process and are an important source for research. The teachers shared their experience on their teaching-learning experiences at the basic level. Finally, these themes were discussed in relation to the theory and research questions, and I discussed them through the meaning-making process.

I created a few major themes as the study's findings based on the narratives and how they were interpreted in the previous chapter. Following the narratives' examination and interpretation, the following major themes emerged:(a) Enriched Learners-friendly Classrooms, (b) Balanced curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities, (c) Teacher as a Role Model and Mentor, (d) Understanding the key to Success, (e) Collaborative Learning Method, and (f) Assessment System based on Projects.

Enriched Learners-friendly Classrooms

Enriched Learners-friendly Classrooms in Private Schools address the significant structural barriers students face in their education. They should adopt inclusive classroom practices to render teaching holistic and humanistic (Tabe & Fomukong, 2020).In the context of this study, I define the phrase "classroom setting" as the arrangement, utilization, and accessibility of tangible items that are kept up to date to enhance the standard of instruction in the classroom. This implies that the pedagogy used to convey knowledge and abilities to the intended learners is more influenced by the physical layout of the classroom. This approach seeks to create a learning environment where students of diverse backgrounds feel valued and empowered and their unique needs and experiences are acknowledged and addressed (Munala et al., 2023).

My first research participant, Sarita's journey as an educator, started just like any other teacher who always refused to assume adopting the teacher's job at a young age. Despite her disinterest in this profession, this job turned out to be a most rewarding profession for her.

She was promoted to coordinator and worked rigorously to develop a child-friendly curriculum. However, the school authority and owners didn't show interest and outcome in her effort; hence, she had to stick to the teacher-led classroom. She was not happy with the situation, so she decided to hope for a better job opportunity where she could align her teaching-learning philosophy. Finally, she joined a reputed school in Lalitpur. She said:

> When I was new to this school, many things like the philosophy, teaching
> strategies, and many others were so different. Although I already had 10 to 12
> years of experience when I joined this school, I used the lecture teaching
> method when I realized that everything was so new to me. And then, I realized
> that some of the students didn't understand. For example, students struggled to
> understand when I was teaching Merchant of Venice. The language and all
> were okay. Although we had paraphrased the chapters, it was still quite
> difficult for them to understand, and then, as time went on, I decided to
> implement a collaborative way of learning. Unlike the lecture method I once
> used in the class, I did group work. The same thing was again done in a group,
> and one of the students said, "Oh, miss now, I understood." So, that was my

experience of peer work, which helped me understand the topic. Therefore, let's
give preference to group work.

This provided a spark in her teaching-learning journey. And since then, she has been designing her curriculum and lesson plans in a child-friendly way. Research conducted by Klassen and Tze (2014) on teachers' self-efficacy and teaching performance identified that these factors have a greater connection. She researches new techniques to implement in the classroom for a better learning experience, and the result of her effort was seen among the students who thrived in every circumstance. She vividly recalls the tough days when she wanted to quit the profession. However, once she implemented the constructivist approach, she enjoyed each class with her students, incorporating fun learning and engaging activities. Her positive attitude made her popular among her students, who look forward to attending her classes.

Pooja is my second research participant. She has a postgraduate degree in management and started her teaching career as a preschool teacher. According to her, teaching was not her dream job, but she took it as a starting phase of her career that she was planning to build in banks for the long run. After 2 years of hustle and bustle of working as a preschool teacher, her experience deviated from her dream job of working in a bank and took her to one of the reputed schools in Kathmandu.

Pooja considered teaching an incredible journey of teaching and learning with the students. She believed that the students provided the essence of the learning happening in the classroom. All the students should be provided with an equal opportunity to speak and share their ideas and views as well as get a friendly environment where they could open up and express themselves freely.

She shared that for students to learn better, their learning shouldn't be limited to the classroom, but the teacher should provide first-hand experience so that the students can think outside the box and implement the learned concepts in their practical lives. She said that this kind of exploration allows the learners to enrich their knowledge, where they learn through observation, investigation, interview, and hands-on activities. She said:

> *I think that's what we do in our school in the "School with no Walls"*
> *program. I think that this environment helps students learn much better*
> *because last time, we went on a trip to Bandipur and Gorkha, which was*
> *related to our topic. The objective of the trip was to learn about historical*

monuments, and while teaching the topic, we showed the pictures and had an enriched discussion on the historical monuments; it was much easier for the students to relate when we went there and talked about it and we showed them the real monuments. They learned about the Dhikies, which ancient people used to grind grains, and the students learned how to use those ancient things. This helped them know more about the ancient monuments because it was much easier than showing pictures and talking about them. So, taking the students outside the classroom helps them to learn more in a better way.

Along with exposure to the outer world, Pooja believed that the students were the leaders in the classroom rather than the teachers. The students should take charge of learning, so Pooja said, "Students in my class initially feel hesitant and confused when I allow them to explore the topics independently. They frequently come with questions in the initial phase, but once they get a hook on the topic, they are guided by their own methods and techniques. For me, this is where the students take ownership of their learning and take responsibility for their successes and failures." Her thoughts align with Blake (2015), who says students are like clay that can be molded into any shape by a teacher at their basic level of education (Blake, 2015).

My third research participant, Arpana, strongly believes in the above statement and agrees that as an educator, she should find multiple ways to ensure the children are learning to the best of their ability. She never fails to engage the students through various ways, such as field trips, hands-on activities, nature walks, and practical learning experiences. She said:

From my experience, students learn by exploring, seeing, observing, listening, and experimenting. Just like we say, in the progressive environment, hands-on activities and asking questions. So, when you give them a voice, they ask questions. And well, I think the learning environment is okay if it is more than just a classroom. I feel so because it is a safe space for them to feel accepted and loved.

According to Lim and Han (2020), learning should be enhanced in several ways, and a major strategy could be incorporating problem-solving activities. To assess the acquirement of knowledge, skills, and understanding among the learners, Arpana shared that she throws a lot of problems in front of the learners and provides them with the required resources to solve the problems. Even though the students

solve the problems, she and her teachers are always there with the students to provoke them and guide them throughout their learning journey. She said:

> *We've got a lot of problem-solving activities in my class, but to name a few, I would say to ask open-ended questions. Model the strategies myself in front of the students. Again, brainstorm, explain, encourage, and sometimes act out group discussions. Again, giving children voice choice and ownership will lead to success. I think this problem-solving activity helps enhance the students' conceptual understanding because children will be able to analyze and understand the concepts and then solve the problems later. If they understand the concept, they can solve the problem.*

Active engagements will allow the students to utilize their energy and caliber and prove themselves achievers. These kinds of active engagements are associated with their multiple intelligence and learning styles (Lim & Han, 2020). As a teacher, as Arpana said, if we know the needs of a child and incorporate the ways they learn best, none of the children will be deprived of education, and they will develop a thirst to learn and grow further.

In this study, the students come to the school from diverse backgrounds and places, making the classroom diverse. During their brainstorming and discussion sessions, they bring the personal experiences they gained through their family and social background to the classroom, making the discussion richer and more authentic. Educators from all subject areas strive for culturally inclusive classrooms where students' authentic selves are valued (Lim & Han, 2020).

To achieve an optimum result, educators must be knowledgeable about the cultures represented in their classrooms and demonstrate a commitment to working with students of diverse backgrounds (Munala et al., 2023). Inclusive education practices ensure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed (Munala et al., 2023). In this study, cultural diversity was vividly seen through the rich discussions during the focused group discussion, where the students shared their learning experiences with their teachers.

Implementing enriched learners-friendly classrooms in private schools is crucial in addressing the structural barriers faced by the students. These classrooms should prioritize creating a culture of acceptance and belonging where all students feel valued for their authentic selves (Munala et al., 2023). As per the teachers' narratives, students feel excited to come to the school, and when the teachers

welcome the students with smiles, they get motivated and enjoy the classroom atmosphere. To create an optimal learning environment, private schools should focus on flexible classroom designs, incorporating interactive whiteboards and comfortable seating arrangements. Embracing technology is pivotal, as is integrating digital resources, laptops, and smart boards to enhance engagement and learning outcomes. Prioritizing student well-being through wellness programs and maintaining a comfortable classroom environment completes the framework for enriched learner-friendly classrooms in private schools, promoting a comprehensive and tailored educational experience.

From the study, I found out that schools should also incorporate diverse teaching strategies such as peer-assisted learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners effectively. In addition, teachers in these enriched, learners-friendly classrooms should act as school administrators, showing tact and sensitivity when dealing with students. Through these strategies, schools can create a learning environment that promotes inclusion, ensures equity in access and opportunities, and fosters a greater sense of belonging for all students. To create enriched, learners-friendly private-school classrooms, educators should prioritize creating a culture of acceptance and belonging where students feel valued for their authentic selves. This can be achieved by adopting inclusive classroom practices that render teaching holistic and humanistic (Tabe & Fomukong, 2020). Educators should also incorporate diverse teaching strategies such as peer-assisted learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners effectively. Furthermore, teachers should be knowledgeable about the behavior and characteristics of students with diverse learning needs to develop appropriate strategies and improve their skills in creating an environment that supports and nurtures the growth of all students.

Balanced Curricular, Co-curricular, and Extra-Curricular Activities

Balanced curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities are crucial in promoting holistic development among school students. According to Zacarianand Silverstone (2020), a variety of abilities, including critical and creative thinking, communicating, innovating, socializing, self-management, and so on, should be included in classroom pedagogy. When putting principles into practice, learner autonomy is essential. These activities ensure that students receive a well-rounded education beyond traditional classroom learning. They provide opportunities for

students to explore their interests, develop new skills, and build important life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and time management. These activities also contribute to students' overall well-being and mental health by providing avenues for relaxation, stress reduction, and social interaction. Incorporating various curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities allows students to engage in different areas of their interests.

In this study, the well-rounded mix of extracurricular, co-curricular, and curriculum activities in the study schools significantly positively influences students' learning. Extracurricular activities that foster critical thinking, entrepreneurship, abilities, and interests were proven beneficial to kids' future lives in the study schools. Therefore, through regular training exercises, coaching, and competition participation, extracurricular activities foster desirable characteristics such as leadership, cooperation, and others (Munadi & Khuriyah, 2023). The curriculum followed at the schools served as the cornerstone of academic success by giving pupils the fundamental knowledge and abilities they need. It created a solid basis for upcoming education and intellectual development by laying the groundwork for critical thinking and problem-solving.

Sarita starts her class with a morning meeting as her classroom ritual, where her students are eager to share their stories and discuss current affairs based on the issues and stories happening worldwide. She believes that these kinds of sharing allow the learners to go beyond the learning expectations set by the curriculum. Her thoughts align with Munadi and Khuriyah (2023), where she incorporates a lot of brainstorming sessions in her classroom, which allows the students to come up with their own ideas and opinions related to the topic being discussed in the class. She is interested in asking her students probing questions, which activates their neurons and keeps them active throughout the session. And she does her little trick when the students are unable to find the answer; she keeps on poking the students with more questions and, this time, more precise questions consisting of hints to find the answer to the asked question.

She agreed with Munadi and Khuriyah (2023) that learning shouldn't be limited to textbooks or classrooms, so she incorporates many warm-up activities such as Dictionary Hunt, Scavenger Hunt, Think, Pair and Share activities, and more. One of her favorite warm-up activities is Brain Gym, where she incorporates light physical activities to allow students to refresh their minds and help them stay focused in class.

She says, "Brain Gym is something I do quite often in the class, and my students love doing so. I instruct them to do simple activities such as Making figure eight using their right thumb and rotating them clockwise to form the letter eight. Also, they love to have some twists and turns of their body. These small activities allow them to listen attentively and grasp the concepts taught in the class." She has also taken her students to outdoor activities to explore and learn. She said:

> *One exploration activity for the students could be a field trip. For example, in Grade 7, the students go to the Australian Base camp and observe the museum there. It's a museum where the returned stolen statues of gods and goddesses are exhibited. Here, the students have first-hand experience of observing and studying the statues. So rather than just teach them the images of the statues and tell them that these things have been brought back, we can take them to the museum and show them. They could interview the museum experts to learn about those statues' history.*

She agrees with Connell (2001) that learning should not be limited to the four walls of the classroom and not inside the textbooks. Rather, the learning should have a broader horizon, where the students could be a part of their classroom community and work together to get a new perspective on the topic discussed in class. She shared that she herself is learning a lot through these explorations and enriched discussions. She shares that since the students come from different backgrounds, they have unique experiences and knowledge, which is an asset for the classroom since they can learn a lot from each other. She said:

> *Understanding is very important. Just because the students have come here to study doesn't mean they are learning well and doing everything correctly. They have to understand what they are doing. So, they must know that learning will help them in the future when they learn on their own. They should realize that it will help them enhance their future learning. They are taking responsibility for learning independently because there will be nobody to guide them later. The teachers won't always be there for them, so they must be responsible.*

Through all these explorations, investigations, identification, organization, etc., students develop the skills required for their grade level development and understand the core value of the concept taught in the classroom (Connell, 2001). She believed that understanding is the key point in teaching-learning and when a child

understands the content and context. As discussed in class, they will automatically develop an interest in the activities.

Sonee is eager to sow a seed of curiosity among the learners and see how it grows into a seedling and, finally, a giving tree, spreading its knowledge and skills around it. According to Mellado (1998), to retain what the students have learned, knowingly and unknowingly, teachers use several strategies and tricks. Learning is incomplete without students getting engrossed in their topic of discussion in several ways: verbally, through actions, or through practical implementation. Sonee wants her students to become problem solvers and learn how to solve real-life problems. She shared:

> *Whenever we introduce any topic, we introduce the concept, give them the topic, and then ask them to brainstorm. Brainstorming is one of the best techniques. It sounds very simple, but it's one of the key strategies we use, and we ask them to think, pair, and share sometimes by asking them to think and share. So, this is how it begins. This is the first strategy I always use, and then we move on to usually skill-building activities. It's not about how they're presenting their work or how good the cover page is, but it's about what they've learned, so we focus on skill building, and that's how we assess them. Another skill and strategy that I use is creating an environment where the students feel safe and can give their thoughts to the discussion.*

She shared that observing and giving feedback is another strategy for a teacher. She asked them to share and observe, and then they did all the discussion. Giving feedback is one of the strategies and, most importantly, the key to all the strategies discussed earlier. Then, she would have lots of discussions. Due to this, sometimes the class might sound chaotic when another person has no idea what's happening in the class. But the discussion, Sonee thinks, is the key strategy because that's how they learn and connect. That's how they relate and understand, thinking: Oh, this is wrong. Oh, this is right. Oh, it's like that. These are the few strategies she shared that she used in the class so that their kids are learning.

According to her, gaining knowledge is never an easy job. However, a teacher has a good set of plans to execute; students daily have a wonderful insight into their learning and relate them to the real scenario. Skills learned through such problem-based activities are long-lasting and ready to be implemented (Sfard, 1998).

Born and growing up in the hills of Darjeeling, Arpana Rai is a 40-year-old female teacher who has been working relentlessly in education for the last eight years. She has completed her Bachelor's Degree in Arts from Darjeeling. After working in a school in Darjeeling for 2 years, she moved to Kathmandu with her family to seek better opportunities, and she has been staying in Kathmandu for the last six years. Arpana loves incorporating exploration, investigation, and hands-on activities into her curriculum. She agrees that children need proper school, family, and community exposure to link their studies with the natural environment and learn basic competencies to compete in artificial intelligence. She considers herself a child-friendly teacher and believes that her teaching career has helped her stand proudly and professionally and raise her child correctly, allowing personal grooming time. She has always wanted to align with her teaching career, and she has been bringing up creative ideas to support the students in her class. She agrees with Applefield et al. (2013) that students should be able to work with a broader point of view and generalized sequential ideas linked with the disciplines and experiences.

A way of involving students in active learning is through group work and peer work. Arpana shared that this strategy is much more helpful in day-to-day classes, where a teacher can immediately see the learning execution in the classroom when the students are actively involved with their group members or peers (Sfard & Kieran, 2001). She said that the students are assigned a certain task, and they are divided into different groups to solve a similar problem, and they will be provided with the required resources to accomplish the task. She finds it rewarding to witness students coming up with various information. She believes everyone will learn new knowledge from their friends when they share their findings through presentations. She said:

> *Again, group work and peer work will enhance critical thinking skills. When you work in a group, you feel a kind of support. And I think there are shy ones who don't wish to talk. I think you will also build a better rapport with them. Again, communication skills are also enhanced through that process. Each member will support their team to give the best outcome through which all different types of learners can show their talent through research, analysis, organizing, illustration, and many other tasks during the work.*

Indeed, active engagement is a wonderful art for teachers, but Arpana sometimes struggles due to the student's behavioral issues and learning styles. She

shared that she had difficulty managing the students' behaviors while doing group work since the classroom would be chaotic and the students would hear the teacher less. She also faces challenges with balancing the learning needs of the students and catering to different levels of the students. She also feels a lack of parental support since the parents are busy with their work and daily chores; they have less time for their children, resulting in behavioral issues among the students.

<h3 style="text-align:center">**Teacher as a Role Model and Mentor**</h3>

The provision of emotional support by educators is crucial for the social and emotional growth of their pupils. The students in the study schools felt safe and respected in a supportive learning environment fostered by a caring teacher-student relationship. This emotional base improved pupils' general well-being and fostered an ideal learning environment, as seen in the students' achievements. Teachers are architects of future goals as well as knowledge conduits. Teachers in the study schools assisted students in choosing their educational and career choices by sharing personal experiences, offering insights into various occupations, and offering career advice. According to Gregory et al. (2019), learner-friendly pedagogy frequently emphasizes continuous assessment procedures to foster cognitive ability, emotional regulation, social interaction, and personal engagement. Students' lives are shaped by the career development mentoring they get, which influences their choices and goals outside of the classroom.

A teacher plays a crucial role in shaping the minds and futures of students. They serve as role models and mentors, guiding students in academic pursuits, personal growth, and character development. Teachers are responsible for imparting knowledge, instilling values, and fostering emotional connections with their students (Sari et al., 2023). This involves demonstrating proper conduct, communication skills, and professionalism. Teachers should exhibit poise, bearing, and appropriate facial expressions and manner of dressing when interacting with students.

The teachers in the study schools significantly impacted children because they served as role models for ethics and values. All educators are motivated to instruct, guide, foster, develop, and support students' learning to promote positive growth and development. Instructors and students share a common passion for learning, and as learning facilitators, they anticipate changes in students' learning behaviors, which inspire instructors to further their learning (Sari et al., 2023). Teachers molded their student's moral compass by modeling integrity, respect, and accountability via their

behaviors and attitudes. Beyond the classroom, this behavioral modeling influenced kids' character development and fostered a supportive school environment. Students frequently acquired these values through witnessing an instructor's dedication to moral principles, which developed a feeling of personal accountability. In addition to offering moral direction, teachers in the study school acted as mentors, offering crucial assistance for students' intellectual and personal development. A teacher-mentor relationship provides a secure environment for students to investigate their interests, get helpful criticism, and overcome academic obstacles. Students who receive this mentoring develop a love of studying and gain confidence that enables them to overcome challenges and realize their full potential. Innovative educators spark the realization of high-quality learning and, in turn, raise the institution's standard (Sari et al., 2023).

Beyond simply passing along knowledge, teachers have a significant impact on the lives of their students. They significantly impact students by acting as mentors and role models (Power & Wilson, 2019). For their students, teachers set an example of behavior and morals. Teachers show virtues like kindness, patience, perseverance, and respect through their deeds and interactions. Pupils frequently imitate these actions, picking up important life lessons from their instructors. Teachers act as mentors, offering assistance and motivation to pupils who are having difficulties (Power & Wilson, 2019). Students frequently seek support and direction from their teachers when faced with challenges in their personal lives, academic pursuits, or decision-making. Instructors listen intently, give guidance, and create a secure environment where students can express themselves.

Sarita believed that there should be flexibility in how rules are applied to the students. She recognized that each student has unique strengths, weaknesses, and circumstances. She confirmed that applying rigid, one-size-fits-all rules may not always be fair or effective. Instead, she advocated for personalized approaches to discipline, behavior management, and academic expectations. She agrees with Hymel and Katz (2019) that these personalized approaches will allow understanding and addressing each student's specific needs and circumstances, fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. She said:

> *Don't make it all hard and fast rule for them that they have to learn it this way or that way. Learning by doing things in a fun way with multiple activities is effective. At home, the parents are very busy, and then they're unable to give*

the students time. So, children hardly get time from their parents at home, so they do their things independently. However, sometimes, if it is needed, we as teachers have to give excuses or extend the assignment deadline. So rather than just making things harder and faster, let them learn in a fun way. So, please don't make it a rule in the classes that you have to do this or that. Let them learn in an activity-based or, as I said earlier, peer learning because that's how they enjoy learning.

She said that the students feel welcomed and are eager to learn if they feel welcomed in the classroom by the teachers, so she makes sure that the students don't hesitate to come near her and share their feelings and problems with her. Initially, in her early teaching days, she had to cater to the emotional needs of the students. However, after working in her current school, she learned that the child should be physically fit, emotionally balanced, socially accepted, and spiritually stable with aligns with (Hymel & Katz, 2019). Hence, she said that she was against hard and fast rules and was always allowed to show a friendly nature to her students. She said:

First, I make the class environment very friendly so that they can easily come up to me and share their problems. So, when I'm friendly with them, they come to me and feel free to share their problems if they do not understand anything regarding the subject matter. Also, they feel free to share their personal matters with me. So being very friendly with the students is very important in class. Apart from that, we have to be clear that everything has a limit, so just because I'm friendly within that doesn't mean that they take advantage of it.

Along with flexibility, she also shared about the limitations she sets with the students. She believed that it is important for the students to understand and respect the boundaries between a friendly teacher-student relationship and the need for authority and structure in the classroom. She considered fostering a positive and supportive environment beneficial, but it should not allow students to take advantage of their teacher's friendliness (Hymel & Katz, 2019).

More than a decade of experience in the teaching field has given Pooja an abundance of teaching-learning skills. She believes that now she can teach the students how they enjoy it, and she was prompt in planning engaging activities for the learners. She was confident that her planning was so concrete that any other experienced teacher could read her plan and easily implement it in the classroom. She

agreed with Adeoye and Jimoh (2023) that the students in the 21st century have critical thinking skills and are problem solvers. They see the matter of study from their own perspective and analyze the situations critically to find solutions. She said:

> *If the students are involved in the learning process, they'll understand all the ups and downs or the minute details they should come across in their real lives. They need to brainstorm their ideas, and they need to understand the problem. They need to understand what is there, so they have to think critically and relate it. Also, I think that they can learn it in a much better way.*

According to her, such critical thinkers will grow as problem solvers in real life if they get similar learning opportunities. She agreed with Adeoye and Jimoh (2023) that the 21st-century skills the students are learning allow them to think critically on a certain topic and help them develop strategies to solve a similar real-life problem they might face. She further added:

> *We have been learning to make our students real problem solvers in our school. So, our curriculum is designed so that students have to be real problem solvers for each topic, not only in an oral way. They have to show it practically in terms of where it might be related to waste management. It might be related to any social issues. So, this is where teachers like us keep saying they have to learn to relate it. Once they learn to relate to it, they can easily think critically and become problem solvers. So, it's not whatever they are learning and not limited to the inside of the classroom; they should go outside the classroom to their house or neighborhood to tackle different situations.*

To nurture critical thinkers and problem solvers, Pooja agreed with Adeoye and Jimoh (2023) that a teacher plays a vital role in providing an environment where students feel valued and trusted. She said, "A teacher should act like a facilitator rather than an authoritative person providing information. A student feels comfortable only if a teacher welcomes their ideas and opinions as well as addresses them while teaching," She further adds:

> *My Role as a facilitator is to create a positive student environment. That's what we do, and we create an effective learning environment for the students. So, I think that's what we do there. We keep telling students that this is our classroom and a place where you can make many mistakes and learn by*

making lots of mistakes. We would love to help you out. So don't hesitate to make mistakes; we are there for you. We will not be judgmental. Hence, you're free to do so. We just tend to create a positive environment for the students. So, if they encounter any problem, they can easily come to us, and we can help them.

As a teacher, Pooja has learned a lot from her mistakes and tries. Not to repeat her mistakes. She added that outspoken students or extroverts come and share their problems with the teachers. However, a few students are in every classroom, and as we know, they lag behind since they do not take the initiative to come forward (DuFour, 2004). So, in that scenario, we, as teachers, need to develop different strategies to support them. She said:

As far as I know, even the so-called introverted students also have that particular bonding where they come freely to us without hesitation. They tend to share their problems, and yes, a few students take some time, but they come sooner or later to share. It's not an issue to me because our classroom environment is quite easy going, and we tend to support them. So, I think because of the environment, student don't hesitate to share their problems with me or with us.

Hence, she has happily worked in her classroom, implementing the latest teaching strategies and helping students groom in a safer learning environment. She agrees with DuFour (2004) that she has a long way to go and discover other new ways to deal with the students whom people call as problematic learners. She enjoys her work and is willing to contribute more to the development of education in other parts of the country through her story.

I started with her role as a teacher in her classroom and the process of knowledge construction among her students. She was open to the question and said:

Usually, in our school, whenever we have a topic, we start with concept building. We do not jump into teaching them in the traditional teaching way. We first introduce the students to the concept. So, it is never about whether we are going to study rivers or we are going to study about Grammar. It's always about the entire thing and what it is about. We start with the concept generally, and then, once they are clear about the concept, we move on to the materials they need. Then, we work on it so they can relate to their studies. So,

it's not only what the teacher is trying to give to them; it's their understanding of their real life and relating it to real life.

Sonee was clear about the roles and responsibilities she needed to perform as a teacher to her students, and she also had a clear vision of the objectives she needed to meet to make her students 21st-century learners. Along with the details of her role as a facilitator in the classroom, she was also clear about the role of the students in her class. She is fond of conducting engaging activities for the students and said:

The students are the researchers. So, when we introduce any new topic, we provide them with handouts, but that handout is not the answer key to everything they will get. So, we do have certain notes and handouts, which will be used as a reference, and they usually are the ones who research and who take notes. Then, they develop something they think is the ultimate answer to the topic. So, the students are the leaders; they are doing everything that a teacher should do in a traditional school because we are usually given notes, write them, and then pour them into the exam papers. But in our schools, the kids research, and then they come to an understanding of any given topic.

Teachers in the study schools had set an example of good communication that students could follow. Clear and articulate communication, active listening, and encouraging open dialogue were the skills that students absorbed from their teachers, and it was reflected in their behavior and performance. These communication skills are essential for academic success and contribute to students' ability to express themselves and engage in meaningful interactions throughout their lives, which is evident during their focused group discussions. According to Morano et al. (2021), pupils with friendly and supportive relationships with their professors are likelier to perform well academically than those who frequently maintain unfavorable relationships. The teachers at the study school also helped students develop their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Teachers gave pupils analytical skills beyond the classroom by setting tasks that forced them to think critically. This focus on problem-solving techniques gave students the tools to deal with complexity in various spheres of their lives.

In the study, the teachers continued to have an enduring impact as mentors and role models beyond the school years. Students were motivated to pursue higher education, participate in lifelong learning, and make meaningful contributions to society by the positive influences of the teachers. The teacher's impact lasted a

lifetime for the students, emphasizing the transformational power teachers possessed in influencing student's overall development. It has even been found that teachers place more emphasis on their pupils' comprehension and meaning-making of facts and concepts than on their simple repetition and replication, as mentioned by Morano et al. (2021).

Furthermore, teachers must possess the qualifications and credentials to ensure they have the knowledge and expertise for effective teaching. Teachers must continuously update their skills and knowledge, staying current with educational trends and best practices. Through their pedagogical abilities, teachers can create a comprehensive and integrated learning environment that nurtures the potential of each student. They should also strive to create a positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere where all students feel valued and respected. Teachers' role goes beyond just delivering subject matter; they are responsible for shaping student character and fostering the development of prevailing values (Morano et al., 2021). Teachers can positively influence students' behaviors and feelings by being role models, mentors, and educational leaders (Morano et al., 2021).

Understanding is the Key to Success

Understanding is crucial for the success of students in school. When students deeply understand the concepts they are learning, they can apply that knowledge to new situations and challenges (Setiyani et al., 2020). This understanding allows them to become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and active societal participants. When students truly understand a concept, they are not just memorizing information but internalizing it and making it their own. This level of understanding empowers students to think critically, analyze information, make connections, and develop creative solutions.

Furthermore, understanding enables students to develop a strong foundation. With a solid understanding of concepts, students can build upon their knowledge and skills to tackle more complex problems. Additionally, understanding the concept leads to developing other important conceptual abilities, such as communication skills, reasoning, and connection-making (Setiyani et al., 2020). Overall, understanding is the key to success for students in school because it fosters critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to apply knowledge in real-world situations.

Unquestionably, comprehension is essential for students to succeed in their academic endeavors. It denotes a higher degree of comprehension and subject-matter

expertise than just memory. In the study, it was noticed that the students who thoroughly understand the subject matter can make connections between ideas, spot patterns, and put their knowledge to use. Instead of only memorization, when learning settings are created to improve students' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, knowledge is psychologically internalized with meaning and becomes permanent (Montuoro & Lewis, 2017). It was seen in the study that this breadth of knowledge not only improved academic performance but also established a foundation for critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, which are necessary for success in many facets of life.

Pooja initially had a hard time. Learning the new teaching-learning techniques at her new school was indeed a challenging task since she had come from. In a different school, a teacher goes to a classroom to deliver content, and students are used to it. Act like an audience, but in this school, she was surprised when her level coordinator took the classes with his minimal role, and the students played the lead role. Her points are very similar to those expressed in the discussion by Montuoro and Lewis (2017). They assert that pupils emotionally invested in their teachers are more likely to be behaviorally invested in them. She pays greater attention to pupils who deserve it. When asked about the way learning happens in her classroom, she said:

> When discussing *learning, we never reveal the topic; the discussion topic could be any general topic. When a student comes up with a query, they all have so many questions, showing that they are very interested in the topic and tend to learn something more. This is how we generate learning in the class. We try to do similar activities in our class, and as we all know, there are different types of learners to cater to their needs. We teach the topic in a different way to them. We have to plan so that each child learns to the best of their ability. So, all the types of learners get what we are trying to teach.*

She pledged to guarantee the students' active engagement to make teaching pedagogy student-friendly. Many academics have argued in favor of making students actively participate in the classroom learning process, claiming that learning can be guaranteed on their side only when students are actively involved in the learning process (Oldfather et al., 1999). The learning environment should be better for them as they become more active. Therefore, an active and engaged student performance is an essential component of a learner-friendly approach. In this regard, Zacarian and Silverstone (2020) believe that the classroom environment motivates the

aforementioned children to be active learners in the classroom, which seems important. This implies that a teacher must create a stimulating environment in the classroom that completely motivates the kids to participate in class activities (Sharma, 2017).

When Pooja is asked about her role in the classroom, she shared that she tries to take a minimal role in the classroom by giving authority to the students to learn and showcase their learning by taking action. She considered herself a facilitator guiding and mentoring the students to lead their own inquiry of learning. She said:

> *We are just the facilitators in the classroom. So, while discussing a topic, let's say they share their experiences. They start from their point of view; they share their own learning, and then we tend to add our points. So that makes students get to relate with the topic. So that means students take ownership of learning, and learning ownership makes them more involved in learning what they want.*

Pooja shared that she had a wonderful time while taking the classes at the school. She is friendly to her students, who don't hesitate to share their queries with her. They also participate actively in the class without fearing the teacher's judgment. While discussing a new topic, she said she includes many brainstorming sessions where the students are asked probing questions to get into the topic. She gave an example to explain this process. She said:

> *In social studies, we discussed Social Values and the students were very interested. The topic itself was interesting, and at the same time, they talked about superstition, social change, and many other things. The students linked it with the logic, the dowry system, and the Sati Prath. There were so many points in the topic to be discussed, and students were so interested, and they said, "Yeah, my mom also gave dowry to my father." the topic went so vague, and so many interesting facts and stories were discussed and shared. That way, it was much more student-focused. It was students who were teaching their friends, and they were sharing the experience. So that was one of the ways that, I think, helped them to deepen their knowledge and understand the topic in a much better way.*

Pooja has been doing a lot of similar topics that have not only allowed her students to get a new perspective on the world they are living in but it has also helped her as an educator to relate with the current world, explore new opportunities, and

implement emerging. Teaching pedagogy in her classroom. She has shared that she is extremely delighted and has a feeling of accomplishment while following these types of teaching-learning methods.

Knowledge is constructed through social interactions and explorations, and Sonee believes that she is embedding long-term knowledge, skills, and understanding among her students. She is assured that if the learners are responsible for their learning, they will take extra initiative to think out of the box and achieve their goals. She believes in a famous proverb,

Knowledge is constructed in various forms, and Sonee emphasizes problem-based situations to develop conceptual understanding among the learners. She agrees that students always climb a ladder where they step on their knowledge base to add extra knowledge and climb the stairs to achieve their goals. She recalled her old days as a student and was sad for some time recalling her memories. She shared that she thinks giving students a problem-based situation to gain conceptual understanding is important because, thinking back on her school life as a student, she was never given any real problem that she had with the topic. She was never introduced to the skills she might face in real life. She added that if she had been introduced, the degree of the problem would have been different, but it was always a conceptual thing. She was introduced to the things she only studied and would never use in real life. She further added:

> *That's not what happens in the school currently. I'm working. We always focus on building, as I said, skill building. So, if they are critical thinkers, they can solve problems. Hence, we are preparing them for real-life situations. So, as a teacher, I think if I can get them to think and analyze and put themselves in somebody else's or the character's shoes, they could develop better skills. I'm there to facilitate only when I'm doing that and when they think hard. When I say thinking hard, they're trying to relate what is happening and analyze the whole situation to connect and understand.*

Asking students probing questions will allow them to connect with their prior knowledge and construct a new idea, allowing them to build further knowledge. Sonee added that whenever she introduces something, it's always related to what the students have already learned or what they've already seen, maybe not relevant to what they have learned in the classroom setting, but what they've learned outside. She added that the students must have learned about animals, so if she asked them about

what they know, they have something to relate to. There's something that they can think about since the foundation is already there, and the buildup of the knowledge becomes easier. So, she thinks that's one reason why she focused on their prior knowledge: prior knowledge is the foundation where they can build on the additional knowledge. So, she considered that if we ignore their prior knowledge and have to make it from scratch, it will take a long time, and the kids are also unaware of what is happening, and they cannot relate to that.

Hence, to stimulate the students' brains, teachers are supposed to ask probing questions so that the students can connect with their prior knowledge, as shared by Sonee. She said:

> *When we teach anything, we give the knowledge, like passing it down. So, it's easy to answer what happened to that character in the book, right? But if I ask them something that needs thinking, that provokes them and makes them dig deeper. Then I think that's the ultimate result that we want because we know a story, analyze the characters or the situations, and maybe try to think of the different endings and twists. I think that's what we're looking for. This is very simplistic. I'm putting it in a very simplistic way, but the probing question is, what is required for them to be successful?*

She further said that students might not be economically successful but as human beings as a person they benefit. So, she thinks it's because when she asks a thought-provoking question, the students dig deep, think harder, and then analyze the situation. They cut it into pieces and then separate each part; she knows how it all comes to a chain. That is a long problem. So, she thinks that's why she needs to ask many questions. If she doesn't, then they will think it is what my teacher said, and that's it. "Usually, that's what it leads to, and we don't want that, right?" she added. She shared that they want them to be reasonable. She wants them to give reasons for their choices even if they don't agree with the teacher; if they can pursue it, then she thinks she's done the job.

All these supports indeed provide a fruitful outcome. However, when a student is struggling and is unable to meet the grade expectations or the teacher's expectations, then Sonee would like to provide helping hands to the students and provide them with the best possible support.

> *I feel instead of spoon-feeding all of the answers, all of the concepts, and everything to the learners, I think if they take ownership of what they are*

doing and if they take the lead, then it will be in their heads because they have
understood it since they had to explore and understand and solve the problem.
It was not ready-made and had not been handed to them. So, when they take
ownership and do everything independently, the understanding is life-long and
can go on for a long time. So, I think that they should take ownership of their
learning.

She said that she does conferencing with the students, but since the time is limited and there's so much to do, she always gives feedback in the notebook. Usually, for the assignments in the written form, she provides feedback, and then she communicates through that. She has asked her children to reply to her in their notebooks when she gives them some comments because she might not be able to go personally individually to everyone for all the assignments. Furthermore, when they have major assignments, they make it a ritual of sitting and sharing, having a one-on-one talk, and discussing what could be better. However, she writes comments for the general day-to-day activities, which she shares, and her kids also respond to her.

Arpana considers herself a facilitator and believes that the students should take the lead in their learning for a deeper understanding of the topic. She believes that the schools usually misguide the teachers and ask them to vent their knowledge to the students, whether they are willing to take the knowledge or not. For me, learners or the students are the heart of the teaching-learning practices and should not be considered a last priority group. Rather, they are the pillar of the education system. Her thoughts align with those of Bhattarai and Basnet (2022), who argue that the construction of new knowledge takes time and needs some prior knowledge in which the new knowledge is created, and this doesn't happen in a short time frame. Arpana shared that she allowed her students to lead their own inquiry in the classroom and planned all her lessons by keeping the students in the center of the plan. She said that she makes sure that the children are actively involved in the class and they feel free to share, speak, and do the planned activities with fun and laughter. She said:

Knowledge is constructed in my class. Knowledge is constructed by giving
children the voice, choice, and ownership of their learning, such as
provocations and brainstorming activities. So that children can reflect on the
prior knowledge and build and construct on the existing ones, it's like
taking one step ahead. It's like creating new experiences, and I think this can
happen both individually and through social engagements.

Allowing the students to understand the concept is not always easy for an educator, as Arpana said. She knows the pain and pressure a teacher must endure while supporting the children through scaffolding. She said that she scaffolds the students by adding to their previous knowledge and allows them to come out from the zone I don't know and reach the zone I can do with support. She said that she first evaluates the learning styles of each learner and identifies their learning needs based on her evaluation. Then she follows up with each child who needs support and either separates her free time to help the children or assigns a professional special needs teacher to support the children in bringing back their confidence and ability. She shared that she enjoys working for students with special needs and has trained teachers in her school who are qualified to handle such children. She agrees with Jia (2010) that a teacher is a person who engraves a positive outlook, interest, behavior, and consistency to learn, hence enhancing their cognitive skills in a well-organized way. She shared that she has seen many students who could come out of their zone of I cannot do it to the zone of I can do with support and finally to the zone of I can do it independently.

In the study, when teachers emphasized understanding, it encouraged sincere curiosity about learning among the students. Students who emphasized understanding enjoyed the discovery process rather than seeing education as a set of chores to be completed. It was clear that their innate drive encouraged students to actively interact with the content, pose inquiries, and look for more information, all leading to a deeper and more fulfilling educational experience. It was clear from the study that retention of information over the long term is also aided by understanding. Students can build knowledge using multiple intelligences through learning experiences, which will likely last longer (Hunter, 2006). Students were better able to retain and apply knowledge over time when they understood the fundamentals of their subject. Through internal assessments, it was proved in the study that the exams were not the only place where this retention occurs; in real-world circumstances, students could apply what they have learned to analyze situations, make wise judgments, and resolve challenging issues.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes understanding and encourages sincere curiosity about learning. Students who emphasized understanding enjoyed the discovery process rather than seeing education as a set of chores to be completed. Their curiosity encouraged the students to interact with the content actively, pose

inquiries, and look for more information, all leading to a deeper and more fulfilling educational experience. After learning a concept, students can do the following: (a) think with it; (b) apply it in contexts different than the one in which they acquired it; (c) explain it in their own words; (d) come up with an analogy or metaphor; or (e) construct a mental or physical model of it (Konicek-Moran & Keeley 2015).

In summary, comprehension is the foundation for student achievement. It pushes students beyond cursory education, opening doors to a world of opportunities and equipping them for lifelong learning and flexibility in addition to scholastic success. Organizing our thoughts around key concepts makes it simpler to recall and apply what we learn to the several connected fields within a field of study (Konicek-Moran & Keeley 2015). The study exhibited that understanding is the cornerstone of student success in school. It empowered students to think critically, develop problem-solving skills, and apply their knowledge in various contexts. Understanding is crucial for the success of students in school. A key to internalizing knowledge is appreciating its connection to a broader, more comprehensive body of concepts. Ideas have credibility when connected to one another, and this helps us all organize our thoughts into more expansive, cohesive groups (Konicek-Moran & Keeley 2015).

Collaborative Learning Method

There are many advantages of collaborative learning. It is a pedagogical strategy where students cooperate in groups to meet shared learning objectives. According to research by Laal and Ghodsi (2012), kids participating in collaborative learning are more likely to think critically, comprehend concepts more deeply, and perform better academically. In contrast to traditional teaching approaches, Johnson and Johnson (2017) study revealed that cooperative group work and other collaborative learning strategies boosted academic attainment and critical thinking skills. According to researchers, collaboration inspires students to participate in lively debates, exchange viewpoints, and create new information as a group.

Sarita believes that students learn better when they work. With her experiences with teaching, she made changes. Due to her positive experiences with collaborative learning, she organized and implemented the same among her students in the dormitory. Like Johnson and Johnson (2017), she believes collaborative learning is the greatest teaching strategy. To that end, she divided her pupils into various groups, with an average of six students each, and encouraged them to engage in peer

discussions and support. She supported their learning and gave them the most chances, including conducting learning, approaching problems, selecting reference materials, etc. Ultimately. she concentrated on establishing trusting and friendly relationships with the students to encourage interaction and active participation in class discussions. She even engaged in discussions and activities to recognize various objects as teaching resources with the students. And she made use of such items in her lessons. She saw that most kids had improved performance levels and fairly good attitudes regarding learning at the time. She stated:

> *I think peer work is very helpful because it discusses with peers, and they understand from their level. Whenever I group them, I ensure that there are three levels of students: intelligent, average, and below average. So, when making groups, I ensure that I include all of these. For example, if I get confused and if I happen to work with you, you will explain to me from our level in your understanding, right? It will be easier for me to understand from your perspective than the coordinators. So, I think even the students, if they understand from their peers of their level, I think more understanding and learning can occur.*

Due course of time, she saw that kids' learning skills improved with time. However, she admitted that some students pretended to participate in class discussions and did not take them seriously. According to her, such kids frequently lacked the necessary information and knowledge, and she needed to give them extra attention or extra or individualized work. I viewed her experiences with skepticism, wondering if all of those students had improved over time. She said that she had at least five students who struggled academically each year and that there wasn't much she could do to help them.

Sonee believes that school is a second home to the students, and they should feel safe and secure when they enter the school gate. She wants her students to embrace the environment of the school with open arms and, after school, return to their homes with a big smile of accomplishment on their faces. She believes that the students don't like being judged or manipulated; she said that she has seen students juggling with their academic performance and scores just because they couldn't concentrate in the classroom due to the fear of being judged and criticized. She said:

> *Usually, I feel that we take the classroom as a community. Students learn through discussions and when they are talking about any topic with their*

friends. That's when the learning happens because it's a community where you share ideas, and even when you are incorrect or have some wrong concepts, the students, when they discuss with their friends and share feedback, get a clear concept of the topic. They also give them constructive feedback. So, I think that's how the students learn. That's how it should be by sharing each other's viewpoints, and I feel as a teacher, I need to be flexible enough to offer them comfort in sharing their viewpoints to create that environment where they feel that even if I say something wrong, I will not be judged. Hence, we try to create an environment so that they can express their confusion and opinions freely, and when they're doing that, it's my job to ensure that happens. So, when I have created an environment for them, they can just go with the discussion, and they come to the answers, and they come to solve the problems themselves. I think that's what we need to do.

The school environment nurtures the children's minds and builds a bridge for them to cope with the problems they might face in the future with a positive attitude and growth mindset. Sonee adds that she agrees with the above-mentioned fact and encourages more engaging and participatory activities so that the students can have a homely environment and learn a lot from each other. She got excited while talking about the activities she incorporates in the classroom. She said:

I am a cheerleader for integrating group and peer work in the classroom activities. I think that working with peers and groups builds that relationship, so they're working, they're talking, and they're having a good time. They are laughing, joking around. But at the end of the day, they are learning. They're learning to coexist. They're learning to appreciate each other; they're learning to accept each other's opinions. And that happens in group work and fair work. So, I think group work and peer work help instead of individual work. Work is always there, but to be in a group and then be able to solve a problem together and come up with a solution requires many skills. So, I think the students should be encouraged to work with peers and groups.

Furthermore, research has demonstrated that cooperative learning enhances students' capacity for problem-solving, communication, and self-worth (Johnson & Johnson, 2017). Students who collaborate in groups develop critical abilities necessary for success in academic and professional contexts: speaking clearly,

listening to peers, and cooperatively negotiating solutions. In conclusion, research has repeatedly shown how collaborative learning helps students develop their critical thinking skills, deeper comprehension, and academic accomplishment. Teachers may create a stimulating learning environment that equips students for success in the classroom and beyond by allowing them to collaborate.

Projects-Based Learning: Ownership of Learning

Despite using a letter grading system, grades are frequently interpreted along a pass-fail continuum. Assessment of students' learning is essential to classroom education (Lopes & Soares, 2018). Student learning can be greatly improved by implementing a project-based assessment system. Project-based evaluations promote the practical application of knowledge, in contrast to traditional modes of assessment that might only concentrate on memorization and repetition of material. In the study, the teachers applied an internal assessment method based on projects by applying principles to real-world situations; this method helped students show that they have a deeper comprehension of the material and developed their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The teachers shared that an exam-focused approach is not fit to be classified as learner-friendly since it prepares students for the test, not for life. Hardly any learning can be permanently transferred from the pedagogy used to help students pass the exam. According to Jackson and Cho (2018), the goal of pedagogy is to alter students' behavior permanently. It ensures learners receive the greatest possible advantage by permanently altering a certain behavior (Jackson & Cho, 2018).

Project-based learning also encourages students' uniqueness and inventiveness. Every project introduced by the teachers in the study schools turned into a distinct way for students to communicate their thoughts, fostering a diversity of viewpoints and creative solutions. This increased student engagement with the material and prepared them for the challenges they will encounter in their future academic and professional pursuits. Thus, soft skills promote students' academic success and well-being. However, motivation and self-regulated learning have little bearing on life satisfaction (they are only important in the classroom (Feraco et al., 2022). Additionally, this study showed that the project-based evaluations simulated real-world difficulties and gave students a taste of the complexities they may face in their chosen industries. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, this experiential learning technique helped the students become more prepared for future employment demands.

Pooja admitted that she had to hop from one school to another, and she was never content with her profession and the teaching technique since it was all one way of delivery. Her experiences resemble those of Woolfolk et al. (1990), who concluded that professors who are unsure of their methods frequently attempt to manage students. As a result, the teachers are likely to enforce several rules and regulations and prevent the students from addressing concerns and issues.

Klassen and Tze (2014) found a significant correlation in a study on instructors' self-efficacy and teaching effectiveness. As a result, it was discovered that beginning teachers prepared extensively before entering the classroom. She unknowingly pressured herself and the students with the teacher-based teaching methods. It was a game changer for her when she came to her present school, which offers a curriculum based on constructivism. She had worked with students of various age groups, from preschool to the bachelor's degree, but she found true meaning with the grade four children she was working with. She said:

> *Actually, at the bachelor level, it's quite easier to teach, but talking about fun, talking about the things that I can do and that I enjoy doing, was completely different. So, as I told you, I could not hold it for a year since it was not what I expected. Since I got a new opportunity, I had to shift here because the age level I'm working at is really interesting. I'm having fun. I can relate to them; I can know what they are into, what they want, and what I can do for them. So, I think that makes me still working as a premier teacher.*

She believed that in any profession, one major criterion is job satisfaction and love of the work. Since the workplace is our second home, she shared that one should feel comfortable and, most importantly, enjoy their work. She never felt so accomplished and happy as she felt in the current school, and because of that, she could work with extra gist and zeal for the betterment of the learners.

If you see, you forget, but if you do yourself with your hands, you understand and never forget. She believed that incorporating real-world projects into the classroom enhances the educational experience and helps students develop a deeper understanding of concepts (Doppelt, 2003). She used a lot of project-based approaches to assess students' learning. This comprehensive assessment offered a more thorough comprehension of a student's abilities and proficiencies. She added:

Because they have control over their learning, it helps them increase their learning outcome. So, rather than teaching traditionally, moving from what and how we learned, the student should play a vital role. Rather than teachers, it's their learning, so they must take ownership because they need to brainstorm their ideas. They need to understand the problem. They need to understand what is there. And for that, they have to think critically and relate it. Also, I think that they can learn it much better.

Learning in the classroom has no boundaries for Pooja, and she incorporated a lot of engaging learning experiences for the students to enrich their learning. She believed Doppelt (2003) that each child is gifted with their own potential and caliber to learn, and if a teacher could discover those potentials, engaging them in the work of their interest would be a brilliant idea. She enjoyed doing things differently, incorporated skill-building activities to be done in groups, and made it part of her assessment. She completely agreed with Doppelt (2003) that introducing a project-based approach in the form of group work and peer work for assessment enables learners to learn from each other without being hesitant to share. She said:

I remember what I did last time, like a few months back, when we had group work where a child was slightly different from others. He cannot participate like other students. I told the group members to try to find his strengths because he is not a good writer. He may not be a good speaker or cannot research well, but he was very good at arts and crafts. He was very interested in drawings. So, try to find out his strength and let him work because he tends to distract others if he's not given any tasks. So rather than distracting others, he's learning something from you. And, you know, he contributed to the group members and did group work. So, that's what we did; it went truly well. I remember later, even a student came to me and said, ma'am, your idea was truly amazing, and because of that, he didn't even disturb me. And also, we came up with an amazing idea.

Today's students are the future of tomorrow, and Arpana agreed with Wood (2003) that providing choice, voice, and ownership is key to empowering the students and making them feel confident and secure. She loves challenging the students with various tasks suitable for their age level and has seen them go above and beyond to get the job done. She said that once she assigns a project-based task to the students, they feel proud to gain the trust of their teachers, and they get motivated to do better.

This type of strategy has worked with children with behavioral issues. Her thoughts aligned with Wood (2003); these students are least bothered when a teacher advises them or scolds them for their naughtiness, but on the contrary, if they are provided with ownership or responsibilities, they will do their best to prove themselves. She said:

> *Absolutely, without a doubt, I feel that the students should be given ownership of their learning because when students take ownership, I feel their learning becomes more fruitful. After all, they'll be able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Secondly, I feel that they can have a sense of self-assurance. Also, when they have a sense of self-assurance, they deeply engage themselves in the learning journey. Lastly, they can be independent and responsible learners when you give them their ownership in learning.*

Step by step, she believes that incorporating leadership skills among the students will allow them to become better leaders in the future who are empathetic and take the whole crowd along with them in their leadership journey. For this, she allows the students to begin with the small responsibilities inside the classroom, such as cleaning the classroom, organizing furniture, cleaning the board, collecting/distributing, etc. This tiny work will make them think from the group level and realize that all the work is equally important, according to Arpana. She also argues that students should be taken beyond the walls of the classroom and for community service as a part of their project, where they will learn about the present situation of the organizations in our country and make better plans to see a remarkable change in specific areas. She said she was amazed to see the energy and curiosity of the students when they were taken on field trips. During such trips, they become extra aware of their surroundings and feel connected with nature and society. They could connect their topic with real-life situations and understand the topic better. Her arguments are similar to those of Montuoro and Lewis (2017), who propose that students who are deeply. Engaged in work along with their teachers are more prone to achieve positive behavior towards the teachers. Hence, providing ownership to the students and making them feel safe and secure at the school will allow them to feel empowered and gain the required skills to move on to the journey of success shortly (Wood, 2003).

Furthermore, in the study, the teachers incorporated collaborative activities, and they were a common component of project-based evaluations, which promoted communication and cooperation abilities. Students in the study schools gained the ability to collaborate, play to one another's strengths, and overcome obstacles as a group. These skills are essential for success in a dynamic, team-oriented workplace. As per Wood (2003), learner-friendly teaching frequently emphasizes continuous assessment methods that aim to support students' emotional control, social interaction, personal engagement, and cognitive ability. Moreover, project-based evaluations provide a more comprehensive picture of a student's talents. Teachers of the study schools evaluated a student's capacity for project research, planning, execution, presentation, and exam results.

In conclusion, a project-based system emphasizing real-world application, critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork aligns with contemporary educational objectives. Project-based exams in the study schools added to a well-rounded educational experience by offering a more dynamic and real assessment, better-preparing students for the issues they will face outside of the classroom. Project Based Learning is an innovative approach to learning that promotes student-centered and real-world education (Wood, 2003)

Self-confidence as an Educator

Sarita is thankful to her father-in-law, who ignited the spark of love and devotion in her towards the teaching profession. Her father-in-law's thoughts are similar to those of Saha and Dworkin (2009), who talk about the traditional thought of teachers being role models and the most educated people in a classroom and in the community outside. The young girl who used to have a teaching profession as her least priority had her mind changed after her marriage. Initially, she was selected as a member of a diplomatic mission after a rigorous interview session. However, the last payment made was the only constraint that stopped her from accepting this job. While in a dilemma, her father-in-law approached her to join the teaching field since he believed that teaching was the most respected job and she should opt for it.

Maybe the entire universe was trying to push her toward her destiny to become a teacher; hence, she found out that the teaching job offered more wage than the diplomatic mission job, so finally, she decided to take a step ahead and opted for the teaching job which was indeed a game-changing decision for her life. She started with the kids at an early age, and with each passing day, she found an eternal peace

working with the little munchkins. She was captivated by the innocence of the little ones and found herself more devoted to her work. Her thoughts align with Jia (2010), who concluded in research that the source of teaching is the teachers who motivate and encourage the students to get the optimum benefit from the knowledge gained at the school. During her work, she even hesitated to take a day off since she was conscious of the study of the children being hampered due to her absence, and she found herself much more committed to the parents who trusted her with their children.

Her Initial Days of Teaching

She started teaching at an early age and used a teacher-led teaching method to teach the students. Even though she immensely enjoyed the time spent with her students, she was always in the process of discovering new methods to implement with her students. At this point, she agreed with Applefield et al. (2000) that for a lesson to be constructivist, it needs to have a precise objective or goal, and the lesson should include appropriate activity, task, and probing questions. In her first school, she worked as a pre-schoolteacher and struggled to handle the student's behavior. She used to go to school with a new spirit and energy, but how she was taught to deliver the content did not work for the students. She then switched to a new school and started working with the primary-grade students, where she started to study and identify better ways to engage and teach the students. Although she disliked quiet classrooms and passive students, her lack of teaching ideas and confidence caused her to anticipate what her teachers did. She even anticipated that students would be able to regurgitate and reproduce what she had taught them. She even made an effort to exert strong disciplinary measures, repetitive practices, and primarily one-way communication over the children's learning. She claimed that, for the most part, she remembered and used the same strategy, activity, and examples as her teachers. Thompson (1984) conducted a case study on the effects of math teachers' preferences, attitudes, and beliefs on their professional activities. Her research concluded that these teacher characteristics significantly influence how they behave in the classroom.

New Dimensions of Teaching

Sarita found her dream job in the current place and was recognized time and again by the coordinator and the principal. She had never thought that her 15-16 years of teaching journey would make her feel happy and content after all her struggles as a teacher in other schools who never cared to consider her innovative ideas to enhance the students' learning. She has been practicing a better teaching pedagogy in her

classroom, where she knows that her students are experimenting, exploring, investigating, and learning with the help of their peers and the whole classroom community. She had entered this school as a grade 4 teacher, and gradually, she was promoted to grade 7, and she is thriving in the class. Where she works, she was also acknowledged in her training programs and was made the teacher's trainer quickly. She said:

> *Immediately after, I trained in the Primary Years Teacher's Training Program, and I took the training in 2014. Before the results were out, I was selected as one of the trainers. Philosophy trainers. So, I think that was one of my proudest moments because I had never expected to become a trainer, at least not right after the. Training. The third-term results were not even out. I was excited then. Once I was appointed as a trainer, I gave my heart and mind to transferring my knowledge, skills, and understanding to the trainees, and I have been doing that for the past 7 years. Initially, I was appointed as. I am a Philosophy trainer, and now I have been appointed as a Language Arts Trainer, so you see there is ample opportunity if you dare to take the challenge and work relentlessly to thrive in your area of work.*

Sarita had never thought that she would transform herself from a traditional teacher to a 21st-century teacher and finally. To a teacher's trainer, delivering her knowledge to the new and enthusiastic teachers willing to learn. However, she adds that as an educator, she faced a huge challenge during the pandemic, where all the teachers had to take online classes and get acquainted with modern teaching tools. She said:

> *When we were introduced to online teaching platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Google Classroom. Google Drive, etc. I was lost. I had a hard time grasping the idea of new technology and teaching methods. Our school started rigorous training on the use of ICT tools, and unwillingly, I used to participate, but slowly, I took the challenge and started exploring the tools. I had great support from the ICT team, and I will always be grateful to Krishna sir for helping me out with my concerns and issues. While taking the classes. We took online classes via Zoom and worked days and nights to make slides for our students. We used to search for related videos, worksheets, resources, games, and so on to make the classes interactive, enriched, and child-friendly. We even asked the students to upload their assignments to Google Classroom.*

She considered this a huge opportunity for her as an educator to enhance her ICT skills. Today, she uses the skills learned in her classroom by showing topic-related videos and digital resources. Even though the pandemic phase of online classes was challenging for her, she still enjoyed it. She embraced the challenges as an opportunity to move ahead in her professional life. She said, "My life has become easier due to the technological aspects I learned during the pandemic, and that keeps me going. I still wish I could teach online classes again to learn more about technological advancements in education." She sometimes felt like going back online even though in person has several advantages, but physical classes cannot have the technology at a fingertip. She said"

> Sometimes, after the pandemic, we got so used to YouTube videos and all the other technologies, and after the physical classes started, I used to miss the YouTube videos that I used to share in my class. The online resources were not easily available, and there was no Internet like there was no good Internet, so I missed that.

She had been enjoying her profession so far and had come a long way in enhancing her teaching-learning methods. She argued that a teacher should never stop learning; if the thirst for learning ends in a teacher, there comes a dark time for the students. Besides all her hardships, she has encountered several challenges, and even though she overcame a few, some still remain an issue for her. She said:

> Sometimes, the parents are demanding, expecting the teachers to do everything for their child. Nowadays, parents are so demanding, and they come to the teacher if the child is not studying, not doing the assignment, or even if they are not showing good manners; they expect the teachers to solve all those problems in the class. Even though the child is an average performer, the parent's expectation is very high, and due to it, the child cannot perform up to his ability. These situations are quite challenging for me. So, I had to be behind the child and report the observations to the parents every time. Although the child was doing okay, the parent was very demanding and texted me every time, and I barely had time to read those messages. Sometimes, I felt like giving up, but then, as a teacher, I thought it was my responsibility. I have to deal with such situations sensitively, which stresses me and disturbs my daily chores at school and home.

She mentioned that as a person, she already had more than enough on her plate and dealing with such conflicting situations puts her in the dilemma of continuing the teaching profession. However, when she enters her classroom and works with her students, she finds each challenge worth it, and the profession is even more rewarding despite her challenges.

A Journey of Self-realization

She taught there at the secondary level for nearly 3 years, and her eagerness to explore new teaching-learning methods took her to another reputed school. She was thriving in the school and was promoted to an academic in charge within a year of her tenure. This was an extraordinarily strange experience for her, and even though she was much appreciated there, she was not satisfied with her work. The school knew she could do more, so they again promoted her to a lecturer for Bachelor second and third-year Management students. Anyone would have been flattered and glad about the promotion, but again, Pooja couldn't find her inner satisfaction in the college since this was not the age group she was willing to teach. She couldn't make a connection with her students and was seeking an age group with whom she could connect and enjoy her work at the same time, and that venture took her to the school where she is currently working. Finally, she was able to make a connection with the basic-level learners of Grade 4 and has been thriving in the teaching-learning process of the school for the last four years.

I have selected her as my research participant on the recommendation of one of my friends, and both work together. When I called to request an interview, she was excited and eager to share her teaching journey. For research purposes, I have visited and interviewed her twice at the school. During the interviews, I found her to be an open-minded and kind-hearted person. She felt glad to contribute to teaching methods in Nepal. We got along quickly since we both shared the same field of teaching, and both of our experiences, journeys, and struggles were similar. She was reflective, had a smile on her face, and was eager to share her experiences during the interview sessions. I started the interview with her first experience as a teacher, and she stated that:

> *I started teaching as a preschool teacher at 25 years old in a school near my*
> *house. In my initial days, I was not properly trained; hence, I faced many*
> *difficulties, especially working with the youngest age group who had just*
> *entered the school. I didn't have kids back then, so caring for such a young*

age group was challenging. I had to look after their studies and overall development, such as food, games, fine and gross motor skills, and much more, which I can't even describe.

She further added that she was a mother to the children of that school. These experiences helped her as a building block for her foundation as a teacher, and she was never scared to take up the challenges in her professional and personal life.

An Insightful and Extravagant Journey

Sonee is a cheerful and bubbly educator who has worked in this field for a decade. She has completed her Master's in Education and is always passionate about teaching-learning methods. She is passionate about teaching and always finds joy and pleasure in working with basic-level students. She initially taught the students of Grade 2 and gathered her teaching experience from 3 different. The school she worked at last time went through many changes, starting from a change in location and the struggle of students and teachers to travel to a distant place. Finally, the school had to close down due to the financial crisis and internal conflict, leaving the teachers unemployed and students scattered to different schools. That unprecedented experience has strengthened her, but her luck has favored her since she got a better opportunity just 4 months before the school closed. She was excited to move into a reputed school in Lalitpur and has been working there for the last 4 years. She is quite fond of children and said that even the children love being around her. She is tech-friendly and loves to try our new teaching-learning pedagogies to implement with her students and make them critical thinkers and lifelong learners. She considers herself an innovative teacher but shared that as a student, she was never good at her studies and had never thought that she would be involved in teaching and gain success in this field.

I chose her as my participant since she has been my good friend, and we have been together in a 3-month teacher's training program. I visited her twice and interviewed her once at her school and another time in a restaurant. I found her quite expressive, fun-loving, and cooperative during the interviews. Whenever I meet or interview her, she is eager and excited to share her teaching-learning journey.

Using Building Blocks in Construction of Knowledge

Besides all her efforts, she feels that time constraint is the number one challenge because there's so much on her plate. There's so much she has to do. She says no matter how good a juggler she is, she cannot address each problem. She said,

"There's something always missing, even though we work hard. So, for me, the time constant is one. Other than that, I want to help the students. If somebody is lagging, because usually, the kids are, she said:

> There are only a very few times when they're constantly lagging behind. So, in those situations, I make it a point that I get to that student somewhere. It could be a lunch break. It could be anywhere. I ensure that I talk with them. I just let them know that I know they're facing problems. I understand they're having problems from there. To solve it, maybe briefly for a minute or two, that does the job. So that's what I usually do.

One thing I say is that if I had more time, I would have done this differently, right?". Apart from that, Sonee feels the construction of the classroom and the composition of the students is another problem because there are usually vast differences among the students; some are intellectual. She said, "Intellectually, they are smart, and some are poor. We have a heterogeneous, mixed mixture to maintain the gap between these two classes. So, I need to maintain the gap as a teacher. I must do a lot of work because I need to develop things that cater to those already doing much better." Maintenance is one problem she faces every year in all the classes, and she wishes it wasn't this way. Despite all these major challenges, she loves working as a teacher, nurturing the little minds and supporting them to grow as a major individual in the country.

A Journey from Darjeeling to Kathmandu

She is blessed with a daughter who is 14 years old now, and she lives with her small family in Bouddha. She has been working as a deputy coordinator at a reputed school in Lalitpur for the last 5 years, and she is thriving in her profession as an educator. She is a fun-loving and confident lady who handles all circumstances with resilience, patience, and vigilance. She is an elegant lady who is well acquainted with the recent trends in education and loves to keep herself updated with the emerging teaching-learning pedagogies to cater to the needs of her basic-level students. In her recent school, she worked for 2 years as a Grade 3 teacher and 1 year as a grade 2 teacher. Due to her dedication and competencies, she was promoted to deputy coordinator last year and has been working on building the curriculum and supporting the teachers to enhance their abilities.

I have selected her as my research participant since she was my colleague in one of the schools in Lalitpur. I know her as a hard-working and dedicated person

who is always calm and has a lot of patience. During my interaction with her, I met her twice. Once, I met her at her school, and the next time, I met her at her home, making it easy and comfortable for her to share her journey as an educator. She was open-minded and felt free to share her thoughts and opinions. When asked about her past teaching experience, she shared that coming from a reputed school in Darjeeling, she always seeks a similar work environment in Kathmandu, but in her first school in Nepal, she was speechless to see the teacher-led classroom and was helpless when she was asked to teach similarly. She wanted to use teaching materials and incorporate games and hands-on activities for her students. However, since her first school didn't allow her to implement such activities, she had to leave the organization and shift to a new one after doing an in-depth study of the curriculum the school follows. She believed in the finding of Jia (2010) that teachers are responsible for constructing an interactive teaching atmosphere, the mentor to the students, and the counselor for the students' performance. She shared that finally, after a year of torture, she felt that she was set free, and finally, in the current school, she has been enjoying the freedom of picking and choosing the activity to be implemented in the classroom.

Empowering the Future Leaders

Empowering the students means giving them responsibilities and a homely and safe environment where they can nurture their young minds and feel safe and confident. Being an educator, Arpana added, her first priority is safety and a sense of belongingness for the students because they don't feel safe at school, and with teachers, they will never get empowered since the major source of empowerment is motivation. She said:

> *Kids should feel safe, accepted, and loved. So, my role is more than an educator. In the traditional teaching system, I think the role of a teacher was just a teacher, focusing on academics only, but now, dealing with Alpha's generation 21st century kids, it's a bit difficult because we also focus on skills. So, I feel I have kept the learning atmosphere congenial for students. I support them. And the best part is I have unlearned and learned along the process.*

She also adds that showing the real face of society is important for students nowadays since they are living in. a cocoon well protected by their parents and they are. Not aware of the harshness of life of several people living in small huts and slum areas living in poverty

Chapter Summary

Sonee, my research participant, feels that the intellectual side of education is crucial for teaching in the actual world of a professional teaching position, using herself as an example. She began teaching even though she had a formal degree in pedagogy and educational philosophy, and she believes that this caused many of her issues in her early professional practices. She was unhappy with this, but she felt compelled to practice teaching as her teachers did. However, she started to alter her teaching methods due to her growing experiences, education degree information, and the skills she had received from multiple trainings. Her efforts now seem more transformative, focusing on the kids' learning rather than just imparting knowledge. Sarita has stated that she has a strong interest in real-life activities but cannot clarify what exactly led her to form these expectations. She identified them as her ingrained expectations when I asked her about them. It is evident, therefore, that students typically seek out material that they can apply to real-world situations. Research even shows that students participate in activities directly tied to their interests or life far more frequently. She believes that unless students' interests are considered, studying is a hardship for them. Opportunities for experiential learning can hasten the students' learning.

CHAPTER V

LEARNER FRIENDLY CLASSROOMS

In the research context, focused group discussion (FGD) is a qualitative data-gathering technique in which a moderator or facilitator leads a small group of people in a conversation about a particular topic of interest. In social science research, focus group discussions (FGDs) are frequently employed to investigate participants' viewpoints, backgrounds, and attitudes concerning a specific topic or problem. FGDs, according to Krueger and Casey (2002), are organized talks intended to extract detailed information from participants by promoting conversation and interaction within the group. The moderator guides the debate using a pre-arranged list of open-ended questions, allowing participants to share their ideas and opinions freely.

Additionally, Krueger and Casey (2002) stress the significance of using a targeted and methodical strategy while conducting focus group discussions (FGDs), which includes meticulous preparation, participant selection, and data analysis. They draw attention to the moderator's duties in creating a discussion-friendly atmosphere, controlling group dynamics, and ensuring that everyone can contribute to the discourse. Focused group discussions, or FGDs, are a type of qualitative research technique where participants engage in structured group discussions to learn about their perspectives, experiences, and attitudes around a particular study topic.

I chose five basic-level school students to interview to gather information for a study on learners-friendly classrooms. To create their narratives, I chose the pupils from the schools where I spoke with the teachers. To identify the students who could provide insightful explanations on making education more approachable for learners, I conferred with the teachers during the student selection process. As mentioned in ethical consideration, before conducting the FGD, I took their parents' written consent by mentioning the research's objective. In this regard, I invited the students to participate in FGD and interviews to discuss how to make the teaching pedagogy more approachable for learners. The FGD was conducted in a conference room of one of the research schools. There was a round table set up where all the 5 participants, including me, sat in a circular form so that we could see each other while speaking. The FGD was set in such a way that there was no disturbance from other people in the room during that time. The FGD was conducted for 60 minutes and we discussed the

effectiveness of the classroom, their experiences, their likes and dislikes and overall feedback on the classroom activities.

I created a few major themes as the study's findings based on the narratives, and following the narratives' interpretation, the following major themes emerged:(a) Blend of academic and extra activities, (b) Practical Learning Experiences, (c) Support by the Teachers as Facilitators, (d) Practical Implementation of Learning.

A Blend of Academics and Extra Activities

Combining extracurricular and academic pursuits promotes intellectual and personal development, providing a comprehensive approach to student development. According to research, this combination can improve students' motivation, engagement, and general well-being. Extracurricular activity involvement is linked to several advantageous outcomes, such as enhanced social skills, stronger academic achievement, and higher self-esteem (Mahoney et al., 2005). Students who participate in extracurricular activities reinforce academic concepts and acquire practical skills by applying what they learn in the classroom to real-world situations. Furthermore, extracurricular activities positively correlate with students' sense of belonging to their school community (Mahoney et al., 2005).

Aarav was studying in Grade 7, and he was an outspoken and extroverted child. He was good in his studies and was appreciated by his teachers for his performance. When asked about the classes that run in his school and the one he enjoyed the most, he said:

> *Personally, I think I prefer the ECA classes over normal classes and preferably a computer or a more practical subject. For example, if you're starting a subject like master literature, you're mostly based on reading and writing. I enjoy public speaking because our teacher taught us how to speak, and then we practically used it. I used it in the assembly or on other occasions, and I also enjoy PE and other physically engaging activities because they improve my endurance and my ability to do physical activities, and they improve my physical capabilities.*

Aarav's way of thinking aligns with Eccles and Gootman (2002), which states that providing academic instruction and extracurricular opportunities can enhance student engagement, motivation, and overall academic success. He was proud of his achievements so far with the help of his ECA classes and performances.

Swastika was an average student in grade 7, more inclined toward playful activities rather than academic areas. She was good in English and Social studies but struggled to achieve good grades in Math and Science. When asked about her favorite activity at the school, she said that:

> *I like to take art and music classes, including Social Studies, since Social Studies helps me learn more about Nepal's history, and it helps me because I don't know anything about history. I didn't learn anything until I studied in grade 7, and once I do in other classes, I usually get stressed and overwhelmed. So, when music class starts, I end all my stress by listening to music, playing instruments, or drawing.*

Swastika is an excellent example of how extra-curricular activities allow learners to enjoy school life and, simultaneously help them balance the stress the students generate due to academic pressure. Her thoughts align with Eccles and Gootman (2002), who draw attention to the advantages of extracurricular activities for academic success and personal growth. Participating in extracurricular activities has been linked to increased social skills, self-confidence, and time management abilities—all beneficial for students' general well-being and academic performance.

Richa is a student in Grade 6 and is interested in both academics and extra-curricular activities. She was a brilliant student in the class and also enjoyed the company of her friends and teachers. While discussing the activities she liked most in the school, she said that.

> *I like all the classes that I have been introduced to, and specifically, I love studying Social Studies because it has a lot of history, and it can reveal many secrets that have been hidden in the past or the modern day. Not only that, I like all the extracurricular activities, including my choice, specifically dancing, which is my passion. I also really enjoyed it because it helped me forget all the stress going on in my life, and I could focus on my academic progress.*

Bhawana is a Grade 6 student and is good in her studies. She was interested in reading books and taking art classes. Her teachers appreciated her for her good performance. She also enjoyed the extra-curricular activities conducted in the school and said that:

> *I like art because there are no rules or concepts; we can just do whatever we want, and in other classes, we must do what the instructions say. I enjoy all*

the subjects but most of all I have two more favorite subjects. I enjoy all the subjects, but I like literature the most because whenever I get introduced to a new book, I like to read the story, and I like suspenseful stories, so it is fun to know what happens next. I also like public speaking because it has helped me come out of my comfort zone, speak to new audiences, especially big audiences, and become more confident. I also like it because it's a refreshment for all our starting classes.

The above statements concluded that engaging in extracurricular activities such as clubs, sports, or the arts helps foster a sense of community at school, which can improve students' academic performance and general well-being. Additionally, Eccles and Gootman (2002) emphasizes the value of a balanced approach to student engagement and the advantages of integrating extracurricular activities with academics. They contend that exposure to various experiences enables kids to discover their passions, hone their skills, and build a sense of self and purpose beyond just academic success. In summary, combining academics with extracurricular activities gives kids a well-rounded educational experience that fosters social and personal development and intellectual advancement.

Practical Learning Experiences

Giving primary school students real-world experience is crucial to their growth and academic achievement. Primary pupils can concretely investigate scientific ideas by participating in practical science experiments. According to research by Smeets and Mooij (2001), hands-on activities are crucial in science education because they help young students retain and develop a deeper knowledge of scientific concepts. Field Trips to Local Museums or Nature Reserves: Allowing students to visit local museums, nature reserves, or other educational locations gives them practical experience that enhances what they learn in the classroom. During the FGD, the students shared their experiences on the practical learning experiences they have received at their schools.

One participant, Aarav, shared that he personally thought he would have learned more if he had done more practical activities such as going on trips or walking around, maybe sharing his experiences directly from the heart. It would be more memorable with expression. In the opinion of Smeets and Mooij (2001), such casual learning settings present special chances for students to engage with academic material and cultivate a feeling of wonder and curiosity. He further added that

When we went for an art gallery visit in art, we learned a lot more about those pieces. I was more engrossed when I was able to see; for example, I was traveling around the capital city, and I saw statues and was more inclined towards their significance. Reading and writing could help us understand things better once we write and read. Hands-on activities helped a lot; in Grade 4, we went to the clay mask-making place, and then we could talk to the people who did it and had first-hand experience. Talking to people about the first experience will be more efficient and useful for getting more knowledge and seeing things in person.

Shreeansh was a Grade 6 student and an average child who was more interested in extra-curricular activities than in the academic areas. Shreeansh had a different perspective than Aarav and Swostika; he said he no longer enjoys his extra-curricular or music classes. He enjoyed the normal classes, such as math and science, because he focused more on concepts and theory, allowing him to understand math better. After all, once in math, the concept is clear. Do you get this? Math, for him, is about whether you know how to get the answer. There is an elaborate explanation of the answer but no other meaning. There are no idioms, and this specifically is science; they do a lot of activities, which means they are more interesting. They did this all in an interesting lab, and then they could learn even more. When asked about his way of learning in the classroom, he said that.

I find talking more fun than just sitting down to read and write. It is more informative to ask a person and get information rather than reading a book as a resource. I also enjoy the activities at the school, such as field trips, which are amazing experiences. I recall the experiment my friends and I did at the school where we learned a lot about a science topic practically.

His thoughts aligned with Waite and Goodenough. (2018) study that primary students benefit from outdoor learning in several ways, including higher levels of physical activity, better social skills, and better academic performance. He also enjoyed the origami activity in Math; these kinds of activities will help them better understand the topic.

Bhawana loved to think out of the box and agreed that learning shouldn't be enclosed within a classroom but should be taken beyond the boundaries of the class. She shared that it was an opportunity for them to get a chance to get involved in

several activities happening inside and outside the classroom that was helping them to enrich their learning experiences. She said:

We get to learn in a better way. If you do the activities, you understand those concepts and use them in learning, or you may just go to the books; enough might be for you. I feel like going through the books. I have different moods and scenarios where I focus more on something. So, as people said over here, I'm a person who loses focus very quickly when I'm reading something because I'm not interested in it. Recently, we went to Gorkha on our educational trip, and I realized that I didn't know anything about it when I was going to work. And I didn't know details about the Gorkha Durbar or anything like that. Even when I studied it or researched the right information, I didn't understand it. But when one of the spokespersons in Gorkha told us about the history of Gorkha and Prithvi Narayan Shah, my mind became so much clearer. For me, field trips and hands-on activities are very useful. For example, hands-on activities can be in science. When we were learning about universal indicators, we had to learn about the changes of colors in different types of materials and do it physically. This experiment helped us understand it more and understand what happens in the process.

Bhawana's thoughts matched with Thomas (2000), who said practical-based learning helps elementary kids develop their critical thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities, setting them up for success in their future academic and professional endeavors. By incorporating these hands-on learning opportunities into the core curriculum, teachers can design meaningful and captivating learning opportunities that help students acquire critical knowledge, abilities, and competencies.

Support by the Teachers as Facilitators

For basic-level students, instructors' support as facilitators is crucial to their general development and academic achievement. A key component of this support is the application of Thomas (2000) recommended differentiated instruction. Differentiated education entails adjusting instructional strategies, resources, and evaluation procedures to meet each student's unique learning needs. To suit each student's unique learning style and preparedness level, basic-level teachers may need to explain more, simplify assignments, or provide alternate learning materials. Teachers can effectively scaffold learning experiences for basic-level students by

tailoring lessons. This allows them to provide essential assistance while pushing students to realize their full potential. The participants of FGD were fully aware of the role of their teachers. In the classroom and shared their experience with their teachers in the classroom.

Aarav was grateful to his teacher for being a wonderful facilitator. Also, he considered a teacher to be a guide who allows the student to dig deeper into the knowledge to gain an in-depth understanding. He agreed with Hattie (2009), who asserts that small group instruction improves student accomplishment, especially for those who find it difficult in more traditional classroom settings. He said:

The teacher should be there as a mentor. Learning is an experience where you learn from right and wrong. If you're wrong at something, it doesn't matter. Your teacher should be there to guide you and tell you that you may have been wrong, but it's the first time you're at school to make mistakes and learn from them. When you're older, you don't make the same mistakes. A good person to fall back on. I implement the things that I learned in school in real life; for example, a few years ago, we learned about clouds, and I remember looking at rain because the clouds gonna be. Sunny, I was so glad. So, many of the things you learn can be implemented. You can even implement basic maths. For example, if you're calculating how much money you spent and how much money is left, that's very useful, and I think you can implement most things that you learn in real life. You might not be able to implement some of the things right now but when you're older, it's going to be useful and it's in the future, everything that's asked you because later on you are going to need to learn.

Aarav shared that his teacher was able to help them with all the things that they were wrong with. Personally, his experiences with teachers are that if he's wrong, if he sees something that's wrong, and if he's confused, teachers are there for him to ask a million questions. They'll give him the same answer, and it's very comforting for him to know that there's somebody like that there to support and help him every time.

Swastika considered school as her second family, and when asked about the role of a teacher in the classroom, she was open to talking about the guidance provided by her teacher. She believed that teachers also help by encouraging and providing positive reinforcement, creating a caring classroom environment. Positive reinforcement strengthens students' self-efficacy and encourages them to persevere in their academic pursuits (Bandura,1977). She agreed that the teachers honor students'

efforts and accomplishments by praising them, providing support, and noting their advancement. She further said:

> *Honestly, I think that the school is like a family and the teachers are people who guide us, and they teach us to differentiate between wrong and right, like our parents too, as we students, usually spend most of our day in school with our teachers, they're like our parents or sometimes more. The teachers are there to tell us that it's okay to make mistakes, and I also tell that to others because I've learned that from them. Making mistakes is to learn from them. I think that they should guide us. They should tell us what's right and what's wrong. My teacher teaches me how to do new things. As someone who likes to write poems and stories. And I honestly love to use vocabulary. I learned in word and meetings, and then sometimes, my father just popped out, and he started asking me about math and science both ways. But it's really fun to talk with my father about those because we can finally find something like those things.*

Swostika added, "I learn many things from my teachers, and teachers are there for me. They're kind and amazing. Some people might be like, oh my God, this teacher is so bad. They always scold me, and they never let me do anything. And then they're like, why do we need to learn everything? I say we need a base, but when you grow up, suppose you want to become an engineer or anything, we need to learn angles so that you can make the correct things, and it's basically preparing us from this age, and even when they score less its ok because they want us to know."

Shreeansh also agreed with Aarav and Swostika while talking about the support they get from the teachers, and he also felt that teachers are the mentors who work day and night to brighten the future of the students. Shreeansh's view aligned with Bandura (1977), who believed that teachers could establish a secure space where primary children feel respected, appreciated, and empowered to take risks in their learning by cultivating a positive and supportive classroom culture. He said:

> *So, it's more than a relationship between teachers and students. It's like mentors and mentees. Sometimes, the students are the ones that make mistakes, and sometimes, the teacher accidentally might make mistakes, and the students could accept it; the teachers are good with students as well. The whole purpose of learning revolves around the career we choose in the future. That is all taught to us first by teachers, so when we were first introduced to our topic, we*

might have been confused and had to train our minds slowly, but the teacher did
it gradually and patiently with us.

Shreeansh agreed that the relationship between teacher and students grows while learning. He said that the conversation allowed the relationship to grow even better through the questioning and answering and all those clear confusions that strengthened the understanding between the teacher and the students. Students will get a better understanding through this process.

There are different ways to learn, and Richa enjoyed all the hands-on activities they have in their school. She is fond of the mathematical activities in the classroom and loves the way teachers incorporate different games to teach math concepts. She also enjoyed going out of the classroom to revisit the concepts being taught in the class. While discussing the role and support of a teacher, she agreed to the point that teachers are, to a greater extent, a back support to run the teaching-learning activities happening in the school. She said:

When I am with my teacher, specifically in the hands-on activities, I have a
12-year-old friend with me. I could tell the teacher anything and don't keep
anything a secret. Teachers are people who guide me through everything that
I do. Even when I am not the best person to worry about, they still guide me
through to a good path. And even if I'm leaning towards the bad side, I was
still pulled across everywhere to the good path. No matter what, my teacher
always questions what we're learning. We usually get skeptical and think,
how will we use this? This is not gonna be implemented in our daily lives, but
at the end of the day, we should feel that these things are necessary for us
because when we grow as we go as humans through our behavior, it will be
implemented somehow.

The teacher and students share a wonderful bond with each other, and Bhawana was well aware of the positive side of having a good rapport between the teacher and the students. She felt that the relationship between a teacher and students is like when the student needs help and wants to ask a question, the teacher is always there to answer it. According to research, positive teacher-student interactions have been linked to increased academic engagement, motivation, and self-esteem in students (Skinner et al., 2008). The teachers were always there to solve her problems and fix them. The teacher was like family to her because she always helped her and

never gave up on her class, even though the whole class was chaotic. She knew that the teacher put all of the students on her shoulders. It's wonderful.

In her opinion, a teacher should not only teach and ask questions and clarify them, but you should also be someone who, whenever you have a problem, should feel comfortable sharing your problem and know that they won't snitch or anything or want anyone. She agreed that teachers could better support their students' academic and socio-emotional needs if they take the time to get to know them as individuals and comprehend their special skills, interests, and challenges (Pianta & Stuhlman., 2004). Sometimes, we think whatever we learn in maths may not be implemented. So, whenever her parents are watching television, there's a question that's related to what she is studying, and if she can answer that question, she feels a sense of accomplishment in herself.

In conclusion, small group instruction, differentiated instruction, and positive reinforcement are three keyways teachers in basic-level classrooms provide students with vital support. Teachers enable early learners to achieve academically and build critical skills for lifetime learning by establishing a loving classroom atmosphere, individualized support, and instruction tailored to meet the various needs of children (Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004).

Practical Implementation of Learning

Students learn various things in their school, and the learning is visible in their practical implementation. Hmelo-Silver et al. (2007) assert that inquiry-based learning encourages critical thinking and self-directed learning, enabling people to learn continuously. Teachers give pupils the skills they need to navigate an increasingly complicated and interconnected world by fostering a sense of curiosity and a thirst for information. Hmelo-Silver et al. (2007) found that PBL promotes metacognition, higher-order thinking abilities, and topic knowledge. Students gain resilience, adaptability, and a growth mindset by working on lengthy projects that simulate real-world difficulties. These skills are essential for success in both the personal and professional spheres.

When Aarav was asked about the practical implementation of the learning in their daily life, he shared that:

> *Whatever we learn in school is usually relevant to the student's life. For example, in school, we get the skills whenever we share some information or whatever we're being taught. We're ready to speak in front of a mass without*

feeling awkward because that's a skill that we need in the future. Similarly, many things we learn in subjects such as science or literature are useful in real life. For example, when we read a new book or reach out to a piece of literature, it's always a huge impact that we can implement into our lives because we can correlate something with our lives. We know what to do from what the character is in. Similarly, social studies focus on history and what happened in the past, but as the same goes, it's true because they're quite informative since they were done in history. It is life-long, and that learning never stops.

His thoughts align with Hmelo-Silver et al. (2007), who state that you are a student daily. Even if the teacher in your classroom teaches you everything and learns a thing or two from you, you can correct them on their spelling. Words, they pronounce it. You can implement whatever you learn in school.

Learning is all about implanting them in real life, and Swostika agreed to this and said that as someone who thinks that learning can be implemented in occupations. She said:

I liked the picture when I studied the vocabulary words, as I had said earlier, and in Social Studies, I didn't know what Congress and how communist artists' allowance worked, but I found out after learning. Now, when I listen to the news, I get the essence of it. I thought that when we learn, it'll be easier. Then we get a better understanding, especially when we learn from teachers rather than books because the teachers are more popular books. After all, sometimes the book has long definitions and explanations, but it just shortens. We get condensed answers. Also, I can learn new things because I want to be an artist, and I can learn about sketch shading, drawing bases, and pottery. So basically, I shared that it's more relevant to the occupation that I will choose one day in the future.

Shreeansh was clear about implementing the learning in their daily life and was eager to do so. He recalled his time in grade 3 when they opened a market and learned all about the currency, how it works, and all. After getting them from the wholesaler, they sold a few products as part of their school activity. He got to learn about exchanging money and returning it. And after doing that today, he is using that knowledge to buy things himself. In grade five, they made a Nepal folder where they implemented everything that they had learnt about Nepal, such as history, provinces

maps, rules, regulations and many more about the country. So, like that, everything they study in school has been helping them. According to Dweck (2006), people with a growth mindset think they can improve their skills with commitment and hard work.

There are different ways to learn, and Richa enjoyed all the hands-on activities they have in their school. She is fond of the mathematical activities in the classroom and loves the way teachers incorporate different games to teach math concepts. She also enjoyed going out of the classroom to revisit the concepts being taught in the class. While discussing the role and support of a teacher, she agreed to the point that teachers are, to a greater extent, back support to run the teaching-learning activities happening in the school. Her thoughts aligned with Dweck (2006) research on contextual learning, highlights the significance of learning in real-world settings where information is gained by doing meaningful activities and actively participating. Students who participate in real-world activities acquire transferable abilities, perspectives, and networks that can help them in their future academic and professional endeavors.

Bhawana agreed that whatever they learn at school could be helpful in daily life and that learning is a life-long process. She said:

> In literature, we learn many vocabulary words that we can use daily while making a lesson sentence or starting a conversation with others. We'll have such a big dictionary in our heads of words. We can make our sentences even better and the parameters we correct. Many of us wonder why we use maths daily, and many of us think we must learn maths. Basic Math, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, can also be very important in life. For example, you'll live in someone else's house and have to pay for the water bill or other utilities. You need to ensure you're giving them the right amount of money. So, you need to calculate it using Math.

Furthermore, bridging the gap between classroom learning and future opportunities can be achieved by giving students real-world learning experiences. Students can use their academic knowledge and abilities in real-world situations through internships, apprenticeships, service-learning initiatives, and industrial partnerships (Dweck, 2006). Students who participate in real-world activities acquire transferable abilities, perspectives, and networks that can help them in their future academic and professional endeavors.

In conclusion, the transferability of the skills students have gained, their attitude toward learning and development, and their exposure to real-world experiences all impact their capacity to apply those abilities for opportunities in the future (Dweck, 2006). Teachers can help students succeed in a world that is changing quickly by giving them transferrable skills, encouraging a growth attitude, and offering opportunities for authentic learning.

Understanding is the Key to Success

Swostika was outspoken when asked about her way of learning. She said that memorizing is not everything. Understanding is the main point of studies. According to research by Bransford et al. (2000), meaningful learning experiences are crucial for fostering deep knowledge. Their research indicates that students are more adept at applying their knowledge to novel contexts and resolving challenging issues when participating in activities that foster conceptual comprehension. Consequently, comprehension is the basis for long-term memory retention and higher-order cognitive abilities.

So, if you don't have activities, you understand the concept way better. She added that by bringing it to today's conference people, many of them will search the internet for information. When it comes to her, she knows that whenever she understands it. So, she suggested that it's twice as good to understand it with a person with more knowledge than to go after the internet type of thing because when she writes and reads, it depends on what sort of book she is reading and what she is writing. So, it depends on the background. If she is reading a very interesting book, then she'll, of course, be interested in it. And that book will remain with her, physically or not, for the rest of my life. On the other hands-on activities, she personally feels like those are very interesting enough work.

To sum up, comprehension is the cornerstone of academic studies since it promotes critical thinking, deeper learning, and the growth of metacognition. By emphasizing comprehension in the classroom and offering chances for deep engagement with the material, teachers enable their students to become lifelong learners who can solve challenging challenges and apply their knowledge to new situations.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Constructivism's incorporation into the classroom has led to a major global shift in education by highlighting the importance of students as active learners. Using constructivist principles is a possible strategy for encouraging students' deeper comprehension, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities in Nepal, where education has historically been teacher-centered. This dissertation examines the degree to which constructivism has been applied in Nepalese schools, highlighting the possibilities and difficulties that come with the nation's distinct socio-cultural and educational context.

Discussion

It is satisfying to hear from the participants of this study that they are trying their best to ensure quality education in their schools and make learning fun and fruitful for their students. It is necessary to discuss the important points generated in this research work. This study was conducted after the COVID-19 pandemic, when the students and teachers had just returned from their online platform, and the study was taking place in full swing. The teachers and the school leaders were trying their level best to cover the gap the students and the education field had due to the prolonged pandemic and the implementation of online classes.

The teaching-learning method after the pandemic was observed to be more innovative and tech-friendly, allowing the students to experience the boon of the 21st century. For example, the participants Sarita and Sonee revealed that they have been using technology more often in their classrooms to provide a visual learning experience for their students. It greatly helped the students understand the concepts taught in the classroom. The participants had been implementing the constructivist approach through various classroom peer and group work activities through their brainstorming and discussion sessions while introducing a new topic. The research participants, Pooja and Arpana also agreed that the more exposure a child receives, the greater learning will happen, and the students can relate the learned concept to solve their real-life problems. They also believed that incorporating co-curricular and extra-curricular activities would help the students to pay more attention to the course content. Taking the students for exploration, such as field trips and nature walks,

activates their thinking and retention ability, making learning have a long-term effect. All the teacher participants agreed that understanding is the key to success. Students will forget what they have heard but will remember what they have done, so they shared that they incorporate group and peer activities where the students learn by doing and get involved in real-life problem-solving processes to use their learning to solve future problems.

Both groups of participants (teachers and students) reflected that they experienced better learning when the students received autonomy in their own learning and got enough resources to explore and learn the topic through investigation, research, discussion, and presentations. All the teachers shared that they have received enough training sessions to educate young learners and incorporate a better teaching-learning approach in their day-to-day classes. The advancements in the training session greatly helped the educators to meet the requirements of the learners of a new generation. These examples revealed the presence of proper and adequate teacher training sessions and the teachers' adaptation to the latest teaching-learning pedagogies. However, the training shouldn't be limited and should be received repeatedly to get updated and use better learning techniques in the classroom. Another positive factor, as mentioned by the learners, is the role modeling of the teachers, where the teachers are friendly to the students and open to any suggestions and queries. Teachers like Sarita, who does not have hard and fast rules for the students, make it easier for the students to try the best method through which they can learn and share their learning using various methods such as presentations, drawings, essays, blogs, etc. which provided a choice, voice, and ownership to the learners.

In today's modern era, a teacher plays the role of facilitator, and the students lead the learning process. The research study provided enough evidence of learner-friendly classrooms, but the classrooms and the schools still lacked sufficient resources to implement a constructivist approach to learning. It was difficult for the teachers to manage time since this teaching pedagogy requires more time when the learners can explore and learn on their own under the guidance of the teachers. The time for the teachers was limited to 50 minutes per subject, which obstructed time management, and the teachers had difficulty in delivering the desired content.

The findings of this study revealed the importance of learning by understanding, which will have a long-term impact on students. The research

participant, Sonee, beautifully explained the techniques she used for long-term knowledge retention and the way she embedded this technique in her classroom. Like Sonee, the other three teachers, as research participants, also had a similar opinion on the knowledge gained through understanding. As an educator, I could relate to the ideas and reflections shared by the participants that knowledge is co-created in a classroom where the learners are actively engaged in gaining new insight into the topic being discussed in the class, and the teacher acts as a facilitator guiding the students throughout their journey of learning together. Therefore, from the narratives the teachers and students provided, implementing a constructivist teaching strategy allows learners to think outside the box and experience the wonderful and rich philosophies aligned with the teaching approach.

One of the major findings of the research work is that the learners construct knowledge on their own with the guidance of the teachers. As mentioned by the teachers and students, with a suitable setting and sufficient resources, new knowledge will be built on the previous knowledge gained by the learners. One of the research participants, Pooja, mentioned that she conducts many brainstorming sessions before discussing any topics in class. She also mentioned her Social Studies class, where she allowed the students to ask many questions related to the topic so that they get hooked up with the topic. Once the students were interested in the topic, she allowed the learners to discuss their understanding. She gave an example of the topic dowry system, where she allowed the students to explore the topic based on their interests, and the students came up with amazing findings and information related to the topic. She also shared that this kind of group work and discussions allowed the students to deepen their knowledge and helped them understand the topic much better.

Similarly, Sonee took the classroom as a close community where the students take ownership of their learning, learn through discussions, and share their ideas. She believed that in a classroom, students share their ideas, get a clear concept of the topic through discussions, and learn a lot through constructive feedback. She shared that she was flexible enough for the students to feel comfortable sharing their viewpoints, even if they made mistakes. She was there with the students to facilitate them and not to judge them, which created a positive environment for the learners to learn in a pressure-free environment. Sonee had experienced this environment, which allowed the learners to think out of the box, brainstorm, discuss, argue, and come up with the best possible solution. She believed that such a school environment nurtured the

minds of the learners and, at the same time, developed skills to cope with the challenges the students might face in the future with positivity and confidence. Sonee believed that she was a cheerleader in forming groups in the classroom through peer and group work for the students, where the students talk, work, and have a great bonding time, and ultimately, they learn. Through this process of group learning, the students appreciated each other's opinions and ideas and learned to coexist in the social world in which they lived.

Similarly, Arpana, who believed that she is a facilitator in the classroom, agreed that most schools ask the teachers to vent their knowledge among the students without knowing their actual needs and the objective of the teaching-learning process. She shared that she allowed her students to lead their own inquiry and that her entire lesson plan for the classroom revolves around keeping the students at the core of learning. She made sure that the students were actively involved in the classroom and felt free to share, speak, and enjoy the activities taking place in the classroom. She agreed that knowledge is constructed in her classroom by providing the students with a choice, voice, and ownership through provocation and brainstorming sessions. The students learn by reflecting on their prior knowledge and build and construct on the existing ideas. She believed that this kind of learning experience is like creating new experiences through social interactions, and it is a slow and steady process of scaffolding. She was eager to navigate the students from the zone I don't know to the zone I can do with support. Hence, Arpana's teaching method demonstrates the student's independent learning with minimal teacher guidance.

At the same time, the findings from Focused Group Discussions also argued that the learners construct knowledge on their own with the guidance of the teachers. Most of the students believed that learning is a journey of unlearning and relearning, and they all enjoyed the exploring part embedded in their curriculum. The students enjoyed the topic more when they had the independence to dive into it with their peers and group members. The issue they all had in common was the lack of time since the students had been involved in various co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Hence, it was difficult to focus and get expertise in one thing.

Discussion on Findings

This section discusses the findings with a critical perspective. It relates to the theory to find out whether the findings match with the theory or deviate from Vygotsky's social constructivism theory. The main objective of this chapter is to

produce a detailed discussion and interpretation of the findings obtained from the study. The focus of this study was to discover the teachers' narratives in implementing constructivism in the classroom through social interactions and incorporating hands-on activities in the classroom. This study also highlights the students' perspective in the classroom and how they take the teaching and learning happening there.

Learning Beyond Textbooks

The findings from this study indicate that students do well when the learning experiences go beyond the textbook. Context-enhanced study of students illustrated their understanding of the importance of such interventions as games, projects, and service-learning to the academic material acquired in class. A student participant stated, "When I could learn from the class and use it in practice, I could appreciate the concepts taught in class." This concern was normal for many other participants who stressed the value of practical aspects of education. Further, the themes generated demonstrated that students not confined to textbooks are more industrious, conceptual, and innovative learners. Students said that when solving problems, they were exercising their knowledge and learning to reason. As an illustration, one student participant stated, "Group projects assisted me in gaining skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, and innovating solutions to issues." This result is consistent with earlier studies that show greater understanding and critical thinking are fostered by active learning strategies, including project-based learning and experiential learning (Kolb, 2015).

Furthermore, the information gathered indicates that students who engage in learning activities outside the textbook are more motivated and engaged. Participants said they felt more committed to their education when they could see how their studies would be used in the real world. The teacher participant Sarita stated, "Teaching goes beyond reading and memorization. Teaching and learning are more interesting and exciting when I can see the practical applications of what I am teaching to my students. This bolsters Dewey (1938) claim that meaningful and interesting education must be grounded in real-world experiences. This theory perfectly aligns with Vygotsky's social constructivism theory, which states that students learn beyond textbooks and explore various learning environments to construct knowledge. According to this hypothesis, students who participate in cooperative, real-world learning situations that enable them to apply and exchange

knowledge with their peers gain a deeper comprehension of the material than those who learn in textbooks (Vygotsky, 1978).

Using Collaborative Learning among the students

According to this study, Collaborative learning significantly impacts student engagement, communication skills, and academic success. Students stated that discussing ideas, debating concepts, and clarifying things with one another in groups aided in their better grasp of the course material. According to one of the teacher participants, "Students learn more when they discuss topics in their group because they can see things from different perspectives, which they wouldn't have thought of on their own." This result is in line with studies by Johnson and Johnson (2017), who claim that relevant peer interactions during collaborative learning help students digest material more efficiently.

Additionally, the theme analysis showed that students' problem-solving skills were improved through collaborative learning. Students created a more dynamic learning environment by using the group as a resource to address problems when they faced difficulties. According to one of the student participants, "My group helps me figure things out when I don't understand them, and sometimes we solve problems together that none of us could solve on our own." This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) idea of the "zone of proximal development," which postulates that learning occurs more efficiently for students when they work with people at different skill levels.

The teacher participants also mentioned the growth of teamwork and communication abilities as a crucial result of collaborative learning. Students had to listen to others, properly express their opinions, and compromise when group differences occurred. "I've learned to communicate better because we have to explain our thinking and listen to each other's opinions in group work," said a student participant. This conclusion is corroborated by research, which demonstrates that group learning fosters interpersonal skills, which are critical for success in the workplace and the classroom (Gillies, 2016).

Furthermore, the teachers mentioned that the students were more motivated and accountable when they worked in groups. Because they knew their group members depended on them, participants felt more accountable for their contributions and more driven to do well when working in groups. According to one of the student participants, "I feel more motivated to do my part because I don't want to let my group down." This observation aligns with Slavin (2014) research findings, which

demonstrated that collaborative learning environments help students develop a sense of interdependence and group responsibility.

Lastly, the information showed that group projects promoted community among students in the classroom. According to several participants, group activity helped them feel closer to their classmates, which improved the supportive and welcoming atmosphere in the classroom. This result is consistent with studies by Laal and Slavin (2014), who contend that cooperative learning helps children develop strong social bonds and a feeling of community.

Knowledge is Constructed, Not Created

Deep insights into the realization that knowledge is formed by interaction, experience, and reflection rather than created in isolation were obtained from the study of the teachers' narratives. Teachers stressed that students actively participate in the material they are exposed to, forming their understanding through experiences in context and group learning. One teacher said, "Students need to engage with the material, ask questions, and make connections to their own experiences to understand it truly. Knowledge isn't something we can simply hand over to them". This is consistent with the constructivist theory of learning (Piaget, 1954; Vygotsky, 1978), which holds that students create knowledge by drawing on their past experiences and knowledge and not a product of individual invention.

Teachers who were the research participants repeatedly emphasized how important it is to establish classroom environments that encourage discussion and critical thinking. "Students are building their understanding when they work together to solve problems or discuss concepts," said one teacher. It's about giving what they already know and are learning context". This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social constructivism, which holds that social interaction and discourse are how knowledge is co-constructed. Instructors pointed out that deep learning is essential for in-person interactions, collaborative projects, and practical applications.

Another motif that surfaced from the stories was the educator's function as an intermediary instead of a knowledge supplier. Instead of just imparting knowledge, teachers defined their mission as helping students build their own understanding. "My job is to create opportunities for students to think, ask questions, and figure things out independently," one educator clarified. According to Sonee, "That's how they learn." The literature on constructivist education, which contends that instructors should

assist students in creating knowledge rather than imposing it, lends credence to this viewpoint (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

The teacher participants also emphasized how students build their own understanding of the subject matter via contemplation and personal connections. "It's not just about giving them information; it's about helping them connect it to what they already know and what they're interested in," said Pooja in an explanation. According to Pooja, "That's how learning becomes meaningful." Dewey (1938) experiential learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is produced by reflection on experience, aligns with this conclusion. The teachers claim students engage more fully and retain material better when they connect new concepts and their personal experiences or interests.

Nurturing Thinkers and Problem Solvers

The study's teacher narratives underscored educators' essential role in fostering students' capacity for critical thought and autonomous problem-solving. The teacher participants emphasized the value of eschewing rote memorization and conventional teaching techniques to create an environment in the classroom where students are motivated to inquire, evaluate, and synthesize knowledge. A teacher participant Arpana said, "My goal is not just for students to know the facts, but to understand how to use those facts to think clearly and solve problems". This aligns with the larger education trend to emphasize higher-order thinking skills. Research on 21st-century learning, which emphasizes the importance of deep thinking and problem-solving skills, supports this viewpoint (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

The teachers' accounts frequently discussed the value of problem-based learning and real-world settings in fostering critical thinking. Teachers clarified that posing challenging, open-ended questions that call for research and teamwork encourages students to think more critically. Pooja clarified, "Students begin to develop the abilities necessary to think deeply when presented with a real problem and have to figure out how to address it. They're learning to approach difficulties rather than merely searching for the correct response. This result is consistent with the problem-based learning (PBL) research, which contends that allowing students to work through real-world issues improves their ability to think deeply and solve problems (Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007).

Teachers also emphasized the significance of developing a culture in the classroom that welcomes inquiry and discovery. "I always tell my students that it's

okay to question what they hear, even if it's from me," said one of the teacher participants' Sarita. By refusing to accept things at face value, students develop and become thinkers in this way. This is consistent with Dewey (1933) idea of reflective thinking, which holds that learning should be an inquiry process in which students actively seek out and evaluate material.

The research participants also talked about how important it is to teach students how to tackle challenges methodically. They stressed the significance of comprehending the problem-solving process and coming up with solutions. "I want my students to be able to dissect an issue, consider it from several perspectives, and then formulate a solution. They are learning to think like problem solvers, even if they don't have the solution right now ". This result aligns with meta-cognition research, demonstrating that educating students to reflect on their thinking enhances their problem-solving ability (Flavell, 1979). This finding aligns with Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory, which says that social interaction promotes the development of higher-order thinking by enabling students to absorb deep thinking and problem-solving techniques (Vygotsky, 1978).

Classroom as a Close Community

The conclusions drawn from research participants' tales stressed the importance of seeing the classroom as a close-knit community where kids are involved, supported, and connected. The teacher participants have often stated that fostering a strong community in the classroom benefits students' social, emotional, and intellectual growth. According to Sonee, "Students are more driven to learn and more willing to support one another when they feel like they belong to a community." Working together is more important than focusing only on individual success ". According to social learning theories (Bandura, 1977), kids learn best when they have a sense of belonging and when learning is a social activity. This viewpoint is consistent with these ideas.

The stories frequently touched on cooperation and teamwork to promote a feeling of community. The teachers talked about how peer-to-peer learning and group projects foster relationships and respect among students. Sonee clarified, "I strive to include group work in practically every lesson. Building relationships and working as a team are just as important as completing tasks. According to research, students' interpersonal interactions are strengthened, and a helpful learning environment is created through cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Teachers also stressed the importance of creating an inclusive classroom where all children feel respected and cherished. Several educators observed that fostering a sense of community within the classroom takes deliberate actions, like motivating students to hear one another out and providing platforms for expressing diverse viewpoints. "Everyone's opinion matters in my classroom," Pooja clarified. I see to it that each kid has an opportunity to speak up and that, despite our differences, we accept one another's opinions". This aligns with the principles of inclusive education, emphasizing the need for equitable participation and respect for diversity in classroom communities (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

Teachers have also observed that small class sizes foster a safe, encouraging environment where students feel more comfortable taking chances and exercising critical thinking. One educator said, "Students are more inclined to take risks, ask questions, and exercise critical thought when they know they are in a safe and encouraging environment. They understand that mistakes are OK since we're all learning together". This is consistent with Dewey (1938) idea that deeper involvement and learning are fostered in a democratic classroom where students feel safe and respected. This finding aligns with Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, where learning takes place in a social setting, with the classroom serving as a small community where students work together and interact to co-construct knowledge. As children learn from one another and supervised interactions with teachers, this community's shared experiences and relationships support cognitive growth (Vygotsky, 1978).

Essence of the Study

By examining teachers' accounts of constructivist classrooms and using Vygotsky's social constructivism theory, this thesis advances knowledge. The study reveals how educators actively apply constructivist ideas in their classrooms through qualitative analysis, creating a collaborative and socially engaged learning environment. Although Vygotsky's theory has been widely explored in the context of student learning in previous research, this study provides a distinctive viewpoint by concentrating on how teachers understand and support these processes. The results show that teachers see themselves as facilitators of learning experiences, where students participate in collaborative problem-solving and critical thinking as part of a learning community, in addition to topic instructors.

This study makes several important claims; one is that teachers view the classroom as a dynamic, interactive environment where students actively create knowledge through direct contact with the teacher and peer discussion instead of passively taking in information. This is in line with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the "zone of proximal development," which holds that learning happens most efficiently when pupils work with individuals who are more knowledgeable than they are. Instructors have often stressed that students gain from these cooperative activities since they enable them to express their thoughts, refute presumptions, and expand on one another's knowledge.

This study also emphasizes how educators balance providing students with guidance and granting them agency during the learning process. Research participants, such as teachers, stated that although they offer guidance and organization, they consciously generate chances for learners to assume responsibility for their education by using group conversations, problem-solving exercises, and peer evaluations. This is consistent with Vygotsky's emphasis on the social component of learning and the notion that meaningful interactions, instead of isolated cognitive operations, are how knowledge is formed.

A further crucial assertion is the significance of a school community that is supportive of cultivating critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. According to the results, instructors believe a supportive classroom environment is crucial to fostering risk-taking, inquiry, and reflection—all of which are important elements of deeper learning. The social bonds formed within this community enhance academic achievement and create a safe space for students to explore new ideas, make mistakes, and learn from one another's experiences. This reinforces Vygotsky's (1978) assertion that learning is a social process that thrives in environments of trust and mutual respect.

In summary, this study deepens our comprehension of the application of Vygotsky's social constructivism in contemporary classrooms by examining the real-world experiences of educators. It emphasizes how educators actively participate in creating cooperative, student-centered learning environments. This offers fresh perspectives on how constructivist ideas might be applied to develop critical thinkers and problem solvers inside a classroom community.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

I concluded that constructivist pedagogy is becoming more popular in Nepalese academics' classrooms and that it was essential based on the analysis and discussion of the teachers' interviews. Educators consider it essential for their work to align with new concerns arising in their own societies. It even helps to shift teachers' practices and ideas toward learner-centered and culturally-situated instruction. Expanding learning opportunities and resources also shifts the focus of teaching methods away from the culture of textbook dependency and toward giving students a sense of control over their education. It even helps to close the gap between technical and practical interests in the curriculum (Dewey, 1938).

My research participants' interviews were analyzed, and this analysis enabled me to conclude that the participating teachers are familiar with the "constructivist approach of inquiry" and "inquiry-based pedagogies." They appeared to view improved communication and student participation in the classroom as inquiry-based learning. The majority of the participant instructors' practices were found to be strongly aligned with the constructivist teaching approach, according to thorough examinations of their methods. These strategies were judged to be highly beneficial by the teachers for improving student learning and empowering learners. Additionally, at least in the last several years, they have practiced for their actual involvement and contribution to teaching and learning, and they appear to view students as potential sources of knowledge.

One way that teachers promote meaningful understanding and knowledge creation in the classroom is through their activities. However, a few things need to be considered for these kinds of activities to be implemented successfully. These include, among other things, time constraints, administration support that isn't as strong, centrally planned and administered evaluation procedures, and traditional established teaching assumptions. Nonetheless, educators should be commended for organizing and adjusting their lessons based on their personal experiences and expectations as students.

The aforementioned talks have led to the conclusion that constructivist approach practices offer teachers and students a variety of chances to modify their

customary practices and build classroom activities as a discourse for knowledge construction. Teachers and students can even use these techniques to empower themselves, include all students in classroom activities, and infuse learning with values and a socio-cultural context. Notwithstanding a few obstacles, they provide excellent chances to change classroom procedures and bring fresh vitality to Nepalese instructing academia.

In conclusion, based on the research, the implementation of constructivism in the classroom represents a transformative approach to education that has far-reaching benefits for students. By emphasizing active engagement, collaborative learning, and the construction of knowledge, constructivist principles align with the dynamic and interactive nature of the learning process. It was visible through the research narratives that the pedagogical framework empowers students to be active participants in their education, fostering a deep understanding of concepts and the development of critical thinking skills.

From the rich discussion on the constructivist approach, it was observed that constructivism acknowledges the diversity of learners, recognizing that each student brings unique experiences, perspectives, and prior knowledge to the educational setting. It was also showcased that this recognition allows for a more personalized and student-centered approach, catering to individual needs and promoting ownership over one's learning journey. Furthermore, the study also revealed that implementing constructivism nurtures essential skills for the 21st century, such as problem-solving, collaboration, and adaptability. In the study, the students learned to explore, question, and construct meaning through hands-on experiences and social interactions, preparing them for the complexities of the modern world. Ultimately, the implementation of constructivism reflects a commitment to fostering knowledge acquisition and the holistic development of students as active and engaged participants in their own learning.

Implication

Based on the findings, discussions, and conclusion, I would like to present some key implications of this study. The finding of the study can be implicated in multiple areas related to various scholars and stakeholders, which are discussed below:

Implication for the Students

The study's conclusions might encourage students to discover what makes learning enjoyable. It could be appealing to them to realize that learning involves more than just fixing an issue; it also entails permanently altering their behavior to fit their socio-cultural and professional environment. Additionally, students comprehend and apply the findings in a way that allows them to confirm their age, needs, and areas of interest about the curriculum, teaching-learning exercises, instructional materials, motivation, and classroom environment. They might understand that learning accomplishments are not solely attributable to their comprehension and problem-solving skills but rather to a whole system that combines several elements.

Implication for the Teachers

The results of this study can be connected in several ways to teachers. To teach and learn in a classroom, they must first be able to distinguish between their own perspectives and those of the students. They could also combine their viewpoints with the students' opinions to show what it means to create learner-friendly pedagogy. The concerned teachers must consider pedagogy as a comprehensive depiction of the learners' lives rather than merely as a means of imparting knowledge in the classroom. To make their pedagogy more learner-friendly, teachers can assess how well they use resources for learning, how to deliver lessons, how motivated their target audience is, how friendly the classroom is, how well they use an assessment system to gauge their student's progress, and how well they get along with their students.

Implication for the School Management

The results will be helpful to the school administration in determining what kind of pedagogy can be designated as student-friendly pedagogy. The school administration takes into account the elements that need to be concentrated on to create student-friendly pedagogy while supervising the teachers' usage of classroom pedagogy. In addition to this, they can help with classroom management, learning resource management, and other accessories that are essential to making the pedagogy in the classroom student-friendly.

Implication of School Policy

Several significant implications for school policy in Nepal's education system arise from the results of this study on constructivist classrooms based on Vygotsky's social constructivism theory. The policy ought to aggressively encourage the transition from more static, teacher-centered approaches to more dynamic, student-

centered ones that emphasize critical thinking and collaborative learning. To support this change, educational policy should consider the need for social constructivist-based teacher preparation programs that empower educators to function as facilitators and promote engaged, active learning in the classroom.

One significant policy impact is the requirement for professional development programs that give educators the abilities and information to apply constructivist pedagogies. To do this, teachers must receive continual training on designing classroom settings that encourage discussion, group problem-solving, and peer learning. The policy should ensure that teachers are provided with continuous support and access to resources that help them foster critical thinking and collaboration among students, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on learning as a social and interactive process.

Moreover, inclusive classroom strategies that build robust encouraging learning communities ought to be emphasized in Nepali school policy. Educational policy should support smaller class sizes and more individualized teaching approaches to allow for deeper teacher-student and peer interactions, given that classroom communities significantly enhance students' social and cognitive development. Students actively building knowledge through real-world experiences can be further ensured by policies that support the integration of experiential and problem-based learning approaches.

Finally, critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving should be emphasized as essential competencies in Nepali curricular revisions to adhere to constructivist ideas. Activities beyond textbooks, such as practical applications and community-based projects, should be required under the policy. By nurturing the abilities necessary to prosper in a fast-changing global society, this method will assist students in making the connection between what they learn in the classroom and their life experiences. Including constructivist pedagogies would increase academic achievements and contribute to the holistic development of students as engaged, thoughtful citizens in Nepal's future.

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ANNEXES

CONSTRUCTIVISM IN CLASSROOM: NARRATIVES OF BASIC LEVEL
TEACHERS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN LALITPUR

Detailed plan for Field Visit

Research Questionnaires: Teachers

Table 1

Background Information

S. N.	Description	Response	Justification(if needed)
1	Name of the teacher		
2	Name of the school		
3	Address of the School		
4	Age of the teacher		
5.	Gender of the teacher		
6.	Experience of teacher		
7.	Ethnicity of the teacher		
8.	Education Qualification of the teacher		
9.	Training of the teacher		
10.	Teaching Experience of the teacher		
11.	Religion of the teacher		
12..	Type of school		
13.	Number of teachers		
14.	Number of students		

Research Question

How do private school teachers and students in Lalitpur narrate their experiences of implementing constructivist approach in the classroom?

Interview Guidelines

According to the theory and philosophy of constructivism:

- Learners themselves construct knowledge.
- Students explore the learning environment to construct knowledge.
- Students are responsible for their learning.
- A problem-based situation is created to improve conceptual change.
- Knowledge is constructed internally with the help of pre-knowledge.
- The role of a teacher is to motivate learners to learn and work as a facilitator.

1. How is the knowledge constructed in your classroom? What is the role of the learners in it?
2. How do you think the students learn in the classroom? What could be the learning environments from which the students learn?
3. Do you think the students should take ownership of their learning? If yes, why? If not, why?
4. What strategies do you use to make your students problem solvers in your classroom? Do you think a problem-based situation will enhance conceptual understanding?
5. Why do you think a teacher should ask probing questions to the students? How does their prior knowledge help to build up a new understanding?
6. What is your role as a teacher in a classroom for a better learning environment? How do you follow up with your students to support them?
7. Do you think peer work and group work can help students learn better? What could be their requirements to learn on their own?
8. What challenges have you faced inside or outside the classroom as a teacher?

Topic of Focused Group Discussion with Students of Basic Level
- Teaching Learning Method of the School and its Effectiveness
    1. Do you enjoy the classes at your school? What are the activities you like most at your school?
    2. Do you learn more when you go on field trips and do hands-on activities or do reading and writing in the classroom?
    3. What kind of support do you get from your teachers while learning? How do you implement the things you have learned in your daily life?

Table 2
A Summary Framework for Data Collection

Research question or theme of inquiry	Informants/ research participants	Method or technique of data collection	Location or activity of data col ko lection	Frequency or number of visits/interviews /observations	Number of stories expected (to be generated)
1	2 teachers each from two Schools 5 students from each school of the basic level	In-depth interview with teachers FGD with students	Lalitpur	5	6

Table 3

Tentative Plan for Data Collection and Analysis Process

Tentative Start Date: 23rd March 2023

Tentative Completion Date: 30th September 2023

Activities	Details
First Field Visit-1st School First Field Visit-2nd School	• Take permission from the **gatekeepers** and visit the research site. • Introduction with the **participants-teachers** • General discussion • Explain the **objective of the research work** followed by ethical consideration of the research.
Second Field Visit-1st School Second Field Visit-2nd School	• Meet the participants and **interview** each participant on the basis of the **guiding questions** (1 to 4). • Take permission from the participants and **record** the conversation in **audio form**. • Take **notes** of the important details.
Third Field Visit-1st School Third Field Visit-2nd School	• Meet the participants and **interview** 1st participant with reference to the **guiding questions** (5 to 8). • **Record** the narratives after **permission**. • Take **notes** of the important details.

Fourth Field Visit-1st School Fourth Field Visit-2nd School	• Meet the participant and **interview the 2nd participant**with reference to the **guiding questions** (5 to 8). • Record the narratives after permission. • Take notes of the important details. • Request the school to get **written consent from the parents** of 5 basic-level students to conduct an **FGD**
Fifth Field Visit-1st School Fifth Field Visit-2nd School	• Take **permission** from the concerned department to **conduct an FGD** with 5 basic-level students representing different classes of basic level. • Conduct FGD on their **feedback** on the **teaching-learning method** of the school. • Record the narratives after permission. • Take notes of the important details. • Thank you note to the school and teachers for their support.