PLACE PEDAGOGIES, ECO-SPIRITUAL COSMOLOGIES, AND CULTURAL

STORIES: WISDOM FROM DHARMASHALA, NEPAL

Shree Krishna Wagle

A Thesis

Submitted to

School of Education

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

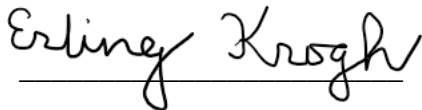Kathmandu University

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Doctor of Philosophy in Education thesis of *Shree Krishna Wagle*, entitled *Place Pedagogie, Eco-Spiritual Cosmologies, and Cultural Stories: Wisdom from Dharmashala, Nepal*

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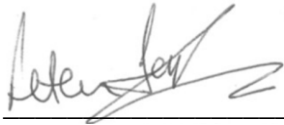_____   August 29, 2021

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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 authorizes the release of my thesis to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

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DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge belief, this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person or institution except where due acknowledgment has been made.

_____   August 29, 2021

Shree Krishna Wagle

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DEDICATION

To my grandfather late Laxmi Kanta Wagle, grandmother Tika Devi Wagle, father

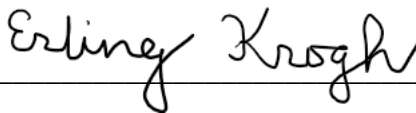Rishi Ram Wagle, mother Maina Devi, wife Chandira, and son Vedanta.

ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of *Shree Krishna Wagle* for the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy in Education* was presented to Kathmandu University School of Education on August 29, 2021.

Title: *Place Pedagogies, Eco-Spiritual Cosmologies, and Cultural Stories: Wisdom from Dharmashala, Nepal*

Abstract Approved:

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Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD   Prof. Erling Krogh, PhD

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This thesis reports the researcher's emotionally thoughtful impressions of the actions and reflections of a participatory action research project in a public school in the rural located town of Dapcha, Nepal. The community of practice consisting of the university researchers, the schoolteachers, students, school managers, and parents identified seemingly a displaced, and therefore, lifeless school pedagogies as possible constraints of teaching and learning for communal belonging, being, and becoming. To this consideration, the PAR community made an action plan for a participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies for one academic session and worked accordingly. The community passed through the spirals of three different action-reflection cycles in one academic year.

It appeared that the school couldn't 'romanticize' on initiating (revolutionary) new model of 'living pedagogies' within the long endorsed in-door pedagogical design. Therefore, beginning from the first cycle the teachers began to integrate partly active teaching and learning strategies like inquiry learning, project learning, and

outdoor learning (like school gardening) within and beyond the dominant Western-Modern practice architecture and cultural milieu of the school. As the study progressed, the PAR actions and reflections encountered manifold mess, doubts, and dilemmas inherent in dominant indoor pedagogical approaches which had been long endorsed by the school under seemingly a non-ecological, disciplinary policy climate.

The initiation moved ahead with mixed attributes of fear and excitement. There was an excitement that teachers and students were moving beyond the 'routine-passivity' of the school. And, there was fear that the model began to challenge teachers' predefined Western-Modern expectations of being a 'good' teacher, students' predefined expectations of being a 'good' student, and parents' predefined expectations of having a 'good' school that prepares their children for the future. The 'teach and learn for good exam marks' metaphor of dominant practice architecture of the school, and the schools' long-established tendency to follow 'directions' from authorial expectations of others outside the school appeared as constraints to 'action' the 'talk about' innovations. Though PAR partly challenged many of the closed, linear, and disciplinary cultural milieus of the dominant practice architecture of the school, and though it partly fostered perspectival shifts among practice communities, the long-established 'teach and learn the prescribed course to pass the exam' pedagogical metaphor of the school constrained the innovative pedagogies to fully emerge into the phase of organic continuation.

My attentive observation of the dialectical mess within immediate phenomenon enabled me to make some fresh look on why, despite messy turn, many of the innovative (and outdoor) pedagogical models endorsed in the public schools of Nepal couldn't emerge into the phase of continuation. For example, the PAR team's engagement in 'knowing' the memories, dreams, and aspirations of the place, Dapcha

Dharmashala came with a meaning that, unlike linear and disciplinary Western-Modern pedagogical ethos, the place is relatively characterized by ecological relationality. Dapcha Dharmashala, like every other place, has its own place essential, the place *dharma*. It is the place *dharma*, the natural law of emergence, enactment, and transcendence that has possibly held for centuries the cultural continuity of the place. It was likely that when the indoor disciplinary practice architecture of school pedagogies endorsed in this place was not compatible with the long hold ecological relationality, the school, the teachers, the students, and the community, to some extent, began to lose their authentic ground and ethical responsibility towards immediate ecologies.

Additionally, it appeared that when the outside prescriptions dominated the practice architecture and the cultural milieu of the school, the school teaching and learning were further displaced. Under such circumstances, many other popular but (anti-ecological) postmodern talks like local, or indigenous, or decolonial arrived as a scornful reaction against the dominant 'modern' practice architecture and partly added further messes in school education. Such a 'narrow' and binary undertaking of place concerning 'disregarded others' was more likely to strengthen 'enemy seeking' and 'overly blaming' tendencies among school teachers and learners.

Despite the PAR team's efforts, and despite a 'messy turn', I observed manifold constraints to institutionalize continuous unfolding of emplaced, and therefore, lifeful pedagogies within the ongoing practice architecture of Janahit School. Though, to some extents, the participatory initiations materialized stakeholder's shifts in perspectives and practices, the need for continuous negotiations with indoor design and routine behaviors was seemingly disempowering. It made me realize that even 'participatory' has some limitations in a way that sustainability (the

organic emergence and transcendence) of pedagogical innovation is more than human dimensions. Maybe, it needed a deep structural shift in the meanings, the worldviews, and the overall schooling architecture. Thus, rather than making vain attempts to seek life and lifefulness within placeless, and therefore, lifeless school designs at present, looking ahead for 'ecologically organic' architecture that goes in harmony with the place essential was seemingly the good option.

Thus, the study suggests redefining pedagogical innovation and pedagogical modernity (of Nepal), not as mere 'Western-European' standards to get cultural fit into its disciplinary prescriptions, but as something arising from the 'essential', the ecological relationality place inherently holds. Also, being self-critical of the apparently non-progressive, hierarchical, and rigidly isolated structures of Nepali communities, the study forwards future possibilities of 'living schools' that relatively harmonizes not only inner and the outer spaces, but also the traditional and the innovative. Such 'living schools' possibly celebrates 'pedagogy of authentic lifefulness'. The living school could be a pedagogical means of soul searching- here, now. Also, the journey from 'school' to 'living school' could be something like being ethically responsible for the essential value one holds, turning homewards, asking the question- what is my (educators', teacher's, student's, parents', or the researcher's) *dharma*-here, now, and thereupon, flourishing from inside-out. If the dominant practice architecture of 'modern schooling' is partly non-ecological, displaced, and lifeless, then it appears logical that Nepal begins the journey of emplaced pedagogies from its own place ecologies. Re-defining 'school' as 'living school', adding in it the age-old Hindu-Buddhist metaphor of *vidhya* (wisdom) and *alaya* (place), which together makes *Vidyalaya* (place of wisdom) could be a possible way out.

_____   August 29, 2021

Shree Krishna Wagle, Degree Candidate

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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IDENTIFIERS

The following identifiers are used throughout the thesis:

Identifiers	Descriptions
Researcher (facilitator)	The university-based research-degree student(s)
Teacher participants (teacher co-researchers)	The school teachers being involved in PAR (plan-action-reflection) cycles
Student participants (student co-researchers)	The school students being involved in PAR (plan, action, reflection) cycles
Community participants (community co-researchers)	The community members being involved in PAR (plan, action, reflection) cycle through the community advisory committee
The first person singular 'I'	The researcher (facilitator)
The first-person plural 'We'	The team of researchers and co-researchers
The project with upper case 'P'	The Rupantaran Project
The project with lower case 'p'	The individual PAR project (within the Rupantaran umbrella project) initiated by the team of researchers and the co-researchers
School family	The team of Headteacher, teachers, students, School Management Committee (SMC), and Parents Teachers Association (PTA)
Project team	The Rupantaran Project team of the researchers, Project staff, and research supervisors

Note: For further explanations of the geocultural and Vedic terms that are frequently used in this thesis, please refer to the glossary starting from page 381.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
KU	Kathmandu University
KUSOED	Kathmandu University School of Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MPhil	Masters in Philosophy
NMBU	Norwegian University of Life Science
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PhD	Doctor in Philosophy
PNA	Participatory Needs Assessment
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SEE	School Education Examination
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee
TER	Transformative Education Research
TU	Tribhuwan University

Spirit is known through revelation.

It leads to freedom.

It leads to power.

The living man, who finds spirit, finds the truth.

Kena-Upanishad (Swami & Yeats, 2005, p. 20)

Figure 1: The Dapchali village and the human landscape

PROLOGUE

Dear reader, I welcome you in this exciting journey of discovering ways to bringing life to school and school to life. Maybe, for any shift to occur there must be a shift in meaning. Therefore, considering the ecologically multilayered, rhizomatic, and fuzzy theme and structure of this thesis, few pages that follow suggest how I wish you to read, and make meaning of it.

Now you have opened the thesis on this page. You may turn over few pages, and if you believe in the episteme of procedural rationality, and are still not that much concerned with 'research hypothesis' (which modern academic architects usually do), at least you may look for the phrase like 'problem statement' or what the rationalists call it, 'the rationale' of the study. These components are nearly always to be found at the beginning of the 'standard' academic thesis.

But to continue, here you don't find those dominant research architectures popular in modern academia. Nor do you find those 'complicated' 'mind first' reasoning. The forms and the contents partly move through the ecological rhythm of the place.

Now you may doubt- is this a Ph.D. thesis?

And maybe it is very natural that whenever we encounter something different that is unlikely to fit in the given standards of the dominant cultural milieu, we begin to doubt. Though the study is, in many ways, an influence and a continuity of a kind of (post)qualitative transformative research trends at Kathmandu University School of Education (see Gautam, 2017; Rai, 2018; Quthosi, 2016), the 'off the beat' design of this research, which sometimes goes even beyond the trends, which Bainbridge and

Del Negro (2020) call it a shift from academic 'ego to eco', is likely to evoke some doubts. Maybe, this doubtfulness is of equal value for seeking ecological whole-heartedness in education and research.

Constructive Doubtfulness

Isn't it that, moving through different stages of human civilization, human beings, at one time and the other, were doubtful to one another- that the north was doubtful to the south and that the south was doubtful to the north; that the west was doubtful to the east and the east was doubtful to the west; that the mind was doubtful to the body and the body to the mind; that the male was doubtful to the female and the female to the male; that the object was doubtful to the subject and the subject to the object; that the science was doubtful to the religion and the religion to the science; that the local to the universal and the universal to the local (?)

In this ongoing doubtful elasticity of human civilization, I wish you doubt the immanent 'realities' this study presents. You continue to be doubtful here and there, everywhere, for as Radhakrishnan (1980) suggests, maybe every 'evolving' philosophy origins from the doubt of a kind. For Wang and Yorks (2012), such a doubtful gaze at phenomenon is, but a holistic approach to deepen self-awareness.

But, this time, at least at this stage of human civilization, where humanity has already passed through the relatively superstitious and conservative pre-modern world to 'intoxications' of 'timeless universal promises' of the modern world (see Ford, 2007) to 'local, but fragmented and ironically fluid promises' of the post-modern world (see De Witt, 2015), I wish now we begin to realize the sad mess we (human beings) have made of our apparently anti-ecological 'modern' lives. Matured from this genealogical meta-reflection, I wish now we embody ourselves to the immediate ecology and begin cultivating an inclusive, and ethically conscious and yet

constructive doubtfulness on a question of a kind- why is our education system here? What do all these mean, and where do we go from here? Hopefully, such doubts, maybe an essential step in the progress to ecological wisdom, beget a grounded philosophy, a new embodied envisioning of bringing life to school and school to life.

Within All, Outside All

Till this time, with doubtful gaze, you must have already flicked through the pages, here and there. And before claiming the 'validity' (?) or accountability of this thesis, I share with you at what philosophical base this study eloquently stands. For this, I begin by narrating the meaningfulness of the thesis title- "Place Pedagogies, Eco-spiritual Cosmologies, and Cultural Stories". Together, the words make the title of this thesis. I wish you to understand the three phrases not in their isolated linearity and binaries, but in their relational totalities.

Here, 'place pedagogies' refer to lifeful teaching, learning, and assessing through intense place-consciousness and engagement. These place pedagogies are also lifeful pedagogies in a way that the pedagogies are authentically active, participatory, dynamic, and relational. They discuss everyday places as contexts for awareness (see, Clover, 2002). Another phrase, eco-spiritual cosmologies connect the science of ecology with spirituality and make relational-ecological frames of place pedagogies. These ontologies of ecological relationalities (Lange, 2018) inherent in eco-spiritual cosmologies manifest spiritual connection between all beings and non-beings, and establish schools as an agent for an ecologically sustainable society (see, O'Neil, 2018). Likewise, the cultural stories this study talks about are long-inherited cultural narratives of the place (and the schooling community) that shape people's communal (and relational) views and actions. It is through these cultural narratives of a place in micro-macro circular hermeneutics, connected to (multiple) eco-spiritual

identities, images, symbols, and rituals (see Fowler, 2002, 2005) of the place, we discover the ways to bring life to schools and schools to life.

This is what the thesis topic is about.

As you begin studying ahead, you will encounter additional related words like pre-modern, modern, postmodern, global, local, indigenous, colonial, decolonial, and similar other lexicons like sustainability, autonomy, and ownership. These are often the buzzwords in present academia and social science research. But for the sake of this study, since the study has made some 'fresh observations' on them, maybe it is too early to 'define' the words. As the study progress, you may gradually develop familiarity with the cohesive meanings of the keywords this study carries. Here as well, I wish you understand these words not individually but in their reciprocal and integrated relations to one another.

You will also encounter different questions of a kind-What is meaningful learning? Where and how does the learning happen? Why learn? Why go to school? The questions further develop into an inquiry agenda as "How can schools foster life and lifefulness in teaching and learning? Thereafter, aimed at bringing life to school and school to life, the study explores manifold ways to integrate time and space informed 'place spirit'[1]in its curriculum and pedagogies. Thus, together it seems that the major purpose of this study is to find ways to invest school education with meaning, establishing the school as an agent for an 'ecologically conscious' sustainable future.

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[1] Place spirit in this sentence refers to place *dharma*, the fundamental (the essential) nature the place holds

Integrative-Synthetic Logic

Grounded in here and now, this study mediates the past and the future. Our pursuit of meaning in this study arises not only from something in the past and the present (Ford, 2007) but also from something toward which we are always moving. Therefore, in terms of time and space, the place-spirit, here-now, is neither pre-modern nor modern or postmodern. It is 'with, in-between and the beyond'. While building awareness on place, this study doesn't make any claim based on 'one world universal intoxication', and 'one capitalist discourse' (Nordveit, 2010), which the modernists univocally claimed. Nor does it make any claim based on 'postmodern narcissistic yearning' to enjoy the 'never-ending' fragmented locals (see Williams, 2018).

The place-spirit in this study is not the absence of pre-modern, modern, and postmodern either. Instead, it unfolds 'the good' in all three waves of human civilization and seeks 'real ground' to mediate from, within, and beyond the 'extremes' of any kind. The study, therefore, acknowledges the boundless freedom offered by postmodernism but at the same time, falling in its intoxicated trance of freedom, tries not to lose the 'real ground'.

Such integrative-synthetic logic of a kind (see Ferreira, 2017; Luitel, 2018) accepts the underlying chaos of ecological lifeworld, and at the same time, seeks the life of meaning within the chaos. Learning from the 'failed attempts' of modern logic to understand the world through 'linear rules of universal governance' and post-modern 'ironical logics' (Ford, 2007) to understand it through plural alternatives of fragmentations, this study accepts that this chaos governed' universe is never to be fully understood. But, at least human beings may look for 'wakeful awareness' to live

in their 'highest self'. From there arises time and space-informed (constructive) maturity.

This study accepts the universal phenomenon as incomprehensible chaos, the divine play, the *Leela*[2] (Radhakrishna, 1980) and yet it reminds us of the ethical imperatives, the roles, and the responsibilities of human beings to play not for reactionary anarchy but for 'participatory harmony' of planetary ethical considerations. Through *Leela* awareness, the study suggests that as conscious beings, human beings can't just stay hopeless, or just celebrate the apparent chaos as it is. Instead, the study suggests human beings to embrace pragmatic means that are informed from the past, revisit traditions, establish an ongoing dialogue with the past, integrate it with the rhythm of the ecological phenomenon, and through embodied wisdom, inform the future.

Figure 2: Metamodern ecological gaze

(Source: https://www.kindpng.com)

For this purpose, this study forwards an emergent Metamodern ecological paradigm[3]. This 'ecologically aware' paradigm emerges from seemingly a time and

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[2] Leela in Hindu wisdom tradition is a cosmic play of chaos and order; of the apparent and the real.
[3] Readers will continuously unfold the meaning (and justification) for metamodern ecological paradigm as the study progress. To begin with, the paradigm in this study is a postmodern informed modernity characterized by the ecological principle of place authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility.

space informed discourse that escapes not only the centrifugal cocoon of dominant practice architecture of modernity but also the incapacitating freedom of scornful revolts of postmodernity (Davis, 2014; Nealon, 2012). On the one hand, the paradigm moves beyond the binary oppositions, and on the other, it moves beyond the endless play of difference' (Moore, 2011). Also, the paradigm apparently unfolds and transcends from 'the true, the good, and the beautiful' in all the past 'extremes'.

Arising from such forward-looking, and wisdom-informed ethical mindsets (Culbertson, 2013), this study offers a wisdom system- a (post)humanistic focus on ecological sincerity and relationality. For posthumanists, culture (and the place) is no longer a localized phenomenon tied to a specific national or ethical identity (Ferrer, Romero, & Alboreda, 2005), nor a global phenomenon tied to mere a universal identity (Fowler, 2002). Instead, the place and the culture are a part of the whole that shares reciprocal give-and-take kinds of shared ethos.

Leela: The Cosmic Play

This study is aware that modern 'standards' of academic language, which it univocally advocates, limit the natural realization of the place. This study is also aware that postmodern 'anarchy' of language use is seemingly ironic that instead of suggesting meaning within chaos, it continuously adds extra anarchy, and 'hopelessly' celebrates its fluidity. The language use of this study is aware of the linguistic 'extreme' of linear and binary use of academic language in modern research. Also, the language use is aware of the linguistic 'extreme' of the schizophrenic plurality of academic language in postmodern research. Learning from the limitations inherent in both trends, this study chooses the language of Metamodern authenticity- of hope and transcendence.

And maybe you have, to some extent, begun to feel the authenticity that aligns 'what' and 'how' of the research. The authenticity arises from the life-likeness of relational reflexivity (Denzin, 1995; Stronach, 2013) in the ecological lifeworld. Additionally, authenticity arises from heart-to-heart communication with you, the readers. Also, authenticity arises from its ethical responsibilities for 'ground-of-being ecological awareness (Morgan, 2012). The authenticity accepts underlying chaos and still spreads wisdom of hope for a better world and sustainable future (also see Luitel &Taylor, 2019).

Doing so, telling of stories that act as cohesive agents, I attempt to introduce *Leela writing[4]* (Upreti, 2012), somewhat the surreal writing style in social science research. It is partially real and partially mythical, in between (and beyond) the order and the chaos. Arising from the 'crisis of representation' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), upon which postmodernism stands, *Leela* writing doubts the scope of linear language standards. It exposes the 'playfulness' inherent in ecological chaos and order, and thus, rebel against the 'binary standards' through evocative, reflexive, and multi-voiced genres.

But, this study is unlikely to leave the ground.

This study, to some extent, introduces the playfulness of language and thereby attempts to find relational order in continuous sleeping and sliding of meaning. But unlike in postmodernism, its playfulness doesn't appear schizophrenic. Its linguistic play is to expose mystery within incomprehensible playfulness of ongoing order and chaos. Often it makes a short pause in between the visible and the invisible and the present and the absent (Stronach et al, 2013), and informs how you, the reader, may

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[4] Leela writing is an alternative form of writing, particularly popularized by Nepali writers like Indra Bahadur Rai, where the theme of human existence as divine play is also manifested in the writings and the language use.

draw meaning from the text. It is to bring authentic meaning inherent in the play, to cultivate awareness, and to suggest constructive 'strategies' for a sustainable future.

The Yogi, the Rebell

And maybe, at the same time, you have begun to hear a 'rebel' voice somewhere in between these lines. But, again the 'rebel' you will see in this study is not a modern rebel aspired for 'one truth' 'avatar' 'hero' 'expert' 'specialist' 'king' and 'emperor' in absolute grand narratives. It is nor a 'skeptical' postmodern rebel for fragmented locals. Instead, the rebel in this study is holistically constructive. The rebel is informed of transformative, and transdisciplinary potentials in the life-world around (see Bainbridge & Del Negro, 2020; Hedlund-de Witt, 2014). Also, the rebel in this study is likely to spread wisdom-governed hope and optimism for continuous construction and re-making of the ecological order.

The rebel-researcher in this study is seemingly the yogi-researcher.

Here is not an 'academic' researcher to 'find knowledge', but an aspirant, a *yogi*, aspired to interpret the phenomenon through intrapersonal awareness, somatic presence, interpersonal dialogues, and performative praxis (De Witt, 2015; Rao, 2005) - why is our education system here? What does all this mean? And where do we go from here? This yogic-rebel researcher, aware as a part of the living world, appears to be embodied, emotional, and thoughtful all at the same time.

It seems that the *yogic* aspirant in this study, who interprets meanings from the web of relationships, is not alone in this journey. This collaborative journey of partnership and recognition (Edwards-Groves, Olin & Karlberg-Granlund, 2016) operates from a more complex framework of interconnections and relationships. Here, the researcher, co-researchers (research-participants), and the readers, all are together

in the 'praxis-informed wisdom making' (Luitel, 2018). Together, they are aspired to illuminate the dynamics of educational issues.

As a principal researcher, I get engaged and reflect on the action-reflections expressed by the PAR community, pass through convoluted and messy relationships, obtain the insider's perspectives of the action-reflections, and thereafter, interpret these accounts from my impressionistic positioning.

Unfolding Together

In this journey, trying to remain cognizant of my twin roles as a researcher and a practitioner, I will introduce you to my almost three year's long Ph.D. project. And, since it was an evidence-based project that carries the educational agenda of bringing life to school and school to life, I will introduce you in detail, the community and the school where this study eloquently stands. Most important, informed through the participatory nature of the action research project, and illuminating the tales of the field (Van Mannen, 2010) through confessional and impressionistic tales, I will introduce you to all those people of the place and the school, who in their role as co-researchers, were together with me throughout the journey.

In between the journey, most often, you may not see and hear me. Instead, you may hear and interact with many voices, the voices from the people in and around the 'study' school, and the community. The study moves continuously through the order and chaos of those voices, and in passing through those circles of performative voices (Denzin, 1995; Stronach et al, 2013), it explores the ways to (re)connect school pedagogies with immediate lifeworld and wisdom traditions of the place.

The study suggests awakened care for and connection with nature and ecological wisdom (see Burns, 2015) as remedies to look for harmony within chaos. It also continuously informs that either you start from the south or the north, or from the

east or the west, from the top or the bottom, connecting lifeworld to the immediate

place, here and now, is seemingly a contribution for 'higher project' of embracing

ecological wholeness (also see Williams, 2013). So, it's a journey of embodied

awareness. It's a journey of embodied presence. It's a journey of embodied

companionship. In this journey, we hear one another. We will act and reflect together.

We will interact, get informed, and flourish together, maybe as 'One' ecological

whole.

The Flow of Research-Inquiry: Unmoving, it Moves

The integrative-synthetic intersection between empirical research and artful

inquiry (see Sweet, Nurminen, & Koro-Ljungberg, 2020) acts, observes, and mediates

on the need for the adaptive(and immanent) change in school pedagogies, its content

and the deliveries. Maybe, this will require us (the research-inquirer and the readers)

to celebrate the long-forgotten ecological play of research-science and inquiry-art as

integral to the living system (see Barden, 2014; Berry, 2006). An embodied awareness

of this integrative living system in a school and nearby communities in the Dapcha

Dharmashala civilization of Nepal informs the meanings. We will mediate the

ecological spirit of this place and find ways to bring life to school and school to life

through integrating the 'place spirit' in school teaching and learning. We will together

look for a time-and-space conscious 'visioning' (Morgan, 2012) that may re-define

and re-position place and school education within unpredictable and

incomprehensible relational ties of the ecological lifeworld.

As the study progress, this journey toward a pedagogy of authentic lifefulness

may encounter manifold twists and turns, and as our knowledge remains forever

subjects to review, this study is unlikely to claim any 'final solution' (also see

Hughes, Bridges-Rhoads, & Van Cleave, 2018). The interpretations you encounter are

seemingly open questions, and that it is also your task to (re)interpret the

interpretation of the situation and events portrayed in this study report.

How were my journeys and arrivals to the research agenda of the place, the life, and the lifefulness in school education of (rural) Nepal?

Figure 3: The age-old Dapchali town

CHAPTER ONE

SETTING THE SCENE

It was July 11, 2019. We, the PAR researchers were almost at the last stage of this Participatory Action Research (PAR) project. Together in a teashop at Dharmashala[5], I was having an interaction with teacher-participants on what we had learned from our year-long participatory engagement for place-informed life and lifefulness in school teaching and learning. There, a teacher said, "Still we have a long journey to travel, but for me, it was a journey homewards."

"Journey homewards (?)"

The sudden seemingly unexpected statements as such surprised us all.

"Yes", he said, "This journey made me realize my *dharma*[6]. It made me think about how each of us is supposed to hold and perform our own *Dharma*". Keeping the teacup on the table, the teacher explained, "Problem arises when we forget our *Dharma*, what essential we are supposed to hold. As a teacher, I have *teacher-dharma*. Students have *student-dharma*. Schools have *school-dharma*. Plants, animals, birds, insects, and every being and non-being has its own *Dharma*. The question is- Do we do things in the spirit of our own *Dharma*?"

Referring to the name of the place, Dapcha Dharmashala, he continued-

"See (?), it may be a coincidence that now we are in Dharmashala. It reminds us that even place has its own *place-dharma*".

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[5] Dharmashala is the name of the place where our study school was located. The word is made up of two terms 'Dharma' and 'shala'. Dharma suggests natural law, and shala suggests the place. Thus, Dharmashala is the place of natural law.

[6] Dharma (in Hindu-Buddhist wisdom tradition) is a mode of being, the essential nature that determines its behavior. So long the humans (and also the non-humans) act in accordance with their essential nature, they are supposed to act the right way.

"But, maybe we forget this, or that we don't take care of it. Deviated from our own essential *Dharma*, we look for something else, *Adharma*[7]. We become irresponsible to the principle of nature. We become unnatural. Otherwise, there is nothing called right and wrong, good and bad."

…

After a month, when one of my friends asked me, "Shree, what is the most valuable insight you have made in your Ph.D. journey?"- There, using my Ph.D. journey as analogous to a pilgrimage, where 'the journeying' is seemingly of higher value than the destination itself, I made a spontaneous reply-

"I don't know, but our active engagement for place-informed life and lifefulness at a school of Dapcha Dharmashala likely gave me and my co-researchers a long-forgotten worldview of the place; maybe the worldview of belonging, being, and becoming from inside-out; the 'homegoing' *dharma- worldview* in education and research"

It is from this *Dharma-worldview*, together with Metamodern[8] sincerity and ecological relationality (which makes Metamodern ecological *dharma*), I narrate to you our journeys and arrivals. The journeys arrive with an emergent ecological vision for emplaced school teaching and learning. Let's move-

The PlaceCanvas

Now, I welcome you to the first chapter of my Ph.D. dissertation. This chapter consists of four different sections. These sections are likely to make you familiar with the overall background of the study project, the research agenda, and the study sites.

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[7] Adharma is other's Dharma, which is essentially unnatural to the value one hold
[8] Here, Metamodern refers to the modernity informed by the postmodernity.

Overall, the four different sections narrate our journeys and arrivals to the study canvas[9]. This canvas, metaphorical to the cosmic *mandala*[10] or a spider web, portrays the human, and also the ecological landscape of the cosmic space in and around Dapcha communities. Within the grand ecological canvas that circles around the earth, the study site for this study, Shree Janahit Secondary School, and nearby Dapcha communities are a micro ecological canvas. This micro ecological canvas, again, carries within it many tiny canvases of various kinds, co-enfolding, and co-emerging from and within the ecological chaos and the order. Here, you may see that every tiny canvas is identical to the ever-widening universal canvas (Heron, 2006), where every canvas is open to another and shares reciprocal give-and-take ethos.

Figure 4: The place canvas

(Source:http://www.holotropic.com)

Apparently, this place canvas is manifested through synchronic chaos and order of design, play, process, participation, creation, destruction, presence, absence, reason, myth, rationality, irrationality, hope, skepticism, and sincerity of a kind. It is from where we begin to realize that since everything is in relation, maybe nothing can be studied in isolation (Burns, 2015; Fowler, 2002); that every 'one' life is likely a co-

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[9]Subscribing to the performative nature of the lifeworld, I have metaphorically used 'place' as a canvas. This place canvas is also a metaphor of *Dharmachakra*, wheel of ethical actions.
[10] A cosmic diagram that represents the wholeness, unity, and integration

performer in every another life; and therefore, any disciplinary and linear episteme of a kind can hardly address this complex relationality (Miller, 2010). Analogous to the place canvas, this textual canvas, thus, creates a special world of reflexive performance.

It performs, and shows, rather than tells.

Section One: My Interest in the Place and the Lifeworld

In qualitative research, a researcher's epistemological stance is often the fundamental component that defines the overall research design (Carter & Little, 2007). The stance arises from the researcher's lived world and the shifts. Thus, in sharing my researcher's position, which is but my epistemological and axiological assumptions (see Bridwell, 2020), I begin telling you how I developed a research interest in the inherent relations between school learning, the place, the ecological relationality, and the lifeworld. In so doing, I narrate on how passing through many perspectival shifts, I came with a realization that present-day disciplinary pedagogies in Nepali schools are eloquently displaced, and therefore, ecologically irrelevant to the actual needs and aspirations of many school learners. My *Hindu-Brahmin[11]* family background may shape many of my perspectives (which sometimes may appear with prejudice and biases), and to this awareness, following the suggestions from Duenkel, Pratt and Sullivan (2014), I repeatedly turn to the 'ecology of Dharma' and wholeheartedness to keep myself sincere and authentic.

My MPhil Research Project

It seems that my interest in the area of life and lifefulness in school pedagogies started during my MPhil studies at Kathmandu University (Wagle, 2016). There, informed by the transformative research orientations of my research supervisor

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[11] In Hindu social hierarchies, Brahmin are supposed to be of higher (pure-blooded) social class

professor Bal Chandra Luitel (see Luitel, 2009; Luitel & Taylor, 2019), I carried

multi-paradigmatic transformative research on how I had conditioned various nature

of disempowering learning emotions at different stages of my school days. There, I

had reflected on my 'autobiographical memories' (Damasio, 2012, p.210) of

schooling experiences, and eloquently questioned the lifelessness of indoor classroom

spaces inherent in the dominant practice architecture of 'learn for exam grades' school

education of Nepal.

Like many of my village-born friends, I grew up in a village, land of streams,

flowers, and fruits. I would like to swim rolling from the stream, climb trees through

the secluded scene, and hear *purans* and *bhajans*[12] of kindness, love, and joy. Maybe I

would have learned a lot from there, so naturally, so wholeheartedly. But my interests

didn't become my learning resources. Following the dominant (social) expectations

for 'modern education', my parents send me to an 'English medium' boarding school-

a school that was supposed to prepare me to live in my future days.

Figure 5: A stream (Jyadul Khola) near my house in Gorkha village

Maybe, the English medium boarding school, to some extent, contributed to

my academic career. But, it appeared that in preparing me to live my future days, the

school took from me my 'present' days. My 'the true, the good, and the beautiful'

place were not in the classroom. The classroom appeared lifeless, without song,

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[12]Mythical stories and sacred songs

dance, play, and poetry of the land, the stream, and the forest. School caged me in its' boundary of four walls. Trying and retrying 'their' parrot rituals, my eyes continuously ached. And 'they' continuously called this 'aching' the learning (see Wagle, 2016). I developed 'learned helplessness'. In the language of Seligman (2018), learned helplessness is a situation where a learner finds herself in a hopeless situation arising from a mismatch between the inner belief of the learner and the outer expectations.

Of all, 'their' SLC[13] melodrama' ached me a lot (see Wage, 2016). Is 'aching' the learning? Don't know. But, like many other schoolchildren of those days, I memorized the school's prescriptions. I memorized the course books and crossed the 'iron gate'. I 'proved' myself 'fit' for the university. Maybe, if you had been enrolled in the private boarding schools of Nepal around the 1990s and 2000s, your experiences were in many ways similar to mine, "weren't they?"

Growing as a transformative educational researcher, in my MPhil 'memories made conscious' (Damasio, 2012, p. 2010), I questioned such displaced (and therefore lifeless) pedagogical practices prevalent in the school learning process.

Oh! Land of streams, flowers, and fruits;

Free me from *their* sinking ship.

The critical self-reflection came with a meaning-making that conventional schooling practices of Nepali schools with its passive, content-oriented rote learning, dislocated curriculum, exam-oriented assessment, and over-emphasis to indoor space settings (MoE, 2016; Wagle, 2016) were responsible for lifeless, disempowering, and irrelevant school learning. Such mind-first ideals of school educations would discourage students' first-hand experiences in an authentic environment.

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[13] School Leaving Certificate, the national level exam, which was also called the iron gate

During the MPhil days, I found modern classroom rituals as hindering my 'meaningful learning'. My MPhil study metaphorically critiqued the in-door classroom space as a cage. It claimed that the 'four-wall cage' was purposefully designed under the neoliberal colonial agenda of education to exercise mind-centered intellectualism inside the classroom (Wagle, 2016). Also, it claimed that a few 'policy elites' purposefully designed the pedagogy to continue 'parrot rituals' of rote-learning, which in a long run would serve the 19th-century Western-Modern agenda of 'learning for future earning' (also see Freire, 1993). Eventually, questioning the dominant 'rote-learning' practices, my MPhil study stressed the need to establish 'authentic' learning spaces outside the classroom (Wagle, 2016). Also, being thoughtful about the issue, I proposed to find ways to add students' first-hand experiences, critical self-reflection, and critical questioning in school pedagogies. Those earlier concerns for integrating the lifeworld in the school education of Nepal continuously encouraged me to concentrate my Ph.D. research in this area of life-based authentic learning.

It seems, therefore, that the present study on place-informed lifeful pedagogies for bringing life to school and school to life is a continuity and a (re)making of my MPhil studies. It is a continuity that I am still looking for life and lifefulness in school education. But it is also a remaking that now as Takahashi (2004) puts it, unlike skeptic otherness, blames, and divides between I-they, local-global, subject-object, east-west in linear (dualistic) inquiry, here I have embraced 'responsible and participatory me' (Also see, Lundmark, 2007). Engaging in 'participatory me' involves a realization that since nothing can be studied in isolation (see Hauge), the immediate phenomena are to be observed through place authenticity and relational

complexity (Lange, 2018). This engagement is what I call in this study, my (and our) soul searching and our journey homewards.

Passing through Skeptic Circles

During my MPhil days, I was critical of the lifelessness of indoor authoritarian school teaching and learning. Maybe such critical attitudes enabled me to question modern hierarchies and unjust educational ethos. But it also induced in me an increasing tendency to look for never-ending binaries, and fragmented locals. Maybe it tempted the 'postmodern rebel' inside me for narcissistic yearning to enjoy 'breaking' unjust social narratives here and there, everywhere. It may be the reason that despite searching 'responsible me' through ontologies of relationalities (Lange, 2018), my MPhil study overly blamed 'others'. I blamed the teachers, the school, the policymakers, the westerners, the capitalists… but, I had no specific 'solution' on- what next?

Growing in an authoritarian 'modern' school, it is likely that I learned to have high respect and faith in all of its dominant practice architecture with its emphasis on machine-like predictability, scientific process, and rationality. Later, during MPhil studies, embracing poststructural ethos (of deconstructive attitude), I learned to be critical to its dominating structures. But, maybe until then, I was not aware that passive acceptance arising from modernity, and overly reactions that arise from postmodernity as such were both disempowering extremes (Steinnes, 2004). Those tendencies would either resist personal improvement or would invite never-ending oppositions, 'disregarded other' and fragmentations. The question then arises was, "So what"? This question- So what (?) had been informing my post-MPhil worldviews.

After my MPhil graduation, in my role as an educational researcher, I had a series of embodied interactions with many rural communities of Nepal. The visits, to some extent, enabled me to develop impressions on the educational value and relatedness of the place, the space, and the lifeworld in Nepali communities. It enabled me to develop impressions on changing scenarios of the rural and indigenous lifeworld. In all those visits, with the question- what then (?), I was still looking for a socially informed sincere self in education and research that I could express in an authentic voice.

Hearings from my Birthplace

Of all those visits, my recent visit to Gorkha, my birthplace, had a larger impact on me. Now, I will share with you an event on how I developed a 'self-responsible' awareness of changing scenarios of rural lifeworld and indigenous renderings in Nepali communities. Maybe it is imperative to share because such embodied awareness I developed in Nepali villages, in a way or the other, has shaped this Ph.D. studies, informing in it the need to address the shifts.

…

Gorkha is a rural located district in western Nepal. I had spent my first decade of childhood days there, in a small village called *Mailung*. In the mid-1990s, my family migrated to *Chitwan*, a district in southern Tarai. Since then, I had not visited Gorkha. After 20 years that our family had migrated to Tarai, in March 2017, I got an opportunity to visit the place.

The visit shocked me all inside out. The house which my family had left some 20 years earlier was still there in the village, but it was completely ruined. There were a few other ruined and broken houses around the village. Since we (the house owners) had already migrated to the 'cities', there was no one to (re)arrange the ruins. Also, as

many of my relatives and neighbors from the village had already migrated to urban

locations, the lands in the village were bare. There were no youngsters to work in the

field. There were rarely male members. Possibly, they had gone to Kathmandu or

overseas for work.

Figure 6: The human landscape of Gorkha village (my birthplace) at present

Some households in the village had shifted their house-buildings to the road-

sides and had re-designed the houses with concrete and iron rods. There were also

television sets and mobile phones. There were noodles and cola bottles. It seemed that

the village was in the simultaneous process of 'rapid construction' and 'rapid

destruction'- construction of many things *new* and the destruction of many things *old*.

Taken from my journal article (Wagle, Luitel, & Kroge, 2019), here follows an

excerpt that reveals changing scenarios of village lifeworld in Nepal-

The next morning, *Thula ba*, my father's elder brother, served me a cup of

milk tea. The milk tea was always my favorite.

"How many buffalos do we have *Thulo ba?"* I asked.

He laughed and said, "Buffalo! No *Chora* (son)! Buffalos are only in our

memories. Drinking fresh milk has already been *yeka desh ko kaatha* (past

stories) in the village"

It surprised me. I remembered my childhood days where there would be

buffalos in every house of the village.

"Then, how you prepared this milk tea, *Thulo ba*?" I inquired.

He smiled and said, "It's from the milk powder I bought from the shop".

 Milk powder in the village! His remarks surprised me.

"There is no one to look after buffalos", he continued.

He pointed to the meadow outside and said, "See, there is no one to cut the

grass for animals. Younger people don't stay in the village". (p. 32)

Who Burned the House?

That morning, two of his statements touched me the most. Calling the village

metaphorically the *bridhashram* (elderly home)[14] he said - *padya lekhyaka haru gaun*

maa koi ta basdainan. He stressed that educated people don't stay in the village. Is

being educated means being 'certified' to leave the village? Don't know. His second

statement, as I felt, was wiser and more meaningful. Referring to the continuous

replacement of village life with city-imported modern tools and ideals at the expense

of natural environment and culture, he said- *Ghar nai polya pachi kharani ko k*

dukhkha! It means, when you burn your own home, you will have no scarcity of

ashes.

Saying so, maybe he was referring that young school graduates in the village

have learned to burn their 'home', their cultural roots, and sacred 'natural life' for

seemingly worthless 'modern' products. But, who burned (and is burning) the 'home'

in the village'? His statement was so triggering enough that I turned to myself, and

made self-reflection of a kind. Maybe I was also the one who was burning my home

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[14] Subedi (2005) observed that many of the older people "are caught into the syndrome of marginalization…Hill is overburdened with the proportion of older people in general and of older women in particular. Similarly, the proportion of aged population is higher in rural area than in urban areas" (p.16)

and blaming 'others'. In my school days, for example, I had learned to value Western Modern culture as absolute, good, and standard (Wagle, 2016). I learned to find every western as something new, great, true, good, and beautiful. I became 'Mr. Obedient'. Without giving any second thought, I seemingly accepted every 'modern narrative' that my 'modern' school and its 'modern pedagogical creeds' taught me.

During my MPhil days, maybe influenced by critical research ethos, I learned to be critical to Western-Modern[15] schooling creeds as colonial agendas of education. Shifted from my earlier identity of 'Mr. Obedient', it appeared that I learned to be 'Mr. Critical'. But, till then I had never 'responsibly' turned to myself. Maybe I learned to look 'far away' and blame 'others'. Maybe my friends, here-and-there, everywhere, did the same. It seems, we villagers continuously 'burned our house'- added concretes, ruined the culture, cut down trees, made roads around the hills, poisoned our food with insecticides. And it seems that we continuously closed our eyes at the immediate; continuously looked at the distance; made a vain attempt to 'fit' ourselves in foreign-made linear designs, and continuously blamed 'some other' for our plights.

Maybe our house kept on burning, and we kept on blaming 'other'.

In the village, as my *thulo ba* said, are we really burning our home, our organic life-world, just for the tribal things like ashes? Are our educators aware of this? Are our new generations aware of this? Where are we heading? Such observations induced in me the need for a self-responsible look at the educational phenomenon. It induced in me a burning desire to study, to think, and to work in the area of the place, the earth, and the lifeworld.

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[15] Throughout the thesis, I have used the term 'Western-Modern' as the school of thought that inherently look at the phenomenon as law-like regularities. My ecological appreciation to the phenomenon may appear critical to this school of thought. But, I am not critical to any geographical location and group of people.

Soul Searching

Later, when I began this participatory fieldwork for place-informed lifeful teaching and learning in Janahit School of *Dapcha, Kavre*, I observed that the village lives in Nepal were in many ways similar to one another. Things have been shifting rapidly. Many new stories are continuously emerging and the older are fading. The internet, the roads, and Information Medias have already opened and have connected the village and indigenous (the ethnic) community to the outer world.
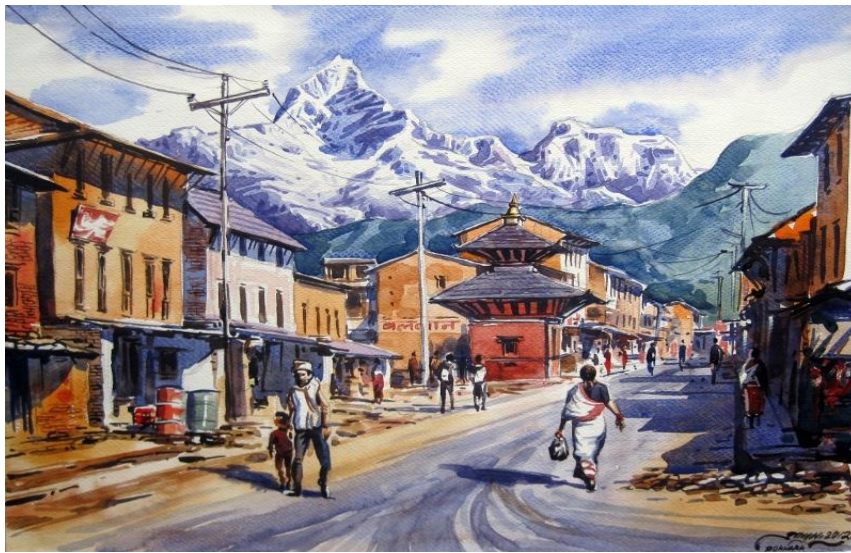
Figure 7: The hyper-modern cultural narratives of Nepali villages

(Source: https://www.artranked.com)

There, I realized that our rural lifeworld, to some extent, had been trapped in the mess of seemingly contradictory 'pre-modern', 'modern' and 'postmodern' ideals of dominant practice architectures, which in many ways, were seemingly less compatible with the ecological relationality, and place authenticity. It was likely that many of the old 'standard' logics either for 'superstitious isolation', 'one universal standard' or 'fragmented locals' could just add the complexity of the mess. It is how, slowly, I learned to embrace a holistic but still a hyper-local-hyper global present reality and a self-responsible participatory worldview in this Ph.D. research project. It

is from there I realized that to respond to the emerging realities of the constant flux in the rural and indigenous lifeworld, we need "a forward-looking, inward-looking and soulsearching framework" (Etim, 2019, p.6), which could be enabling enough to re-define and re-position Nepal's place discourse in school education.

There began my 'soul searching'.

Section Two: Travelling in and through Dapcha Dharmashala

Till this stage, I was narrating my research positioning arising from my place experiences in Nepali communities. As this study is largely informed from a PAR project in Janahit School located in Dapcha Dharmashala, now I take you to the study field. And I begin by saying what kind of place it was, and how somewhere in the universe, the place was unfolding, enacting, and emerging with age-old ecological narratives of give-and-take ethos.

Performing in this ecological canvas are a few human beings- the local inhabitants, Aryans, non-Aryans, *Dalits[16]*, men, women, rich, poor, kids, youth, the graduates, the dropouts, elderly people, the visitors, farmers, small business holders, housewives, school teachers, students, parents, and the community members. Seemingly, these human beings are themselves the art and the artists; the performers and the performed with multiple narratives of their own. They appear to act in and reflect on their roles, the rituals, the dreams, and the memories in their own ways.

Together, they seem to enfold, enact, and emerge.

Together, they seem to make the place Dapcha, maybe a civilization.

In this place-canvas, you are also likely to see different shades of colors emerging, being visible, and fading in their own rhythm. For example, out of a

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[16]Less privilege group in Nepali societies, often excluded as untouchables

sudden, a new color named 'earthquake-2015'[17] had entered the field, and recently yet another color the 'COVID 19' has entered into it and has informed (and shifted) the way we interpret the place. The blood-sheds of 10 years of armed revolution[18] are still there. And there are many told and untold myths, scratched from generation to generation. Every art, every artist, every color, every act, every actor, every game, and every play; every sorrow and happiness; and every rest and movement in and around this place makes the lifeworld herein.

Now I share with you how I came in touch with this place-canvas.

Out from the University Walls

Starting from 2017, I began to work with the NORHED[19] Rupantaran Project at Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED). In the project, I was a Ph.D. researcher and a practitioner. Together in the team, I was to work for community empowerment through school-based pedagogical innovations. For this purpose, Tribhuwan University (TU), and Kathmandu University (KU), Nepal, selected eight of the Ph.D. research-degree students.

I was the one from KU.

The Rupantaran Project facilitated a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project in 10 different schools from three different districts of the country i.e., Kavre, Chitwan, and Nawalparasi. Our team of university researchers from both universities initiated individual sub-projects within interconnected themes i.e., education, health outcomes, and livelihood prospects. Another partner university, the Norwegian University of Life Science (NMBU), Norway, provided a contributing environment for reciprocal knowledge exchange and collaborative learning.

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[17] Thr great earthquake of Nepal-2015 had broken many village-buildings from Kavre, and therefore many villagers were left homeless

[18] Nepal Communist Party Maoist broke armed revolution starting from mid 1990's.

[19] The Norwegian Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education and Research for Development

From Kathmandu University, our research team selected five schools located in the Dapcha community of Kavre district. About 50 kilometers North-East of the capital city Kathmandu, Dapcha is a rural location, a slowly fading 'historical city' with a hilly landscape.

Growing in transformative educational research culture at KUSOED, my research interest from the very beginning was more concerned with exploring manifold pedagogical possibilities for individual and social transformation (see Wagle, 2016). Gradually, during PAR field interactions in and around the selected communities, observing the life-world and the worldviews of school students and school pedagogical creeds the communities hold, my growing interest in bringing life to school and school to life , now, became my 'research concerns', of which I narrate in brief below-

Out from the City

On August 6, 2017, together with other fellow researchers and my research supervisor from KU, I made the first educational visit from Kathmandu to Kavre. The purpose of this visit was to select five public schools for our action research project in education.

At around 8 am, I and a fellow Ph.D. researcher (Parbati) reached Koteshwor, a crossroads at the city center. We took a road to Dhulikhel. Our research supervisor took a lift on the way to Bhaktapur.

Early that morning, we experienced heavy traffic; the sharp smell of the smoke, and the sounds from the vehicles. For a few minutes, the rapid urbanization of the Kathmandu valley and poorly managed traffic became the topic of our discussion. Maybe, we now live in an interconnected global system, where unfortunately, the human-dominated planet at present has increased the urban-rural disconnection. Or,

maybe we have already moved beyond the Anthropocene into the new urban era. But still, why is it that the ecology of urbanization has, until recently, been missing from urban landscapes?

Figure 8: The roadways from Satdobato to Koteshwor to Bhaktapur

There, sometimes, we discussed about urbanism; how societies choose to fail or succeed. We discussed about modern constructs, which you may call the urban Anthropocene. Also, we discussed about concrete-designed skyscrapers and automobile anarchy. And, we discussed our 'modern-urban' fate and the fate of the people hundreds of miles away!!!

Traveling through the Hills and the Forest

It was already 9 am when we reached Dhulikhel, a city around 28 KM South-East from Kathmandu. In Dhulikhel, Mohan, the local leader of the Dapcha community joined us. From Dhulikhel, we continued our journey to the East. We passed through the hills and the greeneries around B.P Highway.

No sooner had we left Dhulikhel, I felt the fresh wind brushed against my face. For sometimes, we became nostalgic. I shared how the hills, the forest, the cold forest breeze reminded me of my childhood days in a rural located hilly village of Gorkha. And now I have been living the life of the metro. Maybe it is my choice; maybe a compulsion for a job, for higher education. Maybe I enjoy being here!

Don't know!! Maybe it needs some other forms of engaged discussions on the evolution of human preferences.

The Countryside

It was around 10 when we reached Bhakundebaesi, a small fast-growing town in the hill basement. We had tea in a teashop, had some rest, and thereafter, moved up the hill to Dapcha communities.

We passed some newly built concrete houses on the roadsides, where we could also see traditional mud and stone-built house scattered around the hills. We could see spirals of roads running around the hills, and the traces of small and big landslides around. Also, there were many ruined houses locked from outside. A large area of land around the roadside was bare and dry.

One of our fellow travelers, Mohan, who was also a local leader of the village said, "Our village is going empty. Once it was the most populated village of Kavre". He shared with us that the village was once a renowned trade center. And he shared different reasons for people's outward movement- Maoist terror[20], the earthquake[21], drying of water ponds, youngsters' fascination with foreign jobs, and a growing tendency among village youth to imitate the western culture and Western-Modern life standards.

He pointed to a small Hindu temple to the right and said, "This place was also the center for art and culture." While he was saying this, we could see old, almost ruined temples, old Newari buildings, and monuments with fine architectural design on the roadsides. We could also see the stone-base of old *chautaras[22]* with *peepal* trees all around the village. Many of them were ruined during road construction. Like

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[20]A 10 years long armed revolution initiated by Nepal Communist party (Maoists)
[21]The great earthquake of 2015 had destroyed many traditionally built village-houses and heritages in Dapcha
[22]A stone raised belt round the Peepal tree, where villagers have rest and conversation

the ruined *chautaras*, the village lifeworld was seemingly sandwiched between the modern and the traditional.

Figure 9: Human Landscape of Dapcha, the basement and the hilltop

It seemed Mohan had many stories to share. He pointed to two old-looking (and almost ruined) houses with a locked door and said, "Possibly, the families have shifted to Kathmandu to educate their children in an English medium school".

"Or, maybe they have shifted for the job".

"Or, maybe they find 'social prestige' in being city dwellers."

He added, "It has been a popular culture in our village that when husbands go to foreign countries for job, wives generally shift to a rented house in Kathmandu in the name of educating their children"

Doko[23] **and the Mobile Phone**

On the way we saw a middle-aged woman carrying at her back a bamboo basket with cut-grass, maybe fodder to feed the animals. We saw a mobile phone in her right hand.

What an image, a village woman with a *doko* on her back and a mobile phone in her hands. I took my mobile phone from my pocket and captured her photo.

Digital technology has entered the village. It has re-informed the village life, the rural worldviews, and the indigenous rituals.

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[23]A bamboo basket into which Nepali villagers often carry fodder grass for domestic animals

"Maybe it's a time to redefine rurality and indigenous", my research supervisor shared his views.

"Almost all the household in the village has at least a mobile phone and a television set", shared the fellow traveler. "They change channels of their choice, the news, the reality shows, the folk songs, the hip hops, the national geography, and the 'sophisticated' Indian serials".

We continued our conversation.

Maybe with mobile phones and televisions, the village was no more closed and isolated as we imagine the village to be. Maybe new ethical concerns to integrate emerging technologies and the 'roots of the beings' have readily entered the educational discourses of the village life and the indigenous communities.

Desperate Circle of Distant Hope

In a few minutes, we passed through a community school located at the hilltop. It was Janahit Secondary School, which later we choose as 'action school' for our PAR project.

A group of school students with radiant cool eyes passed us. "Maybe they were students from Janahit School", we guessed. But to our surprise, they didn't enter the school gate. They crossed Janahit School. They were heavy with a big school bag on their back; weighed upon with heaviness, a blue tie was hanging on their neck.

"Where are they heading?" someone in our group asked.

"English school", some others replied, "village kids are locked inside the dream of learning 'great' English ideas". "Village civilization is running and growing pale in this desperate circle of distant hope."

It was from the visit that our team of university researchers and the supervisors began to ask and discuss on many questions of a kind- Why do many

villagers choose to educate their children in English medium private schools when there is a community school in the center of the village? Why such fascinations with English medium schools? Have we begun to lose our belief in our language, our culture, our ancestors, our wisdom traditions, our norms, and values? How could village located public school exercise a 'new' learning ethos that re-defines students' belonging, being, and becoming in the immediate place, and sustains the local lifeworld?

Referring to those village-born children, who were sent to 'English medium' private schools in the village and the nearby city centers, we would ask- Do those children who are fantasized about the glory of 'English life' and the city life since their childhood days will readily 'return' to their village after they complete their 'English-medium' education?

Maybe the 'English contents' they receive are in many ways distanced from 'their' place realities; maybe their 'distant' civilization is tied in the knot of 'modern tie' hanging on their neck. Don't know.

The Community

For the first eight months, our PAR team, comprising of university researchers and research supervisors, explored the communities and their cultural landscape. Doing so, we intended to set the study grounding, to strengthen our place sense, and strengthen our intimacy through insider-outsider communication in the community.

Figure 10: Rupantaran team's community visits

Our team of university researchers regularly visited the community. We stayed there for weeks. We made photographs and video recordings of the regular life-world and cultural landscapes of the community. We climbed up and down the hills.

While walking around, we shared informal talks with the villagers. They shared their memories and their dreams. We had tea together in local shops and nearby *chautaras*[24]. In our embodied interactions with the local inhabitants, our concentration was more on finding the answer- How is it to be a Dapchali? How is the historical, practical, and ethical foundation of the people from this community? How are their situated worldviews? Their memories, their dreams, comforts, and hardships… (?)

We were engaged from within the relatedness of knowledge traditions of the community. To some extent, it enabled us to develop our familiarity with the community on its past and present, its culture, natural resources, climate, demographic situation, and people's way of living.

For the whole eight months, I was more concerned with the decreasing trend of the population in the village, the gradual fading of cultural histories, ruined arts and designs, the bare and the dry land around, the spirals of roads running around the hills, the landslides, and uncontrolled mobility of educated/ uneducated youth from village

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[24]A slight stone-raised spot below the Peepal tree, where villagers have rest and they interact.

to the city. Together, I was thoughtful of newer hopes concerning drinking water, and various means of communication and transportation that had entered the village.

The School

Now, I will take you to the 'study' school.

Still in the process of strengthening enough communicative space in the community, we began our PAR 'intervention' at Janahit Secondary School, starting from May 2018. Among the five selected schools in the Dapcha community, we selected Shree Janahit School as the leader (action) school for the *Rupantaran* action research project. Located in the hilly landscape of Namobuddha-7, Kavre, the school was about 50-kilometer North-East of the capital city Kathmandu.

The *Rupantaran* Project had suggested us to initiate pedagogical innovations in the leader school; and thereafter, cascade the experiences and learned lessons to the other four initially selected reference schools within the community. Accordingly, in July 2018, we carried out a needs assessment in Janahit School (see chapter V for the details). There, we examined ongoing schooling practices. Also, we developed our familiarity with the current state, problems, and opportunities for improved teaching and learning. We were to use the findings from those needs assessments as a benchmark for a collective action plan.

Figure 11: Exploring needs of the school and the community

The workshop focused on assisting school headteachers and teachers to look upon, examine, and share their experiences and assumptions regarding teaching and learning. In the process, teachers continuously unfolded in sharing how they had arrived at the present state of thought and action.

The irrelevance of the school pedagogy, the disciplinary/ non-disciplinary mess, the lifelessness, and its 'failure' to connect students with their immediate life-world were always at the focus of the conversation. The conversation unfolded with manifold dilemmas and confusion on regular school pedagogies.

In between, they would raise conflicting voices of various kinds-

"We have to finish the prescribed course on time".

"We have no time and resources to experiment with new ideas"

Some teachers would say-

"Parents evaluate our school performance based on our students' marks in the national exam"- "We have to 'anyhow' prepare students for good exam results."

"Parents find their pride and prestige in sending their children to English Medium School."- "Maybe we have to start teaching in the English medium."

Some other teacher would say-

"I have already started teaching Science in the English medium."

And some other would question-

Why English? Why not in mother tongue?

"What an irony! We have begun teaching 'additional English' subject as a local curriculum?" Is 'additional English' the local curriculum?

Some others would say-

"I am worried about the students' discipline."- They bring a mobile phone to the class.

Some would respond-

"I want to introduce new methods of teaching but the whole system is not supportive."

The blame would continue-

"It is all because of a weak central policy of Nepal Government?"

"No, it's the inability of our school headteacher".

Some others would say-

"We need to make our school education more relevant and meaningful".

"Maybe lifeful"

"We need to connect our students with their everyday lifeworld"

"Maybe with the place"

"But what is this 'thing' called place?"

"Is it something local?" "If so, what is 'local'? What is 'local' in the local curriculum?" A teacher would mockingly reply, "It is additional English".

And all others would laugh.

Whenever we would discuss on 'local', some others would say-

"Why not global? Isn't it the time to think for global competence?"

Then we would discuss for hours- "what this mess is all about?" Also, we would discuss on what time and space we were in; what skills do our students need? How?

The voices would continuously unfold. And there would unfold the students' voices; and there would unfold the parents' voices; the voices from local authorities.

The ideas generated out from those voices in the series of interactional sessions of these kinds became the starting point for the participants to go through participatory action learning cycles (see details in chapter V).

Bringing the voices together, we began asking the question-

"How could we make school education more emplaced, lifeful, and relevant?

Passing through a participatory needs assessment of the improvement needs, the school family was further exposed to the irrelevance and lifelessness of on-going school pedagogies and therefore decided to initiate participatory and generative models of emplaced pedagogies (see chapter five for the details). Despite passively following externally designed pedagogical models, our model of emplaced pedagogies was supposed to emerge (organically) from our own actions and reflections of the PAR project.

There we began asking, how could we integrate life and lifefulness in school education? After realizing the importance of place, we focused our inquiry on- how could schools integrate present time and space informed place-spirit in the school pedagogy?" And more specifically- "How could Janahit School develop pedagogical approaches which could enable the students to live and to learn in their place?" This 'place spirit' for us was the essential value the place is supposed to hold.

Section Three: Emerging with Place-Thoughtfulness

So, what was the point of this study anyway? Why it was so important to make a detailed study on lifeful pedagogies within and beyond the dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu of the schools in Nepal? As narrated in the lived stories above, it appears that the 'disoriented' entry of 'modern education' in Nepali village has increased manifold confusions and dilemmas. School education of Nepal has been tied to various threads of modern 'standards', postmodern fluidity, and fragmented locals. The village is going empty. Students graduate from village school not to *live* there, but to *leave* it (Wagle et al., 2019). Available resources are not 'adequately' utilized. People are constantly looking for 'something else', beyond the

immediate. But what? – Maybe, they have no idea. Such confusion (and purposelessness) has apparently added the extra messes. Longing for 'something distant', the youth are leaving the village. They are leaving the country. Roads are circulating the hills, adding to it the big concrete buildings. Farmers are adding poisons to the farm.

Encountering Displaced School Education in Nepal

If you are in Nepal and you graduated from Nepali schools, and that you have a job of a kind, it's seemingly great. You are still having a job at a time when the number of 'unemployed educated youth' is increasing every year. Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2014) claims that about 4,000,200 people are not getting jobs suitable to their qualifications and skills. It adds another mess, what actually is the problem of education in Nepal? Is it 'undereducation' or 'overeducation'?

If you are still a student and thinking of some career of your choice, see, the literate unemployment rate (4.1%) is two times more than the illiterate unemployment rate (2.1%). These facts may question the benefits of you being a school graduate. Isn't it ironic that 'modern' schools use all their resources to prepare students for the future, and eventually ends up leaving many school graduates isolated from both the present and the future lifeworld?

Still, agriculture employs 65.6% of the Nepali population. And now if I ask you a question- did you have any agricultural experience at school? - There, you are more likely to say-What? - You mean, learning to farm at school? - I don't imagine it. And see, 81.3% of the total population of Nepal is still looking for possible ways for their day-to-day survival (CBS, 2015). Because they are not able to acquire the skills to use locally available resources for income generation, there is uncontrolled mobility of youth from village to city and from city to foreign countries.

If you are a university graduate who came to the city for higher education, it is less likely that you have any future plan to return to your village and make your living there. It questions our learning at school. Why go to school?

There are 125 different castes/ ethnic groups in Nepal, and thus, 125 different languages (CBS, 2011). However, the centrally prescribed school curriculum of Nepal doesn't address this cultural diversity and wisdom traditions (Awasti, 2004; Rai, 2018). As students grow up, many of them begin to lose confidence in their place and culture. Perhaps, this is the reason that, as school education couldn't connect them with immediate lifeworld, over four million youth of Nepal have migrated to foreign countries for skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled jobs (CBS, 2015).

Figure 12: Learning to leave the place of origin

(Source: https://thehimalayantimes.com)

Recent Changes and Perplexities

Recently, the Constitution of Nepal (2015) has called for structural and functional reforms in educational sectors and laid down the directive principles of the federal state, provinces, and local bodies on education; and therefore, localized education, local development, and sustainability are major political priorities at present. Also, the Nepal government has come with the provision of an integrated curriculum (MoE, 2016). This provision for the integrated curriculum is likely to

break the conventionally practiced disciplinary school teaching and learning. Maybe it is the most favorable time, where the local government may use constitutional rights to develop their own place relevant school curriculum and implement it in its service area. Those policy initiations for contextualized pedagogies could be *a bridge* (Luitel & Taylor, 2019) to connect students with their cultural artifacts and everyday lifeworld. For Luitel and Taylor (2019), such initiations would acknowledge the cultural diversities, and establish education as a powerful means for sustainable development. Rai (2018) suggests making wise use of the decontextualized policy provisions and making school pedagogies more culture-inclusive. Other similar studies of transformative interest (e.g., Pant, 2015; Poudel, 2016; Shrestha, 2018; Thapa, 2016), in a way and the other, suggests an overarching need to integrate disciplinary knowledge and skills.

Despite this, local bodies in Nepal have hardly made any informed discussion on 'place informed relevant education' (Wagle et al., 2019). Many schools lack informed awareness of what time and space they are in, and what skills their students have to foster (MoE, 2017). As such, many 'talk about' pedagogical innovation like Continuous Assessment of students (CAS), local curriculum, and life-based teaching and learning is not adequately 'actioned' (MoE, 2016). A national achievement report of the Education Review Office (ERO, 2019) accepts this claim for pedagogical indecisiveness in the school education of Nepal. In following the traditions, there are higher risks that schools in Nepal may not make effective implementation of seemingly ambitious pedagogical reforms (MoE, 2016) like those of integrated curriculum.

Nepal government has made the policy provision for local curriculum as a means for emplaced pedagogies (CDC, 2010; Subedi, 2015; 2018). But, the policy

documents are unlikely to hold informed views on what is the place; what is 'the global', and what is 'the local' in school education (Khanal, 2010; Wagle et al., 2019). The confusion further extends as to how much local and how much global? Also, there are no informed discussions on what 'place value' the school education of this country needs to hold (Subedi, 2018)? Does place value mean being global? Being national? Being local? Being decolonial? Being indigenous? These emerging perplexities of changing educational contexts (see Roy, 2017) suggest the need to rethink our school pedagogies.

Being Thoughtful on the Question- Why This?

Being mindful of the mess that Nepal has made of modern schooling, the study team began going thoughtful on- Why this? Why are we here? What does all this mean? Where do we go from here? Informed through the grounded experiences, we began exploring- how could (rural located) public schools of Nepal become active agents of teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming? It is to this end, our PAR team began initiating praxis-informed emplaced pedagogies (Barane et al., 2018), which could possibly bring school to life and life to school. Also, following the suggestion of the Nepal government to find ways for school-based pedagogies (CDC, 2010), we looked for participatory and generative approaches to pedagogical innovations.

As the study progressed, we encountered the mess between dominant and residual pedagogical practices and reform agendas. Pedagogical innovation for holistically open and lifeful teaching and learning had to pass with and beyond the linearly designed indoor practice architecture (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) dominant in the schools of Nepal. The growing awareness of the irrelevance of seemingly clock-like machine views of dominant schooling enabled us to think (and

act) from newer worldviews, where we could view school as an ecologically dynamic and immersing living system. There, attuned to relational place-ontologies (Lange, 2018: O'Neil, 2018), other themes on the need to redefine the place, the local, the global, the rural, and also the indigenous and decolonial renderings continuously emerged and shaped additional research questions (see chapter three). Understanding them in their relational totalities would enable us to be aware of the 'emplaced and lifeful place-spirit' (also see Hathaway, 2018; Radhakrishnan, 1980) we were looking for in the school education of Nepal. Thus, to make the study more authentic, we aligned PAR action-reflections to the actual place context of the Dapchali lifeworld.

Here follows an overview of the study purpose, the guiding question, and other questions that emerged during the research process.

Study Purpose

To explore the ways for place-informed lifeful teaching and learning at school

Guiding Question

How could (rural located) public schools of Nepal become active agents of teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming?

Emerging Questions

1) What place, and emplaced pedagogies meant to us, particularly to the Nepali people of Hindu-Buddhist, and ethnic origin? (see chapter 3)

2) How was the place *dharma*, the place essential of Dapcha, Dharmashala? (see chapter 4)

3) How did the displaced (and therefore lifeless) school pedagogies in Dapcha, Dharmashala located Janahit School suggest a need to integrate place and lifeworld in teaching and learning? (see chapter 5)

4) How the PAR team initiated participatory and generative approaches of emplaced (and therefore lifeful) pedagogies? And, despite some hopeful perspectival transformations, how the team experienced manifold messiness while in the process to implement it? (see chapter 6)

Also, we will reflect on-

5) What meaning did I make about the reasons that many schools in Nepal couldn't actually 'act', and sustain the 'talk about' innovative practices for lifeful teaching and learning? (see chapter 7)

The study makes an acute observation on western-modern pedagogical design dominant in Nepali schools, relates it to ecological place relationality, and eventually emerges with informed answers to the questions-

6) 'So what' and 'what next' in school education and research? (Chapter 8)

…

It seems that the study purpose and research questions that I have mentioned above have no linear sequence. I had entered the field (and the research process) just with a general idea to carry PAR and explore ways to contextualize school pedagogies. To some extent, the purpose was backed (and evidenced) to my MPhil meaning-making (Wagle, 2016), which was also supported by literature studies (e.g., Awasthi, 2004; Luitel, 2009; MoE, 2017; Rai, 2018) that pedagogical practices in Nepali schools are displaced and lifeless. Other research questions continuously emerged during field engagement and the writing process. Also, though the study was largely informed through participatory action research experiences in a school of Dapcha, Nepal, it is equally aware of and is respectful to outer realities. For example, informed through my first-hand experiences in a school located in Khotang district of Nepal, and another school in Aurland of Norway, the study seemingly holds national

and global relevance as well (see chapter seven for the detail). From there, this study seeks to mediate the global and the local in their interconnectedness from and within the place wisdom, here-now. Mediating the dominant practice architecture, the essential, and the innovative moves beyond the cultural residue, to some extent, the study is also on current affairs and the immediate future of education and research.

Being Thoughtful of a New Color in the Study Canvas

Now you give a deeper look at the place canvas.

Your embodied awareness at the canvases may also introduce you to the new colors from COVID 19 that may in many ways influence the 'old logics' of place, space, sustainability, decolonial, indigenous and rural identity in their relation to school teaching and learning (see Brooke, 2020; Hynes et al., 2021; Paul, Brown, & Ridde, 2020). Maybe the time 2020/21 is too early to make any sense from this new color in the study canvas but it is visible that in this new color of ecological chaos and order, the world as we know is dissolving, and that we can at least imagine how it is likely to change our cultural residue and the dominant practice architecture of school education. Also, the pandemic is likely to shift our beliefs concerning our belonging, being, and becoming in and through the place.

This new color has, in many ways, informed the meaning-making of this study canvas. Maybe COVID 19 is that metaphorical 'butterfly' in chaos theory (Lewis & Owen, 2020; Livingston, 2011), where a slight vibration at one corner of the globe may widen vibrating waves all around it. Maybe it is the reminder that present reality is hyper-global and hyper-local (see Baines, 2010; Hynes et al., 2020; Hynes et al., 2021) at the same time and that no village and no indigenous community are as isolated and as unaffected from global movements.

Thus, the new color of COVID 19 (re)defines the meaning-making of our ethical imperatives on how our 'individual soul searching' is at the same time, also the 'planetary soul searching'. Also, COVID 19 informs this study in a way that either we accept it or not, there has already been a sincerely matured global shift in human consciousness (Hynes et al., 2021; Tesar, 2021). It reminds us that reality is likely composed of many threads, within numerous spider weaves. In this connected web, there appears a looming ecological crisis, and also hope. Likely, it informs the study that now is the time to rethink on our long-established 'growth at all cost' logic; that now is the time for intense soul-searching and formulating new educational models (Etim, 2019), which may readily foster 'higher-order ecological thinking' of ethical responsibilities.

Section Four: Postformal Dissertation Structure

This study adopts "interdisciplinary approaches for studying the complex and dynamic interplay between societies and landscapes" (Barrera-Bassols & Toledo, 2005, P. 9). Arriving at this stage, now I will inform you of the overall nature of this complexly dynamic dissertation structure. As mentioned earlier, this dissertation artifact is a detailed documentation of a three-year-long PAR project (with a one-year-long participatory 'intervention') in Dapcha located Janahit School of Nepal. Through ecocomposition (the linking of ecology and composition), I have made the metaphorical use of the community and the school as the study canvas, which rests within an ever-widening universal canvas. For Dobrin and Weisser "Ecocomposition is concerned with rhetorical analysis of environmental/political issues, the effects of language on those issues, and on the ways in which ongoing debates or conversations affect the ways in which writers write" (p. 579). Also, I have made metaphorical use

of the three-year-long PAR project and the project activities as performative art being performed somewhere within and around this canvas.

The emergent postformal[25] dissertation structure mediates two important stages i.e., being here, and being there. While preparing this study report, as Morgan (2012) suggests, I am 'being here', making focused (yogic) attention to PAR experiences there (see chapter IV for the details). Not located primarily in the linearly sequential-empirical frame, this overall postformal reasoning appears partially impressionistic and partially confessional; partially phenomenological, and partially ethnographic, all working together to form an ever-widening 'One' ecological whole (Hathaway, 2018). Therefore, unlike mechanical structures, it seems that this postformal dissertation structure is ecologically organic and multi-layered. Also, analogs to either-or, neither-nor, and-or *Leela* of ecological chaos and order (see Radhakrishnan, 1980), the dissertation structure is often rhizomatic and fuzzy.

Multilayered Chapter Division

I began the study report with a preface that might have already informed you of the details on the metamodern concerns and linguistic use of this study. As I informed you, the ecocomposition and interpretation of the metamodern sensibility in this study-report are multilayered and open (Denzin, 2001) rather than linear and closed. Therefore, it should be studied more as an invitation not for any form of 'dogma prescriptions' but for 'ground-of-being' awareness.

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[25] Postformal is the most widely used psychological term to denote higher developmental stages characterized by complexity, creativity, imagination, reflexivity, spirituality,values and wisdom

Figure 13: Multilayered, rhizomatic, and fuzzy thinking

(Source: https://www.pinterest.com/)

Chapter one**, '**setting the scene' (present chapter) portrayed the overall background of the study project, the research agenda, and the study sites of this research project. It was a short narrative on our journey and the arrivals on the question- How could (rural located) public schools of Nepal become active agents of teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming? This chapter moved through details on my (researcher's) positioning on displaced pedagogies. The detail was necessary for a way to make readers aware of the 'urgency' and practicality of the research agenda of emplaced pedagogies.

Chapter two, **'**research as 'Living-Dharma': A methodological choice' narrates in detail why and how we choose PAR within the evolving and constructive nature of the metamodern (ecological) frame of social science research. There, I discuss our multi-methods way of evidence generation. This chapter makes a detailed discussion on how the study made sense of the PAR activities (being there) through yogic observation (being here). It required me (the emotionally thoughtful field-worker) to make impressionistic meanings of the phenomenon. The later discussions on quality standards and ethical considerations gradually orient on how I took research as an endeavor to live my research-*dharma* for life-like authenticity, relationality, sincerity, and ethical responsibility

Chapter three, 'place as mind-body integrated self', through ecological hermeneutic (re)view of literature, builds awareness on what 'place' is. Through detailed literature studies and embodied awareness on Hindu-Buddhist place orientations, and ecological relationality of place, the chapter builds ideas on what is 'historically' done in the name of modern education, and how emplaced pedagogies have not made 'successful' entry in mainstream schooling practices. Also, the chapter builds awareness on the mess arising from modern/postmodern reactions, and eventually makes meaning that the mess is likely to continue until any pedagogical innovation arrive, first, as a means to address ecological relationality of the place, and second, as a means of 'soul searching' and home going'. It is in this background the overall study stands on the idea that place is neither the 'isolated body' nor the 'isolated mind' alone. Instead, it is a complex of the mind and the body, wherein lies the beings' (and non-beings) belonging, being, and becoming.

Chapter four, 'the eco-spiritual *place-dharma* of Dapcha Dharmashala explores the place-spirit of Dapcha communities. It journeys around the myths, the culture, the memories, aspirations, and dreams of the place. The chapter arrives with the 'place essential' (the place *dharma*) of the community that it inherently gives high regard to interrelationship, kinship, and collectivism; that in its natural form, the community is ecologically spiritual and flexible; and that it is continuously 'struggling' ahead to meet Western-Modern standards of 'prosperous life'. It is through this 'place-spirit' we reflect on our overall PAR journeys and arrivals on learning for belonging, being, and becoming in and through active place awareness.

Chapter five, 'encountering displaced school education and research', narrates the details on how the participatory needs assessment identified seemingly a weaker place sense and the displaced schooling culture within Western-Modern pedagogical

architecture as responsible for students' and teachers' weaker sense of belonging,

being and becoming at Janahit School, and how in long run, it has partly influenced

the cultural expectations of the community to run after linear and disciplinary ideals

as 'good'. The chapter narrates the details on how the PAR community of practice

identified emplaced teaching and learning as an overarching need for pedagogical

innovation. Also, the chapter discusses how a plan to initiate a kind of generative and

participatory model of emplaced (and therefore, lifeful) pedagogy emerged from

within the dominant and residual (modern) practices of Janahit School.

Chapter six, 'embodying the place-informed lifeful pedagogies' narrates the

details on how the PAR team, passing through three different PAR cycles of actions

and reflections, worked with participatory and generative approaches to place

informed lifeful pedagogies. Also, the chapter narrates the overall process on how

when the PAR team endorsed these participatory and generative approaches of place

informed lifeful pedagogies, though the initiation moved forward with the mess, and

emerged beyond the mess with transformative experiences (e.g., perspectival shifts)

of the practitioners, the pedagogies contradicted with many of the regular, dominant

schooling practices and cultural expectations of the school as an organization.

Chapter seven, 'perspective transformation is not necessarily the practice

transformation', primarily focuses on the theme of sustainability and ownership of

pedagogical innovations. The chapter includes several sustainability-related rhetorics

of place-informed lifeful pedagogies within the Western-Modern dominant

pedagogical design and cultural milieu of present school education of Nepal. Making

relational studies of the pedagogical practices of Janahit School with two different

outdoor models from the schools in Khotang Nepal, and from Aurland Norway, the

chapter stresses the need for open and interdisciplinary, often holistic, pedagogical

design and schooling architecture for it to sustain. From there, the study begins to make non-anthropocentric meaning that pedagogical innovation for emplaced pedagogies is more than human dimensions.

Chapter eight, 'the disciplinary mirage and the evolution of future in education and research' makes the theoretical meaning of the study. Divided into three sections, section one, 'a deceitful mirage' makes detail Metamodern meaning of the study that fostering place, life, and lifefulness (e.g., the trans-disciplinary Dapchali lifeworld) in already displaced Western-Modern pedagogical design dominant in Nepali school education is seemingly a 'Sysipus ritual', a road to nowhere. Likewise, section two, 'schooling is not the right match', through the Hindu-Buddhist *dharma* worldview, makes meaning of the study that the dominant 'schooling design' with 'indoor classroom architecture' can neither readily let pedagogical innovations for 'home-going' and 'soul-searching' nor to move beyond its mechanical interest and anthropocentric advocacies. And, section three, 'the futures of emplaced education and research', forwards an 'emergent space', where practitioner educators and researchers in Nepal can possibly reflect upon their own South-East (and/or Hindu-Buddhist and ethnic) contexts, and evolve with pedagogy (and research-inquiry) of authentic lifefulness.

Chapter nine, 'Conclusion: The wisdom from *Dharmashala*' makes a concluding reflection on the journeys and arrivals of the study. The chapter answers the questions, 'what happened', 'so what' and 'what next' and forwards the possible implications of the study for my personal and professional life, to the co-researchers, to the Janahit School and the communities, to the curriculum developers and educators, and to the researchers and the students.

…

Seeding the notions for the evolution of (Metamodern) ecological consciousness in school education of Nepal, the dissertation ends with recursive Metalogue and afterwords. Overall, the postformal design is seemingly justifiable for this study on the ground that the 'place spirit' this study seeks to explore is apparently multi-layered. In this ecologically complex structure, each 'seed idea' in the previous chapter organically develops into a 'tree idea' (with stronger and deeper roots) as the chapter progress. This 'thinking like tree' organic emergence possibly makes meaning of the study topic (i.e., prospects of emplaced pedagogies) not in mechanical linearity but in ecological relationality. Often, the readers have to move back and forth between the 'part' and the 'whole' of the ecological circle and make organic meaning through multi-layered reflexivity of a kind. It appears that the constructive consciousness inherent in the layered research framing often celebrates hope and integration from within the fear and fragmentation.

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

The next chapter is about the methodological choice of this study.

Let's move-

How did I make a methodological choice of the research as 'Living-Dharma'?

Figure 14: Lakhe dance, a Leela-like playful dance of chaos and order

(Source: https://www.tripadvisor.com)

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH AS 'LIVING-DHARMA': A METHODOLOGICAL CHOICE

Dear reader, now I introduce you to the 'methodological' choice of this study. It introduces a posthumanist (see Braidotti, 2019) i.e., mind-body and nature-culture integrated nature of constructive consciousnesses. The posthuman ecological consciousness as such is embodied through Participatory Action Research (PAR). As Braidotti (2019) elaborates, unlike human exceptionalism in humanism, posthuman ecological knowing is relational, embodied, and embedded. It is a complex mind-body, and nature-culture continuum. To build posthuman ecological consciousness at the study phenomenon, I have employed the Hindu-Buddhist metaphor of *DharmaYoga* (also see Hyde, 2013), which binds both the mind-body and nature-culture continuums through authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility.

In such 'being here yogic consciousness' and 'being there PAR experiences' the study's explicit or implicit assumptions are at work. Together it establishes 'ground-of-being'[26] impressionistic experience (Morgan, 2012) 'with' 'in-between' and 'beyond' the dominant Western-Modern practice architecture and culture milieu of academic research.

So as to explore the ways to bring life to school and school to life through emplaced teaching and learning, building embodied awareness on what actually is the place was important for this study. In chapter three and chapter four, through the embodied awareness (and thoughtful-emotional impression) of a kind, I make sense of the place as a complex-built mind-body ecological self, wherein locates life and

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[26]In the language of Warren (1984), ground-of-being experience is "preconceptual foundation of all thought and existence". It illustrates the depth of focus, which give conscious being the sense of stability or grounding.

lifefulness. It eloquently claims that knowing the place, in a way, is being aware of the self, the mind, and the body. Following it, in chapter four, I make a sense of the place spirit of Dapcha as a long process of 'continuous becoming of the self' expressed through myths, religions, arts, science, and other socially constructed structures, memories, aspirations, and dreams exhibited in manifold widening circles in their relational complexity.

Figure 15: Posthuman ecological consciousness

(Source: https://www.npr.org/)

Thus, the study has fostered initial awareness that learning for belonging, being, and becoming in Dapcha as a place is but constructing 'autobiographical self' of this 'place' named Dapcha through transdisciplinary epistemological approaches. The approaches are manifested through manifold memories, aspirations, and dreams in their authentic relationalities (Thiele, 2014). According to Hindu-Buddhist wisdom traditions, this consciousness would unfold, enact, and flourish through 'right' *Vidhy[27]*, an ability to intersect self and 'higher Self' (Rao, 2005); an ability to differentiate temporal and the eternal; and an ability to differentiate the authentic and the modified. In the language of a philosopher-neurologist, Damasio (2012), this

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[27]Vidhya, the wisdom is not to be confused with theoretical learning. Unlike information gathering, vidhya is direct experience of the seeker realized through the removal of our casual apprehensions, baked by our wishes and prejudices.

ability to intersect mind-body integrated self and intellect through embodied, rational, and the extra-rational transformational process are the greatest of all human gifts.

Beginning from the very early days of initiating PAR, this interdisciplinary project took both a philosophical and an applied approach. Doing so, it engaged both the experiential and contemplative episteme (Morgan, 2012), which together celebrated epistemic pluralism arising from relational ontology (ies) (see Braidotti, 2019). Though initially, our PAR cycles for emplaced pedagogies engaged more in accordance with the suggestions from Kemmis (2009); Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988), and McNiff & Whitehead (2010), the meaning-making and the writing process that followed remained more a (posthumanist) *yogic* practice (Morgan, 2012), which was a sustained focus at the immediate ecological phenomenon, which eventually shaped impressionistic and the confessional articulation of my experiential insights as the principal researcher.

Section I: Philosophical Constructs

Beginning from the next chapter, particularly in chapters five, six, and seven, I will introduce you to the PAR team's overall observations, actions, and reflections in the three-years-long PAR project, where we explored manifold ways to bring 'life to school and school to life' through participatory and generative approaches to place-informed lifeful pedagogies in a school of Dapcha communities. Before moving there, this chapter is a detail of our methodological choices for this study, which is but living (and embodying) with relational ontology (ies). In other words, it is the here-and-now mediation of the past and the future; the global and the local; the dream and the memory. For this, the study is somewhere with, in-between, and beyond the constructive worldviews arising from phenomenological hermeneutics,

posthumanism, heuristics, ecological thinking, *Vedic yoga* philosophy, the Hindu-Buddhist way to *Dharma*, and reflective-consciousness, here-now.

Keeping things short, the methodology of this study is-

(1) 'With' 'in-between' and 'beyond' the traditional, the modern, and the post-modern.

(2) 'With' 'in-between' and 'beyond' the dominant research architecture, and the place essential (the place *dharma*) of Dapcha, Dharmashala.

(3) 'With', 'in-between' and 'beyond' the research for 'academic requirements' and 'living the researcher *dharma*' arising from ethical responsibilities, authenticity, and relationality.

Together, the methodology of this study is 'with' 'in-between', and 'beyond' the time and space of the study topic. In the language of Braidotti (2019), time includes the historical memories and genealogical dimensions, where space includes geopolitical and ecological dimensions. In this sense, the methodology of this study appears to step upon and extends from the time and the spatial dimensions that together make 'one ecological' observation of the phenomenon.

Worldview(s) in Context

Worldviews and research paradigms are the beliefs and assumptions, a specific set of tools, a coherent image to see the world and the phenomenon. When the existing worldviews and the research paradigms are seemingly limited to address the way one sees the emerging phenomena, one likely has to evolve with a more supporting worldview. In the context of this research, I have viewed the world and the organizations not as a mechanical clock-like system, but a spiderweb of living systems. Such undertaking of the phenomena needs a complexly built lens of multiplicity, authenticity, relationality, sincerity, and responsibility (Hathaway, 2018).

It is from this integrally synthetic lens of time (pre-modern to modern to postmodern to beyond) and space (local to global widening circles), I have made the Metamodern ecological meaning of the study phenomenon.

Metamodern Ecological Worldview

Now, you may ask- what ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions inform this research? What worldview does the study carry? What paradigm? Metamodern ecological worldview with posthumanist orientations informs this study (see Braidotti, 2019; Lewis & Owen, 2020). In simple language, Metamodern is the modern and the postmodern informed modernity. Ecologically creative openness and maturity (Agrey, 2014; Benedikter& Molz, 2011; Esbjörn-Hargens & Wilber, 2006) for new and original interpretation orients this worldview. As Smith (2002) claims, this hermeneutically circular and ecological ways of seeing is neither to suggest a 'valid' answer to the question nor to encourage silence, but to accept, and therefore, remain open to the apparent chaos, order, ambiguity, and complexity inherent in the ecological phenomenon.

Also, one can understand this Metamodern ecological view in terms of a special circle, which Heidegger (2002) calls a 'hermeneutic circle' that describes the relationship between the parts and the whole within ecological complexity. In this hermeneutic relationality of ecological phenomenon, the circular (and reciprocal) interactions between the whole and the part form the meaning. In terms of time, the meanings emerge continuously through give-and-take interactional openness 'with', 'in-between', and 'beyond the premodern, the modern, and the postmodern. In terms of space, again the meanings emerge continuously through give-and-take interactional openness 'with', 'in-between', and 'beyond' the local, the regional, and the global. These time and space informed meanings emerge with ever-widening maturity and

responsibility. Taken from Esbjörn-Hargens and Wilber (2006) and Benedikter and Molz (2011), the following table suggests a synopsis of the Metamodern ecological worldview in its hermeneutically circular relations with the premodern, the modern, the postmodern, and beyond the postmodern time and space.

Table 1

The Relational Emergence of Metamodern (ecological) Worldview

Premodern (Traditional)	Modern	Postmodern	Metamodern Ecological
Reality as singular, transcendent.	Reality as singular, immanent	Reality as discontinuous and fragmented	Reality as transcendent and immanent
Naïve Realism	(Post-)Positivism	Social Constructivism	Critical realism
Emphasis on community, family	Emphasis on independent individuality	Emphasis on unique individuality	Emphasis on embedded, relational individuality

It is to this end, in its continuous (but matured) dialogue with the traditional, the modern, the postmodern, and beyond the postmodern, this study carries no 'methodological a priori' (Marcus, 2009), and therefore, you may not find any linear adjustments. Instead, the worldview and the research paradigm this study stands upon are somewhere 'with', 'in- between', and 'beyond' all worldviews and paradigms human civilization has unfolded so far. Together, they form hermeneutic consciousness on ecological principles of authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility, and mediate the past and the future, and the global and the local from this ever-growing maturity (see Lewis & Owen, 2020; Tesar, 2021). Metamodern-ecological thinking, in the language of Arthur Koestler (1976) takes every phage of

civilizational growth as a 'holon' that transcends from preceding holons with greater maturity. Arriving at the current stage of Metamodern ecology, it *sees* through present time and space, learns from its journey, gains maturity, and develops from *within* the ecological principles of authenticity, place relationality, and ethical responsibility. In the language of Bateson (1972), this employing of ecological principle within Metamodern maturity is also an attempt to free the study from 'epistemological error' of separating mind-body synchronicity from the living-system of ecological oneness.

Ecological Metaparadigm

Positioning myself as a bricoleur theorist, I worked 'with', 'in-between', and 'beyond' overlapping paradigms and episteme (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Bricolage enabled me to adapt the ecological metaparadigm, where I could work intuitively and organically (Kincheloe, 2005). Arising from Metamodern ecological worldview, the Ecological Metaparadigm this study adopts is in many ways near to the Integral Metaparadigm suggested by transformative educators Taylor, Taylor, and Luitel (2012) in multi-paradigmatic transformative research (also see Katsarou, 2017). Following the 'vision-logic' of Ken Wilber (2007), the integral Metaparadigm in multi-paradigmatic *Metaframe* is all-inclusive of the waves of awareness i.e., (post-) positivism, interpretivism, criticalism, and postmodernism.

Figure 16: Bricoleur theorist

(Source: http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu)

Recognizing holarchical transcendence and inclusion, the integral project of synthesis establishes integral age at the leading edge (Wilber, 2007), where every other research paradigm is more matured and inclusive than the preceding one. These 'transcend and include' relationalities between Integral Metaparadigm and Ecological Metaparadigm, to some extent, widens our relational perspectives, and informs the developmental spiral of Metamodern ecological maturity.

Also, the integral Meta-paradigm (accompanied by ecocomposition) sees personal, social, and ecological dimensions of individual and socio-cultural transformation as inseparable and interwined (Takahashi, 2004). It is more focused on the transformative process, e.g., 'how all-inclusive knowledge is gained? The ecological Metaparadigm, on the other, is focused on attuning to ecological principles and learning to live in harmony with it. Though both the paradigms provide holistic philosophical referents, and though both the paradigms carry transformative interests, the ecological metaparadigm, however, is slightly different from the integral metaparadigm in a way that if the integral is emergent (Wilber, 2005), ecological is imminent (Benedikter and Molz (2011). 'Ecological imminent' gives the cosmological identity of communion and communality. It is about experiencing the interconnection and intrinsic value of life, cultivated through ecological wisdom and the wider sense of self.

Metamodern Ecological Episteme

For this study, I discuss this Metamodern ecology through the episteme of (1) Metamodern consciousness, (2) *Yogic* transcendence, and (3) participatory imminent. Together they co-create post-qualitative methodological ideals, which according to Tesar (2021), focuses on openness and responsibility, and strive to free egotistical anthropocentrism in the dominant research architecture of modern academia. While

making meaning of this Metamodern ecological episteme, I often take grounded supports from participatory spirituality and transformative sustainability where necessary. Let's discuss it-

Metamodern Consciousness

It seems that human history is a continuous failure of the human mind to perceive the 'ultimate truth', the perfect *Brahma*[28]. But humans are always reluctant to admit this weakness (Radhakrishnan, 1980). It may be the reason; therefore, the historical development of human civilization is a continuous making and re/making of the revised truth beyond the earlier one. Historically, the revised truths continuously threw the old approaches into a legitimating crisis (Ferrer et al., 2005). The 'ultimate truth', however, remained inaccessible (Fowler, 2002). Thus, the epistemological, ontological, and axiological assumption of every 'revised truth' seemed to scorn and distrust earlier making of the 'truth'.

Maybe, human civilization to date is but the 'unfinished project' of continuous revision and (re)making of the 'earlier truths'.

For example, fade-up from every traditional aspect of human existence, human beings introduced modernism as 'ultimate truth' (Ford, 2007). Modernism came with new hope in every sphere, spreading to art, architecture, and literature. It promised to reshape the world with practical experiments, science, and technologies. Such timeless and universal promises for one capital discourse, one size, and one standard, however, experienced decay of epistemological certainty, and consequently, ended in crisis (Butler, 2002).

The 'illusionary' game of reactive, scornful gaze to earlier 'truth' continued.

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[28]The Upanishad affirms the reality of a Supreme Brahma as the pure subject whose existence cannot be ejected by dialectics and conceptualization of any kind. It is non-dual, advaita, known only when all dualities are resolved. Newtonian-Cartesian Science in their cause-and-effect dualities, the reality continuously slips from one to other, without realizing the Brahma, the ultimate truth.

Arising from the crisis of modern legitimacy, the civilization wave now turned to the postmodern fragmentation of standards. Scornful and reactive to modern universal promises, it turned to local and fluid meanings (Ford, 2007). In the process, the postmodern human embraced existential and epistemological doubt and skepticism as a mental attitude in general. Also, postmodernism introduced people with an attitude towards life (Baciu et al., 2015). Those people were characterized by distrust, skepticism, and doubt. Such longing for 'truth' through reaction and fragmentation eventually turned to be an 'ironical longing'.

The ambiguity and blankness continued.

Fatigues of postmodern chaos, arising from its iconic detachment from previous texts, human beings have now begun to acknowledge that the ultimate truth is beyond human comprehension (Nealon, 2012). They can, however, consciously accept past experiences, and willfully produce increasingly authentic narratives and meanings. Scholars (Milne, 2015; Turner, 2011) call this recent wave the Metamodern, which is but the postmodern informed modernity (Turner, 2011). It revisits the root of the tradition, acknowledges the 'disregarded other', integrates the wisdom, and engages in building constructive consciousness.

To this line, it seems that this study is a synthesis, somewhere 'with' 'in-between' and 'beyond' such constructive consciousness. The study often visits mythical pasts, reflects on those narratives, includes in it those predecessors, and transcends them. Also, through the ground of being experiences, it allows individuals to see their own essential nature consciously and looks for constructive efforts to find solutions to social (ecological) issues.

Thus, the epistemic choice for this study arises not from our ironical longing for 'inaccessible truth', but from 'authentic living' with constructive consciousness of

maturity. It is living with 'ground-of-being' experiences. It is where the yoga philosophy of belonging, being, and becoming eloquently stands (Morgan, 2012). Maybe this is also the way to *Dharma*.

Yogic Transcendence

Now, I share with you the idea of how yogic transcendence[29], together with Metamodern reflexivity, informs the episteme of this study. Both Metamodern reflexivity and *Vedic Dharma yoga* philosophy inform the episteme of this study in a way that both philosophical trends acknowledge the embodied (and authentic) nature of constructive consciousnesses, which meaningfully informs the lifeworld concerning its ongoing chaos and world-order.

$$सएषप्रकृतिंसूक्ष्मांदैवींगुणमयींविभुः।$$

$$यदृच्छयैवोपगतामभ्यपद्यतलीलया॥४॥$$

Advaita (non-dual) *Vedanta* posits that *Brahma,* the universal Self underpins all reality (Rao, 2005). The creative power that fashions the *Brahma* is called *Yoga Maya*, which is but the interplay of chaos and order in its continuous movement for the making and remaking of the world order. Human beings cannot see this but realize it (Radhakrishnan, 1980). Thus, acknowledging the essence of the *Vedic* worldview, and also learning from the 'failure' of modern projects for essentialism, and postmodern (ironical) projects for fragmentations, knowing for this study is not to 'find' this 'absolute truth'. Instead, it is to realize the ecological mystery. It is to discover the essential self, the 'ground-of-being.

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[29]Yogic transcendence is Vedic philosophical thought that gives practical way of realizing the supreme ideal. Though yogic transcendence begins with thought and somatic experiences, it aims to go beyond thought and the apparent forms in the phenomenon. Thus, if yogic consciousness is awareness, this awareness is not intellectual but integral.

According to *Vedanta*, our casual apprehension backed by our wishes and prejudices do not reveal reality. Acknowledging the belief, the study holds that it is the aspirants' (researchers') *dharma*, the ethical responsibility to move beyond the illusionary despondency of dominant human constructs.

So what?
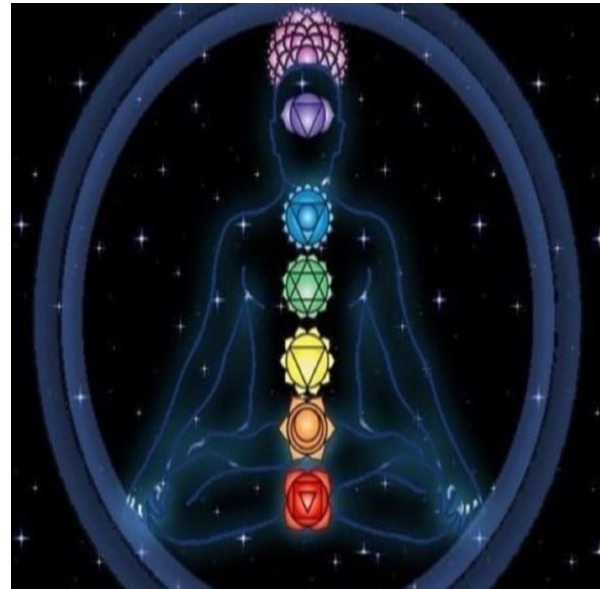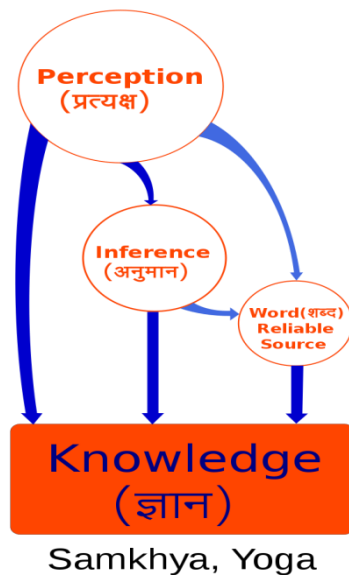
Figure 17 A: Yogic transcendence

(Source: http://www.atmashreeyoga.com)

In this regard, Yoga philosophy informed this research in a way that continuous striving for authenticity (that innate quality, the *pramana*) enables one to perceive authentic knowledge. The episteme of yogic knowing considers *Pratyakṣa* or *Dṛṣṭam* (direct sense perception), *Anumāna* (inference), and *Śabda* or *Āptavacana* (verbal testimony of the sages or shāstras) to be the valid means of knowledge or *pramana* (see Larson, 1998; Radhakrishnan, 1980). Thus, arising from actual PAR experiences, the philosophical assumptions within *yogic* transcendence provide yogic episteme (i.e *pratyaksa*, *anuman*, and *sabda*) to look for the essential nature (the *pramanicdharma*) of beings and non-beings. In this yogic

journey of 'moving homewards' (Awasti, 2004), and soul searching (Etim, 2019), the study often makes a short pause, and asks-

How can I acquire that which I already *am* (Whicher, 1998)?

What essential value do I hold?

What essential value does this place hold?

What essential value does he, she, it, they hold?

Participatory Imminent

Along with Metamodern consciousness and *yogic* transcendence, also the participatory-imminent informs this study. Participatory circle reshapes and emphasizes holism in ecological ways of seeing the phenomenon. Bainbridge and Del Negro (2020) understand such 'subjective-objective' ontology (see Heron & Reason, 1997) of participatory imminent as a shift from anthropocentric 'ego' to non-anthropocentric 'eco'.

The continuous growth and development of civilizations have observed that the nature of evolution is transcendence. This path of transcendence needs a new perspective on the cosmos (Kelley, 2010; Macy & Johnson, 2012). Matured from the experiences, these participatory perspectives are optimistic, where with collaborative awareness, and extended epistemology (Heron & Reason, 1997), the perspectives widen with an increased ability to value practical knowledge in the service of human flourishing (Heron & Reason, 1997). It is from there, these participatory perspectives, through 'embodied foresight' (Floyd, 2012), make evocative visions for the future (see chapter eight). These anticipatory spectrums of possible futures (recoverability) are co-created by the participatory mind and given cosmos.

It is to this end, the participatory episteme of the ecological paradigm this study adopts is active, animated, and co-creative (Heron & Reason, 1997). It is

engaged, local, and planetary at the same time. It believes in the interconnection and intrinsic value of life, the value of diversity, harmony, and the wellbeing of future generations. Such posthumanist orientations of participatory imminent unsettle human-centeredness (Lewis & Owen, 2020) and suggest embodied (performance) philosophy as effective methods for investigating the study topics. It is from there, this study adopts methodologies of participation and action (Luitel & Taylor, 2019), which is the basic foundation of transformative practitioner research like PAR.

Section II: PAR as Transformative Practitioner Research

Also discussed in the prologue of this thesis, this study combines artful inquiry with empirical research (see Sweet, Nurminen, & Koro-Ljungberg, 2020). If the intersectional presence of participatory immanence and yogic transcendence seeks artful inquiry, the presence of PAR and its spiral of actions and reflections ensure the embeddedness of empirical research. After sharing with you the 'bigger' philosophical positioning of Metamodern ecological hermeneutics, now, I share with you the overall journeys and arrivals of this research-inquiry. For this, I begin with the idea of how I adopted PAR as transformative practitioner research, and how it journeyed with artful inquiry and empirical research through Metamodern ecological worldview and metaparadigm. As Hathaway (2017) eloquently puts it, "while there can be no simple recipe for cultivating ecological wisdom, a variety of learning frameworks and processes can provide insights that shed light on these questions" (p. 151). The Ecocomposition of the transformative learning framework is one among those. Moving together with the shifting worldviews, transformative learning and researching are open enough to live a new story. To this appreciation, among many tenants of transformative learning (e.g., Mezirow, 2005; Taylor, 1997), this study

adopts Thomas Berry's insistence to go beyond discursive-analytic modes of cognition and to reconnect to the wider ecological community through visions and dreams.

Now you may ask- What inspired you to bring Metamodern ecological Metaframe, transformative research design, and PAR all in a single holistic frame of this study?

Here, I narrate in brief.

As I discussed in Chapter One, this Ph.D. journey is a continuation of my earlier (MPhil) orientations on transformative education research at KUSOED (see Wagle, 2016). But it is also a remaking of my earlier meanings in a way that also appreciating modern essentialist ethos, reactionary but fragmented postmodern ethos, and all-inclusive integral ethos, which I had embraced during my MPhil research project, now I seek eco-spiritual, attuned envisioning, and planetary consciousness (as a frame of reference) to better understand the life-world. Burns (2015) sees such undertaking as fundamental for transformative research, which is but learning from quantum science, ecological systems, and indigenous wisdom; which possibly broaden our sense of self into the radical interdependence of ever-widening webs of phenomena. Macy and Brown's (1998) 'Work that reconnects' provides transformative ways-out to do this kind of research, where the research-aspirant emotionally connects to the ancestors, to the present, and to the future beings to facilitate the deep structural shift in meanings.

Such planetary views of transformative research go beyond the individual and addresses relational/ ecological issues in education (Luitel & Taylor, 2019; O'Sullivan, 1999). Thus, constructing and appropriating revised interpretations that guide ethically aware future actions in school education (Yob, 1995) are at the heart of my undertaking of PAR as an approach for transformative practitioner research.

But, it is not that I had entered the field with a vision to work with ecological PAR.

Initially, while in the study school and the community, our PAR team worked with

established traditions of participatory action research, particularly informed by

Reason and Bradbury (2008), Kemmis and McTaggart (2005), and Kemmis et al.

(2015). In the process, the more our PAR team developed familiarity with the place-

spirit of Dapcha, along with Hindu-Buddhist and ethnic wisdom traditions of the

community, the more we became familiar with transformative potentials of a material-

discursive ecocomposition (see O'Neil, 2018) of the place. There, still working with

established PAR models, we continuously emerged with context-informed PAR

approaches embedded in the land, the culture, the community, and their relationalities

(also see Williams, 2018). This continuous emergence with 'ethnoecology' (see

Barrera-Bassols & Toledo, 2005) of the place was beyond linear progression. Rather,

the journey moved through discursive ecology (and creative empowerment) of deep

transformative learning.

Further, the circular hermeneutics of PAR investigations enabled the PAR

team to situate ourselves in a particular cultural (and historical) tradition and allowed

us to see how we were "guided and constrained by our prejudices" (Agrey, 2014,

p.396). Such observations would enable us to be aware of our relationship with one

another, with nature, and culture (also see Nutton, Lucero & Ives, 2020). Now, while

making sense of the three-years long PAR project through 'ontologies of relationality'

(Lange, 2018), I am reflecting on those experiences (being there), and making

Metamodern ecological envisioning (being here). Unfolding with and enacting the

PAR was, therefore, my journeying from transformative educational research (Taylor,

Taylor &Luitel, 2012), where I emerged with practitioner research PAR, and re-

journeyed with adding ecological envisioning in it. The figure below shows my

methodological shifts within this research project:
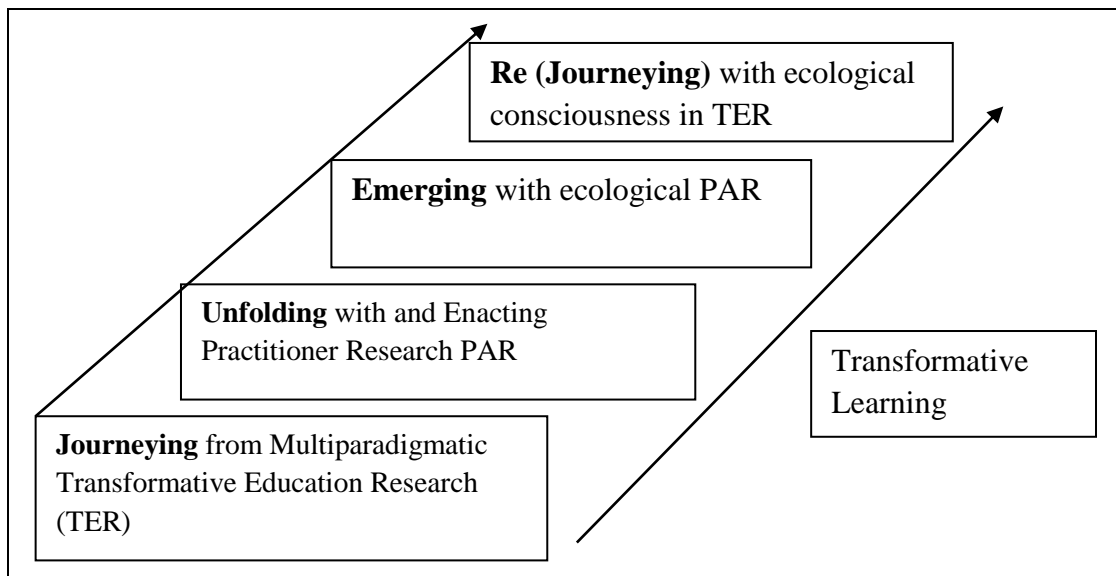
Figure 17 B: My methodological shifts in different stages of this research project

So, placed within the Metamodern ecological Metaframe, how did this study

inform and get informed through PAR? How did the study passed through, in-

between, and beyond the dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu of PAR?

How I continuously journeyed from multi-paradigmatic transformative educational

research, unfolded with practitioner research PAR, emerged with ecological PAR, and

(re)journeyed with ecological envisioning in transformative educational research?

Here is the story.

PAR Models of this Study: Researching Ecological Wisdom in Practice

PAR is an emergent approach, and therefore, not a rigidly fixed, mechanistic

sequence (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). It might be the reason that as the study

progressed, our PAR team developed two different and influential experiences with

PAR, one the organizational learning model arising from Global North, and second

the social justice and empowerment model arising from Global South. Informed from

the works of Argyris and Schon (1996) and Torres and Preskill (2001), the northern

hemispheric perspective of PAR forwarded us the beliefs and strategies for

transforming the practices of school as an organization. There, following the

suggestions from Hendry (1996), our PAR team of university researchers, school

teachers, and students worked through 'communities of practice'. This community of

practice included an interdisciplinary team of 'small learning communities' (Oxley,

2007) of university researchers, teachers, students, and community representatives.

The communities participated in identifying the improvement needs, worked with

potential solutions, and reflected on the outcomes.

Likewise, influenced particularly by Freire (1970), Foucault (1979), and

Habermas (1971), and thereupon the theoretical underpinnings from constructivism,

feminism, social justice, and critical theory, the southern hemispheric perspective of

PAR forwarded empowerment concerns at the social and political influences on

research-participants' social realities. This model of PAR enabled the team to work

with unjust and inequitable social and organizational conditions, where educators

could engage in school improvement activities more authentically and practically

(Miller &Pine, 1990, 2009). It was also supportive in challenging the power structures

in school organizations, where teachers from all levels could equally participate in

reflective dialogues and could change their perspectives. The space for unbounded

learning and sharing of experiences, in long run, was supportive for us to ensure a few

fundamentals of PAR like autonomy, empowerment, sustainability, and ownership.

Continuously journeying with those established models of PAR, this 'soul-

searching and re-searching' PAR project (Stern, 2015) began to embrace the open and

flexible principle of PAR, where though the PAR team passed 'through, with, and in-

between' the established model (maybe to preserve its academic requirements), many

of the actions and reflections emerged from the immediate context and moved beyond the dominant practice architecture. There began my search for (attuning and harmonizing) ecological wisdom in practice. In the language of Trickett and Beehler (2017), drawing on the interdependence principle of ecological systems, my way was the way to experiencing a wider sense of self, and to remain open to manifold unintended and unanticipated ecological ripples that would arise during the PAR process. In the long run, as suggested by Wood, McAteer, and Whitehead (2019), such ecological thinkings in PAR enabled me to appreciate the altered perception of time and space. Also, experiencing the place that reshapes ecological consciousness enabled me to emerge with *ethnoecology* (Barrera-Bassols & Toledo, 2005) of place-wisdom and lifeways, and to get free from intellectual colonization of the wisdom.

PAR Phases and Cycles of this Study: An Organic Approaches to Inquiry

Paradigmatically situated within ecological authenticities and relationalities, the PAR phases and cycles of this study passed through interdependent co-arising. The overall PAR project passed through four different phases. All four phases in the spiral sequence were of equal value. In the preparatory phase, we, the research-degree students, developed familiarity with PAR literature. We entered the study community and the school and began 'breaking' the communicative icebergs (see chapter one, and Chapter, five) (also see Ahmad, Gjøtterud & Krogh, 2016). A complex recursive process of the planning phase followed the preliminary phase, where informed through Participatory Needs Assessment, the PAR team identified seemingly a weaker sense of school teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming as improvement needs (see chapter five for the details). The planning phase moved to the action phase, where passing through three consecutive cycles of reflection, plan, action, and observation (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1998), the PAR team worked on

exploring manifold possibilities for a participatory and generative model of teaching
and learning for belonging, being, and becoming (see chapter six for the details).

The beginning and the end of each cycle were marked by three different
terminal exams of four months interval in one (year-long) academic session. Also,
each cycle underwent three different (PAR committee) meetings i.e., at the beginning,
the middle, and the concluding stages. We made four different debriefing sessions,
one each after the cycle, and the remaining one at the end of the study process. In
cycle 1, which ran from May to August 2018, through school gardening, the practice
community initiated participatory and generative models of emplaced pedagogies
within the milieu of dominant practice architectures of the school. It passed with some
excitement and discomfort (see chapter six for the details). Cycle 2 began in
September and ended in December 2018. Predominantly focused on digital media and
ICTs as integral to emplaced pedagogies, the cycle moved forward with the mess.
There, we experienced the mess arising from the dialectics between dominant practice
architecture and cultural expectations of the ongoing pedagogical models on the one
hand, and the transdisciplinary nature of innovative models on the other. Cycle 3
started in January and ended in April 2019. Particularly focused on identifying
emplaced learning arenas, the cycle emerged beyond the mess, where some of the
basics of innovative models were accepted, and therefore continued. Many others
were rejected by the school and the teachers' community.

In each cycle, in the reflecting stage, we reviewed current practices and
identified areas for improvement. In the plan- stage, we explored possible solutions
for the improvement needs and created an improvement plan. In the act phase that
followed, first, we communicated the plan to all stakeholders and thereafter worked
on planned activities. Following it, in the observe stage (which we called the

debriefing session), we observed the effectiveness of the improvement plan and activities and updated our observations to the stakeholders, and collected their feedback. The process continued for three different cycles. Continuously looking ahead for organic approaches to inquiry, the study, however, was not an ecologically detached linearity. Rather, in exploring embodied ways to live well, the study continuously turned to ecological wisdom. Our attuning with contextual ecologies enabled us to naturally flow into PAR action-reflections, foster resilience, develop alternatives, and act from that place. Relating the process to transformative learning, Hathaway (2018) observes this attuning to ecological wisdom as mutuality and reciprocity in transformation.

My Role as a Researcher, Researcher-Participant

As a Ph.D. research-degree student, I had to mediate my dual identities between an academic researcher and the practitioner. This awareness of my role as mediator was vital to establish a transparent relationship with my participants. Also, this awareness enabled me to remain authentic in my position and role in the research (Heen, 2005). Beginning from the preliminary to the evaluation phase of the PAR project, my role was that of an initiator, facilitator, and active observer.

In the study field, I was both an insider and an outsider. I was an insider in a way that I grew up, and therefore, was familiar with hilly landscapes and the rural lifeworld of Nepal. This inside knowledge of the rural lifeworld enabled me to share membership with the community of participants (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). I was also an outsider in a way that I belonged to the University, and that I was not familiar with Dapchalicommunity settings and the schooling culture. Therefore, throughout the field days, I was cautious enough to mediate my "personal biases and perspectives" (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 59), which could arise from my dual identities as an

insider and an outsider. The way I continuously reflected on the process and the

progress of the project activities enabled me to act my evolving role within it. Now at

this stage of preparing this study report, I have eloquently asked the question to

myself- What actually was my *researcher-dharma*? Did I live it? How did I handle

the personal biases and prejudice that I might have cultivated as *Hindu-Brahmin*,

male? Whenever I would encounter this dilemma, I would position myself within

ecological relationalities, authenticities, and ethical responsibilities and act with the

C/Artographies i.e., the artful mapping of relational positionalities.
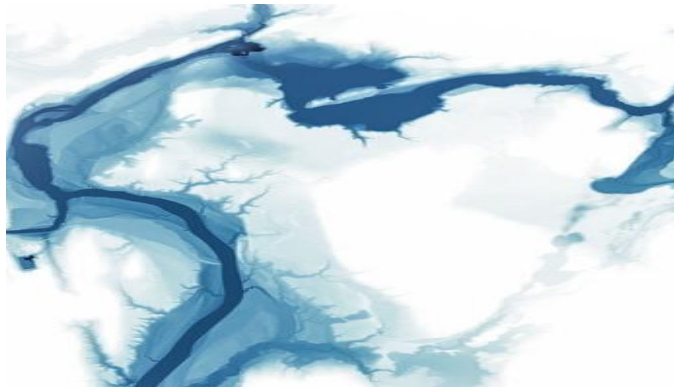
Figure 18: C/Artographies of relational positionality (ies)

(Source: https://www.joemaps.com)

While drawing insights from relational approaches, C/Artographies would

enable me to open space for multiple levels of discussions and reflections, and to map

multiple interests and positionalities (see Anon, 2019). It primarily centered on

mapping the lifeworld of the participants on multiple levels and on mapping

researchers' own transformative changes in the web of ethnoecological relationalities.

Participants, Participant-Researchers, Co-Researchers

In this PAR project, all 17 basic level teachers (4 female and 13 male teachers)

and the headteacher in Janahit School were the members of PAR 'community of

practice'. They were the primary group of participants, which we called the

participant-researchers or the co-researchers. But, the inclusion was not fixed. It was

open. All those involved and affected, including high school teachers, community members, and local authorities could also speak and act (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). On the other, it was not necessarily important that all basic level teachers (our primary co-researchers) make active participation. In our case, as the studies unfolded, some basic level teachers showed low commitment in the project activities, whereas some high school teachers (who were not the primary co-researchers) showed increased commitments. The experiences and the reflections of basic level students on their educational needs were of equal importance for us. But we couldn't include all the students in our community of practice. As the project developed, teachers suggested making a small learning circle of 16 students, two student representatives from each class starting from class 1 to 8. In all three cycles, I had 3 different group meetings with a group of student representatives. Though their inputs were of higher value in each PAR cycle, they were not the co-researchers.

During participatory needs assessment and in between the cycles, our team of university researchers was in regular interactions with the SMC and the PTA chairs, and the members. Also, we were in regular interactions with parents and local authorities. The C/Artographic mapping of the interactions involved in (and with) the ecological community informed the project in understanding the context through mutuality and reciprocity in transformation. In other words, enabling the communities to be open and responsive to the wisdom of place (Hathaway, 2018), it facilitated re-inhabitation, which was but a process of homecoming.

The School

Shree Janahit Secondary School is a community school with a long history. Established in 2017 BS, the school is located in Dapcha, Dharmashala. Though it is a municipality (Namobuddha-7), the school is in a rural setting. Despite remarkable past records, the student number was decreasing every year. For example, the number of students that had crossed four hundred a few years back had decreased to 198 as recorded in the academic year 2017/18. In our initial interactions with the parents and community members, we observed that the school had begun to lose community trust as it was in the past. Therefore, despite poverty, parents were taking their children to private schools. The community mapping below shows the school, the community, and the school catchment area.
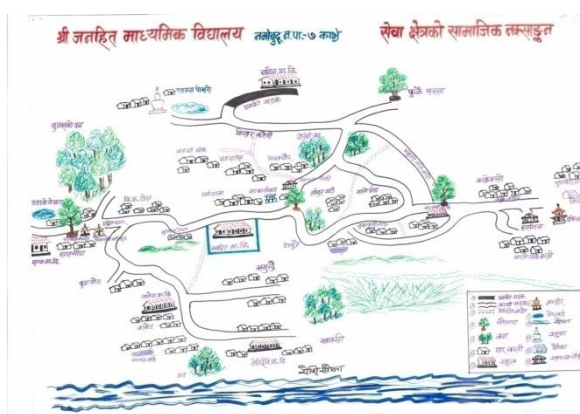
Figure19: School, community, and school catchment area

The Headteacher and the Teachers

When we first entered the school on August 6, 2017, there was a male headteacher (age around 40). During school selection days, we made many of the initial interactions with him. A few months later, a lady headteacher (age around 30) replaced him. Therefore, beginning from needs assessment to activity cycles and activities evaluation, we worked with her as the headteacher of the school. We would feel comfortable interacting and working with her. But, as she herself was not from

that community, we could see that she was having difficulties with managing

everyday school rituals and community expectations.

Among 17 teachers, there were 4 female teachers and many of them were from

the same (and nearby) communities. A few teachers were themselves active in

seasonal agriculture in their own land. The school had assigned teachers the subject

routines, and therefore, many of the teachers would identify themselves with the

subject they taught. As there were no clear markings between basic and secondary

level teachers, we included all teachers in the PAR community of practice.

The Students

When we first entered the school, there were a total of 198 students, and there

was minimum students' number up to grade 5. The students came mainly from

economically underprivileged families. I would interact with the students both outside

and inside the classroom. Many of the students would view their students' role as to

be regular in the class, hear from the teachers, and pass the exam. In many cases, girl-

students were seemingly more active and enthusiastic than their male counterparts.

The SMC and the PTA

In Nepal, SMCs, led by locally elected chairperson supports internal

management. Likewise, PTAs support the day-to-day functioning of the school. We

were in regular communication with the SMC and PTA chairs from the first day of

our school visit. Though they were particularly interested in developing the physical

infrastructures of the school, we observed that they were seemingly less interested in

pedagogical innovations and improvements.

The Parents

Many of the parents were from agriculture and small-scale business

background. In the initial days of our school visit, we observed very low involvement

of parents in school activities. They would rarely visit the school to talk with teachers about their son's and daughters' school performance. Also, many of the parents were illiterate, and therefore, couldn't support their sons and daughters in their studies.

The Community Advisory Committee

After the participatory needs assessment of the school, with the support of school teachers, we formed the community advisory committee, which we supposed would manage the delicate matter of advice-giving (Davidson & Edwards-Groves, 2020). It included community members representing different professional backgrounds, and community voices. The committee was open to anyone interested. Every after one PAR cycle, we would share the experience in the committee meeting, and collect their feedback.

At school, we formed teachers' community of practice (Hendry, 1996; Kindon & Kesby, 2010). The formation of the community created a space through which all involved in the PAR process could collaborate for more authentic action and reflection through a series of formal and informal discussions. Our forming of the PAR community of practice, however, was not an entirely new practice. Teachers were habituated with staff meetings where they could discuss everyday school activities and routines. It was a little different from ordinary school meetings in a way that rather than discussing on continuing everyday school activities, the community would sit and discuss together for some improvement propose. Also, we formed a university advisory committee, which included faculties interested in PAR activities. We would meet every Wednesday and would discuss and reflect on ongoing PAR activities.

Research supervisors

Unlike other academic research, the role of the research supervisor was more engaging in the field. We worked together with the research supervisors beginning from the school selection. Research supervisor from KUSOED, and sometimes together with research supervisors from NMBU made frequent visits to the school. The visits would give directions to the PAR activities and would add the researchers' and co-researchers' enthusiasm.

Reflection, Collaborative Practice, and Praxis

Reflection, collaborative practice, and praxis (see Edwards-Groves & Kemmis, 2016) were at the heart of our transformative ecological co-enactment and emergence. Collective practice informed through reflection (Pine, 2009) enabled us to enrich self (and collective) awareness of the process and reshape ideas in action. Our reflection process included three different ways i.e., reflection-for-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action (Pine, 2009; Schon, 1987). Reflection-for-action took place before an action, often while planning an activities plan. Reflection-in-action would integrate within research activities, and guide spontaneous actions. Likewise, we would make reflection-on-action after the activities cycle ends.

Figure 20: Collaborative praxis

(Source: https://www.agrilinks.org)

The process was, in a way, parallel to Pine's (2009) three-tiered approach to reflection i.e., the mirror, the microscope, and the binoculars. The 'mirror' image allowed for intrapersonal reflection, where each participant would study his/her own beliefs and assumptions. The 'microscope' image allowed for interpersonal reflection, where participants would interact in groups, and study group beliefs and assumptions. Likewise, the 'binoculars' image allowed me to engage in global (ecological) reflection. Here the participants would consider their work in a wider ethical context.

The subjective meaning of change was at the heart of our changing perspectives and practices (Fullan, 2007). Thus, when the collaborative ideas were embodied and enacted, our practice readily took the form of praxis i.e., theory-informed practice (Macdonald, 2002). Such praxis, informed from reflection and action, was of higher value for embodying participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies within, with, and beyond the dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu of the school and the community. In Aristotelian philosophy, maybe our way of praxis was also the *phronesis*, which was the informed way of acting wisely (Kemmis & Smith, 2008). In short, the reflection, collaborative practice, and praxis as such were integral to our ecological PAR process, through which researchers and the co-researchers enacted, embodied, and realized their beliefs and assumptions through a cyclical process of co-creative learning.

Multi-Methods and Epistemic Pluralism: Knowing the Complex System

In this ecological PAR project, our study team made maximum focus on exploring possibilities for place informed active pedagogies; and therefore, to bring this place-spirit (Anderson and Jones, 2009) was of higher importance for us. Together with socio-economic and political context, we had to look for ecological worldviews that shape the memories, aspirations, and dreams of the community and

of the school located in that community. It was the reason that while bringing field-evidences, our attrition was more on generating embodied mind-body relationships (Howes, 2005). Such exercising would enable us to develop awareness on how teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming was an integrated form of the body, mind, emotion, and social practices of the place. In the process, our PAR team actively engaged in exploring both the concrete and the abstract aspects of the place. The abstract aspects of the place included dreams, imagination, memory, and feelings. They enabled us to evoke the inner processes of the place.

Often, the linguistic limitations in representing embodied experiences would drive us to additional methods, from where we would look the ways beyond conventional linguistic representation (Anderson & Jones, 2009). Thus, when needed, the study has taken considerable supports from visual arts and movements. Together, we collected embodied experiences and sensational movements of the place (Kullman, 2010) through visual arts and theatre performances. The table below shows our overall use of a broader (multi) spectrum of evidence generating methods, which included interviews, walks, discussions, video, and photography. It is to this end, if methods imply linear ways and abstract recipes (Najmanovich, 2007), then our manifold ways to polyphonic relationalities of multiple logics are the approaches than methods.

Table 2

The overall use of a Broader (Multi) Spectrum of Evidence

Methods	Contribution to the study
Teachers' and students' workshop	The interactions in teachers' and students' workshops were supportive in collecting reach information on participants'

	observation, reflection, and feedback related to pedagogical uses, which were vital to continuing PAR phases and cycles. We conducted 8 different teachers' workshops and 3 different students' workshops in total. (See Chapters five and six for the details.)
Narrative (Auto)biography Memories and Dream Data	Various forms of narratives allowed for reflective attentiveness to lived experiences. Also, the narratives and auto (biographies) including personal experiences and oral stories enabled us to understand the ways how individuals and groups construct reality (Bird, 2002). It enabled us to make temporal and spatial meanings of participants' lifeworld, their memories, and their dreams. (See chapters four, five, and six for the details.)
Textual/ Document analysis	The documents, texts, and archival contents, particularly the photographs and the historical accounts of the place and the school, adding in them the collaborative reading of maps, policy documents, school textbooks, and curriculum documents enabled us to gain familiarity with place historicity and pedagogical culture of the school. (See chapters three, four, five, and six for the details).
Focus Groups/ Sharing Circles	The focus group and sharing circles enabled us to identify school improvement needs and plan accordingly. The sharing circles of teachers' community of practice, particularly at the beginning and the end of every cycle were of use for sharing experiences and collecting feedback. (See chapters five, six,

and seven for the details)

Community mapping and mental maps	The collaborative drawing of physical geographies and their human meanings enabled us to be aware of the school's experiential involvement with the human landscapes (see community map in p. 50). Likewise, the mental map enabled us to internalize embodied interpretation of the space and place within individual and collective level experiences (Futch & Fine, 2014).
Drawing and Visual art	In the third cycle, we organized a drawing and visual art program. The drawings made by local artists, teachers, and students embodied curricular images of the place (see chapter six, cycle 3)
Talk, conversation and interviews	The informal talks and conversations allowed us to look for spontaneous reactions and contradictions. Interviews with teachers, headteachers, and the SMC chair in the planning phase informed participants' interpretations of events. (See chapter five for the details)
Photovoice and photographs	Photographs enabled us to record and reflect on the human landscape, and the school activities. In cycle 3 we distributed cameras to the students' group and asked them to capture photographs on various themes related to their place. Students recorded, and thereafter reflected on their interests and concerns.

Video/ Digital storytelling	Particularly in the second cycle, the teachers made visual and digital storytelling on their experiences with ICT uses. It exposed different facets of temporality and the sociality of lived experiences. (See chapter 6, cycle 2)
Walking interviews/ Go Alongs	We went to 'the field' or the community to undertake participant observation. It was the embodied, participatory, and spontaneous modes of responsiveness and communicability
Theatre performance	One of our strategies to engage students in interactions was through role-playing. Such role-playing enabled us to come with an embodied expression of the experiences, perceptions, memories, and dreams. (See chapter five for the details)
Spoken words and music	We participated in various fares, cultural performances, and festivals in the community. The spoken words and music also enabled us to be aware of place spirit and community consciousness. (See chapter four for the details)
Social media & web-based	The official websites from the municipality, the Facebook page of the school, and some individual Facebook contents were also the sources of information

Together with these multi-methods/approaches of generating evidence, I kept a field journal throughout the academic year. There, I made notes on key incidences and experiences. Also, I continuously wrote my reactions to those experiences on what was seen and heard. The journal entries provided me a reflexive account of the

research process. Of all, the reflective journal was equally supportive of continuous reflections for-on-and-of the PAR activities.

Meaning-Making through Ecological Representation of the Text

Reflections and meaning-making began from the very start of the project. It continued from the initial phase of the field days and passed through a long process of reflexive performances. The initiation enabled me to come with increased reflexivity and rich descriptive writing. So, what did I do? First, I collected all the field evidence. Arriving at the stage of thesis writing, I had already transcribed and translated the recordings from the needs assessment. Likewise, I had made reflective notes every after a cycle ended. I collected those previously transcribed and translated notes. Also, I collected notes on discussions, conversations, shared stories, textual documents, photographs, and maps. Thereafter, I arranged the manifold evidence into a series of major movements and turns (the time frames) of the PAR project. The process allowed me to be aware of various shifts and changes over time.

I read and re-read the texts and digitally (in MS Word) prepared the analytical memos. Also, I began uncovering descriptive codes like displacement, belonging, being, becoming, autonomy, empowerment, sustainability, ownership, resistance, and mess to name a few. Thereafter, I developed themes from two broader categories of the evidence (1) the evidence from the place, the community, and the human landscapes (see chapters three and four) and (2) the evidence from the pedagogical experiences of the school (see chapters five, six, and seven). Once the themes were developed, I made a detailed, often reflective, and performative description of the events (see chapters three, four, five, six, and seven). Thereafter, I made sense of the experiences about the dominant practice architecture of the school, the cultural milieu

of the community, and the place *dharma* (see chapter seven). The overall process of ecocomposition allowed me to move through reflexivity.

To capture the subjectivities of the seemingly messy and fragile place (and organizational) experiences and to represent them in the research report was not an easy process. I responded to the ecocomposition through reflexivity, both shaping and being shaped by the immediate phenomenon (Lather, 2013). Also, in performing the interactions, my reflexive meaning-making was largely performative rather than linguistic descriptions (Jensen, 2010). Through these performative approaches, I considered the 'what elseness' and looked beyond the linguistic standards (Jeffrey, 2011). The reflexive space may enable readers with different experiential and philosophical positions to construct their own interpretations of the ecological circle.

Also, informed particularly through the ecological hermeneutics of the Metamodern reflectivity and the Hindu-Buddhist ecological worldviews, the meaning-making of this study mediates and performs between (1) 'being here' and 'being there' relational rhetoric, (2) autoethnographic excavation, (3) impressionistic and confessional writing, and (4) the collage of evocative arts, multi-genre, and multi logics. In my role as a practitioner-researcher, my act of reflexivity concerning the field issues and my experiential (and philosophical) positions were an integral part of the interpretation. The meanings of the study, thus, were generated from-and-within the hermeneutics of ecological relationality and complexity. Hampson (2007) calls this complexity, the hermeneutic helix, which is but a complex weaving between the whole and its parts.

Being Here' and 'Being There' Hermeneutics

In reference to modern psychology, 'Being here' is my present moment, here-now, in what immediate state I am writing this study report. Here, my writing (as

inquiry) has itself been an art of consciousness building. 'Being there', on the other, is my returning to every memory and experience I accumulated during PAR activity cycles around 2017-2019. Thus, 'living with consciousnesses'- a focused mediation between 'being here' and 'being there', seems to be an overall meaning-making (reflexive) performance of this study.

A conscious mediation between being here and being there is also a 'self process'. Following the suggestion of Damasio (2010), the meaning-making in this study considers the self process from two vantage points. The first is the vantage point (being there) of an observer appreciating a dynamic object, certain traits of behavior, and history in the study field, *kshetra.* The other vantage point (being here) is that of the 'self as knower', *kshetragyan*. This 'being here' is also the process, here-now, which gives a focus to our ground-of-being experience 'there' in the study field (Morgan, 2012), which eventually let me reflect on those experiences.

Thus, the meaning-making of this study, this 'being here-being there' mediation corresponds to two stages of the evolutionary development of the self. This 'self' is the 'self as knower'- here-now. Its origin is in the self as an object, which I had experienced 'there' during PAR cycles and activities. But there is no dichotomy between this 'being here' self as knower and 'being there' self as an object. There is rather a continuity and progression. The self as a knower, *kshetragyan,* is grounded on the self as an object, *kshetra* (Damasio, 2010), and arising from there, it unfolds, enacts, and transcends. Also, in reference to Vedic philosophy 'Being here' is the individual self 's' engaged in *Dharma-Karma* of a kind in this world of phenomenon. Being there is the universal Self 'S'. 'S' is identical to the essential 's' of all human beings. But human beings don't realize this complex relationality and embeddedness (Radhakrishnan, 1980) because of their worldly *Sanskara*, distractions, and

prejudices, arising from over-attachment (Rao, 2005) to human-made dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu. Under such circumstances, my undertaking of 'Research as living-Dharma" also mediates being here 's' (*bisesh dharma)* and being there 'S' (*Sanatan dharma*). It is by developing inner spiritual nature, the wisdom, I reflect on PAR experiences with constructive consciousness. Doing so, the meaning-making has sought freedom from all 'prejudicial limitations', and yet walking the path of 'Researcher's Dharma', it has tried not to compromise the integrity of the self.

Autoethnographic Excavation of a Thoughtful-Emotional Fieldworker

The transformative design space under the ecological paradigm enabled me to embrace ecocomposition, the nonrealistic style of ethnography (Van Maanen, 1995), from where I shaped the meaning-making of the study topic through autoethnographic excavation. Here, as a researcher, my subject of research has been fieldwork itself, and therefore, emerged through the multilayered voices of the 'participants', I passionately textualized my own ecology of critical self-reflection. As Ellis (1997) argues, such emotional introspections enabled me to get in touch with ambiguities and contradictions, which Morgan (2012) refers to as 'ground-of-being' realization.

Figure 21: Self-reflexive excavation

(Source: https://socialpolicyblog.com)

This autoethnographic excavation (of me, a thoughtful emotional fieldworker), through the dialectical interplay of my embodied lifeworld and the lifeworld of others,

continuously emerged with a critical reflexive understanding of the place, Dapcha Dharmashala. Also, it emerged with the relational ecologies of place pedagogies in the Janahit School. I represented the excavations through impressionistic and confessional writing (Thompson & Howard, 1988), which I have discussed in a separating heading below-

Impressionistic and Confessional Writing

In participatory (realist) epistemology as such, there is always a risk that self-absorption in autoethnographic excavation undermines the truthful portrayal of participants' voices and their lifeworld. Showing ways to minimize the risk, Guba and Lincoln's (1989) fourth-generation evaluation cultivates possibilities for the evocation of cultural archetypes from the researcher's collective unconscious. Artfully fabricating and piecing together the impressionistic vignettes (Bright, 2018), the authentic lure of evocations have been a moral project *(*Marvasti & Faircloth, 2002) to serve a useful purpose for the intended reader. Also, in conveying readers an authentic sense of their own cultural-situatedness through colorful means of portraying the complex interplay of reason and emotion (Van Maanen, 1998), I have justified the self-absorbed meaning-making of this study.

Place inquiry in this ecocomposition needed passionate exploration and representation of place spirits. It is, therefore, unlike 'Atma-free' texts (Luitel, 2018) in narrowly expressed deductive logic and syllogisms, I adopted 'Atma laden' evocative arts for meaning-making. The impressions, which are but the intersections between the scholarly and personal (Prendergast, 2009), are expressed through dialogues, narratives, poems, and metaphors. The aesthetic value of reflexive performance has added a balance between chaos and order, and therefore, ensured verisimilitude as fundamental to knowledge creation. This transgressive metaphor of

'impressionistic writing as inquiry' (Luitel& Taylor, 2019) is not merely theoretical, but 'extra rational'. As this 'extra rational' wisdom was beyond the reach of standard linguistic norms, this study developed the impersonal outlook by resorting to the ecologies of 'either this or that', and 'neither this nor that'. The impressionistic and confessional writing has been the best means to strengthen pedagogical thoughtfulness in the textual canvas, where at many junctures; I invite readers to reflect on how the stories presented in the textual canvas portray their own being in the world.

The collage of Evocative Arts, Multi-genre, and Multi-logics

This transformative ecology of being in the complex relational world makes a textual collage of evocative arts, multi-genre, and multi-logics. Unlike the logo-centric view of the world, where the order is pre-given, the textual collage makes visible the mythos-centric views (see Lahman, 2020). The mythos-centric view as such is also the world of Leela, which is but the playful reconstruction of the order from the chaos.

Figure 22: Collage of evocative arts

(Source: http://www.tsherinsherpa.com)

Often, the use of metaphorical logics, poetic logics, narrative logics, ironical logics, and mythical logics go beyond literalism. Working as a/r/tographers, the art-making within the inquiry, thus, has become a rigorous articulation process to evoke multi-schema thinking. The thinkings are often discursive, fictive, and fuzzy, which in a way or other, portrays the ecological order and chaos as they are (2015). Informed

through such relationally symbolic (ecological) domains, the logics reveal visible and invisible cultural complexities. Also, the collage of evocative arts, strengthened through reflexive performance, has offered a temporary release from the (illusionary) apparent world. Adding 'form and content cohesiveness' this postformal ecological sense-making, thus, is tentatively fabricated and transformative (Holbrook & Pourchier, 2014). It is beyond dualism, is inclusive, and is wisdom oriented.

Ensuring Quality in the Process

As suggested above, this inquiry aims to explore the ways to bring 'life to school and school to life' attuned to place pedagogies, eco-spiritual cosmologies, and cultural stories. It is not to identify a single, neat, and linearly static truth or universal pattern of 'being in the world'. Instead, it is to illuminate the ecological uniqueness of human experiences. Therefore, the quality of this study is to be understood largely from the ecological relationality of life, which considers ethical responsibilities, reflexivity, humility, authenticity, and dignity. From there arises the researcher's accountability and the study's meaningfulness. In the language of Heron (2006)-

> There is a whole range of procedures for looking into the soundness of the inquiry processes. They include the balance between divergence and convergence in research cycling; authentic collaboration; challenging consensus collision; managing distress; balancing reflection and action; and attending to the dynamic between chaos and order. (p. 21)

As Heron stressed, the meaningful coherence is established by employing Ecological Metaparadigm, muti-methods, and 'being here/being there' impressionistic reflexivity that corresponds with the goals of the study. Elaborating it further, here, I begin explaining the quality considerations of this study by explaining how I ensured catalytic validity. Thereafter, I discuss how I considered the Metamodern ecology of

authenticity, sincerity, and maturity aimed at transformative activisms. Also, it discusses, in brief, the rich rigor and trustworthiness, which were but additional quality issues of this study endeavor.

Catalic Validity: Towards Awe-inspiring and Transcendent Legitimacy

The continuous striving for balance in 'academic requirements' and 'researcher *dharma*' ensures the quality of this study. From there arises, catalytic validity. According to Lather (1991), catalytic validity represents the degree of process engagements that enable the practitioner-researcher and the research participants to co-construct meaning and enact it. Continuous striving for catalytic validity has ensured the legitimacy of this research-inquiry. The study believes that legitimacy is more an authentic endeavor. The authenticity comes not from passive obedience to the prescriptions in dominant practice design. Instead, it continuously emerges from openness to the possibilities (Davies, 2014). Ensuring the legitimacy as such, the study though doesn't leave the entire ground of dominant practice architecture in education and research, it continuously moves inwards to the place essential, and often challenges the prescribed rules, advocating the transformative activism.

The Sublime Move from Being Sensible to Believable

Authenticity, sincerity, and maturity have been the defining quality standards in the postqualitative futures of Metamodern ecology. It needs detailed excavations of perspectives and subjectivities. In including my own perspectives and subjectivity, I have been transparent about my own beliefs and assumptions with enough focus on openness and responsibility (Tesar, 2021). Often, the interactive dialogues with research participants and the shared reflections of the reflexive performances have emerged as reflexive praxes (Sandelowski, 1986), which according to Stronach et al.

(2013) is an inescapably a qualitative symbolon. In the process, I have established the credibility of the shared reflexive praxes by narrating in detail the mutual influence among the researcher and the co-researchers. Also, in evoking ecological consciousness, meaning-making has established a transversal bonding between the mind-body and the nature-culture continuum (Braidotti, 2019). It has been particularly supportive for unsettling human-centeredness (Lewis & Owen, 2020) and for investigating discursive ecological terrains. Also, like Hughes, Bridges-Rhoads, and Cleave (2018) suggested, the study has made and remade the inquiry field and has ensured transformative activism through the continuous raising of questions rather than finding answers. To this end, though trustworthiness, as used by Guba and Lincoln (1989) is the dominant quality standard of this study, it equally considers that the ecocomposition of the written texts are not only sensible but also believable and life-like.

From Self-Absorption to Communal Immersion

In making the texts believable and lifelike through but not limited to autoethnographic subjective impressions, the study has been cautious enough that the self-absorbed self and emotional introspections do not lose communal sights of participatory action and reflections. For this, as Ellis (1997, 2004) suggested, I was always (but critically) open to manifold (subjective) contradictions and ambiguities. It was evident that many of the contradictions and ambiguities were usually invisible for empirical observers (also see Kincheloe, 2005, 2006). Therefore, from this 'knowing as critical self-reflection' (Brookfield, 1994), I have addressed the limitations, and have conveyed to readers an authentic sense of cultural situatedness (see McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007). The self-absorbed field reflections of the researcher and co-

researchers, when served as a means to evocate cultural archetypes, it possibly made a communal immersion.

'With', 'In-Between', and Beyond Narcissism

In qualitative research, particularly in autoethnographic excavations of the texts, there is a risk that the impressions of the researcher are self-centered (Spry, 2001, 2006, 2009; Ellis, 2004). This is the case with narcissism. In 1923, Martin Buber published an essay *Ich und Du* (I and Thou). There, the author pointed out that self-absorbed researcher's narcissism often leads the researcher to relate to others as objects instead of as equals. Narcissism may generate *Egoistic vanity*, which is the self-reflective researcher's inability to differentiate perspectives other than one's own. Also, when narcissists' views undermine the communion domain, the views tend to be exaggerated. Buber (1923) calls it *vulnerable narcissism,* where the narcissist engages in narcissistic defenses (which are seemingly rigid and totalistic), and denying the limitations, tries to preserve the idealized aspects of the self.

In the case of this study, making a constructively doubtful look at the phenomenon, and also becoming self-critical, I have tried my best to free this autoethnographic impression from being a vulnerable narcissist. Engaged together in plan, actions, and reflections, and incorporating co-researchers' reflective observations in four different debriefing sessions, I have shown trust, and therefore, recognized the actions and reflections of my research participants (the co-researchers). The dominant PAR literature suggests such trust and recognition as integral to PAR (see Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Kemmis et al., 2015).

But, also moving beyond the suggestions, I have continuously shown some doubts on collective actions and reflections. The constructive doubtfulness as such has enabled this research-inquiry to avoid *collective narcissism* (see Golec de Zavala,

2011). Collective narcissism is the tendency in collaborative works and communal thinking, where the 'in group' subconsciously exaggerates positive image, cultural values, and prejudicial importance of the group. Thus, such awareness against collective narcissism has enabled this research-inquiry to avoid vulnerable narcissism, and instead, appreciate *healthy narcissism*. In the language of Solan (1999), healthy narcissism, sometimes, is essential for strong self-regard, self-respect, self-love, and the greater good. In admiring the place realities, and ecological aesthetics, maybe healthy narcissism (unlike national/ collective/ and vulnerable narcissism) has enriched this 'home going' and 'soul searching' journey with 'in-between and the beyond' ability to doubt, to trust, to admire, and to be admired all at the same time.

The Sublime of Empathy, Assertiveness, and Humility

In Buddhism, humility, compassion, and wisdom are intrinsic parts of 'being in the world' (see Maxwell, 2003; Khisty, 2006). Also in Sanskrit literature, humility comes together with the term *neti* (नति), which connotes 'no me' (see Swami & Yeats, 2005; Radhakrishnan, 1980). Bringing the concept of humility into light, Bhagavad Gita has forwarded the concept of *Amanitvam*. This is a fusion word for pridelessness and humble behavior. Also in Taoism, humility is a refusal to assert authority over others (Laozi, 2001). In this appreciation, to free the study from self-absorbed egoistic vanity, selfless emotions as empathy, assertiveness, and humility have been the essential quality tools. My repeated use of nonconformist words (like 'seemingly', 'maybe', 'possibly', 'perhaps') has, to some extent, ensured the virtues. The virtues have enabled this research-inquiry to appreciate 'self' concerning the 'other' and to avoid vulnerable narcissism. Often while being engaged in PAR actions and reflections, and in debriefing sessions, experiencing another person from within his/her frame of reference was eminent. While making reflective meaning of the

phenomenon, gratitude, thankfulness, and gratefulness towards co-researchers (but with constructively doubtful gaze) shaped this study. Maybe this quality of being humble (see White, 1999), which is but neither having pride nor indulging in self-deprecation, has secured the quality of this study.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations in this study arise from the idea of 'righteousness' in action, which is of two kinds: special ethical considerations arising from professional righteousness, and general ethical considerations arising from planetary righteousness (Radhakrishnan, 1980). In the language of the *Vedanta*, the two-fold ethical values are (1) *bisesh dharma*, which is 'what's right in my profession, here-now, and (2) *sadharan dharma,* which is 'what's right for larger humanity, beyond time and space. Thinking ecologically, the two-fold ethical values are similar to Brydon-Miller and Coghlan's (2019) first-, second-, and third-person values-based ethics, which are but the personal resonance, mutual regard, and social responsibility. Informed from the ecological thinking as such, the ethical considerations of this study are shortly discussed below-

Special Ethical Considerations

We gained permission from the research committee of the Kathmandu University School of Education for conducting this study. As I already discussed in Chapter one, on August 6, 2017, we, the Ph.D. research-degree students visited Janahit School along with the research supervisor. There, we shared the objectives of the *Rupantaran* Project with the school family and gained an invitation. On the first day of a four-day participatory workshop, we took informed consent from participants. Doing so, we ensured our respect for the autonomy, and freedom of our research-participants (Chevalier & Buckles, 2019). The information letter informed

the project. Also, it negotiated the participants' rights to anonymity and confidentiality. We gained consent to make video and audio recordings. Before this, we had explained to the teachers and the headteacher that we would use the records in writing our thesis. The headteacher and the teachers gave us consent to directly identify the school, the teachers, and the headteacher. We also took the student's consent to take their audio and visual recordings.

As this study is about the place phenomenon in school education, and as the culturally established name of the place carries emotional historicities of manifold dreams, memories, and aspirations (where the use of pseudonyms may distort the meaning), I have used the exact name of the places. Vizenor, Tuck, and Yang (2014) suggest place-researchers' to find ways to achieve 'survivance', a native sense of presence. Therefore, my use of the exact name of the place and the school is justifiable in a way that the use may allow the texts to co-mingle with original (and multiple) memories. Doing so, it may allow for surveillance, the native sense of place.

General Ethical Considerations

The planetary ethical considerations of this study arise from the idea of separating humanity from the source of suffering. If suffering arises from Av*iveka,* an inability to discriminate what is essential and non-essential (Radhakrishna, 1980), then the end of suffering arises from the realization of true nature. Therefore, the ethical 'rightness' of this study is not in accepting the apparent 'practice architecture' (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) of school education and research as something 'right', 'good', and 'beautiful', but looking for the true nature, the essential. Also, the ethical rightness of this study is not from the development of something new, but a re-discovery of what is forgotten, and what is next from there. It needed more-than-

human performativity (de Freitas, E. (2017), which sometimes had to go beyond rationalist acquisition of knowledge (La Jevic & Springgay, 2008). In these ethical concerns, the study established the' being-with' relationship between embodiment and ethics through A/r/tographical networks of relations.

Ethics of Care and Altruism

This study, thus, has appreciated general ethical considerations as ethics of care and altruism. Appreciating place realities as the realities arising from interdependence and interpersonal relationships (Hathaway, 2018), the virtue of care and benevolence has shaped the decisions. Throughout the PAR process (and particularly in the debriefing sessions every after a cycle, and at the final stage of the evaluation of the study), I considered situational realities in a way how those realities safeguard and promote the interests of those involved. Maybe such attentiveness was crucial to recognize others' needs to respond to them responsibly (Ellis, 1997, 2004). But unlike 'white men's burden, this responsible responsiveness was more altruistic than egoistic. Popularized by the French philosopher Auguste Comte, altruism was used as the opposite of egoism. In Buddhism, altruism arises in the form of love and compassion, where in Hinduism it arises in the form of selflessness, love, kindness, and forgiveness (see Radhakrishnan, 1980). In those appreciations, *nishkam Karma* has ensured the ethics of care and altruism (also see Khaptad, 2000). *Niskam karma* is an action without attachment to the action and the end results. In this study, when there was more focus on the process than the expectation for the result, there was almost no desire for personal gain, which eventually encompassed altruism.

<div align="center">

Concluding Remarks: Research as Living-Dharma

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Arriving at this stage, I conclude this chapter explaining research as 'living-*dharma'*, where (analogical to *tirthayatra,* a pilgrimage) this research for me is an

(embodied and collaborative) living process to move inwards and discover the 'essential'. Here, research as living-*dharma* means that mode of being, which drives an aspirant to the essential nature of the being. It is this essential nature that determines the mode of research-behavior. So, the overall methodology of this study claims that if my conduct as a researcher confirms my essential nature, e.g., 'who am I? - and What am I for?' - I am acting (and doing research) in the right way. My belief as a researcher must conform to this essential I hold.

This study looks at the possibilities that connect me and my co-researchers in our true authentic nature (*swa-rupa*). Our over-reliance on a fragmented dualistic world disconnects us from this essential (Yogananda, 2002). Sometimes even the *pratyaksha* (surface evidence) may not reveal the essential, and therefore, a researcher has to take refugees to 'extra rational' logic (Radhakrishnan, 1985). This extra rational logic takes the form of wisdom, which is more a trans-rational and transconceptual mode of 'knowing'. Thus, the study holds that this mode of knowing for authentic self cannot be attained through 'imported' conceptual and methodological frameworks. In this ecological relationality, the dominant frameworks can not be ignored either. Instead, the frameworks can be used as references; the boundaries can be blurred (Stern, 2015); and therein, the dominant and the emergent boundaries can be harmonized through the intense sense of 'being-in-the-world'. This is all about the methodological foundation of this research.

…

The next chapter is a hermeneutically circular literature re(view) on 'what' place is and 'how' the place has been historically understood in school education of Nepal. Adopted and developed during the course of my Ph.D. studies, the ecological

hermeneutic re(view) blurs the boundaries inherent in our traditional ways of doing a literature review and embodies in it the immediate place, here-now.

Let's move-

So, what is Place?

What are place informed lifeful pedagogies?

How is the historicity of the place, the life, and the lifefulness in school education of Nepal?

Figure 23: Darauni Pokhari (a lake of terror), a historical lake in Dapcha hill

CHAPTER THREE

PLACE AS A WIDENING CIRCLE OF THE MIND-BODY INTEGRATED SELF

March 24, 2020. The outbreak of coronavirus has become a deadly epidemic. Countries around the world have imposed shut-downs and travel restrictions.

In Nepal, the government has decided to shut down all borders with India and China.

Information technologies and social media are on the fronts.

For the first time in history, human beings around the world have come to realize how they are too connected and yet too far from each other.

Many of my friends and relatives have returned to their village from cities. They say they have returned to 'their place', 'their home'. Many of my friends and relatives abroad say that they have missed 'their place' 'their home' more in this crisis.

My grandmother gave a telephone call from my village and said, *"Babu yo kasto hauguji aayo gaun maa"*

She says an unseen ghost (COVID-19) has entered the village.

It is how my grandmother thinks. It is what she learned growing in the village.

I remembered my village. I remembered my grandparents. I also remembered the village Dapcha Dharmashala, where I had spent almost two years during my Ph.D. days.

I don't know how much my village and my grandmother who grew in the village are responsible for the recent outbreak of the *hauguji*. During my Ph.D. days what I have come to understand is that such many *vikrit* (deviated from the essential) *haugujis* have possibly entered the village and have been contaminating it for a long.

Maybe, it entered in school. It entered in books. It entered in soil. It entered the forest.

It entered in culture. It entered mountains and rivers. And maybe human beings let

them enter simply being indifferent to the essential. And we, being unaware, let it

enter and contaminate our mindsets.

Perhaps, my grandmother is right. *Hauguji* has entered the village. And

maybe, she is partially right because it might have entered long before she knew it.

And maybe there is no logic of any kind from where the *hauguji* entered the village.

From city…from local…from global… from North…From West…where?

It is also likely that the *hauguji* is, but human beings' own egocentric

prejudice (see Bainbridge & Del Negro, 2019), their taken-for-granted tendency to

overly blame 'others' and set themselves aside from (global) ecological relationality

and ethical responsibility. Don't know. But, its message is seemingly clear in a way

that human civilization has entered the ecological era (see Lange, 2018; O'Neil,

2018), and arriving at this stage of human civilization, nothing (and no place) around

is alone, lonely, and isolated.

An 'Ecological-Hermeneutic' (Re) view

Dear reader, in chapter one, I narrated in brief how this PAR project

approached the inquiry agenda of exploring possibilities for emplaced pedagogies in

school education of Nepal. Also, I narrated in brief how the research themes and the

research questions continuously unfolded as the study progressed. As I mentioned in

chapter two, this study has developed themes from two broader categories of the

evidence i.e., (1) the evidence from the place, the community, and the human

landscapes of Dapcha, Dharmashala (in chapters four and five), and (2) the evidence

from the pedagogical experiences of Dharmashala located Janahit School (in chapters

five, six, and seven). Informed through the (to and fro) hermeneutic circle of the evidence, the meanings are drawn in chapter eight.

The details will continuously unfold in the chapters that follow.

Before moving to those, this chapter engages the textual and experiential hermeneutics of literature review, and concentrates on how we built awareness of what 'place' and 'emplaced pedagogies' mean in this study. For this, I narrate how the study team entered the study 'field' and developed embodied awareness of the phenomenon. The chapter narrates, how, with supports from existing literature and the archives, we 'conceptualized' what place and emplaced pedagogies are. Also, the chapter narrates how passing through an embodied awareness of the local wisdom traditions of the study community, we began (re)defining the universal applications of the 'popular' academic concepts of the place and the emplaced education so far.

Figure 24: Ecological hermeneutics

(Source: https://ohhowrandom.wordpress.com)

Doing so, unlike linearly designed 'systematic review' of literature; you will find a back-and-forth hermeneutic 'play' (Gadamer, 1982) between the texts and the lifeworld. It is not to tell 'what is' but to cultivate a 'researcher-reader' participatory journey of 'seeing' a big picture of the study topics. To achieve this, I have been

engaged in what Greetz (1979) suggests, a continuous dialectical tacking 'in' in-between' and 'beyond' the local and the global.

In this circular (which I call ecological) hermeneutics (Heidegger, 2002) of 'whole-to-part' and the 'part-to-whole' ecological relationality and complexity, I have been aware that I am navigating between the immediate lifeworld, here-now, and the 'imported' scholarships. In the process, often, I have passed through information overwhelms (maybe present-day academic anxiety) arising from so many books, articles, and internet sources.

The hermeneutic exercising, added in it our PAR team's embodied awareness, eventually became fundamental in 'building' wisdom that place is a mind-body integrated self, which unlike causal linearity and disciplinary concepts, one can eloquently realize it in terms of ecological relationality and complexity. Each place holds its own essential *dharma*, and that the disorder and perplexities arise when our dominant (and often imported) cultural milieu and practice architecture is not compatible with the essential *dharma* of the place.

Overall, this chapter is an ecological hermeneutics of literature (re)view, characterized through place relationalities, authenticities, and ethical responsibilities. Though the chapter is eloquently informed from participatory engagement, the text is my (researcher's) performative reflexivity (Denzin, 2001; also see Stronach et al., 2013) and impressions on how 'place' and 'emplaced pedagogies' are conceptualized in the literature. The exploration eventually enabled me to relate the 'place concept' (in the present chapter) with 'place wisdom' (in chapter three) and thereby make sense of PAR action-reflection cycles for place-informed lifeful pedagogies at Dapcha Dharmashalalocated Janahit School (in chapters five, six, and seven). Also, the

chapter depicts my continuous unfolding with relational and ecological ontology(ies) of place.

Let's move-

<div align="center">**Section One: What is Place?**</div>

So, let's begin from here. When I ask you- 'where do you belong (?)', what would be your response? Maybe you say, home, or you may name a community, or a village, a city, a country, or maybe the earth, or the universe. Or maybe, identifying yourself as a member of a 'digimodern age', you begin Google surfing or turn on a few pages of the books in your bookshelves.

But still, you may not come with one specific answer of a kind.

Conceptualizing Place

Casey (2009) describes human beings' being and becoming in terms of place belongingness**.** Other scholars have used the term 'place' in multiple ways (Agnew, 2011; Barad, 2007; Casey, 2009). Sometimes, they define place as space and/or geographic metrics. Some other times, they define it in terms of social and human positions. Sometimes they define it in terms of local, and some other times as global.

You may encounter so many fragmented definitions.

The static concept of place carries physical-geographical meaning, where the focus is only on their spatial (and/or physical) entities that could be measured. As Agnew (2011) observes, this positivist notion of place as mere measurable spatial and geographic metrics (as position, altitude, longitude), however, underwent a significant shift in the 1970s and 1980s.

 Undergoing the human-ecological turn (see Lange, 2018), maybe new-humanism and new materialism (see Braidotti, 2019), now, the place is not only a physical and spatial location. The place appears together with social position and

moral order (Agnew, 2011). It is more 'an identity' and 'belongingness'. This socially and morally inflected concept of place mediates its role in terms of social and human relationships.

You may also find that few scholars (Gulson & Parkes, 2009; Huss, 2008) have used the word place and space interchangeably. But, for many of them, the place is not space. Rather, space is perceived as more abstract than place (Lewicka, 2011; Ralph 1976; Tuan, 1977). Space is an independent entity. It is either indoor or outdoor. Unlike independent space, the place is a humanized space. When people's sense of both individual and cultural identity, as well as their experiences and meanings are attributed in the space, it takes the form of place. Arising from space, place is a collection of symbolic meanings and identities held by an individual and group (Stedman, 2002). Thus, the place is identity embedded space. Also, the place is a time (historical memories) embedded space.

There are also some other groups of people with the current notion of the world as placeless (Coleman & Collins, 2006). These groups of people, primarily yielded through commentaries on the non-existence of prior time and space barriers to labor and commerce, observe the world as 'flat' (Friedman, 2005), and thereby they question the existence of place in today's society. For this group of people, the earlier sense of place, thus, has disappeared to non-place. This 'non-place' or the 'end of place' is seemingly the result of globalization, representing new technologies, the internet, and cell phones (Auge, 1995).

Now, you may go surprised that you journeyed to understand the 'place', and eventually arrived at 'no place'. Now you may say- If human civilization has already arrived at the stage of 'the end of the place', or 'no place' then why bother on it. The game is over.

But wait-

Despite this, as Casey (2009) and Smith (2008) stress, globalization has made considerations of time, space, and place more important at present than before. They argue that the increasing influence of indigenous and decolonizing perspectives on the lifeworld cannot ignore the contextual and temporal identity of the surface upon which life happens. Denying such an idea of 'placelessness' in today's global communities, geographical and socio-anthropological thinkers like Edward S. Casey see human beings' place-connectedness in today's society more than before (Casey, 2009). Individuals shape their identities as who they are, how they behave, and who they become through both the real (perceived) and imagined (conceived) concepts of the place they inhabit. Also, they normalize their place-identities through their lived experiences and interactions with others.

Now you may be flustering among many conflicting ideas- place, space, yes-place, no-place, abstract place, concrete place, the origin of the place, and the end of the place. To some extent, such 'conceptual' undertakings of place enabled me and my co-researchers to render on the educational significance of the space and place in this research-

That place consists of social position and moral order.

That it consists of the earth, the landscapes, and the collection of memories, the symbols, and cultural identities.

That it is 'living', interactive, and dynamic.

That it moves and changes over time; shapes and reshapes human beings that inhabit it, both individually and collectively.

Entering the Place

Now, let's embody the 'textual' concept to the place-embedded lifeworld, which I call it our relational to-and-fro engagement to the ecological hermeneutics of a place canvas.

When I first entered the Dapcha community as a PAR researcher, though I was eager to 'live' the place, I was not much interested in conceptualizing what the place is. However, as series of interactions with school teachers and local stakeholders came with a decision to make action research studies on exploring possibilities for participatory and generative approaches to place-informed lifeful teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming, we arrived in a stage where we had to conceptualize what 'place' means for this study. We embodied the emerging concepts within the 'real field'.

For people of Dapcha communities, the meaning of place is rooted in ancestral belongingness and immediate adoptive processes.

Seeing many houses locked from outside, and the bare land around, once I had asked Mohan, a local inhabitant of Dapcha village, "Sir, if the villagers don't stay in the village anymore, then why don't they sell the land and other properties? Why don't they leave the village permanently".

He said, "*Purkha ko Thalo kasari bechnu sir*"

Meaning, how they can sell their ancestors' land!

The first concept of place for Dapchali is *Purkha ko thalo*.

It is the land of ancestors.

Adopting the everyday need to earn and live, they may move from the place, but whenever there are important functions, and festivals they return to 'their place'- their *purkha ko thalo.*

This connectedness to ancestors' place is interchangeably used as *janma vumi*, meaning the birth land. Therefore, the meaning of place for Dapchali is the origin. It is a root. It is a comfort zone between their birth and death.

They often name their place through ancestral connections- *swajan* (kinship). For example, *Kafle thok*, *Khanal thok*, *Adhikari Gaun* are few places named after the ancestral lineage of Kafle, Khanal, and Adhikari communities.

They understand the place through earth and landscape as well. For example, *Chauki danda, Bhanjyang, Darauni Pokhari, Chautara* are some places named after land structures.

Figure 25: The hilly landscapes of Dapcha

Their place is their *Dharmashala.* It is where they learn their natural law to perform, and where they are supposed to live as per their *dharma*, the natural law. This *Dharmashala* is also a *Dharmachhetra,* the active field of righteousness; the battleground for the moral struggle that has been continuing for ages.

Tallo Hatiya and *Makhlo hatiya* is also their place. *Hatiya* is where they buy and sell things. It is where they make *artha*, the wealth for their living. *Hatiya* as a place is *Karmavumi,* where they work out their *karma* and fulfill the purpose of living.

Thus, the place for the Dapchali people is their way of living, their origin, their land, their ancestral, their kinship, their culture, their *karma*, and their *dharma*.

This place appears as sacred, as terrifying, as divine, as cosmic, and as complicated as a *mandala* art in the *Namobuddha* shrine. This place is also the *bhu bhavati- bhu,* the land, and *bhavati*, becoming in and from the land.

And now you may ask, is this enough to conceptualize the sifting scenarios of the place-Dapcha? Hasn't Mark Zuckerberg entered the village with its new definition? And Bill Gates and Steve Jobs...?

Don't you see a village youth sitting on the ages-old wooden bench in a village *chautara*[30] of Dharmashala and talking to his uncle in Japan, and Malaysia, or Canada? Don't you see a schoolgirl trying lipstick in a way that she saw today as tried by an actress in her favorite TV show?... and a schoolboy trying a new hairstyle…?

Perhaps, now we have to 'solve' this complex 'place perplexity' by taking a multi-disciplinary approach, which you hardly find in classical literature on the place. Maybe the old logic to see the village as something 'sacred', isolated and remote needs a new 'shifted' look at it.

'Conceptualization' is Not a Good Match

When our research team began to think and to work on school teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming in and through the place, as in the above-mentioned paragraphs, we journeyed to 'conceptualize' place. We attempted to figure out what place means in our study process. We studied literature. To some extent, the literature enabled us to 'conceptualize' what place is.

But you see, as we continuously turned to the cultural settings and human landscapes of our study community, (parallel to the civilizational growth from modern, to postmodern to Metamodern) we arrived from the stage to conceptualize to

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[30] A stone raised belt under a peepal tree

de/conceptualize, and thereafter to re-conceptualize[31] it. Our embodied awareness and presence at the shifting phenomenon enabled us to acknowledge 'different' directions i.e., conceptualization, de/conceptualization, and re-conceptualization of the place at different stages.

Conceptualization *(vikalpa)* is made from linguistic knowledge on an apparent form *(rupa),* not contact with real things (Radhakrishnan, 1980; Rao, 2005). And therefore, because of this linguistic fallacy, conceptualization is more likely to take an aspirant to false perception *(mithya gyan).*

Our embodied engagement at the place enabled us to realize that rural wisdom tradition is not a 'conceptual' but an oral (maybe, a somatic, or performative) tradition, where meaning is both symbolic and metaphorical that passes from one generation to the next through myths, cultural norms, values, ceremonies, songs, dances, and folk tales. It is through their nature-based spontaneous living, adopted and modified for generations, that the unique rural and indigenous worldviews of local inhabitants are expressed.

In decolonizing and indigenous renderings, which is also the reaction to colonial modernity, the term 'conceptualization' apparently is not the right match. Conceptualization is what 'modern science' celebrates mind and its intellectual exercising as different from the body and bodily engagements (Radhakrishnan, 1980). To this awareness, I shifted to 'de/conceptualize' (in place of 'conceptualize'). Maybe it was my postmodern means of 'dialectical reaction' against colonial modernity to understand the place in its dialectical logic. Doing so, my use of de/conceptualize

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[31]Here, I have used the sign (/) to represent dialectical relationship between opposing attributes, and sign (-) as relational. The movement from conceptualization to de/conceptualization to re-conceptualization is parallel to the movement from Positivistic modern to critical postmodern to ecological Metamodern.

made decolonial and indigenous nature of reactionary questioning for universal application of the 'concepts' so foreign from the context.

Moving further, again, I revisited my initial use of the sign (/) in between 'de' and 'conceptualize'. Our embodied awareness of the study phenomenon again took us in the next direction- from de/conceptualization to re-conceptualization that knowing things may not necessarily be dialectical. Instead, it is interactional and relationship-based. My recent use of 're-conceptualizing place' is also identical to the ever-shifting, dynamic nature of a place. Maybe some hundred years ago, the Dapcha community was a lonely indigenous, rural community 'so pure and so sacred'. But with passing decades, with larger mobility of village youth to the city and abroad, with road and electricity, with mobile phone and the television sets, with noodles and the cola bottles, the rural' and 'the indigenous' is waiting for its (ever moving) re-conceptualization.

Maybe there is no more I/they, but I-they.

Tuck and McKenzie (2015) have come to a similar conclusion that in the embodied rendering of rurality, one may begin moving from intelligence to interpretation; from fragmentation to wholeness, with a particular concern for the historical, cultural, ethnic, and social dimensions (also see Subedi, 1993). Here, argument building is not competitive, but cooperative. It is not analytical, but interpretive.

Rural and Indigenous people have embodied awareness of place. It extends to the widening circle around. Together, it appears with the feelings of 'homeliness', 'insideness', and belongingness (see Bhattachan, 1999; Chemjong, 2003). It is inherently embedded in the 'spirit' of culture, and the landscape. It is full of emotions and feelings.

Therefore, passing through our embodied awareness on the uniquely built place sense of our study community, we began to embrace that place in indigenous rurality is something not to 'conceptualize', or 'de/conceptualize'. It is something to 're-conceptualize' and 'build awareness' on its memories, aspirations, and dreams.

The awareness made us realize that Dapcha, today, is no more 'modern uncivilized'. It is no more 'postmodern superior'. It is simply unique. The awareness of this kind has shaped this study for not to fall under modern 'conformability' and postmodern never-ending 'reactions' but to hold ecological-relational views of the place. It is where metamodernism stands.

'Place-this' and Place-that' is not a Good Match Either

It is very interesting that passing through series of interactions and embodied literature of the place, where we used every tradition and symbol as our literature-metaphors, we build yet another awareness that the word 'place' (as this and that) itself is not a good linguistic match for our study. Indigenous worldview and rural wisdom traditions prefer the word 'land' over the place (Rai, 2018; Lowan, 2009). But this land is not just a 'form' *(rupa)* or a physical entity that one can measure. The land combines with desire and hatred, pleasure and pain, intelligence, and steadfastness.

Many people who grew in our study community have their own 'learning stories'. These stories, which they encounter in their everyday interactions with their land, are the source of their learning. It is through the land that they have 'learned' to live. For them, the land is something more than the feelings of homeliness, insideness, and belongingness. The land is not just a surface where life happens. It is a mother, *Janani.* It is a source of all creation. It is the God, the *Devi*. It is a complex cosmos of spirit, emotion, and intellect.

The land is also a terror. Once, while walking around the hills, Mohan pointed to a cliff, and said, "From here slipped down a village woman, and died." Next time, while walking around the village, a villager shared "It is from this corner, a tiger took a baby girl". The study community, like many other communities that share indigenous rurality, has developed a symbiotic relationship with a particular land-base. As discussed above, their cultural identities are integral to their landmarks.

In Dapcha civilization, the place is *shala*- e.g., Dharmashala

It is *thok*- e.g., Khanalthok

It is *sthana*- e.g., Bhimshensthana

It is *gaam,* meaning upper landscape

It is byasi, meaning lower landscape (Bhakundyabesi)

It is *bhanjyang,* meaning a small area of slope land in between two raised land.

Thus, acknowledging this land embeddedness of rural located indigenous communities, we also build awareness that the univocal definition of place (as we understand it in popular literature) is not a good match in our study.

Figure 26: The ecological dynamism of Dapchali lifeworld

A few shifts in rural and indigenous lifeworlds at the present, arising from the increasing number of professional choices, entry of 'modern' tools and processed food has been slowly and gradually shifting land-embedded worldview in rural

indigenous communities (see Rai 2018) like Dapcha. Dapcha is not the same 'isolated, land-embedded, sacred, and organic' place as we read in much indigenous literature of this kind (Kovach, 2009; Lowan, 2009). It is not the complete absence of these qualities as well.

Linguistically, the place is a noun. It is something to name, see, feel, and measure. The place is also a verb. It is to act, to embody, to perform. The place is 'noun-place' and the 'verb-place' at the same time. It is not something to know as 'place this' and 'place-that' through conceptual logic.

Now you may ask- So what?

Place as a Complex Integrated Cosmos

Maybe, it looks for multilayered postformal logic of a kind.

The place is a complex integrated cosmos consisting of both the abstract and concrete entities within an area, the land, human landscapes, the materiality, and the human ecology. The place is not the fragmented one and the other. Rather, it is a widening circle (Barane, Hugo, & Clemetsen, 2018). The circle may start from the home, the family, the social institutions, the community, the river, the forest, the mountain, and may continuously widen to the nation and the world.

Figure 27: Place cosmos

(Source: https://pixabay.com)

Also, the place is the immediate cosmos within our reach, extended to many other circles beyond our reach. It is our embodied totality around, where, with what, and with whom we perform our everyday interactions (Agnew, 2011).

It is alive, full of feelings and emotions.

It is cultural and spiritual.

It is political and economic.

It smells the root.

It hears the voice of the ancestors.

And, it is a life process, the source of authentic learning; where learning happens, where learning grows, emerges, unfolds, get enacted, and flourished.

It is context-dependent and also the context-independent.

It is local patterns and also global planetary.

It is belonging-together; an ever-changing dynamic cosmos only to be understood through 'either-or' and 'neither-nor' postformal logics.

Arrival so far: Place as 'either-or', 'neither-nor', 'and-or'

Now, for some time, let's reflect on our journey of building 'ecologically hermeneutic awareness' on what place is. In this journey, we encountered many 'fragmented' conceptualizations of place in 'modern' literature. Our embodied and ecologically relational presence to Dapcha as a place, however, made us realize that place is not something to 'conceptualize'. The place is not to 'de/conceptualize' either. Instead, it is something to 're-conceptualize' for the place cosmos is constantly unfolding and continuously changing. There, we realized that one cannot understand the place in isolated 'this' and 'that' frames. Instead, the place is complex integrated cosmos, a micro-macro web of chaos and order. One needs to understand this 'place-

emergence' and 'interplay' at the totality. Maybe, instead of formal logics in modern academia, the totality demands 'either-or', 'neither-nor', 'and-or' postformal logics.

Section II: Hindu-Buddhist Place Worldviews

We are discovering the meaning of 'place' grounding the literature-based conceptual meanings to the actual lifeworld of Dapcha, Dharmashala. After discovering the meaning of the place (for this study) as complex integrated cosmos, which is neither to 'conceptualize' nor to 'de/conceptualize' but to 're-conceptualize' its fluid dynamism from multi-perspectives, now we will discover how Hindu-Buddhist wisdom traditions understand place. The researcher, co-researchers, and the location Dapcha, Dharmashala have inherence historicity of the *Tamangs'*, the *Newars'* and the *Parbatya Brahmins'*[32] of Hindu-Buddhist knowledge traditions, and therefore, discovering the meaning of place from these perspectives has higher significance in this study. One common 'wisdom' that defines both Hinduism and Buddhism is their orientations on ecological relationalities, authenticities, and ethical responsibilities. In many contexts, they understand the place and the lifeworld through 'either-or' neither-nor' postformal logics.

Let's begin-

Cohesive Place-Realities in Buddhism

Relational studies on Buddhism, modern science, and place cosmologies claim that the universe as a place is fundamentally holistic, and is characterized by unbroken wholeness (Maxwell, 2003; Khisty, 2006). It is from this unbroken wholeness of ecological realities, as Naess (2005) claims, place stimulates the feelings of ecological oneness and interconnected belongingness among the beings and the non-beings.

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[32]Tamang and Newar are ethnic communities of Nepal. Parbatya Brahmins are upper class residents in the hills.

Referring to such Buddhist 'place-vision' of interdependent causality (Khisty, 2006), Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Monk makes a philosophical claim that if we look at anything in the phenomenon more deeply and attentively, we see everything in the cosmos in that phenomenon (Nhat Hanh, 2000). He describes the place in terms of the fundamental oneness of the entire phenomenon. Thus, self-realization and the realization of the place as widened (and coherent) 'Self' make Buddhist place-ecology. From there arises the Buddhist wisdom to take refuge to intelligence (*Buddham Saranam Gachhami*); take refuse to authenticity and righteousness (*Dharmam Sharanam Gachhami*); and take refugee to the wider community (*Sangam Sharanam Gachhami*).

Buddhist place worldviews, particularly the *Pratityasamutpada* recognizes the interrelatedness of all beings and non-beings that inherently forms one strand, one ontological unity in the web of life. In many ways, Buddhist knowledge traditions consider this ecological wholeness to be a form of *dharma* (Kamalashila, 2005), from where arises the theme of unconditional love and compassion to all beings and the non-beings. The *Pratityasamutpada* recognition of co-arising, thus suggests *Madhyama-pratipad*, a path of moderation in belonging, being, and becoming.

Cohesive Place-Flourishing in Taoism

Tao acknowledges universal processes as interrelated cosmic wholeness, an 'all-embracing One". In this sense, Tao as a place is similar to the *Brahman* in Hinduism and the *Dharmakaya* in Buddhism. Unlike, *absolute Brahma* in Hinduism, however, Taoism undertakes place in its continuous flow and change (Laozi, 2001). To this end, the Taoist conception of place as ecological interconnections characterized through continuous flourishing has socio-political implications in a way

that it advocates unity in diversity. An individual may realize the 'Tao of self' in relation to the 'Tao of others' in its complex ecological wholeness (Miller, 2013).

Figure 28: Ecology of Taoism

(Source: https://www.quora.com)

Tao is a natural flourishing, and therefore, similar to the *Dharma* worldview in Hinduism and Buddhism, Taoism encourages human beings to live following natural processes (Honore, 2005). In another word, Taoism is a cohesive place-flourishing, and it is to this end, Tao doesn't entertain external force and intervention in the name of changing things and the beings. Instead, it acknowledges change as self-flourishing in accordance with ecological principles, which is effortless, harmonious, and non-egoistic action (Slingerland, 2000), which according to Fowler (2005) is a step by step movement towards ecological wholeness.

Place as 'Ethnohermenutics-Animism' in *Mundhum* and *Shamanism*

Mundum, the oral tradition of Kirati worldviews, and *Shamanism*, the mystic belief in all the beings and nonbeings, in a way or other, inform place in terms of ethnohermenutics-animism (Chemjong, 2003; Rai, 2018). These knowledge heritages see hermeneutic bonds between human beings and 'powerful spirits' of the ancestors.

It is a symbolic bond with the roots, which is rhythmically embedded in the land, the powerful place-spirit. As verbal language has limitation to communicate the spiritual message of the land (the place-spirit) that connect their ancestors, the *Shamans* uses multi-epistemic symbols like music, art, and dance to share the bonding between human beings and their ancestral roots (Chemjong, 2003). Seen from *Mundhum* and *Shamanism*, place, thus, is the land-embedded spirit that connects the present lifeworld (the time-space dynamism) with the regulatory spirits of the ancestors.

Place as 'OneBelonging-Together' in *Vedanta*

Similar to *Pratityasamutpada* in Buddhism, Hindu wisdom traditions understand the place in terms of *loksangraha.* Here, *Loksangraha* stands for the unity of the world. It is world-maintenance. In the Hindu wisdom tradition, an individual and the cosmos depend on each other (Rao, 2005). There is a constant interchange between the individual 'self' and cosmic 'Self'. The world is in progress because of this give-and-take ethos between an individual self and the universal Self. You may now call it an inter-relational philosophy of the human landscape, the place, the local, and the global. Such undertakings of place see the world as increasingly inter-cultural.

Now, arriving at this stage, bringing together the Hindu-Buddhist knowledge traditions, we have begun to think of the place in terms of the inter-cultural philosophy of the 'being', if not yet, will start from here.

So, let's start from the hermeneutic 'being' of intercultural ontological thinking in Śankara's *Advaita*, i.e., the 'Non-duality' of *Brahman* and Ātman.

'Being' what? - *Brahman* or *Sat*

'Being' where? - *Brahman* or *Sat*

'Become' what? - *Brahma or Sat*

It shows then that in *Vedic* philosophy, especially the Shankara's *Advaita Vedanta*, beings and non-beings are integral to the 'One Brahma', 'One Self'.'Being' is undivided from belonging, and this being is the means and the ends in itself, which you may call *Sat-Chit-Ānanda.*

Thus, it seems that in *Vedic* tradition, the concept of the place is the 'One Self', the absolute, the *Brahma*, which goes beyond the fundamental dividing norms of negation and affirmation (Radhakrishnan, 1985). Many 'ones' within the 'One' share the shame absoluteness from the One

This is the "belonging-together" of Being and thinking.

This is also the 'belonging-together' of 'universal Being' and 'human being'

In *Vedic Advaita*, when Brahman is the 'One' and 'the same', there is no room for differences in individual beings. Thus, in this worldview, your belonging in this place, the Brahma is, but your blissful consciousness at the absoluteness, the oneness of your being, the *Atman*.

But, this oneness of the 'place-belonging' is non-conceivable; it cannot be logically conceptualized. This logical inconceivability of the apparent world is brought out by the word, *Maya*[33]. It is what the *Eesha –Upanishad* (Swami & Yeats, 2005) claims- "The Self is far away, yet near; within all, outside all. The Self is everywhere, without a body, without a shape, whole, pure, wise, and all-knowing". (p.16). Lets' explore further-

Place as Cosmic Play, the *Leela*

After understanding place as 'belonging together' now our hermeneutically circular literature (re)view begins to see it like cosmic play, the *Leela*. The wheel of

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[33]'Maya' is derived from the root 'ma'. It refers to thae capacity to produce forms. As apparent form is incomprehensible, also, maya is sometimes said to be the source of delusion.

karma is ever moving to become something in the *Leela-like* illusionary web, the

Maya (Radhakrishnan, 1985). The illusionary movement continues through a complex

web of chaos and order, the *Vabasaagar*.

Figure 29: Place as cosmic Leela

(Source: http://www.norwegiansage.com

In Hindu wisdom tradition, place as such is, therefore, the *Leela*, the cosmic

play in the web of Maya (Rao, 2005).In this play, the *Leela* of belonging, being, and

becoming continues. This is the cosmic play, where the mutual belonging between the

absolute (Brahman) and the individual (Ātman) becomes prominent. Thus, in Vedic

Advaita, human ecology around is the divine play of belonging, being, and becoming.

It is neither 'Sajātīya' (homogeneous) nor Vijātīya (heterogeneous) (Swami & Yeats,

2005). The place is the same One *Brahma* appeared in terms of continuous flux

between chaos and harmony.

The lifeworld as *Leela* is also the cosmic dance of annihilation and creation,

which Hindu ecological mythology presents in the image of dancing Shiva. It is what

quantum physics claim that the cosmic world is but the continuous dance (annihilation

and creation) of sub-atomic particles. Hindu worldview sees the idea of *Leela* in

relation to *Rata*, where according to Luitel (2019) if *Leela* represents chaos and

disorderliness, *Rata* represents the order developed out of series of *Leelas*.

In terms of this cosmic *Leela*, the place is *nēti nēti,* not this, not this (Radhakrishnan, 1985). And therefore, this place is neither something nor nothing. This neither nor concept of the belonging, being, and becoming in the place, the human ecology, is further described in the *Madhyamaka* school of Nāgārjuna (see Radhakrishnan, 1985). For Nagarjuna, the veil of *Maya* (the *Leela*, the universe, the *Loka)*, is totally devoid of reality. It is a void (*sunya*). Whatever is apparent in this void *Loka*, the *lokavyavahara* are 'is' and 'is not' (Potter, 2002). Such Madhyamika dialectics enable one to understand place-ecologies in their fluidity.

In short, human beings' belonging, being, and becoming in this cosmic human ecology is but their continuous moving of *karma-wheels* within the void of chaos and order (*Leela-Rita* dialectics). If this *karma-wheel* has an aim of any kind, it is to maintain the world order (Yogananda, 2002). As a conscious being, maybe it is the human 'self' and 'selves' who can act consciously through mutual companionship, and move to a higher 'Self' to maintain the harmony of the apparent world around.

Place as the 'Knowable' Field, *Prakriti*

Oriental cosmology reveals *'Leela*-awareness' of place as 'field'(क्षेत्र), arising from co-participation of subject and object; the mind and the body (Rao, 2005). This place as the field is neither an isolated object (body) nor an isolated subject (mind). It is rather a co-participation of everything that born, grows, decline and die.

इदंशरीरंकौन्तेयक्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते |

एतद्योवेत्तितंप्राहुःक्षेत्रज्ञइतितद्विदः || (13.1)

It is the *Kshetra* (the field) in which events happen, and events happen when elements (either subject or object) in the field modifies. This field is also the *Prakriti* (see Radhakrishnan, 1985). This *Prakriti*, the field, is knowable. *Purusa* is the knower of the field (Radhakrishnan, 1985). But, the *Purusha* in itself has no

expression of any kind. It is an inactive consciousness, which functions through matter, *Prakriti.*

It means, only when *Purusha* (the knower) comes in touch with *Prakriti* (knowable), an experience, either good or bad, takes place. This integration of *Purusha* and *Prakriti* is the 'self' forming process (Yogananda, 2002). The self-forming process, if contaminated with unnatural, becomes *Vikriti*, an evil-contaminated self.

Thus, the human 'self' is identical to the place 'self'.

Undivided, yet it exists as if divided.

Knowing this undivided place-self is the end of knowledge, which according to *Advaita Vedanta* (Radhakrishnan, 1985) comes from the practice of moral virtues as humility, integrity, purity, and self-control.

Place as All-Pervading Awareness, *Ksetrajna*[34]

Looking at the place from these perspectives as all-pervading awareness sheds new light to understand the place. The 'what real' of the place is awareness (Swami & Yeats, 2005). The place is *Brahma,* which is but the field (क्षेत्र), and knower of the field (क्षेत्रज्ञ) both at the same time. Also, this *Brahma* is both the individual self and the eternal self, playful in their continuous presence and absence *Leela* (Yogananda, 2002). The 'how to know' episteme of the place is again the awareness. Maybe the way, the path to reach the awareness is the awareness itself. Awareness is also 'the true' 'the good' and 'the beautiful' of the place.

As discussed earlier in the sub-heading, place as 'One' belonging-together, Vedic wisdom suggests place as *Sat-Chit-Ananda*; that the place is a wakeful truth, a wakeful knowing, and a wakeful bliss (Rao, 2005). It is *Bhu-bhavati*, meaning to

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[34]As mentioned in Bhagavad Gita, chapter XIII, Kshetrajna is the light of awareness, the knower of the field, the body.

belong and to become in and from the place. To understand the place and its various appearances as 'One Brahma' is *Vidhya* (knowledge) (Yogananda, 2002). *Vidhya* is the power of self-becoming *(atmavibhuti)*. Through this *Vidhya*, according to Radhakrishna (1985), human beings gain a new kind of relatedness to the world and grow into freedom.

<div align="center">

क्षेत्रज्ञचापिमांविद्धिसर्वक्षेत्रेषुभारत |

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानंयत्तज्ज्ञानंमतंमम || (13.3)

</div>

This realization of place as all-pervasive awareness to immediate phenomena (क्षेत्रज्ञ) forwards the concept of *Vidhyalaya* (school, in its narrow modern term), where an aspirant *(jigyasu)* exercises *Vidhya* (see Khaptad, 2000; Radhakrishnan, 1980). Here, a student is supposed to be aware of the place around, work in accordance with basic ecological principles of authenticity and relationality, and realize the 'One' *Brahma.*

Place as the field of *Dharma*, *Dharmachhetra*[35]

Now we arrive at an ethical awareness of the place as *Dharmachhetra.*In this complex ecological relationality, this interaction between the knower, the knowing, and the knowable is a self-formation process (Yogananda, 2002), where place as a self and human as a self (both identical to 'One universal Self') continuously interacts (Radhakrishnan, 1985) within chaos and order. Place as *Dharmachhetra* has its own *Place-Dharma*, the essential. Everything that goes against this essential is likely to add disharmony, *vikriti.*In Hindu cosmology, the *dharma* (the essential) of five gross elements (*PanchaMahabhutas*) sustains this *dharmachhetra* (Rao, 2005). Their continuous 'play' preserves and sustains the environment.

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[35]The place of Dharma

But, as Hindu-Buddhist wisdom tradition suggests, cosmic awareness as such needs an 'authentic place for knowledge generation' (Yogananda, 2002) called *Vidhyalaya*. *Vidhyalaya* (not the school), is supposed to be a catalyst to realize this interconnected, and relational *place-dharma*. It is *Vidhya* (the essential knowledge) that strengthens learners' belonging, being, and becoming in this place as *Dharmachhetra*.

Arrival So Far: Place is, but the Cosmic *Mandala*

Dear readers, arriving at this stage, our ecological hermeneutics of literature explored the very 'depth' of Hindu-Buddhist wisdom traditions and developed further awareness that place is 'One Self' with many selves. The cosmic wholeness can be realized through holistic envisioning.

Figure 30: The cosmic place-mandala

(Source: https://limitlessspirituality.com)

This holistic envisioning of place as widening circles is manifested in Hindu and Buddhist mythologies of *Mandala* (Vira & Chandra, 1995). This *mandala*, the psycho-spiritual organic realities (see Gautam, 2017) undertakes place-ecologies as dynamically connected in a complex karma-web of integration, disintegration, and reintegration. It is to this end, this study sees the 'Dapchali Place-Canvas' also as a widening circle of micro-macro wholeness of ecological relationalities, the *Mandala*.

A Doubt of a Kind

But, is Western-Modern pedagogical design as dominant in the global educational forum today is compatible with the ecological relationality of the place? Also, has place-based learning, which has promised to integrate place in ongoing indoor pedagogies adequately addressed such undertaking of place as 'unwavering awareness' to ecological relationalities, here-now? Is this perspective of students' learning as belonging, being, and becoming in-and-through all-pervading awareness at the immediate place around still prevalent in modern education? Do modern 'conceptualization' of emplaced pedagogies enables learners to work in accordance to place essential, the *place-dharma*?

It appears that the open place can hardly be practiced in a closed classroom. Maybe, considering our recent understanding of the place as widening circles of a mind-body integrated self, now is the time for detailed exploration on how the world, both philosophically and pragmatically, has been undertaking place, life, and lifefulness in school education.

Section III: Place in 'Modern' Education

Now I take your attention to the next direction that discusses how the idea of place is historically discussed and embodied in school education of modernity. Through (to and fro) ecological hermeneutics, we continuously reflect on how the idea of place is integrated into the Western-Modern form of school education. At the end of this section, you may begin to realize the very 'thesis' of this study on how present-day classrooms are 'pre-designed' and 'pre-constructed' (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) in a way that many of the 'radical innovations' (like outdoor pedagogies) cannot possibly break these '19th-century educational walls', which are inherently isolated from the place-ecologies. Also, sadly falling under the neo-liberal

agenda of 'school for the preparation for future earnings' (Ferrer et al., 2005), many of the present day's advocacies on active, emplaced pedagogies are unable to hold place essential, the place *Dharma*, in their philosophies and practices.

So, how the idea of place entered into the cultural design of modern schooling, and how it, to some extent, blurred the indoor boundaries of modern ideals?

Let's see-

Beginning with the History of Place Pedagogies

At present, together with global-local debates and innovative experiments, place, and space have held much attention in educational theories and practices (see Burns, 2015; Klein, 2018; Williams, 2018). Perhaps, this is a response to spatial turn (Massey, 2005), resulting in a pragmatic turn in education (Sterling, 2001) in the form of place-based pedagogies.

In the twentieth century, American pragmatic philosopher John Dewey in his 'Democracy and Education' challenged traditional classrooms, which are primarily designed for information gathering. For Dewey (1916) meaningful learning is a continuous interplay between experience, interaction, and reflection. It is "a process of living and not a preparation for a future living (Dewey, 1897, p.1).

If so, learning has to be 'practical' and embodied.

Later, Freire's 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' (1970) added and gave a critical turn to Dewey's 'philosophy of action' where he advocated pedagogy as emancipatory means for solving local problems. Both Dewey's pragmatic and Freire's critical orientations to pedagogy were the pedagogical constructions arising from long dialectical and dialogical discourses, particularly in opposing Descartes' theory of dualism in 'Discourse on Method' (1637), which Russell referred to as 'Cartesian Doubt' (Russell, 1967).

Descartes said- only one thing I cannot doubt is that I am a thinking being. Descartes would doubt all 'non-thinking' worlds. He would doubt his own body, his own action, his own experience, except his mind. Decartian school of thought not only celebrated rationalism in education but also anthropocentrism. This 'mind-first' Vs. 'action first' dialectics separated 'thinking-being' from 'non-thinking' being for long. The later integration of 'thinking' and 'non-thinking' in the (educational) endeavors of Dewey's pragmatism (1916, 1920), and Freire's critical look (Freire, 1970, 1983, 1985, 1992, 2004) is a departure from Decartes's rationalism, from where later discourses on experiential, embodied, and place-based knowing emerged.

Here, Kant's role was pivotal.

Kant's 'enlightened' being added body and experience in Descartes' 'rational being'. In his 'Critique of Pure Reason (1781), Kant recognized the importance of both experience and reason in knowing the phenomenon. Later, Heidegger's (1962, 2002) 'existential being' in his 'Being and Time' recognized the world as a combination of thoughts and experience arising from the phenomenon. We are not just beings; we are 'being-in-the-world', said Heidegger. His 'Dasein' (Heidegger, 1962) in our mode of being recognized the importance of place, the body, and the immediate phenomenon in our knowing. Also, American transcendentalism as promoted by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman, unlike narrow economic reductionism, celebrated immediate human landscapes and nature as integral to wisdom (see Emerson, 2000; Thoreau, 2000; Whitman, 1982). Having some bearing on the French revolution, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile* viewed natural education as indispensable, which particularly criticized feudal educational thoughts and practices (see Clouds, 2016; Rousseau, 1978). All such

undertakings seem to have 'constructed' the philosophical basis of modern-day's emplaced pedagogies.

Slowly, mediated from Dewey's (1916, 1920) pragmatic learning, Freire's critical learning (Freire, 1970, 1983), and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning, the place-based pedagogies began to find their practical space. Moving into the details, I begin with David Sobel. His voice has held the attention of the 20th-century educational field when in his article 'Place-based Education: Connecting Classroom and Community', he 'boldly' declared the presence of place in 'modern' education.

Thus Spoke Sobel

Look, something's happening here!

And he narrated-

"As you stroll down the halls of your neighborhood school at nine o'clock on a Wednesday morning, you notice that something is different. Many of the classrooms are empty; the students are not in their places with bright, shiny faces. Where are they? In the town woodlot, a forester teaches tenth graders to determine which trees should be marked for an upcoming thinning project. Downtown, a group of middle school students are collecting water samples in an urban stream to determine if there's enough dissolved oxygen to support reintroduced trout. Out through the windows, you can see children sitting on benches writing poems. Down the way, a group of students works with a landscape architect and the math teacher to create a map that will be used to plan the schoolyard garden. Here's a classroom with students. In it, eighth graders are working with second graders to teach them about the history of the local Cambodian community. In the cafeteria, the city solid-waste manager is consulting with a group of fifth-graders and the school lunch staff to help them

design the recycling and composting program. Students' bright shiny faces
are in diverse places in their schoolyards and communities" (see, Sobel,
ndhttps://kohalacenter.org)

The world heard Sobel's narration with a little surprise, little hope, and a little
doubt.

Seeing this 'doubtful look' Sobel said-

"You don't have to pinch yourself. It's not a dream. Place-based education is
taking root in urban and rural, northern and southern, well-to-do and rough-
around-the-edges schools and communities across the country" (Sobel, nd).

David Sobel (also see Sobel, 1996) announced the beginning of place-based
teaching and learning in modern schools. Few educational practitioners around the
world now began to think- if self-identity is place-based (maybe land-based), such
conceptualization of place as a living space and homeliness finds its significance in
school education as well. They began to recognize that schools and the behavioral
norms that prevail within schools not only organize social life but also shape social
identities (Gulson & Symes, 2007). They also recognized that a place identity, where
the school locates, also shapes indoor/ outdoor educational spaces. As shown in figure
31 below, Green School of Bali forwards some distinguished features of emplaced
pedagogies.

Figure31: Green School of Bali, Indonesia

(Source: https://theconversation.com)

This inseparable relation between the place, space, and the school now began to hold the attention of 'mainstream' education and research (see Kahn, 2010). Increasing numbers of schools around the world now began experimenting with place-based education (see Burns, 2015; Klein, 2018; Williams, 2018). Green School of Bali, Indonesia, Aurland School of Norway, and Khotang School of Nepal are some examples of this trend.

Cultural Fit in the Dominant Approach

But, do you think that Sobel's above-mentioned definition of place-based education 'as learning in and through the place' became a fundamental part of mainstream education? Except for some schools with radical movements beyond the dominant architectures, it appears that the answer is 'No'.

It appears that, today, many schools around the world are 'struggling' just to fit the trans-disciplinary place inside the disciplinary classroom (Kahn, 2010; Kemmis & Smith, 2008). Educationists around the world have introduced many innovative models like area-based learning, culture-responsive learning, situated learning, contextualized learning, experience-based learning, and outdoor learning. But, many of those innovations are designed in a way to make 'cultural fit' within the western-

modern, dominant practice architecture of school education (Kemmis & Smith, 2008). And therefore, many of the 'mainstream' schools around the world have not been able to exercise all-pervading awareness on complex-integrated place cosmos.

Let's explore.

Transformative Place Pedagogy: Shifting Perspectives

Perhaps, Heidegger's (1962) phenomenal 'being-in-the-world' is Sobel's (1996) embodied 'being in the place'.It is very paradoxical that since the beginning of 'modern' education, though school existed in the place, for along, the place didn't exist in the school (Barane et al., 2015). School boundaries as a place remained largely time disciplined, where students were controlled by the daily rhythm of school routine, clock needles, and bells (Holloway & Valentine 2003). The school became a closed place to 'produce' students ready enough to live in the open place.

Progressive educationists like Dewey (1916), Freire (1970), Kolb (1984), and Sobel (1996) among few others continuously advocated for experiential learning in (and from) the immediate lifeworld. For decades, educators have been looking for alternatives that facilitate creativity, integrated use of technology, entrepreneurship (see Wagner, 2012). But, studies (Biesta, 2006; Palmer, 1990) show that despite such 'revolutionary advocacies' to add a place in school education, place-based education as an innovative (and emergent) pedagogical model has not been able to move beyond the residual and dominant milieu of practice architecture of 19th-century schooling legacy. Many of the pedagogical innovations for outdoor teaching and learning have ended with cultural fit in dominant approaches.

In this background, it seems that place-based education is a reaction to hegemonic pedagogical imagery of mastery and control; a reaction to mechanist view of the universe. The reaction further developed a foundation for transformative place

pedagogies. The pedagogies are introducing inter-disciplinary (and also transdisciplinary) approaches in education (Heilbron, 2003), which in the language of transformative educators Duenkel, Pratt and Sullivan (2014), is an endeavor of seeking pedagogical wholeheartedness. Also, in the language of Williams (2013), looking for transformative (place) pedagogies as such is an endeavor of seeking ecological relationality through critical onto-epistemological knowing.

Burns's (2015) calling for transformative sustainability pedagogy showed many possibilities of learning from the place, ecological systems, and indigenous wisdom. As Klein (2018) suggested, such learning needed everyday place and human landscapes as the pedagogical source, for which school pedagogies had to move beyond disciplinary design. Such suggestions for transformative place pedagogies, according to Hathaway (2017) have activated hope in crisis. But, the pedagogies have to dare to move beyond dominant pedagogical designs of closed disciplines. Here follow few rationales that suggest transformative place pedagogies to move beyond disciplinary design. Let's see-

'Place' Beyond Disciplinary Design: Embodying a New Story

The recent philosophical movements and scientific discoveries have forwarded a broad spectrum of concepts concerning 'trans-disciplinary place-wholeness' in education (see Burns, 2015; Klein, 2018; Wheeler, 2014; Williams, 2018). Particularly, the developments in system thinking, non-anthropocentrism, affect theory, chaos theory, quantum theory, new humanism, and new materialism have set the ground to understand the complexity of place-ecology through a holistic perspective.

For centuries, scientific humanism made a large focus on anthropocentrism, which strengthened a systematic bias to the non-human world (see Braidotti, 2019;

Lewis & Owen, 2020). It legitimized individualism and egocentrism in education and development (Tesar, 2021; Wenz, 2001). Non-anthropocentrism, on the other, argues that human beings co-evolve with other forms of life. As every being is in co-evolving relation to every other being and non-being in the world, the non-human world can never be ignored. Non-anthropocentrism, together with affect theory, questions the centrality of the human subject in a way that every being and non-being is webbed in their connected relations (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010). This relational embeddedness, not limited to human bodies alone, forms collective thoughts and emotions in the continuous order and chaos of relational wholeness.

Chaos theory, which emerged from Einstein's relativity theory, which later strengthened the claims of quantum theory (Dion, 2007), understands this wholeness in terms of complexity and flux, where slight variation in one area of the system is supposed to make non-linear, rhizomatic variations across the system. Though chaos theory believes in non-linear change, it still sees ecological order in the apparent disorder (Heilbron, 2003).

Such logic of interdependence is eloquently making shifts on traditional humanist ways of understanding school pedagogies that pedagogies shouldn't be limited to linear disciplines. Doing so, the undertakings eloquently advocate human beings' pedagogical responsibilities to ecological wholeness (Nayar, 2014). Such an organic conception of unity counters 'modern advocacy' for the specialization of knowledge. Lange (2018) sees these recent ecological turns, the call for pedagogies of relationality.

Arrival So Far: From Place to Ecological Reconstruction

Arriving at this stage, now, we can eloquently argue that 'place' and 'emplaced pedagogies' are not the new discourse in the field of education. Though

not used the name place-based learning, the history of human civilization was but the history of place-based learning (Kahn, 2010; Sobel, 1996). It is in the immediate place that human beings learned to create some form of culture, to communicate, and to interact. It is in the place that human beings learned to live in a family, in a community, to produce food, to store it, to cook, to tell stories, to dream, to read, and to write, all interacting in the place. As the origin and the growth of human civilization is the result of their continuous interaction with the place, it shows, thus, that the recent notions of place-based learning are not 'new callings'. Instead, as Burns (2015) suggests, it is regenerative connections for the wisdom of ecological systems.

It appears that only in later centuries when human beings needed a 'mass of trained force' to run 'industries' based on prescribed 'standards' (Kane, 2004), the learning began to go detached from the place interaction. The industrial 'civilization' caged human learning within linear disciplinary walls and established the notion of 'parrot rituals' as the standard form of education. Therefore, it seems that the present notions of place-based learning are but the antithesis to the decontextualized form of content learning inside the school classrooms. They are reactions to the closed nature of mind-centered intellectualism. But, unfortunately, place-based educations, in their 'struggle' to fit in Western-Modern pedagogical design, are in many ways unable to re-introduce the age-old ecological relationality and holistic envisioning in education.

Section IV: Place Historicity and Cultural Milieu of Nepali Schools

In the process of developing 'place sense' within teaching and learning for belonging, being, and becoming, the study team continuously discussed how 'place' has been incorporated traditionally in the school education of Nepal. We discussed it together in our group. Making the most of the discussions, I studied available

literature as well. As I found it, there have been some informed studies on the place and place dynamics of Nepali communities. Long back, Subedi (1993) made a detailed place study concerning place-mobility in rural Nepal, which stressed the concern for the uniquely formed historical, cultural, ethnic, and social dimensions of the place. Likewise, concerning the cultural shifts in the rural lifeworld of Nepali communities, Bhattachan (1999) and Acharya (2002) suggested the need for the place-informed response to globalization. Following the trend, Chemjong (2003) not only explored *Mundhum's* place-spirit but also stressed the need for soul-searching of all the knowledge heritages of Nepali communities. In terms of education, Awasthi (2004) stressed the need to bring existing language and cultural communities into regular schooling practices. Acknowledging the past studies, Luitel (2009) made critical observations of the decontextualized school curriculum in Nepal. Likewise, Rai (2018) showed how urbanization as a process of materializing globalization has compelled ethnic migrants from rural communities to forget their cultural roots, and learn alien ways of living.

The idea of place and open lifeworld as a source of wisdom, however, has been powerfully shaped in the socio-political and literary thoughts of Nepal. In his essay, *Education*, poet laureate Laxmi Prashad Devekota condemned (the Western-Modern) schooling ethos as lifeless industries to manufacture machines. In his essay, *education*, advocating life-based holistic knowing, he wrote, "I call education that, which makes a man a complete human, which teaches to utilize time and manufactures belief" (See Devkota, 2007). For this, he suggested nature and the lifeworld as the open-source of wisdom.

<div align="center">

यस्तो रहस्यमय जीवन बुझ्नलाई,

जानूकहाँ ? पढनुके? गुरु को बनाई?

</div>

फुल्दो गुलाबबिच ज्ञानअनेक फुल्छन्

उद्यानमा बस गई सब तत्व खुल्छन्।

Journeying beyond humanism, the poet's posthumanist ecological tone is explicit in the line- 'people and people do not live in harmony, but people and nature do'.The verse makes explicit that embodying wisdom through attuning to place is but their mutuality and reciprocity in transformation.

Also, thinking and acting beyond cynicism, Nepal has given Village lifeworld the political priority. B. P. Koirala's political appeal to make state policies 'taking in the heart the Nepali village, and in hand the Nepali soil', in a way or other, stressed the need for place authenticities. Such advocacies encouraged the Gandhian concept of village *Swaraj* (see Bista, 2014; Panda, 2020). Village *Swaraj* is a Gandhian concept of self-dependency and autonomy of rural lifeworld. It was seemingly an appeal to harmonize political and economic freedom with place authenticities. With similar sentiment, in 1967, the *Panchyat* (the nationalist movement in Nepal) promoted the 'Back to Village Campaign' (Adhikari, 2015). Such initiations were supposed to seek village lifeworld and resources at the heart of school education, its curriculum, and pedagogies.

Despite these, it seems that the modern ideals of 'study book inside the classroom, secure good exam mark, and get prepared for future jobs' deeply rooted the 'place isolated' practice architecture and cultural milieu in school education of Nepal. In this background, here I argue in this section that the school education couldn't maintain the 'standards' of modern education because most of its educational ethos was against the place essential of the Nepali context (Wagle, Luitel, & Krog, 2019). Also, falling under the neo-liberal political agenda of the nation, the schools to

date haven't dared to move beyond the established (which initially was 'imported')
practice architecture of modern schooling.

Informed through such hermeneutic exercising of literature re(view), narrated
below is a short 'place history' of Nepali schools. Moving ahead, we may begin to
realize that many innovative models are introduced in Nepali schools (like CAS, local
curriculum), but many of them have appeared as mere postmodern 'reactions' to
linearly designed central constructs. As many of those innovative models are not
compatible with 'place essence', those models have added extra mess in the school
education of Nepal.

Let's see-

The Beginning and the Continuity of Displacement

The history of place discourse of Nepali schools goes long back to the origin
of Gurukul[36] educational practices arising from the Hindu *Vedas*, and Monasteries
arising from Buddhist teachings. The learning would take place in an open space,
where everyday life skills were the curricular domains.

In Gurukul, the *sishyas* (disciples) would take *Vedic* lessons directly under the
guidance of *Gurus,* who used to be exclusively males. The gurus would hold a special
place, where the *sishya* would devote, and tune himself with the guru.

But, access to Gurukul education was limited for a selected group of people
(Sharma, 1990). Deviated from its original ideals of learning life skills, later Gurukul
education began to limit its learning arena to mere religious and military training (see
Sharma 1986). Slowly Nepali *Vidyalaya*[37] deviated from its original *dharma* of
exercising *Vidhya* of higher significance.

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[36]Gurukul, meaning the family of the Guru
[37]Vidhyalaya, meaning a place for wisdom

Also, for long, though not formal, the cast-based labor division and the transmission of family knowledge from the elder to the younger generation was a socially established learning culture of Nepal. And it was another form of traditionally established 'life learning' practices of Nepali communities. But, unfortunately, when caste-based hierarchies developed as a more rigid social order, they excluded a large number of Nepali citizens from education. Maybe, the uninclusive hierarchical rigidity prevalent in Nepali societies became so counter-reactive that Nepal began to address the problem through modern ideals of mass education.

If we mark the establishment of Durbar[38] School in 1854 as a beginning of formal education in Nepal, maybe it is the very root from where colonial legacy entered and 'infected' the Nepali education policies for a long. For example, Ranas established Darbar High School as a private English institution. Its curriculum included the history and geography of India and Britain (Onta, 1997). It was the stage from where 'imported ideas' began to get educational priority than 'organic' essentials.

'Nepal' was not in the curriculum. Established for the selected few, particularly to elite Ranas, it was not inclusive as well.

Schooling for the general people began only after the end of the Rana regime in 1951. Formal education in Nepal flourished with the establishment of the Nepal National Education Commission in 1956. It came with both a promise and a problem. The promise was that it brought a large mass of students inside the classroom. Otherwise, in 1951, the literacy rate of Nepal was less than 9.5 percent (NNEPC, 1956, p. 23). The commission came with a problem as well. For example, the commission introduced a centrally prescribed disciplinary school education and

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[38]Darbar, meaning palace

curricular practices throughout the country. It also introduced in-door pedagogies and standardized examinations.

Though the Commission sought to enrich Nepali socio-cultural identity through Nepali language, kingship, and Hindu religion as uniquely formed Nepali national identity (NNEPC, 1956); it was heavily influenced by the 'modern ideals' of closed linearity from the outside. Unfortunately, the nationalist movement seemingly turned to be counterproductive in a way that it excluded many socio-cultural and religious identities of Nepal. Slowly, it appeared that the dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu of 'modern schooling' with their linear disciplinary ethos began to spread its root and developed as a dominant cultural milieu in Nepali land.

The Place, the National, the Global, and the Local

Now I discuss how at different stages of the historical development of Nepal, the place discourses in Nepali school education appear to take the form of the national, the global, and the local. Passing through the text, you may begin to realize how in the name of 'innovative models' school education of Nepal gradually added the postmodern reactionary mess against the 'imported' cultural milieu of dominant practice architecture. It appears that despite the suggestions from the studies (e.g., Awasti, 2004; Chemjong, 2003; Luitel, 2009; Rai, 2018), school education of Nepal continued with an essentialist, foundationalist, and exclusivist definition of learning, and never at any time, thought in terms of 'soul searching' and 'homegoing'.

Place as the Central and the National

In the *Panchayat* system[39], incorporating its nationalist ideals, NESP (1971) created a uniform and centralized national system of education in the country. It

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[39]Three decades of active monarchy in Nepal

aimed to promote 'Nepaliness' through *ek bhasha, ek bhesh, ek dhesh* (one language, one dress, one nation) (Caddell, 2007). But, the government made no effort to explore the 'Nepali soul' in the school education of Nepal. It didn't recognize that the 'Nepali soul' is a complex 'ecological soul' of many ethnic communities (see chapter four).

Doing so, the policy provisions not only undermined Nepali wisdom traditions and cultural practices but also limited the role of the local community just in providing local resources for school construction. This highly centralized and regulated system, to a degree, alienated the school system from the local communities.

The 'national' curriculum of Nepal with its belief in uniformity didn't address multiethnic and multilingual Nepali identities. It was not inclusive as well. For example, in her study of *Panchayat* school textbooks, Pigg (1992) and Upadhyaya (2010) identifies that, in transmitting a discursive representation of national space, the textbooks would institutionally dominate ethnic, rural, and non-Hindu groups. The curricular contents would place these groups in an inferior position.

The subsequent education policies in Nepal, like Community School Support Project (CSSP, 2003–2007) and School Sector Reform Programme (SSRP, 2009–15) repeatedly introduced school education as a process of modernizing the self (Valentin, 2011), where adopting Western-European 'standards' were overly romanticized.

Place as 'De-Central' and the Local

In 1998, the government passed the Local Self Governance Act. The act was supposed to empower the local government bodies such as the VDCs and Municipalities. It was from that time the VDCs and the Municipalities began formulating and executing the Village Education Plan. Interestingly, however, the more Nepal began to make discussions on decentralization and localization of Nepali

education, the years after the restoration of democracy in 1998 experienced the greater influence of global forces on the policymaking process. One of the reasons was the influence of the global campaign for the EFA movement.

A few studies (e.g., Khanal, 2006, 2010) on educational decentralization have concluded that the current forms of decentralization in primary education have not brought any substantial changes in classroom teaching and learning. So, where are the constraints? It seems that we have not yet made any studies in this direction.

The 2015 promulgated constitution (GoN, 2015) has introduced a federal system. It has come with the policy of educational decentralization, providing the fundamental basis for structural and functional reforms in the education system. It is also in the process of implementing a new curriculum model through local governance. Despite such initiatives, it is eloquently visible that "while the new constitution is a major national achievement, its federal nature presents several challenges for the education sector related to how the federal state will function" (SSDP, 2016, p. 20). Maybe, we have arrived in the context, where the 'local agenda' of education is likely to get discussed than at any other time in the history of education in Nepal.

Local Curriculum, a Place-Breakthrough in Nepali Schools

Nepal government introduced the policy provision for local curriculum as an entry for emplaced pedagogies. Being aware of its implementation practices was of equal importance for us. In the realization, our study team explored policy literature on the history of the local curriculum in Nepali schools as well. It was seemingly important because the local curriculum policy provision, its implementation, and practice were some of the visible efforts of the Nepal government to integrate place in school education.

We discussed that the idea of educating people based on the local needs of the people is not new in Nepal. In 1992, the National Education Commission, for the first time, recognized the importance of incorporating local need-based learning in school education (NEC, 1992). It recommended educational reform to address the needs. In the same year, Nepal implemented Primary Education Curriculum (1992). There, it incorporated the provision of the local curriculum (CDC, 1992). Later, Nepal revisited the primary school curriculum in 2003 and again in 2005. The national curriculum framework of 2005 made the provision of partial inclusion of local content in selected subjects (CDC, 2005). It made provision to include a 20 percent course weightage of local contents in social studies, in creative and expressive arts, and in physical education. It also made the provision of 100 percent weightage for a separate local need-based curriculum. Schools could include the mother language as a local curriculum.

Still later, in 2010, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) published directives related to the local curriculum (CDC, 2010). The intent of introducing a local curriculum was to empower local stakeholders in designing the relevant curriculum (CDC, 2010). But are schools practicing this? Are local authorities aware of such participatory nature of the local curriculum? Despite such initiatives, studies (CEIR, 2010; Subedi, 2018) observed prevalent policy practice gaps in implementing local curriculum policy provisions in Nepali schools. Till 2010, no school had developed and implemented its textbooks on the local curriculum (CERI, 2010). Nepal also experienced a popular trend of teaching the English language instead of the local curriculum (Subedi, 2018). The trend was what we had experienced in the study school and in other schools in nearby communities as well.

The question now is- why many schools in Nepal couldn't implement the local curriculum policy provision of the Nepal government? Is 'local' the right matching for emplaced pedagogies? Maybe, unlike the essentialist, foundationalist, and exclusivist definition of locals, we have to begin adopting heterogeneous standpoints.

'Local/ Global' is not the Right Match

"The old 20th century political model of left vs. right is now basically irrelevant, and the real divide today is between global and national, global or local", wrote historian Yuval Harari. But, concerning the place perspectives as 'all-pervading awareness at the immediate phenomenon around', the linguistic binaries as 'local/ global' don't appear as a right match for this study.

What is local?

What is global?

You may call certain spatial structures (levels, scales, distances,) as local. You may describe local in terms of various objects, symbols, events, networks, and identities (Nayak, 2003). But, again the question is- maybe there is not an object, symbol, and network independent of other objects, symbols, and networks in an ever-widening circle. You may see present local reality as composed of many threads of spider webs.

Figure 32: Local-global widening circle

(Source:https://crystalclearintuition.com)

Under such circumstances, how could you call a certain spatial structure as local? Isn't it that when you locate yourself somewhere around, you will be in the local and the global at the same time? Isn't it something like what George Modelski called it- the layer-cake model- the whole and the parts without the boundaries (Modelski, 1972)? Here cultures and the lifeworld intermesh in a way that you don't find visible borderlines of the local and the universal. Also, you cannot observe one without bringing into reference the other.

Now, you may also explain it in terms of specific sizes and/ or ranges (Sassen, 2007). For example, global means big and local small. In this explanation, local involves face-to-face interactions between physically co-present individuals. But again the question is, where to draw the boundary separating what is local and what is global? Maybe there is no explanation on where the local ends and where the global begins. The open digimodern world at present is becoming more and more unified or homogeneous (see Friedman, 2005). In this context, there seems dynamism in what we call local, or regional, or national, or global. Maybe, in the ecological renderings at present, the artificial fixing of the border doesn't work.

Now you may begin understanding local as a counter-reaction to the 'modern' promise for 'one' universal standard (Agnew, 2003). If so, the global/local binaries are more a political and social-justice issue than ecological. Maybe decolonial and indigenous movements have the answer.

The Place, the Decolonial, and the Indigenous

Together with the global, the national, and the local, the place discourses of Nepali education have come with decolonial and indigenous renderings as well. If the linguistics use like the global, the national, and the local is not a good match for

'place-ecologies' of emplaced pedagogies, then how are the other uses like decolonial and the indigenous?

Let's explore-

Decolonial and Indigenous is not the Right Match either

Often, Western-Modern conceptualization of place brings together the place, the decolonizing, and the indigenous perspectives together. Such decolonizing and indigenous approaches to place are often spatially and temporally specific (Tuck & Yang, 2012). In the language of Goeman (2013), the approaches are conditioned to the ideological base of hierarchies and binaries (Goeman, 2013). As such, these decolonizing and indigenous perspectives of place are supposed to engage the *survivance* of local communities (Tuck & Yang, 2014). *Survivance* is a (political) tendency to see local indigenous communities in a way as they always have been (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). If so, it seems that such decolonial (or anticolonial) and indigenous tendencies (maybe the hypnotic trance) to remain isolated and 'as it is' is self-suicidal.

The anticolonial methods, in their tendency to romanticize the 'other', seem more a method of resistance i.e., resistance with anger and destructive force. Maybe for the 'free and healthy growth' of communal civilization, such resistance with anger and destruction is necessary at some stages (see Agrawal, 2002). But what if such 'enemy seeking' tendencies continues as established 'local and indigenous' culture? Maybe, now as Vizenor et al. (2014) suggest, anticolonial, local, and indigenous have to be expressed and imagined to create a sense of presence. It is more a retrospective building of place-worlds- who am I? Why I am here? Where am I going? Likely, the process demands 'home-going' and 'soul-searching' than politically motivated decolonial and indigenous renderings.

Arriving at this stage, now we begin to see that even the 'reactive' and 'enemy seeking' decolonial and indigenous renderings are not the right match for this study. The reactionary renderings are unlikely to address ecological relationality and place authenticity. Maybe, therefore, in our enthusiasm for means, we should not overlook the ends. Going further, Salmon (2012) stresses that now is the time to look for a place that ensures a reverberating sense of comfort and well-being. It seeks a sense of place-security, where a member of 'the local indigenous community' may find how one is bound to everything around in a reciprocal relationship. In Tuck and Guishard's (2013) words, unlike reactive local, decolonial, and indigenous renderings, now we begin to see an anticipatory and proactive sense of place and begin to make place sense through relational ontology (ies). It is seemingly the way towards ethnoecology.

Towards Ethnoecology: The Relational Ontology (ies) of Place

Arriving at this stage, my earlier development of place-awareness as 'mind-body integrated self' has been further shaped as embodied place-relationalities. It appears that the place is a material-discursive widening circle. Place cosmos is unique, dynamic, and normative all at the same time. Located somewhere in this web-like widening circle, the hyper-global and the hyper-local present reality of rural Nepali lifeworld (like any other lifeworld at any corner of the world) appears to seek new educational ontology, which is but the relational ontologies of place. This cosmovision allows recognition of cultural values and offers an integrative approach to the study of the process of human appropriation of nature. Ethnographers Narciso Barrera-Bassols and Victor M. Toledo understand this cosmovision in terms of *ethnoecology*, which is but an integrated or holistic view. Ethnoecology is a human-ecological or socio-ecological oriented approach to experiencing the (rural) lifeworld (see Barrera-Bassols, 2003; Toledo, 1992, 2002). The realization calls for the use of a

variety of epistemologies, wisdom traditions, and methodological procedures to understand the 'shifting' place phenomenon.

In a similar vein, Luitel and Taylor (2019) look ahead at paradigm shifts in the way we reconceptualize the global and the local- not in binaries but in their relationalities. Also, Ferreira (2017) makes a vision of such paradigm shifts in terms of the nature-friendly and conscientization-driven planetary system. In the language of Radhakrishna (1985), the 'ends' of any time and space informed 'being and becoming' is the 'realization of the self'. It is all about the spiritual fostering of the individual learner being open to the Earth's wisdom. Radhakrishna (1980) elaborated these seeking of place wisdom as "developing our inner spiritual nature", where, connected and attuned to the place, we are supposed to gain a new kind of relatedness to the world and grow into freedom. In this intrinsic growth from within, the integrity of the self is not compromised. Maybe, it is through these attuning and harmonizing means of self-realization, we then become aware of ourselves as active, creative individuals. Maybe, such 'place-aware self' don't live by any discipline of external authority; don't live by any limit of disciplinary binaries but by the inward rule of 'ground of being experiences' (Morgan, 2012), experiencing a wider sense of self.

It seems, thus, that human beings' tendency to deviate from the realization of 'One Ecological Self'' has created such linguistic binaries as local, global, colonial, decolonial, and indigenous among others. Unlike the ethnoecology of 'one ecological relationality', such deviations have entered Nepali societies into the never-ending mess of modern and postmodern reactions. It appears that in education, the mess entered as the Trojan horse of displaced pedagogies. Let's explore further-

The Trojan Horse[40] of Displaced Pedagogies

Dear reader, arriving at this stage what meaning do you make on place historicity of school education of Nepal? My understanding is that, unlike the message from ethnoecology, the major place-discourses of Nepal either in the name of the national, the local, the global, the central, the decentral, the colonial, the decolonial, and the indigenous, all stem from the dominant practice architecture and the cultural milieu of modernity and the postmodern reactions against this established cultural milieu. In other words, it is the mess arising from 'in', 'within', and 'beyond' the continuous dialogues between the modern 'pedagogy of confirmation' Vs. postmodern 'pedagogy of reaction', of which both the movements couldn't eloquently address ethnoecological place relationality and complexity.

Likely, both the modern and the postmodern movements and the pedagogical ideals they suggested (as they lacked Nepali soul, the earth, and the lifeworld) were in many ways the 'Trojan Horse' of displaced pedagogies (also see Lange, 2012). For example, with the rise of modern education in Nepal, it romanticized the 'imported' educational ethos of linearly drawn essentialist ontology and epistemology as of 'quality' and 'standards' (Wagle et al., 2019). In long run, it appeared to have become the dominant practice architecture of Nepali schools. The practice architecture established certain 'expectations' of the teachers, the students, and the parents on 'what is good'. Now, the modern ethos of education as 'teach and learn for good exam results' became the cultural milieu, and every activity that supports this dominant ethos became 'good'.

With the political shifts and the shifts in socio-economic values, other innovations that entered the school and the classroom came as a reaction to colonial,

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[40] A metaphor taken from a story of the Trojan War, the horse as a gift was a deceitful trick that the Greek used to enter the independent city of Troy, and win the city.

centralized, and confirming tendencies of modern education (see Wagle et al., 2019).
But, it seems that the innovations were continuously hindered by pre-defined
expectations of indoor classroom structures. Despite innovative pedagogies and
curriculum developments, it is likely that, as they couldn't move beyond the
established structure, the 'talk about' pedagogical models couldn't get effectively
'actioned'. Likely, such innovative models continuously added the mess. And schools
in Nepal continuously made 'vain' attempts to fit 'innovations' within the established
structure- the structure which itself was 'imported', and therefore, beyond the place
essential. The mess (of the Trojan horse) continued, but it appeared that the schools in
Nepal were unlikely to turn back and observe the root cause of the mess.

So what?

Chapter Conclusion: Undergoing Place as 'Homegoing' and 'Soulsearching'

Dear reader, I began this chapter with a doubt of a kind- 'who (and whose
place) is responsible for COVID 19 pandemics?' If it was a few years back, maybe I
would 'discover some other' (maybe from another context) to blame. Now, arriving at
this stage, and acknowledging the 'new ecological turn' in thoughts and actions, I
have come to acknowledge every being's (and non-being's) ever-widening ecological
responsibilities for everything that is heard and seen.

Overall, these ecological hermeneutics of literature (re)view built the
argument that place is the complex-built widening circle of mind-body integrated self
wherein locates the belonging, being, and becoming of the beings and the non-beings
in their relational totalities. Hindu-Buddhist knowledge tradition views 'place self' as
identical to 'human self', which is the divided of the undivided 'One'. In other words,
the place is 'one ecological whole', the cosmic *mandala*, which stems from the need
for ecological sincerity and ethical responsibilities in education.

Despite this, our (re)view of 'place pedagogies' revealed that though the place has been the first school and the curriculum of the early phases of human civilization, the place sense has been largely isolated in 'modern schools'. The dominant practice architecture of modern schools has run educational activities within the cultural milieu of 'study prescribed texts for good exam results'. Doing so, modernity has established a seemingly paradoxical pedagogical metaphor something like 'study inside the classroom to get prepared for the outer-world tomorrow'. Though active place-based pedagogies are introduced as innovative models, they are seemingly an attempt for cultural fit within the dominant disciplinary constructs.

 Nepali education is in many ways parallel to these global 'standards and shifts'. But, as the 'imported' standards of modern education of Nepal are not compatible to place essential, it appears that the dominant (and displaced) pedagogies are not adequately addressing the educational ethos of belonging, being, and becoming of the students, teachers, and the local inhabitants. There have been many reforms, but most often the reforms are mere a postmodern reaction to modern (displaced) educational constructs. Likely, the reaction is just adding extra mess and never-ending scorns.

Under such circumstances, the chapter argues the need to go to the root of the problem and find ways to address it, even if one has to move beyond the disciplinary boundaries and the standardized rules of the academy (Spivak, 2003). If the mess of displaced pedagogies is the root problem, rather than trying to improve it with additional 'imported' (and therefore displaced) pedagogical models, moving homewards, and soul searching in education could be the way. The home-going (Awasti, 2004) and soul-searching as such are likely to discover the essential nature of

the place where the school is located and to learn to act in accordance with the place essential, the place *Dharma*.

Also, the chapter is mindful that such an exercise for 'soul searching' has to move beyond personal (and communal) bias and prejudices. In this 'soul-searching', it appears that Nepal has to pass through its anti-ecological dogmas' and discover how its belief systems within the stratified social structure (e.g., castes and gender) have affected schooling practices.

…

Now I invite you to the next chapter. Considering the spirally-built understandings of place, emplaced pedagogies, and place historicity in school education of Nepal (which we made in this chapter), the next chapter makes ecologically circular 'awareness' of the place, Dapcha*,* Dharmashala. It is from that 'awareness context', the remaining chapters observe PAR action-reflections for emplaced pedagogies in Dapcha*,* Dharmashala located Janahit School, and make relational meaning on it. Let's move-

How is the *place-dharma* of Dapcha Dharmashala?

Figure 33: Namobuddha, extending to Dapch Dharmashala

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ECO-SPIRITUAL TRANSDISCIPLINARY PLACE-SPIRIT OF DAPCHA

DHARAMSHALA

In Hindu-Buddhist, and ethnic traditions of Nepal, particularly in the Brahmin, and the Newari communities, the tree *Peepal* (*Bodhi* in Buddhist literature, and *ashvatha*[41]in Sanskrit literature) has both cultural and ecological importance. Also, the tree has educational relevance in village life. For example, during the time of its establishment, following the *Gurukul* traditions, the first few days of the Janahit School had run below the *Peepal* tree in Dharmashala. Beyond the ecological and the spiritual worth, the *Peepal* tree has the social meaning of the village identity as well. During our stay in Dapcha communities, often the village *chautara* under the *Peepal* tree were our favorite spots for an informal discussion with the villagers. Acknowledging the value of the tree in village lifeworld, this chapter makes metaphorical use of the cosmic tree, the *Peepal*, as the tree of life (Radhakrishna, 1985, p.326), and views the ecologically holistic cosmic process inherent in the place DapchaDharamashala. As portrayed in the poem below, the tree represents the cosmic ecological coherence of the chaos and the order, without any demarcation on its flow around the origin and the end.

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[41]*Ashvatha* represents the combined image of cosmic world, where roots symbolize creation, main stamen to existence, and the tips to involution. According to Swami Chinmayananda (2011) the term Ashvatha refers something that is ever changing. The life and seed of the tree ever changes (and therefore are eternal) in the course of their own ecological Dharma.

Standing somewhere in

Dharmashala[42]

The tree of life

The cosmic tree

The *peepal*

With root above

And branches below

This world tree is eternal

…

I hear it saying-

The place is a living organism

United with the Supreme

Neither has it had an end

Nor beginning

It just

Takes a cosmic refugee

And

Plays the cosmic *Leela*

…

This tree of life- the *peepal*

A fragment of my own

Having become a living soul

Transcends me a wisdom-

This *peepal*

Is where I belong

---

[42]Land of righteousness

Is who I am

And

Is what I am to become

Section I: Thinking like *Peepal*

Why are we here at school? What do all these teaching and learning mean? Where do we move from here? When our PAR team began developing awareness on these questions, we began to see meaningful learning as place-informed lifeful learning for belonging, being, and becoming. Building awareness of what actually is the place was important for us. Accordingly, in chapter three, we (the researchers and the readers together) developed a detailed presence on place and place discourses in school education (of Nepal) and developed an embodied idea that place is a 'mind-body integrated self'(see O'Neil, 2018), wherein lies the belonging, being, and becoming; that it is mediate-immediate (Heron, 2006); that it is a complexly built relational whole (Lange, 2018); and that it is integrated and transdisciplinary (Burns, 2015).

But, as discussed in chapter three, the 19th-century modern education with its linear and disciplinary ethos isolated transdisciplinary-place inside the walls. This legacy of dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu of modern schools, in the name of pedagogical innovation, added to it many other postmodern 'reactions'. Despite this, many of the 'talk about' innovations couldn't break the long-established disciplinary legacy of modern schools with their fundamental principles of 'learning for grades' and 'future preparation'. Falling on the traps, many of the 'imported' (and therefore, displaced) innovations within disciplinary designs would 'fail' and would end adding extra mess in the dominant practice architecture. Under such circumstances, we wrapped chapter three with a concluding remark that

transdisciplinarity, 'soul searching' and 'homegoing' (see Awasti, 2004; Etim, 2019) has to be the driving force of pedagogical design and innovations. It demands a constructive look at the place ecologies, free from personal (and communal) bias and prejudices.

As I narrated in the introductory chapter, a PAR project (for emplaced pedagogies) in a school of Dapcha, Nepal informs this study. Therefore, to explore emplaced pedagogies for belonging, being, and becoming in the school of this community, we had to be aware of its place spirit. Grounded on our Chapter three understanding of place as all-pervading awareness to here-now, in this chapter, we will together explore the place-spirit (the essential place *dharma*) of Dapcha communities. Doing so, we will begin to 'think like the *Peepal* tree' in its web-like complexities and place relationalities, where we give undivided consideration for our ethical responsibilities to preserve its authenticity. It is through this 'place-spirit' we will reflect on our overall PAR journeys and arrivals.

Exploring the place-spirit of *Dapcha* communities, for various reasons, was important for the PAR team. It was important because the everyday lifeworld of the community would shape their 'place sense'. It was also important that their stories, their memories, and dreams would inform the educational expectations of the community. Thus, the PAR team had to develop an awareness of what has changed over time and what has not. In the process, I explored the physical, economic, and social context of the community. I also explored local wisdom and worldviews.

Based on our embodied awareness and presence at the everyday lifeworld of the place, I drew on an 'awareness context' that I supposed would imagine the very soul of *Dapcha* communities, and if incorporated in school pedagogy, would address the aspirations and needs of the place.

Being Thoughtful on the Mystics

Exploring the place-spirit of *Dapcha* civilization was not an easy venture. Like the cosmic *peepal* tree, as portrayed at the beginning of this chapter, the branches of this place (like any other place) are extended all around, below and above. It is formless, ineffable, and inexpressible: and therefore, our direct observation could perceive neither its beginning nor its end.

So what?

Thus, to portray these place mystics, detaching myself from the 'linguistic standards' in modern academia, I have taken refuge in the primal consciousness, the surreal form of mythical *Leela* awareness (and *Leela* writing), from which I suppose I could articulate this cosmic energy. This performative reflexivity like cinematography (and cosmic *Leela* dance) is partially real and partially fictional.

Also, it is partially mythical, continuously flowing through order and chaos.

As you begin to study (maybe perform with the text), you may find that this text, this narrative collage, which Kincheloe (2005) calls it a Bricolage[43], leaps forward and backward without any sequential progression. Many voices speak at once and form a 'hermeneutic helix[44]' (Hampson (2007). And sometimes, you may see me (leaving my researcher's role) join the participants in their everyday performances, and also join you, the readers, and perform a performative (textual) dance together.

Here begins the performance.

Act I, Scene I: Building Awareness is not a Framework Building

Dear reader, there is a general trend in our dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu of academic research that we build a theoretical framework taking references from established theories.

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[43]A canvas-like creation from diverse range of things and colors
[44] A complex learning process of returning to the origin, and extend being more matured than the earlier

Instead, here I have used the term 'awareness context[45]'.

Now you may ask- what is this called 'awareness context'? Isn't it a theory-building? It may be a theory building. Or, maybe not! To understand actually what this 'awareness context' is, now I take refugees to primal consciousness. Here it goes-

…

Stop! Stop for a moment!

While still working on this chapter, I heard a voice coming from somewhere out, maybe from university libraries.

Who, who is this? Why have you come here? I asked.

I am 'academic standards'. Isn't it that you are constructing a theoretical framework here? Why don't you say this clear to your readers? Why do you call it 'awareness context' instead?

Oh! I got it. Maybe Mr. Standards is annoyed that he didn't find his existence here as bold as he would find in many other academic theses.

I tried to convince him. "Mr. Standards, maybe your 'overly reliance' for the theoretical framework is not the right match for this study".

"There are a few reasons behind this", I continued.

"Because theoretical framework uses existing theory or theories, and as these theories are previously formed ideas and knowledge, overreliance on those theories may undermine actual ideas and belief that you gain from the embodied experience of the phenomenon.

I looked at Mr. Standards. Maybe he was still not convinced.

With little doubt, he asked-

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[45]Taking an academic refugee to postformal thinking, my use of awareness context instead of theoretical framework is cohesive to the theme of place pedagogy. In the process, I have been aware of Dapcha civilization, which I have metaphorically called it Dapch Curriculum. It is from this Awareness context of Dapcha Curriculum, I have come with *yogic* reflection of the PAR phenomenon.

"Isn't it that you need 'established' theories to guide the study (Anfora & Mertz, 2015); to connect the study to existing scholarship; to identify the logic behind your methodological choices?"

He raised his voice, "You need a theoretical framework that maps all the literature".

I was about to speak, and there came yet another voice.

"Who, who is this", I asked.

Mr. Standards also looked at the side from where there came the voice.

"I am Professor (Post)standards. Maybe you have heard and read my claims for non-standard (rhizomatic) authenticity in (post)qualitative research design."He reminded us of the published articles on (post)qualitative research (e.g., St. Pierre,2013; Tesar, 2021; Ulmer, 2017) and said, "I have been hearing you two for long. Listen! I have something to share".

Then he said, "Maybe you both are partially right, but I suggest that such 'conceptual' exercises for theoretical framework have potential advantages as well as liabilities".

(Post)standards continued-

"Theories are everywhere. Human beings simply can't escape from theories. But, overreliance on established theories as a framework may control an 'authentic' study. Such tendencies to rely on 'imported theories' may undermine the embodied awareness of immediate reality" (also see Braidotti, 2019; Tesar, 2021)

He looked at me and then turned to Mr. Standards.

"And in the studies like this, where we see the immediate phenomenon through embodied logics, deductive logic of established theories are not a good match."

I looked at Mr. Standards. He was still not ready enough to accept.

"Yes, maybe I was saying the same", I said.

"And therefore, in acknowledging the primacy of lived experiences, here, I have deliberately avoided such methodological orthodoxies of 'framing' the existing theories. Here, the oral and the observed stories are our 'theories' (Goodson, 2010, p.11)", I continued speaking. As Luttrell (2010) suggests, they are "dynamic, unfolding over time, and are contingent on multiple and sometimes unpredictable factors" (p. 10).

After a short pause, I said, "My place narratives are like cosmic *peepal,* with branches below, and roots above; rooted but unmoving they move".

"Ok, I shared my understandings. You go with your discussion. I may appear if needed"- (Post)standards left the conversation.

I looked at Mr. Standards and continued, "Or let me say that our theories in this study are our embodied experiences in the phenomenon. Here, researchers and research participants are engaged in embodied awareness through embodied presence and companionship. They interact to discover their voices".

"I am hearing you," said Mr. Standards. But, I am not convinced yet. I cannot see my existence threatened. You do your job. I go now"

Mr. Standards left the stage. But dear readers, given that practitioner-researchers face epistemological clash arising from the resistance of dominant research architects (see Luitel & Taylor, 2019), I know, he may come again and again.

Living with Consciousness

Dear reader, at least arriving at this stage, we have come to develop an awareness that theories need to 'live'; that they are to emancipate rather than control (Georges, 2005); that they have to born fresh. Therefore, unlike the closed and

'conceptual nature' of the theoretical framework, this study explores our 'awareness context' (Maxwell, 2013, p.39). This awareness context (which I call it the Dapcha curriculum) is our place epistemology.

It is alive, embodied, and reflexive.

To this, our journey of exploring the 'embodied idea context of Dapcha curriculum' inherent in Dapcha civilization begins from the ecocomposition of the Dapchali lifeworld. The ecocomposition is our communal awareness of a 'Material-Discursive Ontology'[46] (see O'Neil, 2018) of this place. We start with a consideration of Dapcha, Dharmashala as a sacred place and then move to see how, passing through time and space, it continuously shaped its 'emerging' identity. Therefore, this awareness context we draw on, like the kinds of people who make it up, is not static. It is dynamic, ever-flowing, amending its shape, size, and taste.

Throughout the journey, the ecocomposition takes you to the past and the present, especially the language, caste, religion, and the territory of the Dapcha community. Also, this ecocomposition introduces you to its people and landscapes. And together we explore the 'awareness context' from where we can explore the participatory and generative approaches to place informed lifeful pedagogies for belonging, being, and becoming as appropriate for the school(s) located in this community.

Section II: Performative Collage of Place Rhythms

To portray place canvas (the cosmic *Place-Mandala),* its concrete and abstract entities, and its movements, the ecocomposition continues with rhizomatic use of textual performances. It's like watching a rhizomatic art in a performance theatre. Let's watch it together.

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[46] Mind-body relational ontology

Act II, Scene I: The Fountain of Compassion

I begin this performative collage[47] by telling you a story, which I had heard in the Dapcha community. It may expose us to different ways in which Dapcha civilization has been imagined for centuries.

Once upon a time, maybe six thousand years earlier, there was a king named Singhat Chenpo. He had three sons, Drahaa Chenpo, Lahaa Chenpo, and Samchen Chenpo.The elder son Drahaa and the middle son Lahaa were good in the art of rule and the war.

The younger son Samchen, though but a small boy was gentle, kind, and caring. He had a tigress with five baby cubs.

One day, near a drab hideaway, beneath the trees, Samchen saw the tigress lying unconscious. The cubs were helpless around.

Lips dry, throat cold, the tigress was dying of hunger. Her soreness filled Samchen with sorrow that he had never felt before. Warm tears rolled down his chicks.

All his soul within him burning, he cut his own thy muscles into pieces; draw blood from his chest, and fed the tigress.

Slowly, the soft responses renewing, the tigress burst into life again.

Scene II: The Spirit of Buddha

It was the same prince, people say, who later became Gautama the Buddha, and the five baby cubs became his disciples.

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[47] Also suggested by Kincheloe (2005) and Stronach et al., (2013), performance collage in this study is a *leela* dance between the visible and the invisible and the present and the absent

In the memory of their prince, the village-dwellers later named their place as Namobuddha. Known by Tibetans as *Takmo Lu Jin*, the present stupa at Namobuddha marks the sacred origin of this place.

Dapcha-Dharmashala, a rustic, and yet a historical place within Namobuddha Municipality, in a way or the other, share this sacredness.

Scene III: A Question of a Kind

Later, when I had shared this story of 'too long a sacrifice' with a teacher from the study school, the teacher said-

You see, the strength of great spirits ever flows in this land.

You hear deep down, and you will listen to the song of owing and terrors that have been passing between us, in this land, from generation to generation.

And there we discussed for a long. We discussed, "what if we could bring this 'place spirit' in our school, in and outside the classroom, in the school ground, and in the curriculum?

Namobuddha[48]

To begin with, the Dapcha community is located in Namobuddha Municipality. This municipality is located in the center of Kavrepalanchok District, in Province 3 of Nepal. It is 52 km east of the capital city, Kathmandu.

If you wish to go there along the road, it is easily accessible through the Arniko Highway to Dhulikhel and along the BP Highway. This highway runs through the center of the municipality.

Or, you may take the road from Kavre Vanjyang that goes along the upper landscape, passing through the Namobuddha shrine on the way. The road takes you to an age-old Tamang and Newari villages; a narrow road passing through tight-built

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[48]*Namo* means new. It also refers gratitude. Therefore, it seems that the name Namobuddha is an honor to Buddha, a mythical spirit of this place.

Newari buildings with art-designed doors and windows that may remind you of the
Lichhavi and Malla civilization of the past.

Figure 34: Dapcha village, with Namobuddha Shrines at the hilltop

Dapcha Kashikhanda Municipality had been formed in December 2014. It included Dapcha Chatrebhanga, Daraune Pokhari, Khanalthok, Mathurapati Fulbari, Methinkot, and Puranogaun VDCs.

Later, Namobuddha municipality was formed in 2017 by combining the two erstwhile village development committees of Kanpur Kalapani and Syampati Simalchour with Dapcha Kashikhanda Municipality. Divided into 11 wards, it covers an area of 102 km2. The population of the area that has become Namobuddha Municipality, based on municipality records, is estimated to be more than 35,000 in 2017.

Scene III: Poetic Dapcha

Sometimes I wonder how I could empathetically share the evocative performance of the embodied place sense of Dapcha, Dharmashala. As I could experience, Dapcha like any other place was always in the process of being made. The self-forming cosmic creativity of the place is continuously attuning and harmonizing in a way that the move is never finished (Messy, 2005). Maybe the human landscape

here, like in any other place, is a poetic inspiration beyond our cognitive

understanding, so fluid, and owes inspiring. In this poetic layer of sacredness, one

day, like many other days from centuries, I saw-

In Dharmashala

In *Chautari*

Under a *Peepal* tree

There walked a woman in

Red *choli* and a green *fariya*[49]

Tired of day-long works

Sweat rolling down her face

She stood and looked

Round the hills

Rocks, trees, cornfields, and rain-

The mountain wave

Where she felt the healing fountain

Charged around her body

This is her place

This is where she belongs

(Journal entry, March 11, 2018)

Is place also poetry- a healing fountain of owes and inspirations? 'Thinking

the place as a poem' may enable one to appreciate these ceaselessly creative

ecological layers of complexities. Maybe 'place' is more than (prose-like) intellectual

appreciation. Maybe it is from where Klein (2018) comes to his poetic senses and

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[49]Traditional dress of village woman in hilly Nepal

suggests transformative educators to celebrate the aesthetics of everyday landscapes as a poetic curriculum.

The next day, when I was in a school library, there came a schoolboy from class seven. "Sir, I have written something about my village", he said

Is it! What is it all about?

Saying nothing, there he performed this poem- *My Village*

Facing the mountain is there my village

The greenery around, Khanalthok is its name

Harkapur, Peepalchaur, down there is Jaisithok

A well-wishing neighbor, Adhikarithok

Down there flows Dapcha stream

From the mid of Khanalthok

Bachchakot, Methinkot, and down is Dhuwakot

From the middle at the basement moves a road

Brothers and sisters live together in unity

All say the Khanalthok dwellers are heavenly

Bahun, Chhetri, Tamang are a community

Staying together like a family

Name: Suraj Khana, Class: 7

(My translation)

Through poetic verse, the boy introduced me to his village. For him, his village was a poem of a kind. It was also a reminder that the place had many poetic narrations to narrate, and many lines to read between. Thus, through poetic inspiration, I added in my text the poetic layer to this place.

It appears that the place Dapcha is a poem (a poetic curriculum), with thousands of beats and rhythms. It is an open poetic-anthology to recite the age-old *Leela-Rita Tandav,* the nature-culture dance of chaos and order that makes a civilization.

Scene IV: Mythical Dapcha

Wait, sir! Yet another voice came from somewhere around.

It was Dhurba sir, the social studies teacher, in his mid-forties.

"You better start this journey narrating a story on how this place got the name, Dapcha". He remained thoughtful for a moment, and said "Don't you remember that once I had shared it with you?

"Yes, I remember it".

"Thank you. Thank you for reminding me of the story".

…

Dear readers, here is the story which Dhurba sir once had told me, which exposes mythical Dapcha, a mythical curriculum of the place.

Long years back, walking through the wild secluded scene, passing through meadows and the woods, through sunny spots of greenery, carrying a *doko,* a bamboo basket on his back, there walked an old man from the east.

He climbed upward from Charaundifedi.

On the way, he felt very thirsty.

He walked up following the wetland.

Walking for hours, he heard the sound from water drops-

Drip

    Drop

       Drip

Drop

It was *kaali Kuwa*[50].

Flinging the *doko*[51] and the *Khukuri*[52] to the side of the pond, he drank water.

That day, the healing fountain was the first song of his happiness.

He had rest for some time, and when he was ready to move, he found that he had missed the *daap*, the outer cover of his *Khukuri*.

He searched here and there but didn't find it.

In a long sigh, he said, "Daap Jaa", meaning 'Daap has gone'.

It was, from that time, people began to call this place *Daap Jaa,* which later became Dapchha.

Dear reader, it is likely that the human consciousness of a particular place is mythopoetically constructed. Thus, making a poetic look at the place Dapcha, Dharmashala, I turned to its mythopoetic arts (which I call it a mythopoetic curriculum). As Eagleton (2009) says, maybe reason does not go all the way down. It is not wall to wall. "Under such circumstances, to portray such complex cosmic networks of the place, I drew on mythical energies "more tenacious and less fragile than 'truth' itself ..." (p.109).

The multiplicity of such mythical narratives would remind us of the place's fluidity. We would hear the same mythical narratives in different forms. Here, is an example-

Scene V: Scratch-like Dapcha

No, No, please don't stop here. Another voice came from the ancient of this land.

---

[50]*KaaliKuwa* means the black pond. This age-old historical pond is dry at present.
[51]*Doko* is a bamboo basket to carry goods
[52]*Khukuri* is weapon to cut things. Those days, the travellers would usually carry khukuri to save them from the wild animals during the journey

"Who, who are you?" I asked

An aged man appeared. I am the old man in the story you have just told.

The old man in the story!

"But, it is a years-old story. How could the character be here?"

"Yes, I am always somewhere around. I am the 'live witness' to see how from generation to generation people tell and retell my story, scratching it, sometimes twisting it. Here, I have appeared to narrate the story myself".

"Wonderful! Please go on", I said.

"First, I was not alone there. You see, I was with a group of travelers".

"And next, when I missed my *Daap*, my friends began to tease me, saying *Daap Jaa.* Next time, whenever we would pass through the way, my friends would remind me of the day and would tease me saying *Daap Jaa"*.

"It was how the place was named", he said. "You add this in your narration".

I did the same.

In rural human landscapes, each place has a mythical narrative of a kind. They are told and retold, and therefore, often modified with time. The mythical spirits personify various emotions, curses, and spells identical to the place. The symbolic reference as such (which I call the 'scratched place curriculum) defines the hidden, unseen, and often forgotten lifeworld of Dapcha, Dharmashala.

Scene VI: Theatre-like Dapcha

It appears that Dapcha is also a theater of a kind. It is a performance. This performative collage is also the performative curriculum of the place.

The performance is full of acts and scenes. It is often interrupted by the curtain of days and nights. The actors and actresses of the performance may enter from anywhere, anytime, in and around Kakre, Dharapani, Pandhyara, Bhanjyang,

Dharmashala, Daraunae Pokhari, Hatiya, Chhatrebanjh, Puranogaun, Bhakundyabasi, and from everywhere the researcher visited during almost three years of his Ph.D. days.

The setting is an upper landscape of rustic hills that runs from the east to the west along the dusty road with *chautara*, *pati, pauwa*, and *falchas*; with temples and gumbas. Settlements are scattered around, mostly with old-looking stone and mud made traditional 'Pahadi' houses; wood and stone made Tamang-huts; bricks and mud made big antique, but old and almost ruined Newari buildings, where thousands of men and women had been born, are living and had died.

Figure 35: Typical house-designs in Dapcha village

Down to the southern hill is Roshi Khola. It gives 'watery life' to the village; carries in it the millions of stories, of life and death. It understands nothing; judges nothing (Or maybe, it understands everything. Don't know).

The hills upwards contain every story of hope, fear, and adventures; of rain, wind, and droughts; of earthquakes.

The characters in this theatrical performance of this place are of a varied nature. One component that informs Dapcha civilization is this demographical composition and ethnicity. This informs the characters of various kinds.

Tamangs, a non-Aryan race has made up the largest proportion of the population. It is one of the major Tibeto-Burmese speaking communities in the Kavre district, especially in and around Dapcha.

Though a few Tamangs in the town sides are economically privileged, more Tamangs live in the less accessible and underserved hilly areas. Many are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Tamang communities in Dapcha seem much influenced by Tibet and Tibetan culture. With the increasing flow of Tibetan pilgrims in the Namobuddha Monastries, the influence seems ever-increasing.

But, you may hear different voices from these Tamang characters.

 They may say-

"We are the teacher and the origin of this place".

"We don't turn to Tibet".

"We have our own culture and rituals".

"And you see, we have created the new Lhochhar festival of our own".

 "We learn from Lamas".

"Lamas teach us in Nepali rather than in Tibetan".

Whatever the story is, the Tamang culture and their way of living are the major cultural identities of the Dapcha civilization.

It is followed by hill Brahmans and a few Chhetries. Civilized by Brahmanical Hinduism, the Brahmins are continuing with *Sanatan* Hindu rituals.

They are Aryals, Khanals, Adhikaris, and Poudels among others.

The education status of this group is relatively higher.

Newari culture locates itself to Sanskrit-based civilization (Pollock, 2006). Unlike their Tamang neighbors, Newar Buddhists do not derive their legitimacy from Tibetan Buddhism to the North. Originally known to be Buddhists, the Newar people of this place have increasingly become syncretic, and at present, almost all of the Newar people practice both Buddhism as well as Hinduism simultaneously.

Newari civilization is found at the heart of the old cities, particularly in the Chhatrebanjh areas, and Hatiyas. The settlement is portrayed by tight clusters of densely packed and attached multi-story brick-built houses.

And you may hear different Newari voices.

They may say-

"Our settlement is ritually organized".

"We call it Mandala".

"You either go to a city or a small town or a village, it is organized according to the Mandala model".

"The narrow streets are the walking ways for you to go to shopping areas, temples, *guthis*, and *Sattal"*.

Among the indigenous nationalities in the country, Newars are regarded as one of the strongest in terms of their culture and traditions.

You may hear Newar people speaking their language, called Nepal Bhasha, which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman, but is different from the one you may hear in the Kathmandu Valley.

And there are a few *Dalits*[53], especially the Biswokarmas. They are relatively poor.

You may hear the voices from this group as well. You may hear them saying-

"I doubt your narration of this village".

"Yes, you are a Brahmin".

"You don't touch us".

You don't hear us".

---

[53]In Hindu cast hierarchies, *Dalits* are of lower class, the untouchables

You may feel some forms of social hierarchy. But it seems hierarchies have not much prevented the emergence of shared culture. Or, maybe being a *Brahmin*, I couldn't portray their lifeworld as they actually feel and live it. The *Dalits'* stories may be different from what I observed (as an outsider) from the eyes of a *Brahmin* researcher. So, let the observation remain open. Let the unseen narratives unfold in the local curriculum of the schools in Dapcha communities. Also, it would be great if *Dalits* bring their curriculum on their own.

Scene VII: Rainbow-like Dapcha

Apparently, this Dapcha curriculum is a rainbow of colors.

It is early in the morning. You may like to go for a morning walk. You may stop by the side of a small shop on the roadside.

It is also a milk collection center. Villagers collect milk there. It is one of the income sources of the villagers.

You may see a lot of people, especially the male members. They drink tea and interact in a group.

There, you may see Brahmins. You may see Newars, and also Tamangs.

If not that much reserved, you may see Dalits as well.

The group is a village, a community, and interaction. And at least in the tea shop, the social hierarchy is not much visible.

And there in the village around, you may see many people with many stories.

You may see an old man, about 82 years old and still working in the field and looking after goats and buffalos.

A 25-years-old energetic youth whom people elected as local representatives

A retired school teacher who would drink alcohol all day and night, and would throw him to the roadsides

A 55-years-old widow whose son has just left her to work abroad

Maili Tamang in her mid-forties, who would actively participate in social activities

Krishna dai, who had lost his house in an earthquake, and has just finished building a small two-roomed house.

A 31 years Mangal BK, who graduated from the university, and has started teaching in the school.

A 45-years-old housewife, who was dying of cancer

Kunsang Sau, a broker, who cut 45 goats and 16 buffalos to celebrate his son's marriage.

And you may see and hear many other people with many stories that have made Dapcha civilization, the Dapcha curriculum at present.

Arrival so Far: Dapcha Dharmashala as Stories-Assemblage

Now, let's reflect on where we have been so far.

We were in a continuous process of developing the ecological awareness of the place Dapcha Dharmashala. Realizing the transdisciplinary complexity of the place cosmos, and the limitations of 'language standards' to portray the complexities, we turned to reflexive performance, which was both evocative and rhizomatic in form and contents. From there we sensed manifold memories, dreams, and aspirations of the place. Slowly and gradually we are moving inwards to the place essential. Maybe, the place is *mandala*-canvas. The place is an art. The place is a story. The place is a myth. The place is a poem. The place is a drama. Overall, the place is an ecocomposition in itself. Maybe, this ecocomposition of the place is an open curriculum, so fresh and so lively, still waiting to unfold (in school education).

Section III: Wisdom Traditions of Dapcha Dharmashala

The wisdom tradition of the place was not waiting there 'crystal clear' for us to observe, read, and bring it into the text. While in the 'field' we took a greater interest in the cultural milieu, particularly its underlying structures. In the process, we continuously made and remade the sense of the widening spiral of participatory rurality and its complex relationality. Here it follows-

The Cultural Milieu

Dear readers, the more we took interest in exploring Dapcha communities, the more we were exposed to the place-informed narrative of various kinds. Many of the narratives unfolded mythical history associated with the place.

The belief system around nature, animals, and the idea of sacredness is at the core of the 'awareness context' of this community. For example, when you are around Vanjyang, a Tamang community, you may hear a Tamang saying-

"Originally we were horse traders"

"*Ta* in Tibetan means horse and *mang* mean traders."

Not only in the origin of Tamang civilization, but you may also observe that many of the social, cultural, economic, and religious practices of Tamang communities are, in one way or the other, linked to plants and animals.

While walking up and down the school, the white thin cotton flag with black letter prints and images in front of the house in Tamang communities would hold our attention. In an interaction, once I had asked an old Tamang woman,

 "*Aama*, what is here in the flag?"

"I have no idea. People say it is *loh*"

Loh?

Later, a middle-aged Tamang introduced me to a Lama in the village. In an interaction, he said-

"*Loh* is our age calculation calendar. Twelve different animals in the *loh* indicate twelve different months".

"Starting from Magh Suklapratipadha, the calendar makes a cycle of a year".

There I knew from the Lama that the animals associated with the twelve *Lohs* were a mouse, cow, goat, dragon, serpent, horse, sheep, monkey, bird, dog, and boar.

Nature and morality are closely linked in Tamang communities from Dapcha, where human beings and the environment form moral unity. This bond is often exhibited in their worship of nature-gods and reverence hymns to the earth.

These kinds of nature-human connection and the idea of sacredness embedded in nature, which may extend to the wider context, the earth, the moon, the sun, and the stars are exhibited in many of the Newari cultures of the community as well.

If you stay there for some more days, and if you built close relations with Newar communities, they may call you to celebrate *Naa Chhuigu*.

Newari community celebrates the 12th day of childbirth as *NaaChhuigu*. On that day, the *Jyotish*[54] calculates the time and the place of the child's birth, and identifies the child's star sign, based on which he gives name to the child.

And some other time they may call you in another family function called *Bel Bibaha.* Usually in between the age of 5 to 11, before the first menstrual period, a female child is married with the fruit of the *bel* tree.

They follow a proper marriage ritual. If you saw a little interest in the celebration, they may tell you interesting beliefs as-

"The groom is the *bel* fruit."

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[54] Jyotish is an astrologer, a priest

"The fruit is an incarnation of Lord Bishnu".

"Since a girl is married to the fruit, she is not considered as a widow even if her husband dies after marriage".

There is no absolute good and evil. There is only *Priti* (agreeable), and *Apriti*, (disagreeable). To follow their ancestors is their *dharma*, righteous duty.

You may also observe how Dapchalis observe certain objects, plants, animals, and features as sacred. There are many *chautaras,* with *baar* and *peepal* trees. It is where, under the tree, villagers have rest, gather, discuss, and sometimes have formal meetings. *Bar* and *Peepal* trees, they say, are the incarnation of God Bishnu and Goddess Laxmi.

If you visit a Brahmin house, you may have your first sight of stone-and-mud-made *math* in front of the house. And you may see a *tulsi* plant onto it, which is another sacred plant they worship. You may also see strings of garlands hanging from houses to trees in the streets. These *torans* are sacred ropes made of *kush* plants, with sacred leaves from *tulsi*, *bar, peepal*, *bel,* and other flowers.

Yet again, if you roam around the village, particularly around Newari communities and the roadsides, you may see the stones with spiral markings, the *saligrams*. They are considered divine forms of Viśṇu, and sometimes Ganesh, and Bhimshen.

Dapchali people even see forests and rivers as holy. Roshi Khola and the nearby Indrabati River have, for centuries, seen on it the many death rituals, particularly the deaths from Brahmin, Chhetri, and Newar communities. In Dapcha communities, there are many raised landscapes in village sides where Tamangs practice their death rituals.

Figure 36: The hilltop, and the Roshi Khola at the Southern basement

Each of these sacred places has a rich narrative tradition, either oral or written that describes in detail the story of the sacred origin of these places. These local narratives such as the stories of the land are deeply embedded in the geography of the place.

The landscapes are sometimes called *sthana*[55]. Also, the human landscapes are *Dharmashala*. These unique worldviews of nature and sacredness in Dapchali thoughts, in many ways, establish eco-spiritual relationships between the place, the idea of sacred, and the landscapes. The narratives about those sacred landscapes also establish a moral relationship between landscapes and the people.

Dapcha communities understand Mother Earth as the *Bhu Devi*. Their view is thus, Loka-centric. *Bhu* (the earth/soil) is what they worship. It is also their *Karma bhumi*. It is where they perform their *karma* (rituals), which they believe is their *Dharma* in this *Martya Lok*[56], which is a means to move to *Dev Lok*, the land of the Gods. Thus, the immediate land around them is their *karmabhūmi*, which is more conducive for liberation (Mukti).

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[55]*Sthana* are the sacred places, where people believe that God dwells there

[56]The living-place for karma, where the communities believe that the 'the right karma' paves their way to salvation, the place of the God

If you go a bit at the depth of Dapcha worldviews, you will see amazing forms of the woman–nature connections. Nature is their mother *(Janani).* It is the source of life.

You may hear people saying-

"The earth is our mother. It gives birth to everything around".

"The value of the earth depends upon its fertility".

"The worth of a woman lies in her ability to become the mother".

Maybe this concept of nature and woman is historically established. In these social constructions, both females and nature are seen as passive and subordinate to men.

Their patriarchal worldviews, if not much in Tamang communities, have made a new image of nature as a female to be controlled. Maybe the construction as such has legitimated the exploitation of natural resources.

But this is not only the story behind nature-female connections in Dapcha communities. If you roam around the village, particularly around Newari and Brahmin communities, you may see many temples of Durga and Kali.

Durga is that of a female nurturer. She is a protector.

Kali is that of wild and uncontrollable. She is a destroyer.

They say-

"We have the goddess as Durga. She is the protective mother"

 "We have Kali. And she is panic force and energy".

The goddess Durga is often called *Jagat Mata,* the mother of the world, or *adi shakti*, the primordial energy.

Thus, nature, the *Prakriti,* for Dapchali people is a female, a mother, a producer, and the destroyer; the Durga and the Kaali. Many of their rituals are born

out of either respect for her love or fear from her rage. Therefore, they worship Durga and offer some forms of 'sacrifice' to Kaali.

Though they honor motherhood, it seems this honor is based on her self-negation, her disinterested selfless sacrifice for the family. She is to be 'eaten' and 'trodden'. They expect that the *Prakriti* sustains on her own.

Thus, it seems they have culturally legitimized nature exploitation.

The Widening Spiral of Participatory Rurality

It is not much unique in Dapcha communities that like many other rural indigenous communities of Nepal, the embodied communion and interconnectedness between living and material beings are present in widening spirals.

This is symbolic of Mandala art within Newari communities, and various geometric arts in *Sanatan* Hindu *karmakanda* rituals.

The bond starts from the individual self, which is identical to the universal Self. The self sees all creatures in it, and it in all creatures. The self is everywhere, the seed and the shape of everything around. The self *(Bindu),* when widens, now spreads to the family, in relation to the father and the mother, in relation to the son and the daughter, in relation to the brothers and the sisters. And in case of joint family, to uncles and aunts

In participatory rurality, the family is home. It is where the communal spirit originates. This spirit widens to the neighborhood. In Dapcha communities often the neighbors are from shame kinship. It is *Adhikari Gaun*, *Aryal Gaun, Kaami Danda*, and *Khanal Thok*. It is *jiudaa ko Janti, marda ko maalami.* It is where one celebrates together the marriage, and mourns together the death.

The neighborhood then spreads to communities i.e., Tamang communities, Bahun communities, and Newar communities with various communal, religious, and

cultural practices. It spreads to wider Dapcha communities, with schools, local bodies, social organizations, temples, *gumbas*, and *falchas*; in a web of relations and functions that are multilayered.

Figure 37: A Dapchali Falchas, where villagers take rest and discuss together

It also spreads to the hills, the forest, and the rivers.

And further spreads a district, a region, a nation, a continent, the earth, and the universe.

The self now is a universal self.

अहम्ब्रह्मास्मि

 I am the Brahman; the absolute.

वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम्

The earth is a family; a home.

The Dream, the Aspirations, and the Memory

The present Dapcha community shares continuous interactions between dreams and memories. They have memories of various kinds.

Once while walking along the village road, Mohan, who grew up in the village, showed me a ruined house building and said-

Do you see this house?

I looked at it.

"Once, when I was still a child, the owner of this house would cut one he-buffalo every day and would serve *masu-chiura* (meat and beaten rice). The flow of the customers was so much that people would wait for their turn to come". "But now, except in some festivals, you rarely see the people's movement".

If you walk around and talk with senior inhabitants of the community, they may share memories of various kinds. They may share how the place was a major business route for the people coming from the east. They may also share the stories of big Dapcha cities, big buildings, and architecture. Most of the lived stories they share are 'myths' for the new generation.

They may also share how the 'terror' entered the village during the *Maoist* war[57]. It was the time when many villagers migrated to Dhulikhel, Panauti, Bhaktapur, and Kathmandu areas.

When BP highway joined Kavre to Southern Terai, passing through a lower landscape of Bhakundae Basi, many families migrated from upper Dapcha landscapes to lowlands. The recent 2015 earthquake broke many old buildings and dried the water ponds in the village, and this even increased the outward movement of the households.

Today, Dapcha is seemingly silent. It is living, with a little dream, and a little hope. It is in between the organic and the infected; between the *Smriti* (memory) and the *bismriti (*forgetfulness), between *Prakriti* (natural, organic)and the *vikriti* (contaminated). It is what you see in Dapcha Khola. It is still flowing as organic as before, but carrying in it the 'modern' ruins of concerts, plastic bottles, and insecticides.

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[57]A 10-years long armed revolution made by Nepal Communist Party, Maoist

In between these moral dilemmas on what *dharma* to follow, the place also shares the dream of various kinds.

Villagers have lifted drinking water from down the Roshi Khola. They have also widened the road connection to Dhulikhel. They have built new house buildings out of the earthquake ruins.

The development this place seeks is either likely to be *Sāttvik,* which would lead to a responsible life on the planet, or *rājasik,* which would lead to short-term pleasure in the expanse of organic nature. Maybe it depends on the local policies of local government, and the education it fosters among school students of new generations. As observed at present (for example, the roads rolling around the hills with traces of landslides), the place has embraced *rajasic* development, the development against the ecological *Dharma*.

Participatory Rurality and Embodiment

Dear reader, we started with a consideration of Dapcha as a sacred place, and then moved to see how, passing through time and space, it continuously shaped its 'emerging' identity. The past sacredness has been continuously blurred. Therefore, this idea context we draw on, like the kinds of people who make it up, is not static. It appears that the making of the village (*gaun*) is dynamic, ever-flowing, amending its shape, size, and taste. Bringing the narratives together, the study has come with a meaning that participatory rurality and embodiment of this 'embedded ecology' is the awareness-context of Dapcha civilization. It is constructed to a great extent by narratives, myths, and rituals. It has a communal origin that has been repeated many times, and modified, from a generation to the other.

Dapcha Dharmashala as a place is co-enfolding, co-enacting, and it is co-emerging. The narratives of belongingness have naturalized the individual and

collective sense of place. And therefore, unlike essentialist, foundationalist, and exclusivist definitions of place and emplaced pedagogies, this ecocomposition begins to adopt heterogeneous ecological standpoints.

Arrival so Far: Dapcha Dharmashala, also as Sociomaterial Assemblage

Arriving at this stage, we came across many facets of the place, Dapcha. Here, the status of an individual is often determined by the family name, and therefore, family relationships, love, and respect are of higher value. Embodied to 'gaun' (the village) metaphor, people here are committed to collectivist (and often rustic) social relations, norms, and values. Its natural way of life, emotional ties, and subjectivities suggest feminine modesty and belongingness in many spheres of the lifeworld.

Figure 38: the socialmaterial assemblage of Nepali villlage

(Source:https://www.pinterest.com)

Also, the cultural narratives of the place show that the socio-economic and material phenomenon interacts with the land and the human landscapes. Such historical contexts and collective memories have been long harmonized through kin networks, relationality, and solidarity. The assemblage produces, reinforces, and transforms knowledge (Fenwick, 2006) concerning the contrasting identities and experiences of long-observed class, caste, and gender roles (also see Subedi, 1993). Overall, the everyday temporalities and rituals as such provide additional resources

for theorizing the sociomaterial implications of the place in school education (Massey, 2005; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). From these ecological relationalities, we may begin to see the pedagogical relevance of Dapcha Dharmashala located Janahit School.

The Dapchali Heart of Darkness

Also, it appears that there are many prejudicial 'scratches' that have been promoting cultural delusions and the darker sides of Dapchali narratives. Though not visible in Tamang communities, the Brahmin and the Newari communities of the Dapcha civilization are still under the influence of caste and gender hierarchies. The rigid hierarchical framework has fostered social hierarchies based on their family occupations. Also, the religion-driven 'misuse' of *dharma* doctrine (e.g., passive submission of women as *stri-Dharma*) has largely influenced Dapchali mindsets. Such an attitude towards women as dependent on men has continued male-domination in these patriarchal communities. Superstitions concerning witches and evil spirits are still visible.

Likewise, the traditionally established (and maybe misinterpreted) metaphor of '*guru* as absolute' has possibly legitimized 'passive acceptance' of 'classroom lectures' as unquestionably 'true'. It has conventionally (and culturally) discouraged other ways of knowing. Maybe the 'soul-searching' of Dapchali-lifeworld has to remain mindful of these delusions of varying colors.

It appears that many of the earlier narratives, however, are in rapid shifts. Though people still prioritize merry-making and collective living, slowly the new generations have begun to consider ambition and economic prestige as more important than social relationships. The collective family structure has been smaller. Dapcha worldviews and wisdom traditions, thus, need manifold relational knowings. The continuously unfolding narratives are not linear and straightforward.

Also, along with continuous historical emergence, it appears that the place identities of Dapcha Dharmashala are themselves the product of a long history of connections with the other places. Its place authenticity and place belongingness are somewhere 'in' 'with' and 'beyond' these multiple and overlapping realities.

Section IV: A Delusion

Once, I talked to the education chair of Namobuddha Municipality.

"Sir, have you thought of any plan for 'local' curriculum in the schools within this municipality?"

He made a disinterested look at me and said-

"Making curriculum is not a big deal".

"We will make it in a week".

…

I doubt how could he integrate such a complex-built awareness context of the place in the school curriculum, in just a week-long exercise?

Perhaps, the lack of prolonged engagement and the lack of stakeholders' participation is the reason why many schools around Nepal have failed to implement policy provisions for place informed lifeful pedagogies, local curriculum, for example.

Section V: The Dapchali Curriculum as the 'Awareness Context'

Now you may ask, why did you give so much space for exploring 'Dapcha spirit' in your 'text canvas' when the focus area of the study is on exploring prospects of participatory and generative models of place-informed lifeful pedagogies? It is to this end, I have arrived at the stage to justify the use of Dapchali eco-spiritual cosmologies as the awareness context of this study. In this chapter, I portrayed Dapchali ecocomposition as the Dapchali curriculum. For me, understanding the place

Dapcha is but being aware of its (ecologically relational) curriculum in progress (also see Klein, 2018). This curriculum in progress is a long process of continuous becoming of the mind-body integrated self, expressed through materials, myths, religions, arts, science, and other socially constructed structures, memories, aspirations, and dreams, which are exhibited in manifold widening circles of relational complexity. It is from there I justify my use of eco-spiritual cosmologies, cultural stories, Metamodern ecological gaze, and the metaphor of *Dharma* and *Dharmashala* as the awareness context of this study.

Eco-Spiritual Cosmologies and Cultural Stories: A Justification

My first argument is that we may possibly situate ourselves into the real ground for emplaced pedagogies (in our role as educators, and the researchers) in case we are well aware of the 'spirit' of that place (see Burns, 2015; Klein, 2018; Williams, 2018). In this study, the details of the place spirit of Dapcha, Dharmashala (as I portrayed in this chapter) reflect the ecological realities of multilayered interconnectedness. In the language of O'Neil (2018), relationally embodied and embedded narratives are very near to the posthumanist (and also the new materialist) thinking, which appreciates the place in terms of a mind-body and nature-culture integrated self. The overall narrative (and performative) collage of Dapcha

Dharmashala portrays the place as the complex of eco-spiritual cosmologies and cultural stories in their relational totalities. It is from this multilayered reflexivity of Dapcha Dharmashala, the study focuses its attention on the

relational understanding of the place-phenomenon in school pedagogies. These (ecological) layers starting from an individual situated to the family to the community to the nation widens to the planet and make to-and-fro hermeneutic interactions through the relational ontologies.

Also, the detailed observation of the ecological complexity of the place Dapcha Dharmashala may introduce us to the non-linear system dynamics of the lifeworld (see Braidotti, 2019; Lange, 2018; Lewis & Owen, 2020). It may challenge the Newtonian universalism in education and research in a way that this interdisciplinary connectedness and openness of the (Dapchali) lifeworld can hardly be inquired through detached and deterministic epistemological viewpoints.

If so, slowly, the ecocomposition of this chapter is likely to begin to make us aware that we need a holistic, ecological embrace of the complexity.

The relational, recursive, and transdisciplinary openness of the place (Burns, 2015; Williams, 2018) enables this study to see Dapchali lifeworld and its educational dynamics from greater ethical involvement. This ethical involvement may arise from the relational wholeness of all living and non-living beings from and within the authenticity they share. In other words, the realization may enable us to acknowledge not only a relational whole of the ecological reality but also to respect the innate quality (the *Dharma*) of every being and the nonbeing (Bellali, 2020; Sohmer et al., 2020). By doing so, it appears that the study adds to the education and researches the basic ecological principle that integrating the ordinary with the mystery of complex human-nature dialogues, one can look after impossible possibilities.

The Metamodern Gaze at Dapchali Curriculum: Another Justification

As suggested in chapter two, Metamodern is the postmodern informed modernity. Learning from the limitations of the traditional, the modern, and the

postmodern, which were but different phases of civilization growth so far, the Metamodern maturity appreciates ecological principles of authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility (see Esbjörn-Hargens & Wilber, 2006; Benedikter& Molz, 2011). Also, it appreciates ecological ripples that emerge, attune, and harmonize.

Observed in this chapter, the place narratives of Dapch Dharmashala suggests that the place is still holding (though scratched) the age-old sacredness. On the other, it appears that the place has been beaten and trodden by the traditional hierarchical biases of various forms like those of gender and caste discrimination. The place Dapcha Dharmashala has observed the comfort brought by modern discoveries and technological innovations. On the other, it seems that the communities have begun to lose their cultural identity. The communities have begun to lose their forest and water sources. They have begun to lose their cultural arts and crafts. Also, with localized practices, Dapcha Dharmashala has learned to speak for social and political justice, but in many ways, the communities have emerged with distrust and humiliation. Slowly, the age-old communal ties and the family bonds are fading.

All these show that the place Dapcha Dharmashala is 'with' 'in-between' and 'beyond' the mess of the traditional, the modern, and the postmodern. It is to this end, this study holds Metamodern maturity, and observes Dapchali lifeworld, particularly the educational imperatives through its ideals of authenticity, relationality, and responsibility. The thinking as such is the local, the national, and the planetary at the same time.

The Metaphor of *Dharma* and *Dharmashala*: Yet another Justification

Also, you may ask, why the metaphor of *Dharma* and *Dharmashala*? And arriving at this stage, making a detailed study of the human ecology of Dapcha, Dharmashals, I argue that 'complex relationality' (see Lange, 2018) hold by *Dharma*

is the place essential of any place, and so does of Dapcha, Dharmashala. This apparent chaos and complexity of ecological relationality, according to the Hindu-Buddhist worldview, is hold and sustained by *Dharma* (Chinmayananda, 2011; Yogananda, 2008). Therefore, rather than relying on other forms of displaced theories (and also not excluding them either), this study forwards place *Dharma* of Dapcha Dharmashala as the philosophical means and the ends to develop ethical consciousness on emplaced pedagogies.

The embodied presence at the Dapchali lifeworld as portrayed in this chapter shows that the lifeworld herein is 'with' 'in-between' and 'beyond' the organic and the contamination. In Hindu-Buddhist wisdom tradition, *Dharma* is the very essence of every human being and nonbeings that protects its innate qualities. It is the path of organic righteousness. In the language of Yogananda (2008), sometimes, deviated from the essential, and following the 'outer' standards, the beings and the nonbeings leave their *Dharma*. Human beings when deviating to*ParaDharma* are supposed to lose balance. To this Radhakrishna (1980) writes, "Our *svadharma*, outward life, and *svabhava*, inner being must answer to each other" (p. 73). The *Dharma* metaphor, thus, gives an ethical look to the educational phenomenon of this place and asks, "Is the school teaching and learning of Dapch Dharmashala is in accordance with the place *Dharma* of this place?" By Place-*Dharma*, this study considers Hindu-Buddhist views of the place, which according to Chinmayananda (2011) and Yogananda (2008) is that of Dharmachhetra; the field of righteousness; the ground for moral struggle.

The place narratives in this chapter show that many of the modern ideals, with their self-fulfilling universal prophecy, have now begun to threaten the 'uniqueness' of this place. Also, instead of searching for the 'self', it appears that the communities have begun to find their pride in establishing 'imported standards' in their place

(Dharmachhetra). This tendency to overly romanticize external ideals (which may well suit the place of its origin) may go against the 'essential' of this place. Maybe, now, holding on to the metaphor of *Dharma* and *Dharmashala*, the 'reasonable' question for this study is- 'Does school education of Dapcha Dharmashala located Janahit School (as its name suggests) holding the essential *Dharma* of this place? Do the school, teachers, students, parents, and even the school curriculum hold the complex relationality (and authenticity) of the place *Dharma*? It is from this ecological lance of place *Dharma,* we see the overall PAR activities for emplaced teaching and learning and make pedagogical sense from it.

Concluding Remarks: Arriving Where Dapcha Dharmashala Stands

Dear reader, it is thus, before revealing the educational practices in the school of Dapcha communities, I revealed to you the spirit of this place. I revealed to you the myths, the norms, the values, the memories, the aspirations, and the dreams of this place. This 'thinking like *Peepal'* ecocomposition enabled me to understand the very nature of (Dapchali) ecological being as relational and evocative. Also, this *peepal*-like place spirit (which I portrayed as the Dapchali curriculum) appears to be the awareness context of this study. Metaphorically, this cosmic tree originates from the ground, extends around, and continuously (re)moves towards the root (the origin). Its real form is hardly perceived in words, and in books and classrooms. Maybe this peepal-like cosmic process of the place Dapcha Dharmashala is an open curriculum to be aware of. The curriculum is poetic, mythical, and performative. It is transdisciplinary and holistic. It is beyond the logic of any kind.

That it can not be isolated within the walls of the classroom.

That it is not a question to be solved with formal reasoning.

That it is not a question to be answered in a two to three-hour exam paper.

So what?

Maybe, it seeks the eyes of wisdom; alertness on the complex ecological relationalities- here, now. And now, I end this chapter by sharing with you the wisdom by a poet T.S Eliot (see Chopra 2018), where he writes, "We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we stand" (p.2). Attuning and harmonizing to these eco-spiritual cosmologies and the cultural stories of the place, now I take you to another exciting journey of this study process, where we encounter the seemingly anti-ecological schooling dominant in the place ecology. I narrate the overall of our PAR action-reflections in Dapcha Dharmashala located Janahit School. The School, in many ways, appears to lack this discursive Dapcha Curriculum in its regular practices. It is from the chapter that follows we will begin to discover the 'missing' of the place spirit of Dapcha Dharamashala in the dominant pedagogical design of Janahit School. The chapter suggests how many other schools of Nepal are inherently displaced from the place where the schools belong. Also, the chapter suggests how the dominant indoor pedagogies have shaped the cultural stories of the community. It suggests how anthropocentric ideals, to some extent, have taken the place of mutuality and reciprocity of indigenous wisdom and lifeways. Let's move-

How were our early PAR days in Dapcha communities and in the Janahit School? How were the displaced school pedagogies responsible to weaken the students' and teachers' sense of belonging, being, and becoming in Janahit School and in the Dapcha community? What activities-plan the PAR community made to address this problem of displacement?

Figure 39: Shree Janahit School in Dapcha, Dharmashala

CHAPTER FIVE

ENCOUNTERING CLOSED SCHOOLING (AND RESEARCH) IN THE OPEN

DAPCHALI LIFEWORLD

Dear reader, arriving at this stage you might have cultivated an awareness of

the major (opening) discourse of this ecocomposition that 'place' is ecologically

relational and holistic (see chapter three). Like all other places, Dapcha Dharmashala

with its multilayered eco-spiritual cosmologies and cultural stories is also ecologically

relational and holistic (see chapter four). To this realization, this study thinks (and

acts) ecologically, and appreciates emplaced pedagogy[58] as the one that acknowledges

ecological principles of authenticities, place relationalities, and ethical

responsibilities. The Metamodern ecological worldview aligns the form and content

of this study (see chapter two). It is from this ecological worldview, now, you may

reflect on the question- is the dominant schooling designs of present Nepal open

enough to embrace these (mind-body) integrated and multilayered place phenomena?

Or, making the theme more specific, also, you may reflect on the question- is the

dominant schooling (and the pedagogical) design of Dapcha located Janahit School

open enough to embrace this ecologically relational and complex Dapchali lifeworld

(see the overall portraying of Dapchali lifeworld in chapter four)?

If pedagogies are displaced, finding ways to emplace them through some

forms of pedagogical innovation are seemingly a good idea. Maybe you are thinking

the same. Thinking in this way, now we begin entering into the major arguments of

this thesis. The ecologically circular arguments expose to you the gap between the

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[58] Taken from Burns (2015) the concluding chapters of this study uses emplaced pedagogies
interchangeably with transformative sustainability pedagogy, the pedagogy that appreciates ecological
principles and wisdom traditions

open lifeworld and the close pedagogies. Also, the realization is likely to let you read

between the lines, and emerge with the appreciation of the need for ecological

mutuality and reciprocity for transformative learning.

Figure 40: Ecological mutuality in learning

(Source: https://www.parkschool.org.uk)

In the next two chapters, I narrate you the details on how, though the PAR

community of practice endorsed a kind of participatory and generative model of

emplaced pedagogies[59] in Janahit School and passed through three different action-

reflection cycles, the reform initiation was seemingly sandwiched within the dominant

cultural milieu of 'teach and learn for exam preparation'. Also, I narrate to you how

the shifting perspectives (one of the major tenants of transformative learning) had still

to cross the limitations of the dominant schooling architecture and anti-ecological

beliefs. It suggests that the pedagogical innovations to emplace transdisciplinary

lifeworld in disciplinary schooling architecture are seemingly anti-ecological.

But, wait.

As those later discoveries are beyond the scope of this chapter (see chapter six

and chapter seven), the ecocomposition in this chapter focuses only on the actions-

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[59] It is a participatory and relational approach of pedagogical innovation, which is grounded in a
specific place. In the language of Holmgvist, Gustavsson, and Wernberg (2007), this inducative design,
and phenomenographic approach of pedagogical innovation adopts ecological perspectives of dynamic
relationality.

reflections during the needs assessment and the planning phase of the PAR project. Actions-Reflections in these phases emerged with the following four key themes-

1. Displaced research practices

2. Displaced school pedagogies

3. Emplaced pedagogies as an overarching need of pedagogical innovation, and

4. Participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies as an approach to pedagogical reform

Slowly, you may discover that, in a way or other, I have linked the theme to the research question- how the displaced (and therefore lifeless) school pedagogies in Dapcha Dharmashala located Janahit School suggested a need to integrate place and lifeworld in teaching and learning? Also, I have linked the theme to the research question- how the PAR team emerged with a plan to initiate participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies in the School? I nest the pedagogical themes together within the onto-epistemological composition of the eco-spiritual place relationality, complexity, and authenticity of Dapcha at present time and space[60] (which I discussed in chapter four).

Also, making continuous reflective look at our realization of place as a complex, mind-body integrated self, which is but a microcosm of widening circle of universal 'Self' (see chapter three), this multi-layered ecocomposition let you see different facets of linearly designed disciplinary pedagogical practices of Janahit School. While narrating the multilayered relationalities, often, I go beyond the reductionist logic and dualistic perceptions of empirical evidence, the *Pramana*. It is because the empirical evidence may appear true in reference to dominant Western-Modern practice architecture of modern schooling, but if seen from the place essential

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[60]In this study, time is historical memories and genealogical dimensions of the place Dapcha Dharmashala, where space is geo-political dimensions.

(the place *dharma*), the apparent evidence may serve the false identifications. These false identifications (*mithya gyan*) may arise from the fragmented dualistic world of disciplinary modernity. Under such circumstances, following the suggestions from Stronach et al. (2013), I have addressed the fallacy relying on performative reflexivity[61] and postformal thinking. Also, this chapter progress with layers of the footnote. The footnotes may enable you to think ecologically and make 'being here' ecological gaze at 'being there' PAR actions and the reflections. For me, the circular cartography[62] of relational cross-references in the footnotes was supportive to make the holographic meaning of the study in chapter eight.

Section One: Journeying with Dis(placed) Academic Research

I start by narrating how as a research-degree student, I encountered various circles of displacement in social science research, and particularly in carrying practitioner research for academic purposes. Our study team had adopted PAR as an effective approach to school-based pedagogical innovation through stakeholders' participation. Also, studies (e.g., Constantinou & Ainscow, 2020; Roberts, Brown, & Edwards, 2015) forward PAR as a contextually relevant approach to school improvement. I experienced it to be true to some extent. But, many times I experienced the risk of displacement even in this ecologically promising practitioner-research, PAR. Despite many good intentions of PAR (like sustainability, empowerment, ownership, and autonomy), in many cases, our team of practitioner-

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[61]Drawing on a number of ecological stimuli, Stronach et al. (2013) suggests reflexive performances as a way for reflexive "praxes" in ecological thinking. The performative reflexivity as such performs from in-between the visible and the invisible, the present and the absent.

[61]Theoretically and politically embedded account of the embodied phenomenon (see Braidotti, 2020)

researchers (for the PAR project) had to rely on pre-constructed (maybe imported and, therefore, displaced) practice architecture of dominant academic design.

The displacement (in many ways) would question the authenticities of our studies for emplaced pedagogies. Also, such displacements would weaken the place belongingness and the sense of the purpose of the university researchers (like me and my colleagues) on 'why do I do research'. Personally, as an academic researcher, in my attempt (maybe a compulsion) to 'fit' myself within the dominant research practices of the university, time and again, I had to compromise the 'essentials' of the place, its authenticities, and the relationalities.

Thus, in the few paragraphs below, I reflect on how I experienced university researchers' opportunities and limitations on carrying practitioner research (like PAR) in Nepali communities. As I discussed earlier, concerned with our theme of emplaced pedagogies, any forms of displaced research practices were unlikely to represent the 'place' in the research. Most importantly, there was always a risk that such an attempt for cultural fit within the dominant research design of modern academia[63] would produce and re-produce the knowledge that meets the interests of those dominant architects.

Let's see-

From the very first day of my selection for PhDs, my initial attempts were more focused on growing familiarity with PAR methods and methodologies. Initially, the RupantaranProject report (see an overview of the Rupantaran Project in Annex 1) had informed me and fellow researchers that the Project aimed at public schools

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[63]Many of the dominant research design for university purpose prescribes a human-centric, intellectualist research paradigm. As Lewis and Owen (2020) suggest, certain forms of performance philosophy are needed to think ecologically, and to address multilayered ecological complexities. The dominant research designs prescribed by the universities for research-degree students are, however, often closed and linear. The closed designs are likely to produce and reproduce closed intellectualism.

improvement through a contextualized and participatory approach. But what makes

participatory research 'participatory'? Whose participation makes it participatory? -

We had many similar questions[64]. We were supposed to research on enhancing the

quality of basic school education in rural Nepal. But, what would be our focus area? –

We were not yet sure of it.
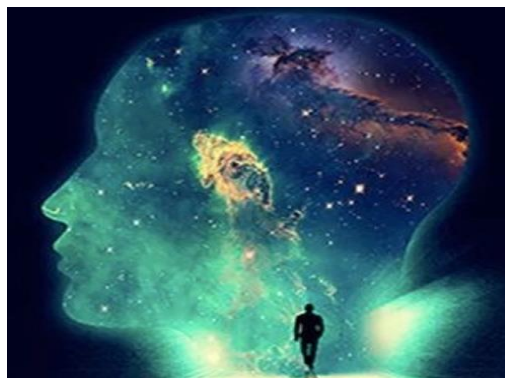
Figure 41: Participatory Consciousness

(Source: https://soundcloud.com)

On August 4, 2017, I defended my research proposal at KUSOED. There, I

proposed to do participatory action research on any one area related to school

pedagogies and curriculum use. I presented my research proposal following

Rupantaran Project Report, where it had suggested us to carry PAR. But, what would

PAR be like? – we were not yet familiar with PAR design. Otherwise, maybe to

present a research proposal before the first-hand experiences with PAR participants in

the 'real' communities was unlikely to be participatory[65]. These (pre-structured and

predominantly linear) university requirements were the beginning from where I began

to sense displacement in academic research. The more we would study PAR literature

(e.g., Kindon & Kesby, 2010; McTaggart, 1997) the more confusion the literature

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[64]It seems that aligning academic research with the 'commercial knowledge value', which Jordan and Kapoor (2016) describes as 'politicizing research' in modern academia; there have been many illusions on 'participation' and 'participatory' inherent in Participatory Action Research for academic purpose.
[65]It is evidence that the long inheritance of the 'mind-first' production and circulation of knowledge in present academia still take embodied knowing as potentially antagonistic.

would create. There were many ways, and the ways varied with the variation in time and place. Despite perplexities, the variations as such were also an opportunity for us to look for organic designs relevant to our time and space.

We were to select (and/or get invited from) schools in rural settings, and carry out a needs assessment to examine ongoing practices, and understand the current state, problems, and opportunities for improved teaching and learning over there. Thereafter, we had to use the findings from the needs assessment as benchmarks for a collective action plan. All the same, what is the nature of participatory needs assessment in local communities, particularly in the context of Nepali communities? What would be the basic methodological underpinnings of context-responsive Participatory Needs Assessment? Most importantly, what if the self-driven 'felt needs' of the participants emerged as 'actual needs'? We were not familiar with such ethical (and political) complexities inherent in identifying 'participatory needs'. There, under such perplexities, we chose to start our PAR journey, negotiating our embodied experiences with established frames of PAR in modern academia.

To look at dominant PAR literature (written from contexts different from Nepali communities) and trying to fit (and negotiate) our activities within the 'prescribed frame' was an 'academically secure (?)' way for us[66]. And therefore, like many other academic researchers from the Nepali context, we began limiting ourselves to the dominant Western-Modern frame of academic research for university requirements. It was how we began to experience the limitations of 'place research' within 'displaced research architectures' of modernity. Slowly, we entered other displaced circles (which I discuss in the following paragraphs) that would question the authenticity of doing such research.

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[66] Many of the PhDs limit their studies within externally prescribed frames. Ironically, they find the frame 'academically secured' (see Tesar, 2021). Adopting the 'risk free' design, often the researchers compromise the authenticity and ethical responsibility of the study.

The Myth of Relationship Building

We could feel manyfold spheres of 'methodological displacement' in the initial days of carrying PAR. When we entered the school, following the suggestions from the dominant PAR literature, our first challenge was to maintain an authentic professional relationship of mutual love and trust with school stakeholders, and community members. We needed 'skills' for 'relationship building'.There were many 'prescriptions' for relationship building in PAR (see Chevalier & Buckles, 2019; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Is a relationship something to 'build'[67]? Is that relationship authentic where we have to look for the 'strategies' to build it up? For what purpose (and for whose interest) we had to 'build' the relationship? There, one of my fellow researchers observed-

"What I don't understand is, you see, the more we struggle to establish friendly relations with school teachers and community members, the more they begin to suspect us? Maybe they feel, we are here with some self-interest."

"Maybe because we are *uninvited guests*", said another researcher.

In Nepali cultural practices, often, guests receive a warm welcome. Maybe whatever name we give, our presence in the school was more a 'selection' than 'invitation. Maybe, the friend was right- we were uninvited guests. Maybe our arrival there was something like Colombus in the Red Indian communities. And maybe not (like Colombus) because Dapcha Dharmashala was also 'our' community, which would tie us together with emotional bonds of 'ourness'. Still, the inside-outside dilemma as such was too complex a phenomenon that it was difficult to discover at what point we were insiders and at what point the outsider. It needed us to distinguish the political from the ecological.

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[67] The need to 'build' relation resists union through devotion. Thinking ecologically (see Chinmayananda, 2011), it is a condition where an aspirant is unable to engage in selfless service

It seems, 'selection' is more political than ecological. Maybe our 'hidden interest to 'change' the school and the community, to impress others with our 'efforts', and to receive an academic degree in return[68] was responsible for the awkwardness. Such limiting experiences suggest how the 'myth' of relationship-building was anti-ecological, and how such a mismatch between the actual community life and literature prescriptions would evoke uncertainty and anxiety. I call it 'anti-ecological (participatory) anxiety' because maybe 'participation' with basic ecological principles like authenticities and ethical responsibilities would not need 'any attempt' for relationship building. Maybe such authentic relationships would foster so naturally, and they wouldn't need any artificial 'effort' of a kind.

Whole Mate and (-or) Role Mate

Here is yet another experience.

We were in a staff room at Janahit School. There were university researchers, the headteacher, and the teachers. Once, while introducing the basics of participatory research, following the dominant PAR literature in Global North and Global South (e.g., Kemmis et al., 2015; Kemmis & Mc Taggart, 2005), I said-

"We are here together for our role to play"

Later, while walking home from school, one of my friends asked-

"What 'role' were you talking about?"

Maybe my use of the word 'role' was stressing my Western-Modern academic attitude to see every relationship in terms of the 'role'[69] we play.

As I would understand those days, mediating agreement to work together was, but mediating our role. In our case as a PAR researcher, it was not only the question

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[68] Hindu Buddhist knowledge tradition holds that such an egoistic desire for fruit, being guided by self-interest, lacks authenticity of the action (see Chinmayananda, 2011; Khaptad, 2000).

[69] Anthropocentric exodus as such narrows our options down to the bionaries (see Braidotti, 2018) between 'my role' and 'their role' and often excludes human beings from their 'higher' ecological role.

of how we belong at the school and the community but also the question of how we mediate agreements to work together.

The next day, I wrote-

It was seemingly paradoxical that in the rural lifeworld that inherently holds human relationships as 'whole mate', we were following established PAR literature and trying 'hard' to establish a relationship of 'role mate'. Otherwise, maybe, relationship building would not have been that much a time-consuming 'effort'. (Reflective journal entry, March 5, 2018)

Entering a new community and a school with an intention to work together and perform our 'assigned (?) role' was both an exciting and frustrating experience. It was exciting because we were to learn something new in a new environment. It was frustrating because our 'role of interest[70]' was continuously establishing us as 'outsiders' in our continuous struggle to belong, to be, and to become with the insiders (if any).

Figure 42: The participatory relationship of ethical wholeness

(Source:http://www.tsherinsherpa.com)

Maybe our Western-Modern academic mindsets and the 'load' of pre-structured research architectures we had carried were responsible to make us

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[70] Coincide with the traditional humanitie, 'role of interest' creates structural 'others', and limits an individual to expand self-boundaries. For Morgan (2012), such anti-ecological 'role of interest' limits wholehearted openness to 'higher needs'.

'outsiders' than we actually were. There, ironically, we choose to give enough time and attention to relationship building. This 'attempt' for relationship building was not only 'interest-driven' but also time-consuming.

Initially, our team of university researchers had thought that we would spend only a few days in the communities and soon afterward start our PAR cycles in the action school. However, it took us more time (almost eight months) than we had allocated. The following excerpts from my reflective journal reflect on how I was doubtful with the slow progress of PAR activities-

Sometimes I doubt that things are going slow. Often, I ask- Why don't we directly go to school and start our activities? Now, it has already been eight months since we first entered this community, and yet we have not started our activities at the school. (Reflective Journal entry, March 4, 2018)

Perhaps, such time-consuming interactions with the immediate living world must have achieved complex integration between our inner and outer reality. In this realization, relying on the suggestions from established PAR literature (e.g., Kindon & Kesby, 2010; McTaggart, 1997), I added, "Hopefully, this longer engagement will strengthen our relationship of mutual trust and care" (Reflective Journal entry, March 7, 2018).

But things were not going as I had thought.

Though it was seemingly a 'relationship of compassion', it was evident that some relationships were in many ways a 'relationship of expectation[71]'. This relationship of expectation was in many ways questioning the authenticity of our participatory relationships.

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[71]Hindu-Buddhist essence of active life highlightshumanactionas made up of two dimensions: (1) a sense of obligation or duty towards others and (2) an absence of desire for rewards. As Khaptad (2000) suggests, relationship of expectation can never be a relationship of devotion. The relationship is likely to pave the path of sorrow.

I narrate below our experiences with the 'relationship of expectation'. We observed that those expectations were in many ways the result of the 'Western-Modern' attitude of viewing research as a 'give-and-take' commodity.

Compassion and (-or) Expectations

Slowly, we 'felt' (or maybe it was just our apparent feeling) that we were developing our familiarity with the community about its past and present, its culture, and natural resources. Each time we entered the community, we received a warm welcome and love from the villagers.

But 'the love' was not always organic.

The love we received was in many ways the complex mediation of the love of compassion and the love of expectations (which I discuss below). While walking on the way, many of the villagers would smile at us, and some others would invite us to their home for tea- *Chya khayara jam*[72]…

Some villagers were so close that they would address us *babu*, *nani*[73].

Our longer engagement in the community for relationship building, however, left many people in doubt. Frequently, we would hear some comments from the community like-

"It has been months and they have done nothing in the school".

"They are here just for their PhDs".

People would comment on our activities relating them to other funded projects they had seen earlier in their community.

"Such projects come and go."

While in interaction, we could see that some villagers would expect financial supports from our project. While in an informal discussion with a villager, they

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[72]A culture in Nepali village to ask visitors to have tea
[73]A loving word for a male and a female individual

would share with us many past narratives on how *gorya haru* (white people) would

come to the village and support them financially.

A villager shared, "Last year a project funded us for goat farming."

We would hear such narratives with an attitude of inquiry and would think

about the moral appropriateness[74] of the narratives.

Here is an excerpt from my reflective journal-

It seems that rural located Nepali villages have developed a culture of

expecting financial initiatives from funded projects. Many of the funded

projects enter the village with short-term improvement (and research)

packages. They make some financial supports and prepare reports in the

interest of funding agencies. Maybe, it gives immediate joy to the villagers.

But in the long run, the supports go counterproductive…maybe the villagers

develop a culture of expectation, which is not always healthy. (Reflective

Journal entry, March 11)

From the very beginning, it was visible that our 'role mate' relationship with

the school and the community was, but also the relationship of expectation. It was

also a sign that our 'participatory ethos' of academic research was lacking ethical

visions of authenticity and relationality. How could we establish a common interest,

where the participants (both the university researchers and the community members)

are driven by the self-interest of a kind? Such anti-ecological perplexities (that lacked

authenticity, place relationalities, and ethical responsibilities) would strengthen the

hesitation and despondency.

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[74] In *Dharma Yoga* perspectives, the ecological worldview is something to be involved in deciding how something is done (give and take) within shared ethos (see Chinmayananda, 2011). The moral appropriateness of this sharing is observed through relational authenticity and responsibility.

The Hesitation and Despondency

To go to a 'new' school and strengthen a mutual relationship was not as easy as we had expected earlier. Beginning from the very first day of our school visit, we began to look for manifold ways to explain to the teachers, the students, and the villagers our project focus, and the reason we were there.

We were there to explain, but ironically, we ourselves were not free from many disoriented dilemmas (Mezirow, 2005) arising from our Western-Modern orientation of PAR and the actual place-relationalities. There, I would be thinking about many ethical and epistemological perplexities within PAR. I would ask myself-
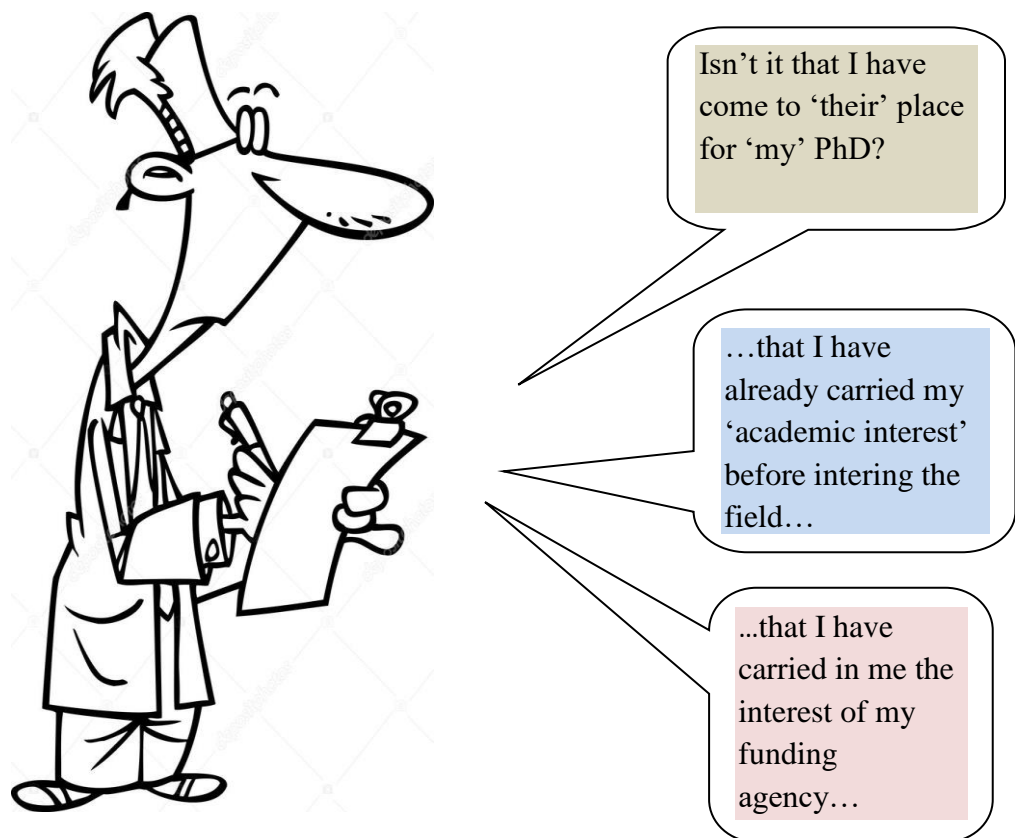
Whatever ideal claim I would make, my major intention in those early days was to complete my Ph.D. Maybe I was not yet aware of my 'researcher essential'-

for what purpose was my Ph.D.[75]? Was it to add one extra 'covered bundle' in the university library and fit me in the dominant cultural milieu of academic research? Or, was it that I had to look for the essential, no matter in what direction the research would flow?

Maybe following the 'most often traveled' directions could be easier. In this path, we could just make some passive efforts to fit our research with pre-constructed prescriptions and 'proven' frames. While in the study field (but not during 'writing as inquiry'), I did the same. While in the study-field, (following the trend of academic research), I continuously followed the dominant PAR literature. I continued traveling this 'most traveled path', but with a little doubt. Maybe, this doubtfulness eventually enabled me to emerge with the idea of Metamodern ecological PAR, where I could integrate 'Science' of empirical (and pragmatic) PAR with 'Art' of inquiry at the sense-making stage of the PAR project.

Purpose and (-or) Purposelessness

Maybe it was from this doubt, sometimes I choose to ask- what 'essential' was I supposed to bring. And therefore, in many stages, I had to mediate the established PAR models (e.g. Kindon & Kesby, 2010; McTaggart, 1997) and the 'actual' place-spirit, the ecological relationalities, which I have portrayed in chapter three. Our PAR team from the university had to mediate the 'expectations' and the 'essential'.

The way, now, became the way of negotiation, which turned to be yet another basis for displacement. Does negotiation as such take an aspirant to the depth of the study phenomenon? I doubt. Such negotiations between dominant PAR and the actual spirit of the place were likely to question the authenticity of our actions and reflections. And along with the doubts of the kind, I continued negotiating the actual

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[75] Thinking ecologically, the research that lacks 'researcher essential', which doesn't ask (and act on) the question- what essential I am to bring (?), lacks ethical responsibility of moving to the essence of the study topic.

lifeworld and the established academic culture. But, in this sphere of negotiation, establishing basic ideals of PAR related to participants' autonomy and ownership was challenging. The challenge involved in mediating particular and the general needs, and also the individual and the social needs. For example, some teachers would say-

"Give us training."

Or something like-

"Distribute us one laptop each."

And it was difficult to identify if the shared (participatory?) need was individual needs or the group needs, and most importantly, if the need was 'felt' need or 'actual' need. There we realized that often the 'actual need' is beyond 'the heard' and 'the told', where in my role as a practitioner-researcher, I had to move beyond the ordinary dualistic perception towards a deeper kind of (ecological) wisdom.

In our case, also, it was difficult to mediate our dual responsibilities to meet community needs and the university's academic requirements. For example, no sooner had we begun our interactions with school stakeholders, I began to feel that their 'actual needs' were different from what I had proposed to do during my proposal defense at the university.

"Why the university asked me to defend my PAR proposal in advance before I had identified the needs of the study school? Is it always necessary that the university has to fit even the practitioner research like PAR in its established cultural milieu? By doing so, maybe the university is continuing the hegemony of 'Western-Modern standards' in academia, where students go to the field taking pre-defined standards. Whatever it was, the displaced practices were discouraging research studies (even the practitioner research like PAR) to 'move homewards'.

Sometimes while in interaction with the school teachers', I would go more thoughtful on the questions like-

Why is it that the teachers need to work with me?

What if my area of (academic) interest is not their (practical) interest[76]?

Who am I to 'intervene' in their school activities?

(Such questioning likely enabled me to mediate the 'higher-order' purpose of doing research, and also enabled me to emerge with the idea of 'research as/for authentic lifefulness', which I have discussed in chapter eight).

The Myth of Autonomy

Initially, I was particularly worried about future relationships with the teachers and the headteacher. Mindful of cognitive dissonance[77], I was partly aware that no sooner than the project activities would continue, the headteacher, the teachers, and the students would have to leave their comfort zone. Managing the distress at that time could be challenging. I was also worried that the unpredictability and the fluidity of our PAR structure (within the rigidity of the research for academic purpose) were likely to make many unforeseen turnings at any stage, and what if the turnings contradicted with the academic requirements of the university and the requirements of the funding agency? The fear would often encourage me to follow the prescribed (but established) path than looking for place authenticity. There, I realized that in a relationship characterized by fear and self-interest, individual autonomy is a utopian dream of a kind.

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[76]It suggests interest duality between academics and the practice. Thinking ecologically, when knowledge construction and practical application of the knowledge harmonize with same interest of 'relationality, human acts lack ethical dilemma. The wisdom is in many ways similar to the three-fold path in Buddhism. It suggests, whenever you encounter a dilemma of a kind, take refugee to higher

[77] It is a form of psychological discomfort when an individual or group of people has to learn something beyond their comfort zone.

Maybe, while in the study field, I was asking such seemingly disoriented questions because I was still confused with the 'essential' of my researcher's duty. Thinking ecologically, when human beings don't work in accordance with their essential *dharma*, they don't discover their purpose in doing things, and continue living in confusion. Slowly, I began to realize that many of the claims of dominant PAR which were 'pre-designed' and 'pre-constructed' by those outside the context would contradict our place constructs. For this purpose, maybe, we had to look for our own contextual model of PAR arising from the place authenticity. Only after completing fieldwork, and arriving at the meaning-making stage of this study, the realization enabled me to 'integrate research and inquiry' and make ecological meaning of the limitations that I experienced during field engagements with PAR.

Research-Inquiry: 'Organic-Out' from Ecological Habitus

Dear reader, exposing our experiences with the limitation of PAR 'standards' and its contextual complexities, my intention in this section is not to undermine the best intentions of PAR to foster democratic participation, action, and knowledge construction all in a single endeavor (Ahmad, Gjøtterud & Krogh,2016; Constantinou & Ainscow, 2020; Roberts, Brown, & Edwards, 2015). Rather, my concern is that even (ecologically) promising research methodologies like PAR, when limited to the 'narrow' academic structure of linearity (see Braidotti, 2018), is likely to limit authentic knowledge production. For this study, such questionings were supportive for later realizations on the need for the new ethical envisioning of practitioner research (see chapter eight, under the heading 'research as/for authentic lifefulness'), which may arise from the ecological principle of authenticities, place relationalities and ethical responsibilities and facilitate transformative learning.

At this stage, maybe you are wondering, if dominant practice architecture is so limited for organic exploration of ecological wisdom and cultural stories, then what enabled this research to move in this direction? Already discussed in chapter two, it is likely that the transformative design space, and its appreciation for ecologically regenerative path and process not only enabled me to embody the transformation, but also to attune with the diverse nature of 'limiting and enabling' cultural entities. Despite manifold limitations (which I discussed above) of doing organic research in present academia, the research supervisors' appreciation for transformative design space, and their continuous encouragement to move from predominant 'technozoic paradigm' to an 'ecozoic vision' (Berry, 2006) was particularly supportive to embody integrative-synthetic logic of the research and the inquiry. Maybe, the space enabled me to arrive with key theoretical discoveries and insights (see chapter eight) that for any transformation to occur, there have to be continuous shifts in overall ecologies and cultural stories, and therefore, the shifts for emplaced pedagogies has to move together with the shifts for organically enabling space for emplaced research-inquiry (also see Esbjörn-Hargens and Zimmerman, 2009).

Section Two: Journeying with Displaced School Pedagogies

After discussing how I journeyed PAR and how I developed place consciousness in practitioner research (like PAR), now I narrate how the participatory needs assessment identified weaker place sense and the displaced schooling culture within Western-Modern pedagogical architecture of Janahit School. Apparently, these anti-ecological schooling practices were responsible for students' and teachers' weaker sense of belonging, being, and becoming. Then, I narrate the details on how the PAR community of practice identified emplaced teaching and learning as an overarching need for pedagogical innovation. Also, I narrate how a plan for a

generative and participatory model of emplaced (and therefore, lifeful) pedagogy emerged from within the dominant and residual (modern) practices of the school.

As already discussed in chapter two, our Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA) followed the eight months of the initial phase, where our team of university researchers and teacher-participants reflected on the current pedagogical practices of Janahit School. Following the suggestions from dominant PAR literature (e.g., Kindon & Kesby, 2010; McTaggart, 1997), our objective of the participatory needs assessment was to identify school improvement needs and to develop (teachers, students, and the researchers') familiarity with collaborative learning. Also, our concern was to develop teachers' familiarity with PAR concepts and approaches.

One possible strategy to initiate collaborative planning was (initiating) participatory needs assessment of the school. Thus, we began planning for it. The participatory needs assessment moved in multilayered flowing, emerging one from the other. The process passed through three major activities i.e., 1) Participatory workshop, 2) FGDs and interviews, and 3) Situation Analysis.

Figure 43: Participatory endeavors to identify school improvement needs

We were particularly hopeful that the wide range of discussions would bring teacher participants' perspectives and several personal stories on the floor. Following it, in July 2018, we (the Ph.D. research degree students) discussed with teachers, took a consent form Headteacher, and conducted four days (three hours each) workshop in

the leader school. The workshop exposed many faces of displacement in the dominant pedagogies, the dominant schooling design, and the cultural milieu. The closed and linear pedagogical experiences the teachers shared were in many ways different from the open, and transdisciplinary Dapchali lifeworld (which we discussed in chapter four). Let's see-

The Messy Ripples inside the Walls

All the teaching faculties, the headteacher, and the administrative staff from the school participated in the workshop. Therefore, as the literature suggests (e.g., Ahmad, Gjøtterud & Krogh, 2016), the role of the four-day participatory workshop, in many ways, was seemingly supportive to strengthen our relationship with the school family, and for us to be aware of ongoing schooling culture.

Day 1 (22 April) - Orienting PAR

We arranged the workshop in the staff room. We arranged sitting arrangements in a way that could facilitate face-to-face circular communication among the teacher participants. Teachers sat on the chair in a way that they could face one another. The headteacher joined the teacher's groups. Maybe it was the first visible effect of the PAR initiations. Otherwise, the cultural milieu of the schools in Nepal expects the headteacher to remain 'distanced' from teaching staff and play a dominant role[78].

Maybe growing early awareness of the fundamentals of PAR was necessary to achieve mutual understanding among the Project team and school family on what was going there. It was equally important to develop a sense of clear purpose (see Walker & Loots, 2018). Therefore, the orientation that day focused on developing the concept of the PAR approach. Also, the first day of the workshop focused on the orientation

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[78] In many ways, the bureaucratic hierarchichies among the teachers and the headteacher in the schools of Nepal is vertically top-down. It would minimize the democratic space for open communication between the headteacher and the teachers.

on Rupantaran Project. Roshani, the PostDoc Research fellow, and Parbati, a Ph.D. fellow (from the Rupantaran team), initiated the orientation.

Following the suggestions from PAR practitioners (e.g., Ahmad, Gjøtterud & Krogh, 2016), we were more to hear from the teachers than to put our views. We shared our research experiences and heard a lot from them. Teachers found that the PAR approach was in many ways different from what they had experienced as a university researcher. In excitement, they shared their past experiences of doing research.-

"I finished my Masters' thesis in a month. Thereafter, I have not revisited it. It's in the University library[79]", shared a teacher.

"Our story is also similar to yours", laughed another teacher.

We all laughed.

In Nepal, many university graduates (and teacher-researchers) feel that research is but merely an academic requirement, which some elite academics carry for 'knowledge-making. It has not been the ongoing praxis for pedagogical innovation and professional development.

Though teacher-participants were familiar with action research to some extent (because it was in the university course contents), it showed that many of them were not familiar with its practicabilities.

"There is policy provision for the entire in-service teacher to do action research in their teaching area", shared a teacher in the right row. After a short silence, he added, "But we don't take it seriously".

"Who bothers? There is no monitoring", added a female teacher.

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[79] The teachers' experience suggests how (in many cases) the university research carried by the university graduates (future teachers) was just a formality for academic requirements.

Why do many public school teachers in Nepal don't do self-directed research in their professional area? Maybe, they feel comfortable in continuing the usual practices. Or maybe they are 'trained' to expect 'idea' than to search for them on their own. Or maybe the dominant cultural practices are not favorable for such initiations. Let's see-

Day 2 (23 April) - Teachers' Disposition and Action

On the second day, the teachers made three different groups. The headteacher joined one of the teachers' groups. Working in groups, teachers discussed existing problems related to curriculum, assessment, teachers' professional development (TPD), and students' discipline. We, the university researchers, kept on discussing with teachers and walked from one group to the other. Sometimes, in-between, we would take an attitude of inquiry and ask positive questions of various kinds.

"Seeing the headteacher coming to you, and working with you in a group is an exciting experience, isn't it?" Our positive questions would probe excitement in the interactions. "Yes, we had never experienced it before", they would respond.

Also, we used language where teachers could feel that our language expressed their needs and expectations. It would enable teachers to feel free and comfortable in the discussion. One of our ways was to avoid 'university jargon' in the discussion.

The discussion was full of noise.

"Aren't we going noisy", a teacher showed her concern.

"Don't worry, the discussion has been lively", suggested a researcher.

"Silent please", said one teacher.

"Even teachers make noise", another added.

We laughed.

Maybe, lifefulness in teaching and learning needs a secure environment, mutual trust, support, and freedom. So is the case in meetings, workshops, and seminars. Maybe too many formal structures resist spontaneous dialogues among the participants.

After the 'emotionally engaged' and 'imaginatively charged' discussion was over, a representative from each group made a group presentation.

Teachers put seemingly contradictory views on professional development practices. They said, "We need training from *experts*". And some other times they repeatedly said, "Training is not being supportive to transfer understandings to the classroom practices".

Why do teachers repeatedly ask for training from experts, when they know that the 'outsider-made generic script' cannot be effectively acted upon? Why do they often turn to someone to tell them what to do in the classroom, with the lessons?
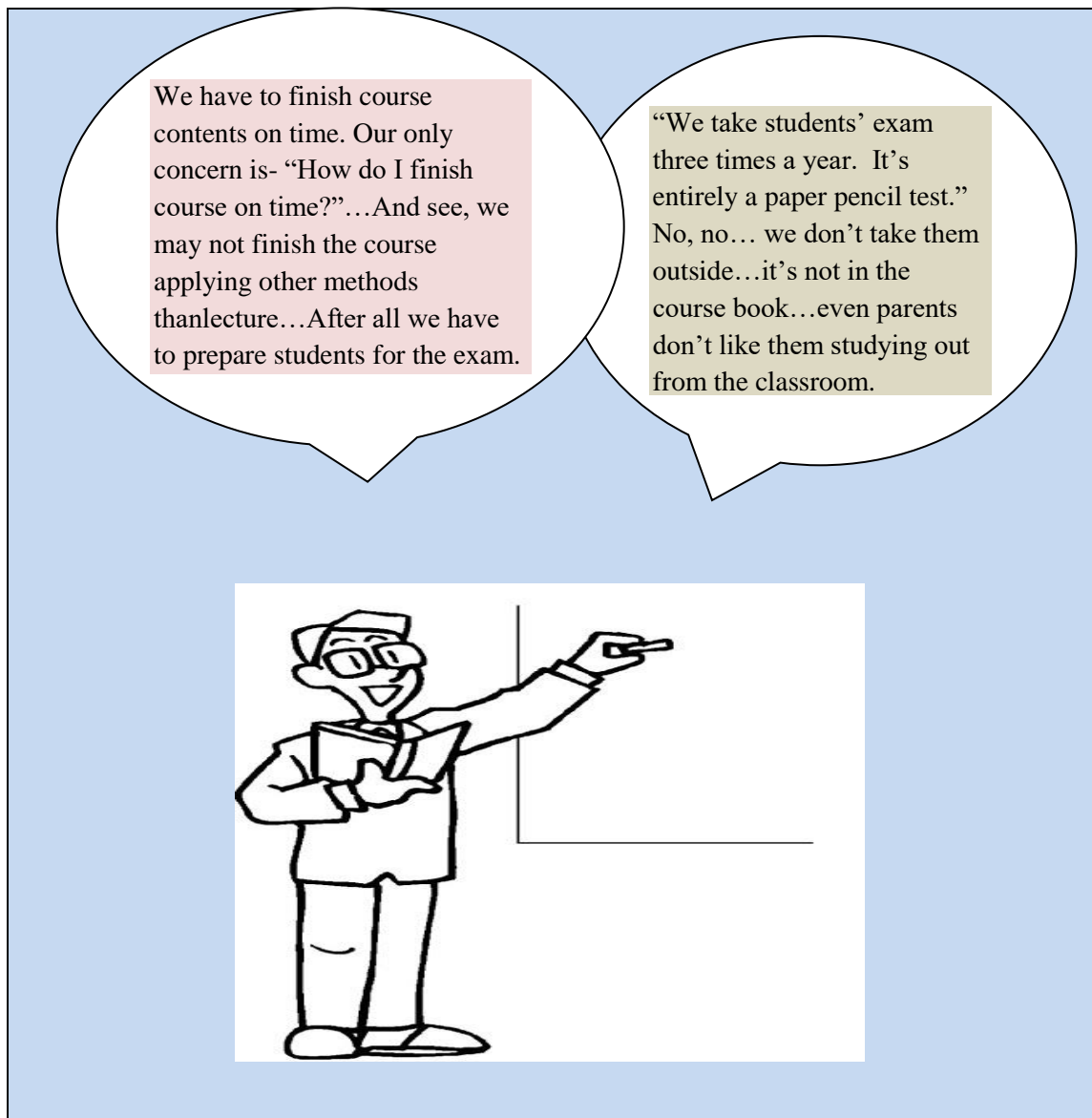
Teachers' focus was particularly on how the school and the classroom settings would endorse the traditional curriculum. They shared that most often they had to fit their pedagogical practices within the sphere of others' expectations outside the school and the classrooms.

"Parents expect us to teach students inside the classroom", said a teacher.

"After all, the community asks- how many students got 'A' in SEE[80] this year?" And, "If we don't teach in English medium, parents will admit their children in boarding school next year", added another teacher.

I observed that the teachers' views and dispositions reflected their dominant cultural traditions of school education. Their dispositions and actions reflected the residual pedagogical process for 'course completion' inside the classroom for exam marks. Seemingly, the teachers were so much occupied with the concerns to 'fit' their practices within the established schooling culture that they could never stop for a moment and reflect on the question- What 'essential' are we supposed to hold?

Day 3 (24 April) -Blaming and Fault Finding

On the third day, teacher participants discussed policy provisions on school education. There, they identified policy practice gaps, particularly in the curriculum.

That day we experienced seemingly contradictory blaming of various kinds.

"Government makes a frequent change of curriculum policy. They don't bother to train teachers. Its government's fault", shared a teacher. "Why does the government make a frequent change and pedagogical reforms, when earlier reforms are not fully endorsed?"

The former headteacher shared, "Last year I strongly put my views to design and implement local curriculum, but RP (Resource Person) didn't show any interest. We cannot make the change unless local officials come with a specific plan and agenda.[81]"

"It's also the Headteacher's fault", shared a teacher, "We teachers can do if school leader comes with proper management and planning". The blame turned to the Headteacher.

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[80] Secondary Education Examination

[81] After a month, we managed to talk with the RP. In the conversation, we observed that he was in many ways not familiar with the 'what' and 'how' of the local curriculum.

"School management doesn't entertain if we take students out of the class…and they talk student-centered learning…I don't understand this." Now, the blame turned to the local authorities.

Hot discussions continued for a long. As a facilitator, our role was more to make an attentive observation, and if necessary, even divert the discussion in another direction. "Maybe I shouldn't take anyone's side", I was cautious not to be judgemental. We left all the decisions, up-to-the teachers because it was the teachers who knew their school from very near.

But the over-blame to one another made me quite thoughtful that day. Here is an excerpt from my journal entry that evening-

> Maybe we have developed a blaming culture- a way to take easy excuses from self-responsibility. Headteacher and teachers blame regional and state policies…teachers blame the headteacher, and the headteacher blames teachers. They blame parents for not being responsible, and parents blame the headteacher and the teachers. SMC chair blames the municipality for the lack of sufficient funding. (Journal entry, 24 April 2018)

That day I reflected on my own role as an educational researcher. In my MPhil research (see Wagle, 2016), I had blamed public schools as being extraordinarily resistant to change. Even I had blamed policy elites for entering the colonial agenda in school education. Maybe, educational researchers are also not free from 'romanticizing' blaming culture.

The scornful discussions that day made me think in terms of a self-responsible educator. What if we begin reflecting on our own thoughts and actions? That day, I wrote-

It may be true that public schools are resistant to change. But whose fault is it?
Aren't we all responsible for this? – Maybe the degree of responsibility varies,
but we are all responsible. Imitating Western-European worlds, we have added
so much enormity and complexity in public schools. We introduced initiatives
that couldn't fit the actual spirit of the place and the community. We failed,
and we continued blaming others for the failure (Journal entry, 24 April 2018)
Is blaming the solution?

What made us seeking excuses and blaming others than looking at the self?
There, we realized that because of various conflicts of interest the teachers had
problems in communicating among themselves, and in working as a team. Such a lack
of interdisciplinary values might be the reason that the sets of knowledge and skills
from different disciplines were not adequately integrated.

Day 4 (25 April) Prioritizing the Needs from within the Conflict of Interests

On the fourth day, which was also the last day of the 4-day workshop, teachers
worked together to find ways to strengthen the continuous learning and development
of students and teachers. They brainstormed a possible action plan.

Teachers' action plan for continuous learning and development of students and
teachers that day was more focused on day-to-day frustrations and contradictions
between the school system and the lifeworld. They discussed the question- How do
we get more connected to our profession? How do the students get more connected to
their lifeworld?

We felt that by engaging with contradictions and enriched through differences,
slowly and gradually the discussion was moving towards the actual lifeworld and
work-life difficulties. For example, the teacher-participants, who in the initial days

were more interested in following only the areas we introduced (for example, please tell what shall we do), now began to come with their own everyday issues. They said-

"We need to arrange timely staff meetings."

"We have to find ways to teach with computers and mobile phones"

"We need to learn to teach from available resources around"

"We have to make our teaching and learning more life-based."

We listed and grouped all the needs for improvements as identified in the workshop into 5 major needs. Then we distributed a separate sheet of paper to each teacher and asked them to prioritize the needs ranging from 1 to 5 based on their priority. Starting from 1 at the top, they identified contextualized (emplaced) teaching and learning as an overarching need for school improvement. Continuous professional development, use of ICTs, and parental engagements were the other needs.

Additional Stories on Displacement

The four days' workshop followed other methods of participatory needs assessment like In-depth interviews and FGDs among subject teachers, the headteacher, the students, the SMC, and the PTA chairs. Also, we made a class observation and participatory discussion on the teaching performances of individual teachers. We made resource mapping and situation analysis of the school and the community, where the school was located.

Making it more inclusive of stakeholders' voices, evidence from these methods was seemingly helpful in prioritizing needs as previously identified in four days workshop. Similar to the sharing in the four day's workshop, also in FGDs, the interviews, and the informal discussions, the teacher participants particularly shared their stories on the weaker sense of teacher's identity, their weaker connection to the teaching profession, and a lower sense of achievement as a teacher. Likewise,

students shared their stories particularly on their low joy of learning at the school, on their low sense of purpose, and how they were less connected with their culture and landscape. Let's see-

Teachers' Stories: I Became a Teacher Because I Couldn't Become that…

Teachers would identify themselves as subject teachers. For example, whenever we would ask - What do you teach? - Teachers would have spontaneous replies-

I teach Science.

I teach Social Studies.

I teach Mathematics…

…I teach books…

It showed how the teachers' identity as a teacher was limited to subject teachings[82]. Maybe, the teachers' identity was a result of disciplinary classroom practices, which were predesigned to teach 'externally assigned course books' inside the class.

Teachers had developed cultural expectations for what they should teach. And therefore, it was likely that their actions and dispositions reflected the dominant cultural expectations both at the school and in the community.

Often, we felt a degree of professional saturation among teachers. It was arising from the boredom of repeating the same classroom rituals over and over again, every day, every year. Here is a piece of conversation between me and a teacher in his mid-forties-

Why do you teach?

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[82] Thinking ecologically, the identity of an individual is an ever increasing circle. Hindu-Buddhist wisdom tradition views identity ethics in relation to macro-micro individual identity (maybe the ethical responsibility to the professional identity, *biseshDharma*) and general identity (maybe the ethical responsibility to Global identity, *sadharanDharma*).

Because it is my job

Are you happy with it?

Yes, I was happy especially at the beginning of my teaching career.

Do you mean only at the beginning?

Yes, I had lots of energy in those days. I would make class interactive and would take students outside the class.

And why don't you do it now?

I am tired.

Similar was a response from a female teacher in her early forties- "At first we come to the teaching profession with energy and passion. Slowly, the energy fades".

Many teachers were seemingly less connected to the teaching profession. Many of them responded- "I became a teacher because I couldn't become *that*…[83]"

Once while in the staff room, seeing a teacher in his mid-thirties busy preparing the exam for government section officer, I asked- "Sir, how did you become a teacher?"

Keeping the book in his hand aside, he looked at me and said-

"Do you mean how I became a teacher? …I don't know how, but here I became a teacher". There, he added, "Last year I appeared an exam for section officer…I failed".

He made a soft smile.

"Maybe this year I can".

Such responses would reflect how teachers were less connected to the teaching profession; how they were less connected to the school they work.

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[83] It shows a dilemma among teachers, the dilemma arising from disorientation on-what is my *Dharma*. Deviated from the *Dharma* (the inner quality) often human beings are frustrated with their professional life. For Chinmayananda (2010), unable to discover true *Dharma* (the natural verson of the self), professionals often lack devotion in what they do for their living.

In a question, "how did you learn to teach", a teacher replied- "How? …Ok…see…I studied in a school of a similar kind. Maybe I learned to teach from my teachers…And, also from the university".

(He laughed) "It's learning to teach by seeing…maybe I am imitating them."

It was how 'learning to teach' for students' exam marks was passing from generation to generation, constructing pedagogical expectations on what is 'good' teaching and learning at school.

Headteacher's Stories: Trapped in the Immediate and the Apparent

The headteacher shared that teachers' seemingly low sense of achievement is the result of frequent policy change. "Government brings new policies and often teachers don't adopt those", she said. In her view, the pedagogical reforms in Nepali schools are the 'talk about' narratives (Cassey, 2009) that don't get eloquently 'actioned'.

Stressing the experiences, she added, "Some teachers even attend professional development workshops…and see what happens… some partially implement it, and many teachers wait just to see the reform fail…and before the provision is fully implemented, the government replaces it with another…and teachers' just wait for the newly endorsed reform to fail and to be replaced by another…"

The Headteacher's remarks made me think about the question, "Why many of the policy provisions are not eloquently acted in Nepali schools?" Maybe teachers just make a passive response- "Here is yet another 'talk', it comes and goes".

Also, the Headteacher shared schools' tendency to solve immediate problems as the cause of lifelessness and passivity in school. She gave an example of how the school was 'forced' to teach in English medium. "See, there is a private school nearby us. It teaches in the English medium. We imitate", she said.

"But why", I asked, "Why can't you make your own decision?"

"Because parents want us to teach in English medium," she said.

"We know that many students don't understand the lesson in English. We know that even we teachers are not prepared for it…but we just make an attempt to teach in English medium", she shared the experience.

Maybe until and unless the school continues to make vain attempts to 'fit' its pedagogical practices within dominant cultural expectations, the school can never be a change agent. I observed silently.

After a short silence, she continued, "Always trapped in immediate problem, we don't dare, or maybe we have no confidence to go to the root of the problem and solve it.

Dear reader, what might be the root of the problem, then? Let's see-

Students' Stories: In the 'Epic' Journey of Becoming 'Thulo Manchhe'

Students in FGDs showed their disorientation to 'right' and 'wrong'. Most often they would make decisions for themselves based on the right/wrong judgments from the expectations of their teachers and the community.

'Teachers take care of only those students who secure good marks' shared a girl-student.

"Therefore our focus is always on exam marks".

Further, they shared that most often their performance would depend on their teachers' comments and feedback. It would weaken their confidence, and wouldn't allow them to move beyond the dominant cultural expectations.

We heard similar other stories from the students. In a question, "why do you study", almost all the students in FGDs responded, "To pass the exam."

Maybe the school routines and the patterns had shaped the behavior of the students in a way that they had formed cultural expectations of a kind that the school learning was just to pass the exam.

What do you do at home?

I do home works.

Does homework?

Yes, I read and write.

Ok, why do you read and write?

Because I have to pass SEE with 'A'…

Then?

Then…then I will go to college….

"Do you want to read outside the class?" I asked.

(I had expected that many of the students would get excited and say- Yes.)

"NO", students replied.

Does it mean that students really don't like to study out of the classroom?

Maybe not

The journal entry I made that day reflects it to some extent-

It is not surprising that students tell they don't like to study outside the classroom. Maybe they are 'afraid' that if they tell that they like to read outside, they don't 'fit' inside the frame of being a 'good student'. Maybe it was their constructed response, shaped by the routine and disciplinary behavior of the school. (Journal entry, May 14, 2018)

Here is yet another example of how students had formed cultural expectations for learning. While in a classroom, I asked class seven students about their aim in life. Many of the students replied that they wanted to be a doctor. The response was followed by an engineer.

"Why?" I asked.

They said they wanted to be a *thulo manchhe* (big man) and serve the poor.

Maybe, again, they were just replying to the pre-constructed social views on-why read? But, dear reader, were those voices the authentic voices. Does it reflect what they really mean? I doubt.

Parent's Stories: Make My Son and Daughter What I Am Not

Though we had invited ten parents for the focused group discussion, only four of them were present. From very early days we were aware of the low engagement of parents in school activities. Despite this, we, the research degree students would walk around the village and talk with parents about their beliefs-on and experiences-with school. It was surprising that many parents whose children would secure 'good' marks in exam results would say-

"No, we don't ask our kids to do household work".

"But, why…Don't you think doing household works is also the learning?"

And parents would respond, "No, they have to study books to get good exam results. We are here to work for them".

Also, they would say, "We are poor farmers because we didn't go to school. We want them to live a good life"

Once I had asked a mother of four graders, "What do you want your son to be in the future?

"What do I want", she said, "I want him to read more and go to the city and earn money."

Again, after a short reflection, she said, "See, we don't have money to admit him in boarding school. Reading in the government school, his English is not good".

It was how the dominant cultural milieu of the community had constructed the communal expectations of the kind. And, the practice architecture of the school as an organization was 'struggling' to fit it within that cultural expectation.

But, how authentic were the expectations?

Maybe the bare land around, the houses locked at the front door, almost no youth in the village, school children not being connected to the cultural landscape, and teachers losing their connections to the teaching profession were questioning the authenticity of the apparent responses.

SMC and PTA's Stories: Add the Building, Lock the Gate

Nepal's educational management policy provisions have envisioned SMC to manage available recourses of the school and to ensure its smooth functioning of both the administrative and the academic activities (MoE, 2016). Likewise, PTA is supposed to coordinate the parents and the school teachers for meaningful communication and interdependence (MoE, 2016). Despite this, we experienced very low interest of SMC and PTA members in the academic and pedagogical activities of the school.

Our frequent conversations with SMC and PTA members revealed that the majority of the members hold the linear and disciplinary view of school teaching and learning, which was embedded in their thought and action.

"I have asked all the teachers to take students' exams once a month", shared the SMC chair.

We could see that the SMC chair was a strong believer in 'teach and learn for exam preparation' cultural practices. Many of his school improvement plans were seemingly concerned to solve the immediate problems. Following is an example of my conversation with the SMC chair-

"What do you think is the major problem in school?"

"There are many problems. One is… it is difficult to hold students till the last period", he shared.

After a thoughtful silence, he added, "See, there is no gate at the school. Students run to their home at any time in-between the school hours."

And in a question, "what is your plan to hold the students at the school during school hours", he said, "We are looking ahead to build a strong gate at the school. I will ask the headteacher to lock the gate and not to let anyone go out of the gate during school hours."

Again, after a short thoughtful look, he added, "Also, I am planning to set up the CCTV around the school. It monitors the students' and the teachers' activities".

…

And after a few months, we saw the CCTV around the school.

Now you may ask- did it solve the problem?

Maybe not.

Instead, it seemingly added the extra mess. I will discuss the details in the next chapter. Let's move.

The Problems: Displaced Pedagogies (and Research)

Arriving at this stage, following the suggestions of the PAR literature (Hendry, 1996; Kindon & Kesby, 2010), we formed a PAR community of practice (Hendry, 1996). It contained the headteacher, basic school teachers, the SMC and the

PTA chairs, and two students each from class 1 to class 8 from Janahit School. Through all-staff meetings and through a separate group discussion with students, we made detailed discussions on what the community of practice was and what it was supposed to do. There, we discussed the pedagogical problems.

So, what was the 'real problem' of the school?

Our continuous reflections on the school pedagogies and the immediate lifeworld of the community emerged with the idea that displacement, and therefore, the lifelessness of the school pedagogies, was seemingly an overarching problem to be addressed. In a staff meeting (August 20, 2018), I shared my reflections from participatory needs assessment and other interactions-

The headteacher and the teacher-friends, Namaskar!

Based on our continuous interactions, observations, and reflections to identify pedagogical problems at Janahit School, today I am here to share how I observed a low sense of belonging, being and becoming of the students, the teachers, and the researchers as a visible problem in school education of Nepal.

I observe that teachers appear to have a weaker sense of the teacher's identity. Isn't it that disoriented to the idea- what am I for, we school teachers are seemingly less connected to the teaching profession? Also, continuing profession with the lack of adequate recognition and autonomy, isn't it that we teachers have developed a low sense of achievement as a teacher?

To my observation, our students are less connected with their culture and landscape. It appears that they feel low joy in learning and have developed low sense of purpose on- why do I study at school?

See!! Even we researchers have a low sense of belonging. Focused on meeting academic requirements and relying on imported methods, I observed that our research endeavor is largely displaced. Maybe, a displaced research design can not readily explore ways to emplace pedagogies.

And it appears to me that, all these problems are steaming from a single problem- displacement. If so, standing on the situation where we are at present, maybe we have to come together with shared meaning and purpose of education and research. Can we work together to bring life to school and school to life? What is your observation? Let's discuss it today and create common understandings of what is going on.

…

Our series of discussions followed by critical reflections that day enabled us to go to the root of the problems, which were responsible for the displacement (and therefore lifelessness) of school pedagogies. While in the discussion, teachers would repeatedly share that they learned to teach 'imported' pedagogies in the teacher preparation program at the university. After entering the service, they would struggle to fit their practice with the ongoing pedagogical structure of the school. They would expect training than exploring their ways. As the school and the community would evaluate the performance of the teachers based on their 'ability' to prepare students for the exam, they would limit themselves for this purpose. They would 'do their job' to teach students the prescribed books inside the classroom.

The displacement would continue.

Also, to some extent, the teachers were with the similar reflection that the root problems for students' displacement were the dominant school structure that was designed to learn for exam results. In the debriefing session that followed the participatory workshop, a Science subject teacher, who was the former headteacher of the school, repeatedly stressed that the school and the community had a cultural expectation on who the good students were, and they had culturally developed a perception that the students who would read books, memorize, and secure good grades in the exam were good. As he shared, students would go to the school to meet these expectations of the school and the community.

Thus, it appeared that the displacement was the culturally legitimized school culture. The government would come with improvement initiatives, but it appeared that many of them were to solve immediate problems, without actually identifying root causes and addressing them. The problems would reoccur, fearful and distrusting of one another, adding extra mess and leaving school isolated from the community and the lifeworld.

…

Based on the reflections, to recognize the shared interests, I prepared a problem tree as portrayed in figure 44 below. Unlike mechanistic images, the web of relations in the problem tree looks at pedagogical issues through the lens of a living system.

Teachers have weaker sense of teacher's identity…less connected to teaching profession…low sense of achievement

Researchers' do research for academic requirements…rely on 'imported methods

Students are less connected with their culture and landscape…low joy in learning…low sense of purpose

Becoming

Belonging

Being

Displaced Pedagogies

Teachers graduate to teach 'imported' pedagogies

Teachers teach for exam results

Expect training than exploring the ways

Students learn for exam results

Indoor classroom structure

Frequent change of government policies

School tendency to solve immediateproblems

Figure 44: The problem tree

Participatory Place Pedagogy: An Aspiration to Bring Life to School

The continuously emerging ideas during participatory needs assessment that involved workshops and professional discussions had influenced teachers' willingness to plan for school improvement activities that could initiate active place engagement in teaching and learning. Arriving at this stage, it appeared that many teachers had begun to accept emplaced (and therefore, lifeful) pedagogies as something worth exploring. In doing so, we made 'authenticity' the meeting point, where we sought to foster strong self-awareness on who and where we are as researchers and as teachers (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004). Also, we sought to foster awareness of the context, constraints, and prior assumptions of school teaching and learning, from where we supposed to cultivate an atmosphere that is conducive to transformation (Hathaway, 2018). In our enthusiasm of bringing life to school and school to life, the PAR committee members discussed some bottom lines for school improvement through pedagogical innovation. Some of the often discussed bottom lines were (1) making maximum use of local resources, indigenous knowledge, and local wisdom traditions, (2) developing collaborative relationships between students, teachers, headteacher, SMCs, parents, and the communities, (3) initiating inquiry and project approaches to teaching and learning, (4) finding ways for formative assessments of students' performance, (5) Initiating outdoor learning relative to local communities, and (6) finding ways for the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of the students and the teachers. Despite these, from the very early days of the activities planning, our PAR community of practice was mindful that to see the relevance and importance of emplaced pedagogies in mainstream education, we needed more than the intellectual constructs. We had to incorporate the contextual realities with many other practical and emotional realities that would come together. Also, this seeing with new eyes

would need ongoing experimentations and inquiry, followed by a reflective conversation that is evocative of lived experiences.

Two Ph.D. researchers (including me) began to facilitate the process. In my role as a research-degree student and a PAR researcher, I decided to take responsibility to initiate exploring participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies. A fellow Ph.D. researcher decided to initiate continuous and collaborative professional development of teachers. Engaging in interactive conversation, we decided to work in collaboration, where under the Rupantaran umbrella project, our individual Ph.D.projects were the sub-projects of the spiral process of authenticity that connects. Doing so, we mutually distributed our responsibilities, where pedagogical innovation and professional development of the teachers would go together, opening and attending to, and complementing one another.

Our planning phase, thus, ended with our decision to work for bringing life to school and school to life through a kind of participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies at Janahit School. Moving with an organic approach, we were still not sure what we would actually do to initiate place-informed lifeful pedagogies because the generative curriculum model is supposed to emerge from learners (and actual practitioners) intense engagement and dialogues on the issue (Ball, 2004). Originally used by Freire (1970), generative pedagogies emerge out of the field through genuine participatory investigation. Embodying the participatory and the place-theories, and the lifeworld, I proposed a concept of participatory place-pedagogy which I supposed not only to be engaging and transformative, but also attuning and harmonizing. Taking support from a local artist, I sketched a frame of a

holistic metaphor of such harmonizing place pedagogy (as presented in figure 19 below), and shared it with the teachers.
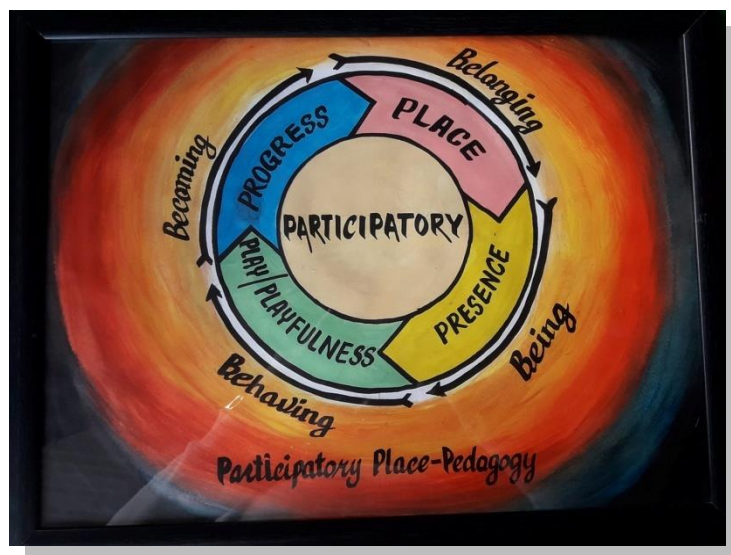
Figure 45: Participatory place pedagogy: A conceptual proposal

The pedagogy had almost no prescription and guidelines. To allow co-emergent meanings to emerge, we left the activities open. We took the official approval of the headteacher and the SMC chair to initiate this participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies at the school. As the headteacher was together with us in many of the discussions and interactions from the very beginning, we easily got the official approval. We (in support of the teachers) shared the plan with the students as well. Also, we received moral supports from the parents and the PAR advisory committee in the community.

Overall Reflection of the Emerging Situation

Overall, I narrated to you the details on how we unset participatory needs assessment at the school and the community. Informed through the participatory needs assessment during the planning phase, the PAR team identified the displaced (and therefore lifeless) pedagogies as a responsible factor to weaken the teachers' and the students' belonging, being, and becoming. In long run, the pedagogical displacement had eloquently displaced communities from their cultural root and had

developed cultural expectations, which would continuously serve and strengthen the dominant pedagogical design of the school. Also, the needs assessment of Janahit School and the nearby communities suggested that public schools in Nepal seriously lacked clarity on life and lifeful pedagogies in school education. It also explained a large gap between the rhetoric and practice of pedagogical innovations in Nepali schools.

Figure 46: Indoor pedagogical design of the Modern schools

(Source: https://thehimalayantimes.com)

I began the chapter reflecting on our academic role as PAR researchers and emerged with the idea that confined to our limitations to 'fit' within many of the dominant practices of present academia, we were also the displaced researchers. It was how the 'pre-constructed' and narrowly prescribed research design was likely to generate and re-generate disciplinary pedagogical legacy, which would possibly pass from generation to generation, constructing pedagogical expectations on what is 'good' teaching and learning at school. Also, we observed that the displacement started at the university. While in the teacher-education program, teachers were not prepared to carry place-informed research. The research they made for university

requirements was merely a formality. Relying on displaced methods and methodologies dominant in universities, many of them had ended with producing displaced knowledge that had no relevance in their everyday teaching profession. There, we observed that the displacement as such was the reason why everyday teaching had not been a part of the evidence-based professional development of the teachers.

Next, we observed the reciprocal influence between the school and the community. It appeared that when public schools in Nepal began to endorse the Western-Modern pedagogical design as dominant educational practices, it influenced the cultural expectations of the community on what is 'good teaching and learning'. The expectations would further strengthen the dominant school design, where any pedagogical innovation that wouldn't fit into the design couldn't continue and would end with adding an extra mess in the design. From the helplessness as such, there would emerge the culture of scorn and blame. Habituated with top-down bureaucratic reforms, schools were seemingly less autonomous to initiate their own pedagogical practices, and therefore, the displacement was continuing. Also, we made a reflective observation that many of the reform initiatives of Nepal looked forward to solving immediate problems and hold almost no interest to address the root. Only those reforms which would possibly fit the dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu of the school would continue, and remaining reform initiatives that wouldn't fit the dominant culture of 'teach and learn for good exam result' would not get readily implemented. In this background, our PAR team emerged with the question- How do we emplace school pedagogies? And from there, we emerged with a plan to initiate a participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies at Janahit School. Doing so, we were supposed to make a continuous move towards emplaced

pedagogies, which would emerge from our own collaborative actions and reflections and would hopefully address the overarching issue of displacement at the school and in the community.

…

Dear reader, it seems now we have arrived at the most awaited phase of the performative reflexivity in this study canvas. The PAR team was seemingly aspired to blur the boundary between 'living Dapchali curriculum' (see chapter four) and 'enclosed schooling pedagogies' (as discussed in this chapter). Inflowing the action phase, the PAR team explored manifold ways for participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies. Here follows a chapter that narrates in detail how the PAR community of practice endorsed a kind of generative and participatory model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies in Janahit School; how it passed through the negotiation with dominant practices of the school; how it encountered messy ripples; and how it eventually arrived at a messy turn[84]. While initiating the emplaced pedagogies, the ongoing conflict-like ripples between the disciplinary closeness of Janahit School and the transdisciplinary openness of Dapcha Dharmashala were seemingly interesting and lively.

Let's move-

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[84] Cook's (2009) uses the term 'mess' and the 'messy turn', which is but the manifold ripples and thereupon a certain state of order arising from the waves of ripples

How did Janahit School take the opportunity to develop a participatory and
generative model of emplaced pedagogies that not only meets national expectations of
local curriculum, but also meets the wider needs of the students, teachers, families,
and the communities? Despite some hopeful perspectival transformations, how the
PAR team experienced manifold messy ripples while in the process to implement
emplaced pedagogies? How was the messy turn?

Figure 47: Janahit School students studying out from the school, in the community

CHAPTER SIX

PLACING THE LIFEWORLD WITHIN AND BEYOND THE DOMINANT

DISCIPLINARY DESIGN

Following the earlier chapter, now I narrate to you the details on how the PAR team worked with a kind of participatory and generative approaches to place informed lifeful pedagogies for belonging, being, and becoming. Burrowing from Casey (2013), I have called the participatory and generative approaches to the place-informed lifeful pedagogies the 'talk about' pedagogies (see Casey, 2013) because we were not confined to any pre-established framework, and its implementation was yet to be observed through first-hand actions and reflections. In this chapter, I narrate the overall process on how when we endorsed these participatory and generative approaches of place informed lifeful pedagogies, though the initiation moved with transformative experiences (e.g., perspectival shifts) of the practitioners, the pedagogies contradicted with many of the regular, dominant schooling practices and cultural expectations of the school as an organization.

Throughout the chapter, we will have continuous reflections on PAR activities cycles in Janahit School relating it to our understandings of the 'place as mind-body integrated self' in Chapter three, and 'eco-spiritual place relationality and essentiality of Dapcha, Dharmashala'(which I call it the Dapcha Curriculum) in chapter four. It is from there, we observe how the linear and closed practice architecture of the Western-Modern schooling design of Nepal is in many ways not compatible with the non-linear, relational complexity of the ecological landscape where the school is located.

Three different PAR cycles carry one major theme each. Cycle 1 carries the theme of negotiation and portrays the limitations of pedagogical reforms to think and

move beyond the cultural milieu of the dominant Western-Modern practice architecture of Nepali schools. Cycle 2 carries the theme of 'the chaos' and portrays the mismatch arising from structural linearity of school organization, place relationality, and complexity of human landscapes. Cycle 3, likewise, carries the theme of 'the messy turn' and portrays that though PAR emerged with 'perspectives transformation' of the participant-stakeholders on the need (and the ways) for emplaced pedagogies, the reforms were the continuous western-modern cultural fit and negotiation.

The next chapter brings some informed pictures on why, despite messy turn, the Janahit School couldn't possibly make 'revolutionary' (?) and/or continuous enfolding and attuning of emplaced pedagogies. It reflects why similar to Janahit School, many other schools in Nepal were unlikely to implement many of the policy provisions for emplaced pedagogies in the past. Before moving there, this chapter focuses to bring details of the research question- how the PAR team initiated participatory and generative approaches of emplaced (and therefore lifeful) pedagogies? And, despite some hopeful perspectival transformations, how the team experienced manifold negotiations and messiness, while in the process to implement it? Let's move-

PAR Cycles: Exposing Messy Ripples inside the Wall

Passing through participatory needs assessment (chapter five), the PAR team partly identified displaced (and therefore lifeless) pedagogies as a reason for the weakening of belonging, being, and becoming of the teachers and the students at school and in the community. It appeared that teachers had a weaker sense of the teacher's identity and were less connected to the teaching profession. Likewise, students appeared to be less connected with their culture and landscape. To some

extent, they had low joy in learning and low sense of purpose on- why do I study? It was likely that this displacement and purposelessness of school graduates (and the dropouts) would later develop the youth mindset, 'why do I stay in the village?' Or, something like, 'what is there to make living in the village?'

In the needs assessment (see chapter five), we identified some root problems for displaced pedagogical practices. We discovered that, to some extent, the problem started from the university, wherein the teacher education programs, the future teachers would learn to teach 'imported' pedagogies. While in school the 'university made' teachers would 'struggle' to fit themselves into the ongoing schooling culture of the community.

It would weaken teachers' belongingness at the school.

When not satisfied with what is going on, the newly assigned teachers would begin to lose confidence and would expect training from the 'outsiders' than exploring the ways on their own. Often, following the (dominant Western-Modern) cultural expectations of the school, the community, and the policy authorities, the teachers would take an easy route and continue 'ritual' teaching for exam results.

Also, it appeared that in meeting the cultural expectations of the school and the community, the students would learn for exam results. Indoor classroom structure, frequent policy changes, and the school's tendencies to solve immediate problems were other root problems giving space for displaced (and lifeless) pedagogies, and therefore, resulting in a lower sense of belonging, being, and becoming of the teachers and the students.

In the process, we, the research-degree students continuously reflected on our own role as PAR researchers. We had to meet many of the dominant practice architecture and the cultural milieu of the academic requirements of the university. To

present ourselves well informed and 'fit' within the Western-Modern pedagogical standards of the university, we had to borrow their 'methodological shoes' and continuously cut our 'foot' to fit in those shoe sizes. Thus, even researchers including me and my colleagues, perhaps being displaced from the 'essential' had a weaker sense of researcher's identity and low sense of purpose- Why do I do PAR? Why Ph.D.? - Was it just to 'prove' that I successfully 'fit' the established, pre-designed 'modern' practice architecture of the academia?

Along with such thoughtful reflections, the PAR community of practice continued reflexive performance on the theme of displacement. Following the collaborative reflections in the needs assessment (chapter five), and realizing the complex relationality and essentiality of the place (chapter three and chapter four), the PAR community of practice made a plan to find ways and act for place informed lifeful pedagogies. We made a common consensus on four non-negotiable[85]principles of the pedagogy that 1) our 'innovative' pedagogy is participatory, 2) it is generative, 3) it is active and experiential, and 4) the 'place' and the 'place spirit' of Dapcha Dharmashala, the complex ecological relationality and authenticity are at the core of the newly endorsed pedagogies. The non-negotiable principles were to create engaging learning experiences in the community, which could readily involve a diverse range of stakeholders, which for long was taken for granted by schools.

…

It was where we were in chapter five. From there, we entered the action phase, on which as detailed in this chapter, we carried out three different cycles of planning, acting, and reflecting (Kemmis & Mc Taggart 1988), one following the other. The

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[85]My use of non-negotiable in this study is the PAR team's earlier assumption that our activities for pedagogical innovations would not negotiate with the regular pedagogical design of the school.

overall action phase passed through 3 different cycles that covered one complete academic year (May 2018- May 2019), where we marked the entry and exit of every cycle by three different terminal exams. While making the collaborative decision for this action plan, and while acting accordingly, our PAR team had expected that the innovative model would emplace the school pedagogies, would make it lifeful, and would strengthen the sense of belonging, being, and becoming of the students, the teachers, and even the community members.

But, did we meet our pedagogical expectations? Let's see-

Cycle 1: Working within the Milieu of Practice Architecture[86]

When our PAR community of practice eventually decided to initiate participatory and generative approaches to place-informed lifeful pedagogies at Janahit School, we began to look for democratic interactions with school families and local communities about lifeful education.

There, many teachers suggested that we had to find ways to emplace our pedagogies from within our ongoing practices. Maybe they were 'right' because confined to the limited autonomy of the School, the PAR team alone couldn't endorse complete new pedagogical strategies beyond the ongoing national and local practices. The school had to complete teaching the centrally prescribed coursebook on time, and prepare the students for the final exam taken by the municipality cluster. Following the suggestions, we began the first cycle from June 1, 2018 to August 20, 2018, sharing prevalent policy-practice gaps in school education.

Our question at this stage was- how are the policy provisions of the Nepal government in making school education more relevant to the immediate context and the lifeworld? Was there any policy attempt in the past which aimed to integrate

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[86] Taken from Kemmis and Grootenboer (2008), a practice architecture in this study refers how schools and classrooms are designed for teaching and learning

school pedagogies, the place, and the lifeworld? Looking for the ways from within already available policy provisions was seemingly practical.

The Paradox of Disciplinary Lifefulness

While in personal interactions, and in the staff room, our team of research-students made continuous discussions with the subject teachers and the headteacher. In Nepal, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005) had suggested the need for context-responsive need-based education. Later, though many other reform initiatives e.g, School Sector Reform Plan (MoE, 2009) continuously stressed the need for lifeworld-relevant school education, the reform initiatives made no effort to go beyond the disciplinary pedagogical design as dominant in Nepali school education.

The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) had initiated local curriculum policy provision. It was supposed to be an initial and important step for the decentralization of curriculum practices (CDC, 2010; Subedi, 2028). Also, to encourage the implementation of the local curriculum, CDC had published directives that emphasized individual school's rights to design their curricula (CDC, 2010). Unfortunately, the directives introduced the local curriculum as another separate 'book' (with local content) to teach in the classroom. It continued the legacy of Western-Modern disciplinary practices. During interactions, the teachers repeatedly stressed that Janahit School, like many other schools in Nepal, was not able to develop and implement a local curriculum.

Accordingly, the headteacher stated, 'We are teaching additional English instead'. Is a book on the English language the local curriculum? It is from where we began to realize the limitations of pedagogical reforms to think and move beyond the cultural milieu of dominant (Western-Modern) practice architecture of Nepali schools.

The headteacher shared that it was the parent's choice. "What to do, parents want our students to do well in the English language. If we don't do so, they will take their children to the boarding school."

There we realized how the community had held a cultural expectation from the school, the disciplinary and linear expectations like- make my child good in English; make him/her pass SEE (Secondary Education Examination) with good grades; make him/her able to move to the city, and in the foreign countries. Also, we realized how the schools were 'struggling' to meet the (dominant western-modern) community expectations. My Journal entries, in the beginning days of the first PAR cycle reflect it-

> Our PAR community of practice has planned to initiate a kind of participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies. We suppose it to be lifeful teaching and learning through active place engagement. The teachers and the students have to move away from the indoor course contents, and classroom teaching and learning. But, I observe that the school structure, classroom design, and school subject routine all serve the Western-Modern expectations of the schools to prepare students for the exam. These expectations, many of which have come from outside the school, thus, narrowly define how students and teachers should act inside the classroom. (Reflective journal entry, May 9, 2018)

From the very beginning of the first cycle, I was gradually growing aware that though the headteacher, the teachers, and the students were showing enthusiasm for the change initiatives, the school activities were not moving (maybe could not move) in that direction. For example, when the school administration designed the school routine, it designed the routine exactly in the same way as it had designed the

previous years. Teachers had to take their usual classes, finish teaching the prescribed coursebook, and prepare students for the exam.

It was the first constraint we experienced.

Apparently, our idea of pedagogical innovation for lifeful teaching and learning through active place engagement, in many ways, had to 'fit within' and continuously negotiate with this culturally established western-modern, linear structure of the school. The next day, I wrote-

> Maybe any pedagogical innovation that doesn't fit these long constructed cultural expectations may find difficulty in their implementation and continuation. How can teachers think- what really do I need to teach? And how can students think- what really do I need to learn- in the present state, where they are all struggling just to meet the cultural expectations of 'indoor schooling designed to study course contents and pass the exam.
>
> (Reflective journal entry, May 10, 2018)

But, seeing the initial enthusiasm of the headteacher, the teachers, and the students, our PAR community of practice was still hopeful that we would find some ways to initiate place-informed lifeful pedagogies from and within the ongoing pedagogical practices.

There began the negotiation.

Why Bother! The Plan Comes and Goes

One day, while I was in the staff room, a social studies subject teacher showed me a book. It was a book on local curriculum guidelines prepared by the CDC (CDC, 2010). The guidelines had suggested two major ways to 'localize' and emplace school pedagogies. The school could develop one separate subject as a local curriculum.

Also, the school could develop and implement local content of 20 percentage weightage in social studies, creative and expressive arts, and physical education.

As mentioned in the guideline, the school could make its own curriculum in collaboration with school stakeholders, where the curriculum contents could be its localities, the human, and the cultural landscapes. Though the initiation was another replication of disciplinary pedagogies, I found the concept in the guidelines practical enough to bridge our action plan for the participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies with ongoing pedagogical practices.

"There are such documents on development and implementation of local (life-based) curriculum, but why is it that the schools are not developing it?" - I showed interest to know more from the teacher.

"It's very usual…plan comes and goes", the teacher said. "The same thing happened to CAS (Continuous Assessment of Students). The government made guidelines. A few teachers got training. It made good discussions for a few months and slowly faded. You see, there are neither school's initiation nor authority's monitoring and supervision".

In a similar question- a science subject teacher said, "Our problem is not that we don't have good plan and policies… we have, but see…when it comes to implementation, we fail. Isn't it very humiliating for us?"

Humiliating? What is there to feel humiliated? I asked

Later, I realized what the teacher meant. There we discussed the chaotic ripples of changing practices (and initiatives) endorsed by the policy. When any policy provision endorsed by the government couldn't get fully implemented, it was likely to add extra mess in the school. It is from there, we began to reflect on the question, why many of the 'talk about' pedagogical innovations (Casey, 2013) are not

adequately 'actioned' in Nepali schools? Now while making an action plan for the first cycle, our PAR team began to think more about it.

The Initial Enthusiasm

While in the all-staff teachers' meeting, teachers showed enthusiasm in exploring and working with place-informed lifeful pedagogies. Taking the available guidelines (like guidelines on the local curriculum, project-based learning, and CAS) as a point of departure, the PAR community of practice made an action plan for a participatory and generative model of place-informed lifeful pedagogies.

Maybe the enthusiasm was the result of the teachers' wish to try something new. We, the research-degree students and the teachers' community of practice read available articles on integrating place and lifeworld in school pedagogies. We also reviewed suggestive practices as applied in national and international contexts. While in formal and informal discussions, we began to explore different learning activities which we could possibly link to several learning arenas out in a landscape and in the place. Studies (e.g., Vaske & Kobrin, 2011; Noddings, 2003) suggested that the development of a sense of place in students could enhance place responsible behavior. We discussed the possibilities of integrating the school garden, the farm, cultural heritages, and physical landscapes, which we discussed as key components for experience-based outdoor pedagogical dimensions. Ballantyne and Packer (2008) had proposed similar components as being in the natural environment, real-life learning, sensory engagement, learning by doing, and local contexts, which according to them would strengthen students' place belonging, and foster lifefulness in education. We used the literature just as a reference.

Often the teachers would say, "Maybe we need training". But, we were to generate our own model informed through our own PAR actions and reflections. It had to continue through collaboration, practice, and praxis.

The Negotiations, Here and There, Everywhere

Our initial enthusiasm moved through negotiations[87].

It appeared that the school routine, teachers' workload, and their compulsion to complete the prescribed course book on time didn't allow us to start with 'revolutionary' outdoor activities. It was mandatory to follow the centrally prescribed school curriculum. Despite the willingness to try something new, the PAR community of practice couldn't possibly challenge the basic foundations of the pre-designed indoor classroom structures.

The dominant cultural expectations of the school, the community, and the central authorities to 'teach books and prepare students for the exam' came in-between the 'talk' and the 'action'. To move hands in hands with pre-defined expectations of narrowly defined disciplinary pedagogies was only a choice left for us.

Arriving at this stage, many teachers suggested finding ways to emplace their existing course contents through school gardening. To initiate hands-on experiences through school gardening and linking regular course contents to school gardens through arts, inquiry, and project activities was a good idea. Therefore, following most of the teachers' suggestions, our PAR community of practice collaborated on finding ways to link existing lessons and course contents to students' lifeworld and local contexts through school gardening.

It was seemingly a way of breaking the new ground, but with negotiation.

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[87] Despite our earlier commitments for non-negotiable principles of pedagogical innovation, it was very paradoxical that no sooner we endorsed innovatie activities, we had to begin with negation at every stage of the innovation process.

Placing Lifeful Pedagogies through School Gardening: The Breakthrough

Now we began to discuss the kinds of learning arena, tasks, and learning objectives appropriate for each class. Teachers decided to emplace their regular classroom lessons through, arts, inquiry, and project work. Teachers were seemingly excited that school gardening would possibly fill the missing link between school pedagogies, daily life, and the natural lifeworld.

Figure 48: Planning for school gardening

When shared with students, many of them were excited to 'green' their schoolyards through gardens. Also, they showed excitement for the kitchen garden. A female researcher, who was also the masters' student for sustainable development, took responsibility to initiate a school gardening project. The team decided to set up a school garden in the schoolyard, and also in the small area of land close to the school building. While in interactions with her, students from eco-club[88], and many other basic level students showed greater excitement to have their own bed to plant flowers and vegetables. Teachers agreed to develop one group project from their regular lesson, practice in the class, and reflect collectively in the reflection meeting.

Table 3 on the next page outlines the action plan and activities the PAR team initiated in the first PAR cycle of the research project for place-informed lifeful pedagogies.

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[88] After participated needs assessment the PAR community of practice had formed an eco-club, where there were the students' representatives from each class from class 1 to class 10.

Table 3

PAR Cycle 1

	Cycle 1 (May-August 2018)
Reflect Review current practice Identify an area for improvement	The teachers' community of practice shared prevalent policy-practice gaps in school education. The PAR committee, the teachers' community, and the researchers collaboratively identified irrelevant and displaced teaching, learning, and assessing as an over-arching agenda for change.
Plan Create improvement plans to guide selection	The researcher and the teachers' community of practice read available articles about the issue and reviewed suggestive practices, as applied in national and international contexts, for relevant teaching, learning, and assessing Researchers and teachers' community of practice formed an improvement plan in place informed lifeful pedagogies through school gardening.
Act Communicate the plan to all stakeholders Implement Plan	The researcher shared the action plan with the PAR committee One university-based action researcher, majoring in sustainable education, facilitated school gardening. 6 out of 12 teachers designed lesson plans linking place

		to the course content, and assigned inquiry and project works to the students in their classes.
		The school allocated one separate room for students' portfolio records, group presentations, and workshops.
		The HT made order of students' portfolio file
		2 teachers out of 12 managed to keep students' portfolio records
	Observe	The teachers shared their experiences through group meetings.
Analyze data about the effectiveness of the improvement plan		The researcher shared the observation with the PAR committee.
Update stakeholders and elicit their feedback		The researcher collected the stakeholders' feedback

During the first three months i.e., the first PAR cycle from June 1, 2018, to August 20, 2018, we experienced a seemingly slow process of change initiatives. When we started to work on participatory and generative approaches of place-informed lifeful teaching and learning, none of us had possessed the 'related' expertise. Despite this, we continued with collaborative discussions and ways out. Realizing teachers' seemingly discomfort with new practices, I (along with fellow researchers) was in regular touch with the teachers.

Enacting the Breakthrough 1: Hasera[89] *Visit*

It appeared that we needed to be familiar with local practices on gardening. When our PAR community of practice was still in its early phase of exploring ways

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[89] An organic farm in the community, the name Hasaera represents three different colors i.e., green, white, and red

on how Janahit School could develop pedagogical approaches (through school

gardening), which could enable students to live and to learn in their natural and

cultural landscapes, the PAR team of student-researchers, school teachers and

students visited an organic farm named Hasera.

Those days we were making a 'treasure hunt' in the surroundings, where we

could find new learning spaces outside the classrooms. By doing so, the school could

develop a partnership with local practitioners and experts. Local people suggested us

to visit this farm. Located in Patalekhet, Kavre, approximately 11 km east of

Dhulikhel, the farm was near to our study school and the community.

From Kakre, Khanalthok, we walked down the Bhakundaebasi. Then we took

a local bus to Patalekhet. A ride of about half an hour brought us to a partly inhabited

hillside. The farm was situated at an altitude of 1,400 meters, covering approximately

4,500 sqm of land area.

Figure 49: Hasera farm in Kavre, Patalekhet

We entered the farm. We walked around it. The integration of crops, animals,

and the natural biodiversity of Hasera was awe-inspiring. Roaming around, we

smelled the earth. It introduced us to nature's life process. We felt the connection of

the place with the lifeworld there, with the earth and the plants.

We talked with Govinda Sharma, the founder of the farm on indigenous ways

of seed saving. We also discussed on green manure and biological pest control. We

saw that day how the students in our visit team were surrounded by meaningful activities. "I had never thought that there is such a beautiful farm in our village", said a male student from grade 7.

The visit drew our attention to unexpected possibilities. Grounded in personal experiences, Hasera was a living example of sustainable living. There we asked and discussed the questions of the kind-Can Hasera be a practical lab for emplaced pedagogies through school gardening? Can we use the farm as a pedagogical resource for our study school?

…

While in the school assembly the next day, a student, who was also the president of the eco-club, shared her experiences of the Hasera visit. For the next few days, the PAR community of practice consisting of teachers, students, and the researchers obtained the school-site for the garden, selected the site, arranged the gardening tools, and determined what vegetables and flowers to grow in the school.

Slowly, we entered the atmosphere of excitement.

Enacting the Breakthrough 2: Class Comes to the Garden

The teachers teaching Occupations in class 6, 7, and 8 also explored ways to link kitchen gardening with course contents. Other teachers discussed the possibilities to teach Science and Maths related skills to measure the ground, to prepare the soil, and to plant seeds. Also, they discussed the possibilities to teach social skills, teamwork, collaboration, and emotional aspects like empathy and compassion. Taken from my reflective journal, here follows an entry that portrays any one class activities of the teachers and the students at Janahit School:

Today class eight students are having hands-on farming experience. They have come out of the classroom to study the plant germination process. The

students are excitedly following their teacher. Some students are carrying axes and soil-cutters from the storeroom. Though many of the students are seemingly familiar with the equipment in their house, it is a new and surprising experience in the school.

They climb down the schoolyard. There is the Science teacher with a coursebook in his right hand and saws on the left. For a few minutes, the teacher instructs the students on preparing the soil for seedlings. Students hear him.

'I can dig this land alone', a 14-year-old speaks in a child-like expression. Four of the girls, starting from a line at the base of the ground move upwards as they dig the land. Students dig the land in turn. Other students are talking and walking, and hearing their teachers and fellow students at work. They hear the sound of saws and cutters.

Some students are seemingly happy and others are hesitant to work.

After the ground is ready, the teacher asks, "Now tell me, what we did today?" Girl-student replies, "We prepared the ground to plant seeds.

"Yes, but still we have to think of many things like manure and water. We have to think of the seed that suits this soil and the season", the teacher says. Working in the ground for about half an hour, the teacher takes the students to their classroom.

Enacting the Breakthrough 3: The Color, the Shape, and the Size

It was very interesting that grade 1 students brought different plant seeds from their house; the grade teacher arranged the seeds in the plastic bag; and taught the students about the name, shape, size, color, and their uses. She placed the seed bags on the classroom wall, where the students could see. "Whenever I have to teach

students on the color, the shape, and the size of the things, I have begun to take help of these seeds", the teacher shared.

In the next class, we saw her outside the classroom, in the school garden, where her grade three students would move around, writing the names of the real objects which they could see in their surroundings. We saw the students enjoying the learning, where they would draw a sketch of the objects and color them.

Analyzing the Breakthrough: The Limitation, the Fear, and the Excitement

In these three months of breakthrough, the PAR team observed how participatory and generative approaches to place-informed lifeful pedagogies immersed (and moved beyond) the regular pedagogical practices of the school. Our compulsion to negotiate (and 'fit') the innovative practices within pre-constructed (and centrally prescribed) pedagogical design showed limitations of pedagogical reforms to think and move beyond the cultural milieu of dominant Western-Modern practice architecture of Nepali schools.

When we had a collective reflection session on August 3, the majority of the basic school teachers shared their experiences of conducting group projects in their classes. While these months of breakthrough brought excitement, motivated the teachers and students to move outside the 'secured' four walls, it appeared that the initiation needed to be immersed from within the milieu of dominant (and therefore, habituated) practice architecture of indoor teaching and learning.

Thus, the first three months of pedagogical breakthrough emerged with both fear and excitement. It was an excitement that the initiation for the hands-on contact with nature through school gardening facilitated teachers' and students' breakthroughs. Science teacher coming out for agricultural experiences, and grade three language teacher teaching colors and shapes of the things through seeds and

plants outside the classroom, for example, were seemingly crossing the disciplinary knowledge boundaries. Teachers expressed that they began to see things from wider perspectives. "I was particularly surprised to see that many of the low-performing students in the class were more active and focused in the field", shared the Maths teacher. "It changed my way of judging the students' performance", he added. Many students expressed that their learning in the school garden was fun.

Figure 50: Students and teachers engaged in school gardening

However, no sooner than the teachers began to integrate gardening activities into their regular classroom teaching, it appeared that they began to feel several constraints as well. Many of the constraints like over-loaded regular activities, schools' continuous focus for regular examinations, and pressure to complete the assigned course contents were predominantly provoked by the dominant indoor practice architecture of the school. The school routine, teacher's disciplinary role, and classroom structure were pre-designed and pre-constructed in a way that those were meant for disciplinary teaching and learning inside the classroom. Maybe, habituated in the design, the students and teachers had developed cultural expectations that it was not easy to move outside.

We could feel teachers and students passing through cognitive dissonance (Cooper, 2007). It was the state of discomfort the teachers and the students were feeling as a result of two opposing cognitions for the 'secured' indoor and the

'disruptive' outdoor teaching and learning. Teachers were understandably wary of the students' results in the coming exam. Also, habituated to indoor classroom teaching and learning for a long, we could see some students' lack of confidence in the outdoor environment.

It might be the consequence of teachers' (and students') fear and discomfort with 'outside the box' approaches that many of the' talk about' ideas (Casey, 2013) on integrating regular classroom teaching and learning with school gardening was not actioned. For example, six out of twelve teachers didn't make any initiatives to link their course contents with school gardening. They went on continuing their indoor classroom rituals as they had done in the past. It might be the fear of the 'unknown' that rather than taking responsibility for their initiations, often the teachers would expect the researchers to suggest to them what to do and how.

The Realization: Starting Small would have been Beautiful

Informed through the reflective meeting of PAR members on August 3, we realized that maybe we started with too big, and therefore, too vague ambitions. Changing long endorsed cultural and habituated practices needs a lot of time and patience (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). Starting with small, concrete, and achievable steps and focusing on improving those steps might have worked better.

We decided to consider these learned lessons in the second cycle.

Cycle 2: Moving Forward with the Mess

The second cycle, September 8, 2018 to January 11, 2019, started with chaotic ripples. There was a month-long vacation for Dashain and Tihar, two of the greatest Hindu festivals of Nepal. In between, there was no one to take care of the newly set up school garden. Maybe, the school didn't give enough attention to managing gardens during vacancies (which shows, the initiations for pedagogical innovation

were still not being the priority of the school). When the school re-opened, we didn't observe the garden as *green* as we had expected.

Also, the school began constructing a new school building. The construction of the school buildings destroyed the school garden the PAR community had set up. Maybe, it was the evidence that school gardening was not taken seriously by the SMCs and PTAs. Also, it could be a shred of evidence that even arriving at this stage, the PAR team was seemingly unable to establish commonly accepted meaning for emplaced pedagogies. Whatever could be the reason; it distressed active teachers and demotivated the majority of the students.

It appeared that, as we could not meet our promised target in the first cycle, many of the teachers who had shown interest in the first three months began to go indifferent. The situation is evident in my journal entry below-

> Things have become complex. The teachers are not as motivated as they were before. Today, a few teachers avoided the staff meeting. It seems they are no more interested in pedagogical innovation. Perhaps, now we have to find the reasons and act accordingly before we move ahead. (Reflective Journal entry, September 8, 2018)

The Conflict: Exposition and Complications

We could experience the tension arising from the conflict and disagreements of various forms. Though almost all the teachers and the headteacher had understood place-informed lifeful pedagogies as something worth trying, there was also a group of teachers who would feel the level of professional saturation, and therefore, would readily avoid the change initiatives of any kind. "I have been teaching for the last eighteen years. Things are working, and why should I change the way now?" complained a grade teacher in his fifties.

"We are already with enough tasks to complete the course on time, and this has been an extra burden", some other teachers would support the complainer.

The clash among the teaching staff and with the headteacher was more visible. The teachers who were seemingly reluctant to move beyond the comfort zone were giving continuous pressure to the headteacher to discontinue project activities. "We may not finish the course contents on time", and "this is not in our coursebook" were the most often heard excuses of the teachers.

"We have not sent our kids to the school to play with mud, clay, and dung", complained a parent". Such complaints from the community watered the 'complaining' teachers.

The Resilience, Openness, and the Bounce Back

Despite this, our research team continued to go to the school on time, keeping on with informal talks with the teachers and arranging group meetings. We increased the time for community visits and made continuous interactions with the community members.

On September 13, we arranged the first PAR meeting (for cycle 2) separately with the teachers and with the students. Four of the teachers, who were disinterested in project activities, knowingly avoided the meeting. Despite this, we continued interactions with the available teachers. For hours, we discussed further possibilities to initiate pedagogical innovations. In between, we (the researchers) would encourage the teachers and the headteacher to look for the opportunities within already available but previously hidden resources. Also, we encouraged the school to reflect on the present status of school-community relations, including those with parents and local bodies.

The teachers shared their experiences from the first action research cycle. Since school gardening ceased, and as the school construction was still continuing, the teachers explored other options to continue exploring participatory and generative approaches to place-informed lifeful teaching and learning. That day, stepping on the activities and the lessons learned in the first cycle, we agreed to work on three different areas of place-informed lifeful pedagogies-

1) Continuing school gardening activities from the first cycle

2) Integrating computers and other digital devices like mobile phones in inquiry projects, and

3) Teaching and learning through community visits

The school administration approved this idea.

The table below outlines the action plan and activities the PAR team initiated in the second PAR cycle of the research project for place-informed lifeful pedagogies.

Table 4

PAR Cycle 2

	Cycle 2 (September-December, 2018)
Reflect Review current practice Identify an area for improvement	PAR group reflects on barriers (and opportunities) to participatory and generative approaches to place-informed lifeful pedagogies as practiced in cycle 1. In a group meeting, teachers discussed the ways to engage the disengaged students in group activities. Discussed various ways for maximum use of ICT tools in teaching and learning.

Plan Create improvement plans to guide selection	Researcher and the Community of Practice read available articles about the issue & reviewed suggestive practices (as applied in national and international contexts) to integrate digital media for lifeful learning and to teach and learn through community visits
Act Communicate the plan to all stakeholders -Implement Plan	Teachers managed to learn basic computer skills. Class 3, 4, and 5 students visited neighboring schools with teachers and prepared group reports. Class 6 and 7 students visited the community and prepared group reports on cultural heritage. Teachers shared their experience through digital presentation
Observe Analyze data about the effectiveness of the improvement plan Update stakeholders and elicit their feedback	The researcher shared the observation with the PAR committee. The researcher collected the stakeholders' feedback

It is, thus, the second cycle was more focused on exploring prospects of participatory and generative approaches to place-informed lifeful pedagogies, using local areas as a learning environment, and making the best possible use of digital media. The pedagogical innovation initiatives needed a broader definition of teacher

professionalism, where pedagogical skills, collaboration, and autonomy are supposed to go hands-on-hands (Facer, 2009). The second cycle, therefore, made equal considerations for teachers' professional development. Let's see-

Enactment 1: Emplaced Pedagogies through Digital Media

Apparently, the idea of integrating digital media for lifeful teaching excited the teachers and the students[90]. 'Can we label old and unused computers as locally available resources?' we discussed with teachers. "If not locally available resources, at least they are 'already available' resources", the teachers put their opinions.

We liked the idea.

Slowly and gradually the PAR activities became more interesting in cycle 2. We began to think about how we could use available digital devices to make our teaching and learning more place-informed and lifeful.

There were already 19 computers at the school, but only three of them were in proper condition. Teachers showed higher enthusiasm for learning computer skills. 'We have no idea of computer maintenance', shared a teacher who would teach computers in class 8. 'I want students to collect necessary information from Google and YouTube, but I am not familiar with it', added the science teacher. 'We go to the computer room just to play games', was the common response of students.

To connect the digital devices and computers with emplaced and lifeful pedagogical experiences, the teachers decided to design at least one inquiry and arts-based activity plan linking students' life-world to course contents and, thereafter, implementing the plan with the students. At the end of the second cycle, the teachers

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[90] Pedagogical innovation for emplaced pedagogies through ICTs integration was equally necessary in a way that the innovation would address the emerging Digimodern Dapchali time and space

were to make digital group presentations and share their experiences in the teachers'
community of practice meetings.

To make the digital presentation, teachers had to gain skills to search, to
collect, to manage, and to dissimilate information through the computer and mobile
phones. Based on the collaboratively designed action plan, we invited a university-
based action researcher majoring in technology to facilitate the use of digital media,
particularly computer use in teaching and learning. Parbati, the co-researcher assisted
in the facilitation of the teachers' collaborative learning of basic computer skills.
Based on the discussions, teachers decided to learn computer skills with colleagues in
collaboration. Six teachers who were already with basic computer skills agreed to
support each other.

Figure 51: Learning computer skills to emplace pedagogies

While some teachers showed hesitation to learn from their colleagues, many
teachers managed to learn basic computer skills. They managed time to learn from
each other in the computer lab. My journal entry below narrates a day activity of the
teachers in the computer lab-

Today almost all the teachers were present in the computer lab. They were

learning, and also preparing the PowerPoint slides reflecting on their experiences

with computers and mobile phones for place-informed lifeful pedagogies. I and

Parbati were there to facilitate the teachers in collecting and dissimilating

information through the computer. Teachers learned from each other. Hopefully,

these newly gained computer skills will be supportive for the teachers to bring the

community lifeworld in everyday teaching and learning. (Journal entry,

November, 30)

On December 13, based on our activities plan, teachers gathered in a multi-media

room that the PAR committee had just set up. Teachers, in five different groups,

shared their experience on place-informed lifeful teaching and learning through the

digital presentation. Arriving at this stage, many of them had developed their skills to

bring visual data (e.g., photo and video) from the community, and continue the

lessons digitally. As they shared in the presentation, teachers had begun to use the

computer lab, mobile phone, and tablets to collect and share the necessary

information. Here follows an excerpt from my notes on what a grade seven Science

teacher shared in the presentation-

> I was teaching flowering plants in my Biology class. That morning, while walking
>
> up the school, I took a photo of different flowering plants that I could see on the
>
> way. I took students in the hall and through PowerPoint slides showed the picture
>
> of all the flowering plants. Oh yes, it was really interesting. I was surprised that
>
> many students who would pass those flowering plants on their way to the home
>
> and the school hadn't noticed the plants. They asked many questions. We all
>
> enjoyed the class. (Journal entry, December 2)

Enactment 2: Emplaced Pedagogies through Community Visit

While still working with school gardening and digital media, we were committed

to strengthening schools' existing relationships with the community and the local

organization[91]. Series of interactions with subject teachers encouraged them to use locality as a learning arena. Teachers could use the local resources and landscapes to illustrate the content of the national curriculum.

It was on December 10. We (me and Parbati) were at the school on time. The day before, the school had informed class 6 and class 7 students about their community visit. Therefore, the students were seemingly excited. After the school assembly, a social studies teacher, together with an English subject teacher made a short briefing to the students. They suggested ways to observe, listen, and making notes.

We walked along the road. Dhurba sir, who was also the local inhabitant of the community, was the team leader. We entered a temple, *Vimshensthan.*

Figure 52: Students visiting and learning from the heritages in the community

The students took the photo. Dhurba sir made detailed narratives on the history and the structural design of the temple. Some students were hearing to the local elders and making notes. We visited the *Radhakrishna* temple. A local leader was so excited to narrate the history of this temple. Students asked questions to him and made notes. Also, we visited Daraunipokhari, a historical lake of the community, and climbed up to the *Durga* temple. It was very surprising that within a one-kilometer distance from Janahit School, there were many *Hindu temples*, *Buddhist gumbas*, *pati, pauwa*, and *Newari falchas*ofhistorical importance. Every historical site had its own unique stories and myths.

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[91]Westoby & Lyons (2017) and Buechner (2020) forward school-community relationship building as effective for social learning in transformative education.

That week, the students prepared group reports about their visit, and with support from the teachers, they made a group presentation in the multimedia hall.

Enactment 3: Emplacing Pedagogies through Community Partnership

Together with using the local area for learning, another idea that emerged in the second cycle was the ways to discover possibilities for social networking and partnership. Visiting the neighboring school and learn each other's best practices was one among many other ways.

Accordingly, on December 11, class 3, 4, and 5 students visited the neighboring school. The English and Social Studies teacher jointly made guiding questions and suggested students to explore and note down the information related to the questions. The headteacher joined the group. The teacher and the students received a warm welcome from the host school. The students walked around the school and made a note of what new and interesting they observed there. Also, the students collected detailed information about the school. The teachers from both schools shared their best practices and experiences.

Figure 53: Students' and teachers' (educational) visit to neighboring Schools

The next day, the Social Studies subject teacher made the students share their experiences from the visit. In a question- what did you like the most about the neighboring school you visited- a girl student from grade 5 said, "I liked the way the school toilet was so clean. We can also collect rainwater and keep our school toilet

clean". She shared how the visit that day enabled her to realize the importance of rainwater harvesting in her school and the community.

A week later, the social studies subject teacher excitedly showed me and other teachers the project report his grade 5 students had prepared on 'school visit'. All four groups had highlighted their impression of a green school compound and a clean school toilet they observed in the neighboring school.

Enactment 4: Exhibition and Celebration

December 18 was the annual school day. Class eight students, in support of Science and Maths subject teachers, made an exhibition of their project works related to school gardening. Also, the students made an exhibition of hand-made local designs. I was particularly interested in the project-work of class 8 boys, who had designed the concept of establishing a cultural museum in their village, where they could collect various cultural artifacts from Newar, Tamang, and Brahmin communities. "This museum will be a major tourism spot in our village", a grade 8 girl-student was excitedly sharing her views with the parents.

Impressed by the concept, a guest, who was also a retired headteacher of a public school said, "See, creative entrepreneurship is everywhere in this place. It is just that our students need relevant space for it to foster".

Enactment Analysis: This is 'Something Else'

In the second cycle, the pedagogical practices manifested the change in different ways. Most often, the change stems from messy, chaotic, and nonlinear patterns. The teachers strengthened their computer skills and were able to use ICT tools for emplaced teaching and learning. Though the teachers' were seemingly nervous about 'getting it wrong' many of them were able to share photos and videos from the local agriculture and everyday activities to link them in textbooks.

"I am particularly impressed with the improved social relationship of the students", shared a Social Studies subject teacher, "Students participated and collaborated more in the outdoor than they would do in the indoor". An English language teacher, who was initially concerned about students' lack of discipline in outdoor teaching and learning, changed his earlier perspectives that he found the outdoor students with increased enjoyment and engagement.

Despite the enthusiasm, it appeared that, similar to cycle 1, cycle 2 experienced the chaotic ripples and the mismatch arising from the structural linearity of the school. We could observe anxiety arising from the school's dilemma on how to ensure that the outdoor activities have met the contents in the national curriculum. Whenever the teachers had to move beyond the established curriculum process and the resources, the alternative contents and ideas would provoke anxiety of a kind[92].

The weaker collaboration culture among teachers within and out of the department would trigger discomfort. "Outdoor activities are time demanding, and therefore, teachers often complain that the 40-minute time period is not sufficient for outdoor classes", said the Headteacher.

The subject identities of the teachers were seemingly so strong that the school found it difficult to fit outdoor activities in the scheduled timeframe for a formal curriculum. Headteacher couldn't possibly take risk of making changes in the school routine as the routine had been practiced as 'true' and 'fixed' from the long past. Often the teachers arranged outdoor activities in extra-curricular time and on other days where there was no formal class.

This may be the reason that many teachers thought place-informed outdoor activities as 'something else' beyond their assigned responsibilities. The school was

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[92]Casey (2012) understands this conflict as the conflict arising from cognitive dissonance arising from the messiness of 'habitual comfort' of the pre-designed dominant pedagogical design and the new endorsed innovations.

particularly struggling to present itself accountable 'upward' to the central authorities more than 'outward' to the community. Thus, arriving at the end of the second cycle, we realized that despite some best pedagogical practices for participatory and generative approaches to emplaced teaching and learning, there were just a few signs that the approach was developing as a dominant pedagogical approach at Janahit School.

Cycle 3: Emerging Beyond the Mess

Arriving at this stage, passing through two different action-reflection cycles, we could feel that both teachers and students were growing more familiar with outdoor learning activities. Many teachers were being familiar with integrating school gardening, ICTs, and community lifeworld in everyday teaching and learning. Therefore, in the third cycle, beginning from 12 January to 28 March 2019, the PAR community of practice focused more on experimenting with and collecting best practices and resources so that the Janahit School could continue the approach as a routine design for emplaced pedagogies. Also, the exercising in the third cycle expected that being motivated from the action-reflection, Janahit School could begin initiating local curricula from the very beginning of the next academic session.

…

ACT I: SCENE I

Time: January 12, around 1:30 in the afternoon

(The school is having a Tiffin break. We, the researchers and a group of teachers, are in a nearby teashop. I am in the informal discussion with the teachers.)

Teacher 1: (Looking at me) we are learning a lot this year. But, I think, now we have to find ways to make outdoor learning the regular school teaching and learning.

Teacher 2: I agree, now many of us can use the computer. Others are in the

process to learn it…

Teacher 1: And now we can connect our lessons with the community.

Teacher 3: It has already been 8 months, you see.

Me: It takes time. Good thing is, our every experience and activity this year is

likely to be (learned lessons and) curriculum contents for the coming years.

And it is a continuous process. This is why we call it participatory and

generative.

Teacher 2: Now I am hopeful that our school can implement a local

curriculum next year.

Me: Let's see.

…

With this increased excitement from the messy turn (Kemmis & Grootenboer,

2008), which I have called in this study the turn from the messy ripples, the PAR

group in the third cycle actively explored the Dapcha community, particularly its

agricultural practices, cultural heritages, and geographical landscapes (see details in

chapter four). Doing so enabled the PAR community to explore manifold learning

arenas for the participatory and generative ways to emplaced pedagogies.

Mapping Resources: Looking for Curricular Contents of Local Curriculum

On 17 January 2019, the PAR community of practice made a collective

reflection of cycle 2 and discussed the collective plan for cycle 3. The discussions

focused particularly on the experiential evidence that could be supportive in

developing the *Janahit* model of emplaced curriculum, and pedagogies. There, our

question was- *How do Janahit School take the opportunity to develop a participatory*

and generative model of emplaced pedagogy that eloquently meets national

expectations of the local curriculum (CDC, 2010), and meets the wider needs of the

students, teachers, families, and the communities?

ACT I: SCENE II

Time: January 17, 2019, 12:30 in the afternoon

(Teachers are gathered together in the meeting hall. The researchers and the Headteacher are also present)

While the discussion was going on, I forwarded a proposal in the group meeting-

"Headteacher and the teacher-friends, based on our collaborative work and reflections on cycle 1, and cycle 2, now we can begin documenting our experiences to prepare the participatory and generative model of emplaced teaching and learning."

As all the attendants were making a curious look at me, I continued-

"This we can use to make an institutional policy document of the school for the next academic year."

A teacher asked-

"It is what we were doing in the last two cycles, isn't it?"

"Of course, yes", I said, "We are continuously exploring the possibilities for emplaced pedagogies. It seems we are ahead with the participatory and generative principle of pedagogical innovation"

"I like the idea", said a teacher teaching the English subject, "Being open and flexible may enable us to meet the evolving needs of our children"

…

There we made a long discussion that the aim of our participatory and generative model was primarily to enhance, through school teaching and learning, the

connectedness of Dapchali residents to the place where they live. As no teachers and the headteacher directly opposed the proposal, we made a series of discussions on not only *how* should be taught, but also *what*. That day, our discussions particularly emphasized framing emplaced curriculum in a way (1) to make use of local context and resources, (2) to design content in collaboration with local stakeholders and community partners, and (3) to meet the place-specific needs of Janahit students.

The table below outlines the action plan and activities the PAR team initiated in the third PAR cycle of the research project for place-informed lifeful pedagogies.

Table 5

PAR Cycle 3

	Cycle 3 (January- April 2019)
Reflect Review current practice Identify an area for improvement	PAR group reflect on barriers (and opportunities) to prepare contextually relevant Janahit model of local curriculum frame In a group meeting, teachers discussed earlier initiations to practice local curriculum Discussed the appropriateness of participatory and generative nature of local curriculum development
Plan Create improvement plans to guide selection	The researcher and the Community of Practice read available articles and policy documents about developing school-based local curriculum & reviewed suggestive practices. Made plan to explore various learning arenas aligning them to local curriculum policy provisions
Act Communicate the plan to all stakeholders Implement Plan	Class 1, 2, and 3 grade-teachers and students participated in a week-long program to design an artbook on local content. Class 4 and 5 students managed to visit local service

	providers with their social studies teacher and managed to prepare a report on it.
	Class 6 students made a one-day community visit and made photo-video on local agricultural practices.
	Class 7 students made a one-day community visit and made photo-video on local arts and architecture.
	Class 8 students made a one-day community visit and made photo-video on the local landscape.
	Teachers together with researchers made an educational tour to a school where agriculture was practiced as integral to the school curriculum.
Observe Analyze data about the effectiveness of the improvement plan Update stakeholders and elicit their feedback	The researcher shared the observation with the PAR committee. The researcher collected the stakeholders' feedback

In all the activities, the PAR team actively looked for how the school, the teachers, the students, and the local stakeholders could support and sustain equal collaborative relationships. The collaborative practice was based on our growing assumption that "teachers learn and grow together with their students" (Jarvis, 1992, P. 114), and from collegial collaboration. Doing so, we were focusing on the relationship parallel to the contents. Along with collaborative actions and reflections, also, we took support from local curriculum preparation guidelines (CDC, 2010) of the Nepal government, where necessary.

Enactment 1: The Art, the Place, and the Pedagogy

The PAR team decided to find possibilities to enhance class 1, 2, and 3 students' familiarity with their communities through arts integration. Accordingly, we

planned a week-long project to design an art book on local artifacts, which could be

supportive resources for class 1 to class 3 school teaching and learning.

For this purpose, we invited a local artist.

Figure 54: Students learning to draw local artifacts with local artist and the teachers

Beginning from February 8, in the presence of the students, class 1 to class 3

subject teachers sat together with the artist in a school hall, discussed, and decided on

the art topics. For six days, the teachers and the artist engaged in finding and drawing

familiar artifacts that were supposed to be age-appropriate for lower-grade students.

For all 6 days, students sat together with the teachers and the artist and learned to

draw. Teachers collected and made a separate portfolio file of the drawing made by

individual students.

Next week, the drawings appeared in the form of three different books, all

with local contents and artifacts.

Enactment 2: The Local Organizations, the Place, and the Pedagogy

Also, class 4 and 5 students managed to visit local service providers with their

social studies teacher and prepared a report on it. The idea was that the school would

be able to form partnerships with local organizations and work in collaboration to

solve real issues facing the community. For this, the students and the teachers visited

the nearby ward office and the health post.

Figure 55: Students' educational visit to the nearby health post and ward office

Though the students were initially hesitant in the new environment, slowly they began asking several questions to the office personnel, took the photo, and made notes. That week, class 4 students made a group report on the topic "Our Ward Office", where class 5 students prepared a similar group report on the topic "Our Health Post". The teacher arranged the report as a library reference for other students.

Enactment 3: The Photo-Voice, the Place and the Pedagogy

The PAR community of practice identified agriculture and livestock farming, cultural heritages, norms and values, and physical landscapes as potential areas for the local curriculum. Accordingly, the teachers decided to design a year-long separate curriculum model for class 6, 7, and 8, where class 6 teachers and students would collaboratively prepare curriculum content for agriculture and livestock farming, class 7 for cultural heritages, norms and values, and class 8 for physical landscapes.

On February 15, class 6 students made a one-day community visit and made a photo-video on local agriculture and livestock farming. In support of the teacher teaching the Occupation subject, class 6 students made four different groups, and starting from the school, they moved to four different directions with the camera and mobile phone. The whole day, for about five hours, the students walked around the Dapcha community and made photo-video of everything they could see about the

agricultural practices in the community. Also, they made a short video of their interviews and discussions with the local farmers.

On the second day, with the support from the Social Studies subject teacher, class 7 students made a one-day community visit and made a photo-video on local arts and architecture. It was to appreciate cultural aesthetics within a geographical place. It was also to foster ethical reconstruction of the place among the students. Similarly on the third day, with support from the Science subject teacher, class 8 students made photo-video on the local landscape. Excited by the vividness and sensuality of the experiences, "we had never realized learning would be this much fun", was the common remark of students.

…

On the fourth day, on February 18, each class, turn by turn, presented their photo-video in front of the teachers and the headteacher. Also, they shared their experiences of walking around the village and making photo-video on the selected theme.

ACT I: SCENE 1

Time: Around 11 in the morning

(In the presentation hall, class 6 students are grouped into four different groups. They are presenting their photo-video on the theme 'local agriculture and live-stock farming". The teacher teaching the Occupation subject is assisting the groups. There are the headteacher and the teachers)

Teacher: Ok, who is presenting?

A girl student in the second group raises her right hand-

"I…I want to present.

She walks to the computer. She is a little confused with the Slide-Share. The computer teacher walks to her and supports her with the Slide-Share.

Now the film is on the screen. Students clap.

There, on the screen, we see traditional farming on the upper elevation of Dapcha hills. These outward sloping of the rainfed terraces, known as *baari,* are not properly leveled. Scattered around, we see a mustard field, very beautiful with yellow flowers.

Also, we see kitchen gardens near the compost heaps, some managed and others poorly managed. There are green leaves vegetables, some cabbage and cauliflower, not for sale.

Still on the upper slopes is *pakhobari*, which is suitable only for maize.

In the lower elevation are *taar* and *baesi*. They touch Dapcha *khola* to the North, and Roshi Khola to the South. The land is seemingly suitable for paddy crops and seasonal vegetable crops.

Agriculture seems relatively marginal in the upper land.

Slightly distanced from the main road are clusters of Brahmin, Newari, Tamang, and Dalit communities. It seems every farm family has *goth*, where we see buffalo, goat, and poultry, particularly for subsidiary purposes. They use livestock as a means of dung for composting. We see compost heaps…spades…hand shovels…and water sources.

The film continues for ten minutes

Students begin to share their impressions.

"Water seems to be the major problem of agriculture in our village", said a boy student.

"But, we can collect rainwater. See, I have a picture of it", another boy showed a picture of rainwater harvesting, which he had clicked from one of his neighborhoods.

…

That day, also the class seven and class eight students made a separate presentation on 'our cultural heritage and 'our landscapes' respectively. In bringing environmental narratives as story threads, we could observe students being emotionally and creatively connected to their place and the people.

It excited both the students and the teachers. "Isn't it the content for local curriculum?" I asked the teachers, "See! Our students brought the curriculum contents of their own". The students' presentation that day showed the possibility to combine place narratives and digital reflections as effective for emplaced pedagogies."I agree", the headteacher showed her excitement, "it seems that the students have brought the whole village into the classroom".

Enactment Analysis: A Messy Turn in Perspectives

Arriving at the end of the third cycle, our PAR team could feel that now the school, the teachers, and the students were being more familiar with the generative and participatory model of emplaced pedagogy. We had already collected manifold evidence-resources. Students' direct exploration of the agricultural experiences, cultural lifeworld, and human landscape in the community was particularly supportive to enhance their understanding (of) and attachment to their community lifeworld.

With self-awareness, awareness of others, awareness of the context, and relationships, teachers and the students, to some extent, demonstrated an improved attitude towards their place, its history. "I am learning to 'study' my family, and my neighborhood like a book", a girl student of class 7 shared her changed perspectives on teaching and learning. "Our village has higher prospects for the tourism industry, particularly because of rich cultural heritage", a group of class seven students concluded their group presentation. They had selected a spot with scenic views, where they thought they could run a resort. Other students shared how they were fascinated with real-life information outside the classroom. It showed that with the widening of the educational space, slowly and gradually our year-long initiations for emplaced pedagogies were emerging into the phase of continuation.

It showed that our PAR initiation made a messy turn.

Despite the perspectival shift among the teachers, the headteacher, and the students on the usefulness of emplaced pedagogies, arriving at the last stage of the academic session, it appeared that the newly endorsed practices were still constrained by predesigned regular classroom structure. It is evidenced from what the Science subject teacher shared, "I am forced to cancel my plan to assess students' performance through real-life project works due to extraneous demand to follow structured question papers in the final exam". In the final exam, the school made questions and took students' exams exactly in the same way as they did in the past. The innovations continued to be 'something else' and showed no sign of being institutionalized as the school's regular routine behavior.

Overall Reflection of Pedagogical Innovation for Emplaced Pedagogies

In this chapter, I narrated and thereby explored how participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies, which were different from the on-

going indoor classroom practices, entered the Janahit School; began negotiation with the dominant practices; encountered manifold chaotic ripples; and eventually approached a kind of messy turn with perceived changes in research-participants' perspectives. Our initiatives for generative and participatory approaches to emplaced pedagogies, though was not for radical construction of alternative schooling, it was seemingly a continuous process of participation, collaboration, and generation of 'what' and 'how' of the emplaced teaching and the learning. In reflecting in this way, I reflect on how though the PAR enabled the teachers to emerge with transformed perspectives on the need (and the ways) to connect the lifeworld with the school teaching and learning, the emplaced pedagogies showed no sign to emerge as a dominant pedagogical approach.

To connect trans-disciplinary, circular, and open Dapchali lifeworld in the disciplinary, linear and closed pedagogies of Janahit School was not much easy and straightforward process. Beginning from the first PAR cycle, our PAR team felt that despite some teachers' best intention to emplace their teaching and learning, the school couldn't initiate any pedagogical reforms beyond the milieu of dominant practice architecture. The externally prescribed course contents and the curriculum criteria had made the teachers, which in the language of Kemmis and Smith (2008), a cog in a machine. Maybe this was the paradox of 'disciplinary lifefulness' in school pedagogies of Nepal. Our reflection as such enabled us to 'view' why many of the pedagogical innovations and reform programs were not adequately 'actioned' in the past. Reform packages would be externally imposed, and as the practice design would remain the same, the reform would not 'fit' the pre-established architecture, and in long run, the reform initiatives would discontinue, particularly replaced by another reform initiatives waiting to 'fail'. Maybe this was the reason that our initiatives to

emplace the pedagogies of Janahit School had to compromise with manifold negotiations i.e. structured school routine, forty-five minutes of fixed class duration, subject identities of the teachers, prescribed curriculums and course contents…

Despite this, continuously negotiating with the pre-designed dominant structures, and finding ways to link teaching contents and outdoor activities, the PAR initiations, to some extent, made a breakthrough. The breakthrough passed through mixed attributes of fear and excitement among students, teachers, and the headteacher- the excitement to try something 'new and worthy', and the fear of the unknown. Things wouldn't go straight, and whenever we couldn't meet our expectations in the action plan, the 'failures' would add a degree of frustration. This state was visible in the initial days of the second cycle. This 'muddy water situation' was seemingly the right time for 'rejecting' teachers to find excuses to return to their habitual practices. The conflict was between the 'habitual comfort' of the pre-designed dominant pedagogical design and the will to move beyond the design. Despite this, as appeared in the latter days of the second cycle, continuous dialogues, flexibility, and openness were seemingly the appropriate bounce-back strategies to keep the innovative spirit of the practitioners.

It appeared that the third cycle emerged with Aristotelian 'phronesis'i.e., the shifts in perspectives backed from the experiential reflection of the research participants. It was the phase where the teachers, the headteacher, the students, and even the parents had begun to question their long assimilated values and assumptions, and emerged with changed perspectives. Despite the messy turn in perspectives, it seemed that the pedagogical metaphor of 'this is something else' was continuously tagged in innovative initiations. To this, I conclude this thesis chapter by suggesting that the model was becoming accepted by some teachers, particularly those from

Science, Maths, Social Studies, Computer, and Occupation subjects. Students were becoming more familiar with the practices, and they were enjoying as well. But the movement needed continuous professional support from outside researchers.

In terms of emplaced pedagogies, not confined to any external suggestions and rules, we continuously explored the ways informed through our own reflective actions. And there, arriving at the latter days of the third cycle, our open and flexible initiations had collected manifold experiences on 'what' and 'how' of emplaced pedagogies. All those experiences and collected contents were likely to be informed resources for participatory and generative approaches to (emplaced) local curriculum in the days to come.

…

Did we sustain the participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies as regular school behavior? The chapter that follows makes a detailed observation on how the PAR team made efforts to institutionalize the participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies through the local curriculum, and how despite the shift in stakeholders' perspectives, the initiation was somewhat trapped in the dominant practices and only to some extent became the regular routine behavior of the school. Maybe we were in the process, and it would need a few years more to institutionalize the innovations. But arriving at this stage, I was partly convinced that sustainability of pedagogical innovations would need a shift in individual stories widening to wider communal stories of 'One' ecological rhythm of chaos and order. The experiences enabled me to make 'new' ecological views on 'participatory', 'sustainability' and 'transformative learning'. Let's see-

How was the sustainability and ownership of pedagogical innovations at

Janahit School?

Figure 56: Students harvesting the school's kitchen-garden

CHAPTER SEVEN

'PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION' ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE

'PRACTICE TRANSFORMATION'

Dear reader, in chapter five, I narrated to you how through the participatory needs assessment, the PAR community of practice identified educational displacement as an overarching cause for the teachers' and the students' (and in long run, the communities') weakening of the place connectedness, which eventually would weaken their place belonging, being, and becoming. Also, I narrated to you how after the participatory needs assessment, the PAR community came with a plan to initiate participatory and generative approaches to pedagogical innovation through emplaced pedagogies[93].

Figure 57: Pedagogical innovation in and through the place

Maybe, the PAR communities' identification of pedagogical displacement as responsible to local stakeholders' weakening of place belongingness was timely and relevant because it was possibly the 'root' from where there had emerged the widespread socio-philosophical confusion on the 'real' purpose of education. Out of

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[93] Studies (e.g., Buechner et al., 2020; Napan, Connor, & Toki, 2020) forward participatory and generative approaches as effective ways for school-based pedagogical innovation. Also, studies (e.g., Klein, 2018; Williams, 2018) suggest the transformative learning potentials of such innovations, which Burns (2015) calls it transformative sustainability pedagogy.

confusion, sense of lackness (and disoriented reaction), many pedagogical innovations were carried in the schools (for example, the pedagogical innovations for local curriculum, Continuous Assessment of Students, student-centered learning, project-based learning among others), and it appeared that as those initiations were themselves displaced[94], there was a widespread (and ever-growing) mess in school education of Nepal.

Being mindful of pedagogical displacement, the PAR team initiated somewhat participatory and generative models of emplaced pedagogies in Janahit School. In chapter six, I discussed how the PAR passed through three different action-reflection cycles and explored manifold ways to initiate emplaced pedagogies from within and beyond the ongoing (dominant) practice architecture of Janahit School and the cultural milieu of Dapcha communities. Hopeful from the inexorable outcome of pedagogical innovations (e.g., informed knowledge on 'what' and 'how' of emplaced pedagogies, and the perceived change in participant-stakeholders' perspectives) the PAR team had expected that the year-long active action-reflections would strengthen the ownership among the concerned stakeholders. Also, to some extent, we had expected that following the principle of generative pedagogy (Kane, 2004; Sterling, 2001), the innovative practices for emplaced pedagogies would continue as regular institutional practices. To this background, primarily focused on the theme of sustainability and ownership of pedagogical innovations, this chapter is the continuity of the earlier two chapters. It includes several sustainability-related rhetorics of emplaced pedagogies within the Western-Modern dominant pedagogical design and cultural milieu of present school education of Nepal.

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[94] The initives (e.g., see CDC, 2010) were centrally prescribed, and in many cases as discussed in MoE (2016), the schools were not prepared to initiate school-based participatory and generative models.

In doing so, the chapter provides seemingly an authentic ground for understanding the broader spectrum of concepts concerning (transformative) sustainability in pedagogical innovation. Here, I seek to address the question, how was the sustainability and ownership of the innovative models for participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies in Janahit School? What meanings could we make on 'participatory', 'sustainability', and 'transformative learning' involved in pedagogical innovation? The narratives of the actions and the reflections at the later period of the PAR activities inform this reflexivity. Here begins the story-

Section I: Looking for Sustainability and Ownership

At the end of the third cycle, from 29 to 31 March 2019, the PAR community of practice conducted a three-day concluding workshop. Arriving at this stage, our PAR community of practice had begun to make sense that in the present form of bureaucratic linearity, a school alone couldn't possibly move ahead with pedagogical innovation, particularly the innovations which larger communities and bureaucratic authorities don't recognize. To this realization, leaving aside many of the innovation activities, which the policy provisions of Nepal couldn't recognize, the workshop particularly focused to develop a year-long roadmap for restructuring school arrangements to accommodate participatory and generative approaches of emplaced pedagogies through local curriculum policy provision (CDC, 2010)[95] of the Nepal government.

We continued with the negotiation.

We had to leave many of the 'good practices' from our year-long action-reflections, and continuing with only those which, to some extent, would fit the dominant schooling architecture. Mindful of this limitation, the participant- teachers,

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[95] This study, however, makes a meaning that the term 'local' in local curriculum is not a right match for ecological renderings, which needs (re)defining the term.

the headteacher, the representatives of school administrators, and the students collectively reflected on the pedagogical activities of the running year, and planned for the next[96]. The textual reflexivity below portrays the performance-

March 29, 2019

ACT I, SCENE I: Institutionalizing emplaced pedagogies, an attempt

The action takes place in a workshop hall

It is in the evening. A room not expensively furnished. Sitting around the table, there are three university researchers, a headteacher, and two teachers from Janahit School. They are exploring manifold ways to institutionalize the year-long experiences for participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies.

The team particularly discusses about integrating the idea of emplaced pedagogies as a strategic measure to include in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). We believed that doing so would partly anchor the innovations as regular school behavior among the stakeholders.

One of the Ph.D. researchers stressed the need for clear goals and pro-activeness of the school headteacher. "It would be great if we hear the improvement plan from the headteacher first", he said. The headteacher gave a thoughtful look- "In our schooling system, a school and a headteacher alone can't initiate (and continue) pedagogical reforms. It has to go hands in hand with central (and local) authorities", she said[97]. "Yes, we have to look for continuous support from local authorities", added a teacher at the left. It appeared that the teachers stressed the need for connection; a need for embodied practical wisdom.

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[96] A study by McLeod and Anderson (2020) stresses the need for school readiness for any pedagogical innovations to sustain. The readiness, according to them, fosters through collective interpretations and priorities

[97] For pedagogical innovation to sustain, Seiser (2020) stressed the need for enhanced pedagogical leadership. To transform the pedagogical leadership Aas, Vennebo & Halvorsen (2020) suggests Benchlearning, which according to them is an action research program that sets collective priorities.

"And it is a never-ending process", I added, "… our experiences have shown that passing on learning from one stage to another is equally important…and it seems, we need to demonstrate flexibility, being responsive to concrete situations".

"It is what I have begun to experience", said the headteacher, "We will find ways to make a team that shares responsibilities". Giving an optimistic look she added, "Innovations have to pass through ongoing experiments and inquiry".

That time, with a commitment to continue generative curriculum innovation, also we discussed the ways to continuously share the experiences, and added in the SIP (School Improvement Plan) report a provision for practitioner's meeting once a month. Here follows what happened the next morning-

March 30, 2019

ACT I, SCENE II: Building consensus on learning arenas and paths[98]

The action takes place in the workshop hall

It is in the morning. Sitting around the U-shaped table are the university researchers, the headteacher, teachers, and student representatives. Working in four different groups, the attendants are reflecting on their year-long experiences, and exploring areas of constructing the open and interdisciplinary local curriculum (as a breakthrough for participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies) to be effective from the next academic session. Each team made seemingly a detailed reflection of their cycle 3 experiences on the mapping of the place's resources. After 20 minutes of engaged discussions, a team leader from each group shared their collaborative views.

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[98] That time the team was collaboratively exploring out-door learning arenas, which could be particularly helpful for local curriculum

Group 1suggested the practicability of multidisciplinary themes. It was something like teaching (and learning) a thematic unit (e.g., 'My Kitchen garden') beyond the discipline. "Each class, in support of the class teacher and all other subject teachers, may engage in any one 'a year-long' practical project, shared the teacher. "Doing so, every year the school can possibly work on 8 different place-based projects, one each from class 1 to class 8". "Good thing is, through portfolio records, we may pass the learning from one class to the next", he added.

Figure 58: Seeking life in school education

(Source: https://www.newindianexpress.com)

Slightly different from Group 1, Group 2 partly focused on linking teaching contents with children's lifeworld. Seemingly, it was a way to combine book lessons with children's practical activities outside. It was also a way to find the relevant application of the subject contents. "For this, we don't need a separate class", shared the team leader, "Each subject teacher can record the students' activities and assess their performance". The other two groups stressed making the field works integral to the regular extra-curricular activities of the school. For this, the teachers could collaboratively plan for age-appropriate work tasks and allocate certain days in each month (maybe every Friday) for the outdoor field works. For this group, the practical and creative arts had to go together with the use of ICTs, science, and technologies.

The interaction session that followed passed through the series of dialogues. Despite teachers' interest to make the best use of the year-long action-reflections on participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies, it appeared that many of them repeatedly showed great concern that the school couldn't go beyond the government's guidelines and the policy provisions. Also, while many teachers, especially the Science, Maths, Social Studies, Computer, and Occupation subject teachers accepted the idea of participatory and generative approaches to the emplaced (local) curriculum with enthusiasm and confidence, others repeatedly showed anxiety as to how to ensure that their work meets the expectations of the national curriculum.

Arriving at the later stage of the discussion session, all the four different teams, to some extent, decided to initiate participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies as suggested by the second group i.e., linking everyday teaching and learning with children's everyday lifeworld and the place around. It was partly near to the suggestions from local curriculum policy provisions of the Nepal government (CDC, 2010). As they discussed, after two or three years of experience with it, the school could look ahead with a multidisciplinary thematic mega-unit in the days to come[99]. For all this to happen, it seemed that they felt the need for active leadership of the Headteacher and the active collaboration of the parents and the local authorities.

Enactment: Continuing with Cultural Fit and Negotiations

Next week, on 7 April, teachers prepared a kind of activities plan for the next academic session and, to some extent, showed their informed commitment to continuing participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies. Apparently, the major challenge was to address national curriculum contents with

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[99] Multidisciplinary thematic mega-unit is also a provision made for integrated curriculum in Nepal (see, National Curriculum Framework [NCF] 2019). Starting from class one, the government has begun to pilot the curriculum.

community lifeworld. Despite this, aligning the 'pedagogical change' with the local curriculum policy provision of the Nepal government (CDC, 2010), the PAR community of practice made an action plan that possibly demonstrated the importance of reimagining local sites for learning. The school could use year-long action-reflections for emplaced pedagogies as informed resources. Here follows teachers' collaboratively developed action plan for the next academic year:

- For class 4 to class 8, design inquiry/ project/artworks for students (any two in each three-terminal exam), linking course contents with the local context, allocating weight as Science-25%, Maths-25%, Social Studies-25%, Computer-50%, and Occupation- 50%. Link ICT and school gardening where necessary

- Document all the project/inquiry/arts activities of the students as library resources for the local curriculum, and use the resources when necessary

- Make a formative assessment of all the students' inquiry/project/artworks through individual students' portfolio records allocating weight in each terminal exam as Science- 25%, Maths- 25%, Social Studies-25%, Computer-50%, Occupation- 50%

- Arrange teachers meeting once a month (last Friday), and make progress reviews on curriculum contextualization activities through reflective dialogues, and feedbacks

- Make a continuous assessment of students' portfolios in the presence of parents

- Link students inquiry/project/arts activities with community service sectors

Maybe any genuinely ecological change requires more than intellectual constructs (Oxley, 2006; Payne, 2008), which needs to pass through continuous co-

creating, embodying, and enacting. To this end, to ensure the head teacher's and teacher-participants' sense of urgency, ownership, and commitment for this action-plan, arriving at this stage, our research team minimized our involvement in the school and the community. We just made a few follow-up visits at the school.

Enactment Analysis: Cultural Fit and Negotiations, a 'Go on with'

As the Rupantaran Project is still continuing the PAR activities in the school, maybe it is too early to make any concluding statement about the sustainability of the innovations. Maybe, the continuous facilitation for some more years will readily institutionalize some changes (see Fullan, 2007). But, there are many evidences that until the school dares to break its long-practiced (indoor) schooling structure, and until individual shifts make shifts in communal meanings of meaning and purpose of education, emplaced (outdoor) teaching and learning is seemingly a negotiation between innovation and dominant indoor spaces. For example, in the next academic session, it appeared that the school prepared the same school routine as it was habituated in the past. Except for some rarely made outdoor teaching and learning, the habitual pedagogical culture, 'to teach and learn prescribed course books to pass the exam' predominantly continued. The reforms were seemingly sandwiched in-between the cultural fit and negotiation. It is to this end, the reflection herein considers how despite perspectival transformation among PAR communities of practice on the need for place-informed lifeful pedagogies, there appeared only limited spaces for 'talk about' (Casey, 2013) innovations to get institutionalized as regular pedagogical practices. Maybe, it needed more than the intellectual (and formal) constructs.

Now, you may ask the question- did the study team meet their commitments as decided in the action plan? The answer may be either 'yes' or 'no'. The answer may be 'yes' because we observed that the study, in many ways, transformed the

perspectives of the stakeholders on the need and the ways for emplaced pedagogies. In the process, the participants seemingly gained new perspectives on their ability to contribute to prolonged collaboration and reflection, which gradually transformed into praxis communities (Blackmore, 2010). As the teachers started implementing some of the planned activities, to some extent, their awareness of available teaching resources within the immediate environment increased, and all stakeholders starting from teachers, students, and parents began to discover the rationale behind their actions. Also, the answer may be 'no' because the pre-designed dominant pedagogical structure seemingly constrained the school to 'break the long endorsed cultural expectations' and meet the commitments. It appeared that when it was the time to institutionalize the learned practices, and when the university researchers (who were in their role of boundary spanner) minimized their direct presence at the school, the school was unlikely to move beyond its regular pedagogical design. Possibly, the rigid bureaucratic structure of the school was not autonomous enough to make its' pedagogical decisions.

Section II: Lessons from Two Different Models of Emplaced Pedagogies

Overall, the schools' bureaucratic and structural limitations to move beyond dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu seemed to be the major constraints to initiate emplaced pedagogies as regular behavior at school. The meaning stresses seemingly a valuable lesson of this 'study' that pedagogical innovation is more an ecological process where perspectives changes have to move together with the change in practice, and maybe this 'togetherness' is possible only when the school is autonomous (and ecologically conscious) enough to continuously redesign its pedagogical structure.

To make the 'sense' of the study more meaningful, I narrate below any two models of emplaced learning, which I had experienced during my Ph.D. days. Both carry the 'place sense and place ecology' of the place where the model is practiced. My experiential narratives followed by reflections on those models may enable us to think upon seemingly 'attuning and harmonizing' shifts in initiating emplaced pedagogies in (and beyond) modern schoolings. Later we will compare our experiences with Janahit School to the experiences from these two models, and 'figure out' why Janahit school and many other schools with Western Modern design can hardly initiate emplaced pedagogies as regular institutional behavior. The evidences are from 'The agro-school' in Khotang, Nepal, and 'The eco-school' in Aurland, Norway. Apparently, one of the common features of these two models of emplaced schooling is that both the models have made ecological principles of place relationalities and ethical responsibilities their guiding principles, and to some extent, have moved beyond dominant practice architectures of modern schools. Unlike cultural fit with dominant (indoor) schooling design, they use the landscape as a common venue for teaching and learning, and thereby wove a wholly distinctive curricular story (see Barane et al, 2015; Hugo, 2000).

The Agro-school in Khotang, Nepal

We were in the last stage of the third cycle. In an informal discussion, a Science subject teacher shared that he had heard about emplaced pedagogical practices in a school located in the Khotang district of Nepal. Other teachers showed their interest to visit the school and learn from their practices. Our PAR community planned for the tour. Accordingly, the teachers, together with researchers made an educational tour to this school where agriculture and the lifeworld were practiced as integral to the school curriculum.

There we observed that the Khotang model of emplaced learning, an initiation of a Nepali visionary and agriculture expert Madan Rai, to some extent, had established new learning spaces outside the classroom. Children would learn in the yard and in the garden. They would cultivate hands-on farming experiences. They would touch the things, hold, and try them out. *Panch Bhoota,* five physical elements-earth, water, fire, air, and space were the school curriculum. Practical engagements with these components would make learning. Students would rise at dawn, do exercises, milk the cows, and mow the grass. They would plow the field, would mend motorbikes, and would run computers. Also, they would sing, dance, and do theatrical acts. It seemed that their learning was their ongoing dialogues with the landscapes and the animals.

Figure 59: Fisheryand agro-farm in Khotang School

Surya Rai, the manager of the school shared that the mission of the school was to provide a new core of values with '12 education'. The school had made its own '12 education' model of learning. It was a complex whole of 12 major learning domains. He shared that, together it was a holistic envisioning of learning, which encompassed an increasing variety of learning spaces. Within '12 educational spaces' students would learn the language, particularly English, Hindi, Chinese, and Nepali. They would also learn about nature and science. They would learn food education; clothes education; shelter (wire and wheel); health and sex education. Also, they would learn

entertainment, humanities, management, and creative arts. And they would learn mental disorders, and balance as integral to everyday teaching and learning. In this model of emplaced learning, it appeared that the lived spaces of the schools had created a unique educational ethos. There, learning would arise from real needs in a real-life context. In this learning, students were seemingly aware of what they were learning and why.

"Our students are money-maker", said Madan Rai, "They have learned the art of materializing nature into money. Also they develop skill, working together". We talked to the students with soil marks on their hands and the face. We saw them connected to their works. Maybe, it was from where they were building ecological consciousness. Maybe, it was from where they were learning to enhance their social-ecological resilience. When asked about the course contents, books and exams, Surya said, "learner's everyday place is their school; their everyday engagement with farm and machines is their curriculum and course books; their everyday progress is their exam". He smiled and said, "We don't follow factory models of school, in fact we have no school, here is only life and the life full of learning and doing."

The Eco-School in Aurland, Norway

And here is another school, a living school model of Aurland, Norway. Like the Khotang model, this school seemingly places place at the core of the curriculum. Now, I narrate a day events, where with professor Erling (my Norway-based Ph.D. supervisor), we, the research-degree students from Tribhuwan University (TU), and Kathmandu University (KU) had visited the school and the community.

We woke up early in the morning and reached the school by 7:30. That day, to some extent, the school was full of life and hands-on experiences. It was a chilling cold morning, with the drift of snows on the valley sides. A group of about 30

students gathered in a schoolyard with their teachers. They formed five different groups. A group of students went to an onion farm equipped with small sickles and cutters in their hands. A local gardener facilitated them on the ways to pull onion plants from the earth and to arrange them in the basket. The teenagers cooperated. They did it in the group.

Figure 60: The ecopreneur curriculum in Aurland, Norway

The second group went to make hot mushroom soup. We saw another group busy baking the bread. The fourth group was learning how to color sheep wool using onion skin and locally available plants.

Things were going in their rhythm.

We could hear the sound of axes from the left. There, the fifth group of students was learning the ways to cut wood and design furniture. They were doing it together with Professor Erling. There was no pen and paper but the billhooks, saws, axes, and cutters.

The whole day we were with the students. In observing all these, it appeared that we were gradually developing a relationship with the place. In between, we discussed with its visionaries. "It is authentic learning", they said. Students here do real tasks, on the real barrow, with solid tools. The 10 years paths to learning from kindergarten to high school take children back to the farm many times. The farm, the forest, and the kitchen are the basis for their practical work.

And there, walking around, we discussed on the values and the mission of the school. The school, as they shared it, aims to "produce, through local curriculum

planning, a binding place-based curriculum" (see Barane et al., 2015, p. 30). It would enable students to grow into everyday activities and the culture of their community. In this model, students from each grade pass through different learning activities. The outer spaces, the place, and the landscape, particularly the garden, farm, cultural landscape, river, fjord, mountain, and the wider world are its learning arena. As they shared, the learning arena widens in a circle. In the inner circle is the garden. The circle widens to the farm and the space for work. As students grow, the circle further widens to cultural landscape and history, and out to the fjord, the river, the mountains, and the wider world.

Embodying, (Re) visioning, and Enacting

Dear reader, unlike the case of the Janahit School, where the school is within the already designed (and externally prescribed) linearly closed schooling structure, the enabling stories of both the Khotang and the Aurland model of emplaced pedagogies as mentioned above appeared structurally and functionally different. Both the models partly suggest that rather than looking and struggling for a possible space 'to fit' the innovative pedagogies within 20th century dominant pedagogical architects, maybe the schools have to make synchronic moves ahead.

Also, seemingly the enabling stories of those schools suggest that sustainability is hardly achieved without a deep sense of community and connection with the earth and with the life…" (Barane et al, 2015). They suggest that sustainability has to live inside the learning process, attuning to the place and the shifting perspectives. It demands from the teachers and the students a new (ecological) eye to look at the familiar surroundings as exciting resources. But, it appeared that things become resources only when one realizes its importance (Palmer, 1990) and to realize the importance of place in school education, the school has to

dare to move beyond the in-door structures that had prevented the place from entering into 'learning process' since long. The schools in Khotang, Nepal and Aurland, Norway, to some extent, question the externally imposed bureaucratic schooling structure of the Nepal government as responsible to minimize the school's autonomy to move beyond the passive prescriptions. If so, it appears that Nepal has to start with 'participatory' and 'generative' models of pedagogical innovation in the schools of Nepal. But, unlike suggestions for participatory pedagogical innovations in PAR literature (e.g., Ahmad, Gjøtterud & Krogh, 2016; Constantinou & Ainscow, 2020; Roberts, Brown & Edwards, 2015), the study finding is slightly different in a way that even 'participatory' has some limitations. Let's see-

Section III: Lessons Learned for Sustainability of Pedagogical Innovation

Partly, the PAR team had set objectives to strengthen school students' and teachers' place connectedness, and thereby strengthen their belonging, being, and becoming through emplaced school pedagogies. It was to add life and lifefulness through active place engagement. For this to happen, maybe at least the school had to dare to move a step beyond the dominant pedagogical design and practice architecture. Arriving at the stage of evaluation, I made a sense that though the initiations brought perspectival shifts among teachers, students, and parents on the need of active learning through the place, the initiations for pedagogical innovations didn't make a visible shift as the everyday practice culture of the school. Apparently, the dominant practice architecture of the school and its design for 'learn book from the teachers and pass the exam' restrained the continuity of our initiation. Though the PAR community of practice in the Janahit School, to some extent, challenged the long-held beliefs of the teachers, the headteacher, the students, and the concerned stakeholders about school teaching and learning, the rigidly designed bureaucratic

structure (and long-held belief in the Western-Modern schooling design) likely limited them to work beyond the 'already designed' practice architectures. It appeared that unlike the experiences from the schools in Khotang and Aurland, the initiatives in Janahit School, except for some nominal shifts, continuously negotiated with and returned to the habituated teacher-centered indoor approach. The experience enabled me to emerge with seemingly a major lesson that sustainability of pedagogical innovations is more than human dimensions in a way that it is (1) more than stakeholders' participation, and (2) more than a change in stakeholders' perspectives. The lessons suggested the need to re(define) pedagogical sustainability in terms of (human and nonhuman) organic emergence and transcendence.

Sustainability of Pedagogical Innovations is more than 'Participatory'

The teachers and the researchers had just returned from the educational visit to the agro-school of Khotang. One day, while I was in interactions with a teacher, I asked, "what great would happen if we could replicate many of the ecopreneur practices of Khotang School in the Janahit School as well?"

The teacher said, "Nothing great would happen."

"Nothing great would happen?" I asked in a little surprise. Maybe his statement was a reflection from seemingly a repeated 'failure' of the school to 'action' many of the 'talk about' innovations in the past.

"You see, we are in school. School is to prepare students to pass exams. Our past experiences show that every innovation that doesn't support this 'indoor' culture doesn't continue", he said.

"Maybe because we don't plan better", I showed doubt in their ways of planning and reforming.

After a few seconds of thoughtful silence, he said, You may be right, but in my experience, it is not that any innovation should have been better planned and implemented. It is all about how present schools are designed and to what extent the design is open for change"

His statement made me thoughtful as well. I had made similar sense from the PAR actions and reflections. There, I realized, maybe many of the initiations for pedagogical reforms in the past, which didn't continue, were the vain efforts in the 'wrong' design. It turned to be a great lesson for the sustainability of pedagogical innovation. Maybe the teacher was right. There was limited space to enter the place, the life and lifefulness in the linearly closed dominant practice architecture of schools in Nepal. Later, when shared it with other teachers, they supported the realization. Our reflection as such enabled us to 'view' why many of the pedagogical innovations and reform programs (especially the outdoor pedagogies) remained as 'talk about pedagogies' (Casey 2013), and why the innovations were not adequately 'actioned' in the past. Most often the non-participatory reform packages would be externally (and centrally) imposed. But, as the dominant practice design of schools would remain the same, the centrally prescribed reform would not 'fit' the pre-established architecture of the school. In long run, the reform initiative couldn't get grounded. They would discontinue. Often, the discontinued reforms would be replaced by other reform initiatives. Ironically, every reform initiative to replace another would be in line to continue the 'failure' legacy of pedagogical innovation.

Figure 61: Dominant pedagogical design of modern schools

(Source: https://thehimalayantimes.com)

Under such circumstances, many studies in the past suggest participatory approaches as effective measures to ground the pedagogical innovations. As the studies claim, the participatory approaches would facilitate positivity (O'Brien & Blue, 2018) and foster cooperation, action, and recognition (see Loeb, 2016). Slightly different from these, this study passed through PAR experiences and found the suggestions for participatory approaches partially true. It appeared that though participatory approaches contribute to knowledge democracy (Wood, McAteer & Whitehead, 2019) and school readiness (McLeod & Anderson, 2020), the approaches for pedagogical innovation do not make an organic move if the innovation 'fails' to move parallel with the shift in dominant pedagogical architecture and cultural design. And for emplaced pedagogies to materialize, as Hathaway (2018) claims, maybe the innovations need to attune with ecological principles, being open to earth's wisdom, and experiencing a wider sense of self.

Sustainability of Pedagogical Innovations is more than Change in Perspectives

Also, I began to observe the sustainability experiences in the context of transformative learning. Mezirow (1997) believes that transformative learning begins with a shift in perspectives. The shift in perspective is the shift in one's frames of

reference. Later, Taylor (1997), Fien (2003), and O'Sullivan (2002) revisited Mezirow's belief about transformative learning. They added in it the need to integrate the shifts in perspectives (knowing) with the shifts in habituated ways of acting and valuing. The cognitive orientation of transformative learning, to some extent, took a pragmatic turning. Still later, Fullan (2007) stressed that for transformative learning to sustain, only change in perspectives and action is not sufficient. As transformation is 'more than human dimensions', the changed perspectives and actions need to challenge dominant (cultural) practice. The recent study by Kloubert (2020) considers all the earlier theoretical orientations of transformative learning and forwards the views that the personal cognitive development (through shifts in perspective) and the shifts in habituated ways of acting and valuing may be a means for transformative learning to occur, they are not the ends. Cognitive development has to come with autonomous thinking. It is this autonomous thinking that challenges the long-endorsed practices.

It seems that this study is very much near to Fullan (2007) and Kloubert (2020) in its embodied message that for transformative learning to sustain, the cognitive transformation and the shift in action have to move parallel with the shift in disempowering designs of the dominant practice architecture. The way, according to Hathaway (2018), needs to be the way of "perceiving, attuning to, learning from, and acting harmoniously with all the diverse entities that make up the Earth community" (p. 137). Otherwise, it is likely that lacking the experiences of the communal and the communality, the ecologically dislocated efforts for transformation just adds another mess in the history of messes.

Sustainability is but an Organic Emergence and Transcendence

The emergent meanings above enabled me to re (visit) pedagogical sustainability in terms of organic emergence and transcendence of human and non-human dimensions. Maybe it was also a realization of sustainability as an attuned and harmonized move ahead. Arriving at this stage, the twist and turns in my 'researcher-ego' were readily visible. For example, during my early days in the Dapcha located Janahit School, I had felt like I was undergoing a hero's adventurous journey to do heroic deeds on behalf of the 'less privileged' community and the school. Slowly, passing through a sense of awe and mystery and gratitude for the ultimate mystery" (Campbell, 2004, p. 104) of the village lifeworld, I began to realize that my Journeys and arrivals to the pedagogical displacement in schools of Nepal were not a Columbus (and/or Hero's) journey. The village and the school were not waiting for 'me' to change and to 'civilize' their lifeworld. It was just a unique lifeworld to appreciate. Seemingly, this process of transformation was more archetypal and mythical (Campbell, 2008), demonstrating in me an emergent feeling of re-integration and wholeness.

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Chapter Conclusion: More than Human Dimensions

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Through this chapter, I raised seemingly a serious issue in educational discourse pertaining to the sustainability of pedagogical innovations and reforms for emplaced (and lifeful) pedagogies in school education in Nepal. Sustainability is something that persists (on its own) over long periods of time (Robertson, 2014). But, as the study suggests, 'sustainability of what (?)' is the most crucial area to address. It appeared that every pedagogical innovation and reform initiation may easily continue, and therefore, sustain only in the case it readily 'fit' the dominant practice architecture and cultural milieu. In case the reform agenda doesn't fit the dominant practice

design, there are limited ways for the initiation to sustain. Maybe, it is in practitioners' choice either 'strive to fit' in the dominant design and 'pretend' to sustain, or look for some ways to attune and harmonize sustainability as organic emergence and transcendence.

Ensuring pedagogical sustainability through 'cultural fit' and negotiation with the disciplinary closeness of dominant practice architecture is seemingly anti-ecological.To this, I conclude this chapter with a learned lesson that transformation in (human) perspectives is not necessary the transformation in practice. To my observation, the components like pedagogical innovation, the changed perspectives (through informed reflection), and the continuation of the innovation have to move parallel to the continuous re-design of the practice architecture of the school. Otherwise, as observed in the needs assessment of the Janahit School, it is likely that every 'failed' reform for open pedagogies adds extra mess in the ongoing closed architecture, and the helplessness as such may leave school stakeholders with loss of confidence and humiliation. Understandings as such enable me to appreciate systems through posthumanist holistic perspectives, ecological thinking, spiritual ethics, and authentic connections with the place, here, now.

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Dear readers, our PAR team identified displacement as seemingly an overarching problem of school education in Nepal. Partly, the team identified the need for pedagogical innovation through pedagogical emplacement. We initiated a kind of participatory and generative models of emplaced pedagogies in Janahit School. We looked for ways to sustain the innovations. But, slowly many of our PAR members began to feel that the long-endorsed practice architecture wouldn't readily accept the participatory and generative models of emplaced pedagogies. It would resist the

innovations to sustain as regular school behavior. The arrival taught us a valuable lesson that closed design is unlikely to foster an open lifeworld.

So what?

Maybe, only pointing out the limitations of human dimensions like 'democratic participation' and 'shift in perspectives', and pointing out the limitations of the linearly designed closeness of dominant practice architecture of modern schools (which we did in this chapter) is just an apparent part of the study. Maybe, following the participatory immanence of this study, the study has to live its 'high-order' *dharma* of envisioning the evolution of the future of emplaced education and research.

Addressing the gap, the chapter that follows, through Metamodern ecological thinking attempts to discover 'so what' of the study. Together with the metaphor of *dharma*, the chapter constructs embodied awareness (and forwards an option) on why Nepali educational practitioners for emplaced pedagogies can possibly move homewards and unlike continuing with displaced Western-Modern design, can possibly evolve from their own place essential. Otherwise, we are unlikely to imagine the trans-disciplinary place spirit of Dapcha to be integral to teaching and learning within the disciplinary design of Janahit School.

Let's move-

What meanings does the study make on the place, the life, and the lifefulness in school education of Nepal? What envisioning did we make on the evolution of the future in education and research? Here follows the Metamodern ecological perspectives (and envisioning of) place pedagogies.

Figure 62: The wooden craft of age-old cultural building of Dapcha

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DISCIPLINARY MIRAGE AND THE EVOLUTION OF FUTURE FOR

EMPLACED EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Arriving at this stage, informed through the PAR actions and the reflections in earlier chapters, where despite visible shifts in stakeholders' perspectives many of our initiations for emplaced pedagogies couldn't possibly move beyond the pre-constructed indoor schooling design of Janahit School, I make two of the major thematic reflections i.e., 1) fostering transdisciplinary lifefulness in closed, and therefore, displaced schooling design is seemingly a deceitful mirage, and 2) the terms 'school' and 'schooling' are, to some extent, linguistically (and philosophically) incorrect to foster emplaced (and therefore, lifeful) pedagogies. Envisioning the future in education and research through participatory imminent (see Benedikter & Molz, 2011) and relational ontology(ies), the study forwards that, maybe, the Metamodern ecological pedagogies and research need to be a 'higher-order' action, a collaboratively performed *yangya*[100] for communal learning and transformation. Also, learning from past experiences, as Owen (2020) and Tesor (2021) suggest, it appeared that the ecologically sincere learning as such has to operate through life, lifefulness, maturity, authenticities, relationalities, and ethical responsibilities.

Divided into three sections, section one, 'Life and lifefulness in displaced schooling design: A deceitful mirage' makes detail Metamodern ecological meaning (see Braidotti, 2019; Lewis & Owen, 2020) of the study that pedagogical innovation for the place, life, and lifefulness (e.g., the trans-disciplinary Dapchali lifeworld) in already displaced Western-Modern pedagogical design dominant in Nepali school

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[100] A Hindu ritual practice where a community of local inhabitanta make sacred offerings for common goods

education (e.g., the dominant pedagogical design of Janahit School) is seemingly a 'Sysipus ritual[101]', a road to nowhere. Likewise, section two, 'Schooling is not the right match', through the Hindu-Buddhist *dharma* worldview, makes Metamodern ecological meaning of the study that the terms 'school' and 'schooling' are apparently imagined and designed to 'change' a group of people into 'someone else' who they are previously not (see Freire, 1970). In this background, it appears that the dominant 'schooling design' with 'indoor classroom architecture' can neither possibly let pedagogical innovations for 'home-going' (Awasthi, 2004) and 'soul-searching'(Etim, 2019) nor to move beyond its mechanical interest and anthropocentric advocacies (see Braidotti, 2019).

Figure 63: The Anthropocentric worldview

(Source: https://www.flickr.com)

Stepping on the meanings in sections one and two, section three, 'the evolution of future' thus, makes Metamodern ecological vision (Benedikter & Moltz, 2011) for emplaced education and research. The section makes embodied foresight of 'emergent space' for the pedagogy of authentic lifefulness, which Howard and O'Brien (2018) describe it in terms of living school (*Jivanta Vidhyalaya*). In this emergent space, aspirants for pedagogical innovation in Nepal may reflect upon their own South-East (and/or Hindu-Buddhist and ethnic) contexts, and emerge with

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[101] The everyday ritual of Sisipus, a Greek character, who roles a stone up the mountain, still knowing that it will fall down and he has to role it again

higher-order action, adding in it a seemingly new *dharma* discourse of the Metamodern eco-spiritual authenticity and ethical responsibility. Also, the section makes 'embodied foresight' (Floyd, 2012) for a new ethical vision in practitioner research, which is but the research as/for authentic lifefulness (*JivantaKhoj*). In this imminent space for living inquiry, the embodied aspirants may emerge with ecologically open and authentic ways of knowing and acting. Aspired to bring life to school and school to life, it appears that all three meanings of the study forward the need to redefine 'pedagogical modernity' of the school education (and research) of Nepal. Re-defining pedagogical modernity as such could be a Metamodern educational project of sincerity and maturity (see Braidotti, 2019; Lewis & Owen, 2020). Floyd (2012) understands it as a participatory (and also anticipatory) project of recoverability. Likely, it suggests educational debates for emplaced pedagogies to arise from Nepal's own place essential at present time and space (also see Awasthi, 2004; Luitel, 2009). Otherwise, it is more likely that falling under anti-ecological traps, the pedagogical displacement continues, and there continues the weakened belonging, being, and becoming of the (rural) lifeworld of Nepal.

Let's see-

Section One: A Deceitful Mirage

Beginning from here, I draw the sense of 'pedagogical helplessness' for the multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary nature of emplaced (and therefore, lifeful) pedagogies in school education of Nepal. For this, I constantly am in touch with the Metamodern ecological *dharma*[102] of present time and space (Turner, 2011), which may enable me to remain constructively thoughtful on ecological relationality and ethical responsibility. As already discussed in chapter two, Metamodern ecology is

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[102] Metamodern Dharma in this study is the fundamental ecological principal of authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility.

present time and space informed modernism, which is equally informed (and matured)

through the past and the future of the place (Davies, 2014; Turner, 2011). To this,

unlike anti-ecological (ideological) modernity, where modernism is understood as a

mere Western-Modern ideological (and linear) worldview, the meaning-making of

this section adopts ecological i.e., the non-linear and relational meaning of

pedagogical modernity (see Valentin, 2011). Such ecologically relational, and

hermeneutically circular meaning (Heidegger, 2002) is seemingly informed through

the embodied authenticity of present time and space.

The meaning-making in this section, therefore, neither romanticizes linearly

designed Western-European models as 'the only' modern and progressive (which

many of Nepal's policy elites have

been doing till date) nor

romanticizes all past traditional

culture of Nepali communities as

ideal and sacred (which many of

the indigenous advocates and

decolonial activists eloquently

stress[103]). Instead, it redefines

pedagogical modernity as

essentially rooted in the place

authenticity and ecological

relationality, which emerges and transforms from within. Doing so, the meaning-

making takes related theoretical underpinnings like whole systems thinking, non-

anthropocentrism, new humanism, new materialism, and complex social adaptations

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[103] Castagn and Brayboy (2008) describe this tendency as 'Survivance'. It is a tendency to see local indigenous communities in a way as they always have been.

into account (see chapter three). All these theories, together with Hindu-Buddhist *dharma*-awareness of place as 'one-belonging-together' of ethical responsibility, they operate through a common principle that the world is one ecological whole in their reciprocal give-and-take relationships.

Concerning the philosophical and practical underpinnings of constructive thoughtfulness (Bainbridges & Del Negro, 2020; Esbjorn-Hargens & Wilber, 2006), the overall meaning of this section is backed upon those Metamodern ecological imperatives like authenticity, sincerity, realism, optimism, and ethical concerns in school pedagogies. Also, the meanings are backed on the reciprocal relation (and embodiment) that may exist between current time and space, the place, the life, and the lifeworld of Dapcha Dharmashala. Bringing together the dominant disciplinary pedagogical architecture of Janahit School (see chapter five), the trans-disciplinary Dapch Curriculum (see chapter four), and the Metamodern place spirit (see chapter three) characterized by ecologically relational complexities (see O'Neil, 2018), the section, thus, makes detail discussions on the possible reasons for displacement. From there, it makes a detailed discussion on the possible constraints of Nepali schools to incorporate 'outdoor space' 'place' and 'lifefulness' as integral to teaching and learning.

Open Lifeworld Vs Closed Pedagogies

So, despite a year-long action-reflection journey, and despite our arrival to the 'messy turn' (Cook, 2009) on the need and usefulness of emplaced pedagogies, why couldn't the PAR team readily institutionalize (and sustain) many of the participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies as a dominant pedagogical practice in Janahit School? Keeping the question at the heart of Metamodern

ecological meanings (see Bainbridge & Del Negro, 2020), here follow the study's initial reflections.

As discussed in chapters three and four, the place Dapcha Dharmashala, where the Janahit School is located, is a widening ecological circle characterized by relationality and authenticity. Like all other place-ecologies, Dapcha Dharmashala is inherently open, dynamic, relational, multidimensional, circular, and holistic. We observed that the place is with its rich cultural narratives and historicities (see chapter four). Opposite to this ecologically relational place *dharma*, the Western-Modern dominant pedagogical practice architecture of Janahit School (see chapter five, six, and seven), like many other public schools of Nepal (see chapter three), is apparently indoor, closed, linear, and disciplinary. It is to this structural and functional mismatch, it appeared that the limitations of Janahit School's schooling structure to acknowledge and appreciate Dapchali (ecological) lifeworld as its pedagogical resources have caused pedagogical displacement (see Chapter five). For example, the curriculum assessment of Janahit School (during participatory needs assessment) revealed that many of its forms and contents were so foreign to the everyday lifeworld of Dapcha communities. I observed this weaker connection to be the reason behind the weaker place-belongings of the teachers and the students in the school and in the community. Also, the PAR communities' identification of pedagogical displacement as responsible to local stakeholders' weakening of place belongingness was seemingly a thoughtful discovery because, maybe displacement as such was the 'root' from where emerged the widespread socio-philosophical confusion on the 'real' purpose of education- why go to school. Maybe, it followed other confusions as why to teach…what to teach…why to learn… and what to learn (see chapter five).

To address this problem of pedagogical displacement and lifelessness, and expecting to bring life to school and school to life, the PAR team initiated seemingly a participatory and generative approach of emplaced pedagogies in Janahit School. Following the participatory and generative principle of pedagogical innovation (Ball, 2004; Kane, 2004), the actual lifeworld of the community, the human landscape, and stakeholders' engagement were at the heart of the initiations. As studies on emplaced pedagogies would claim (e.g., Klein, 2018; Miller, 2010; O'Neil, 2018; Smith, 2002), the PAR team had supposed that the innovative initiations for emplaced pedagogies would remain affective, extra-rational, and lifeful.

But, as the project progressed, it appeared that the PAR team had to negotiate the 'talk about' initiatives (Casey, 2013) with many of the pre-designed classroom frames. The initiations for emplaced pedagogies partly journeyed through the chaos (cycle 2), passed through negotiations, and emerged with a chaotic turn (cycle 3) in stakeholders' perspectives. Despite this, many of the 'pedagogical innovations' for outdoor learning, which couldn't fit the dominant Western-Modern pedagogical milieu of the school didn't get readily institutionalized (see chapter seven). The school continued with its long-endorsed teacher-centered indoor pedagogies. The limitations of human dimensions suggested the need to revisit the basic claims of classical transformative educators (e.g., Dirkx, Mezirow, & Cranton, 2006; Ferrer, Romero, & Albareda, 2000), where they claim that the change in human perspectives brings a change in practice. Already discussed in chapter six, this study adds ecological thoughts in transformative learning theories and moves together with recent undertakings of transformative learning (e.g., Buechner, 2020; Esbjörn-Hargens & Zimmerman, 2009; Lang, 2008; Luitel & Taylor, 2019)that a shift in

human perspectives may be helpful, but it has to go together with a change in nonhuman dimensions and practice architecture.

Passing the phases of initiation, negotiation, chaos, and the chaotic turn, the PAR team, to some extent, realized that we couldn't possibly foster the transdisciplinary lifefulness inherent in the open and the complex relationality of the lifeworld within the close and linear pedagogical architecture of mainstream schools of Nepal. The institutionally practiced rigid closeness of the school had partly hindered the teachers, the students, and even the school as an institution to operate from one's own 'true', open, and non-linear(ecological) nature. Under such circumstances, pedagogical innovation for 'bringing life to school and school to life' within the ongoing, closed, and disciplinary (non-ecological)architecture of Janahit School was seemingly a deceitful mirage.

Figure 64: Ecological thinking

(Source: https://popsop.com)

How was it that the PAR team couldn't possibly foster the place and the lifeworld in the ongoing schooling design of Nepal? There might be many reasons. Maybe the time period for the PAR initiation was not sufficient for as Fullan (2007) argues, it takes 2-3 years for any pedagogical innovation to continue as regular (habitual) practice. Maybe the result would have been different in other contexts with

proactive teachers, headteacher, and the stakeholders. Maybe the PAR team didn't establish strong supports from the local educational authorities. It is also likely that the long-practiced gender and caste-based hierarchical social structure of Nepal (see Acharya, 2002; Bista, 2000) hindered our expectations for speedy change. And, as the Rupantaran Project is still continuing in the school, maybe the school will balance indoor-outdoor learning spaces and make some visible transformation in the years to come. Still being mindful of the limitations, the study forwards a claim that the problem was somewhere in Nepal's inability to define pedagogical modernity from its own place essential. Here follows a detailed Metamodern ecological look on it.

Nepal's Self-Suicidal Road to (Anti-Ecological) Pedagogical Modernity

The study reflects that Nepal's road to anti-ecological pedagogical modernity was seemingly self-suicidal. It appeared that Janahit School, like many other public schools in Nepal, has carried in it a long historical legacy of linearly closed 'modern' school education in Nepal. Also discussed in chapter three, the historicity of school education of Nepal shows that instead of emerging from within, the rapid expansion of mass education imported Western-Modern educational visions (Awasti, 2004; Luitel 2009). To some extent, it began to design indoor and disciplinary schooling architecture in a way to 'modernize' the school learner, which, in long run, turned to be counterproductive (see in detail below).

The establishment of Darbar School as the first Western-style school, for example, shows that the school was established to impress British rulers in India (see Awasti, 2004), and therefore, it uncritically adopted British pedagogical design. Falling under political interest, it didn't bother to look homewards. Likely, many other schools thereafter followed this school design as 'modern' and 'progressive'. After the end of the Rana rule, though Nepal National Education Planning

Commission (NNEPC, 1956) introduced the national agenda of education as 'national school', and 'national curriculum', the political agendas of the commission didn't exercise to make educational vision arising from Nepal's own place essential.

It appeared that, established in 1962, Janahit School, like many other 'national schools' established during those days (the beginning of *Panchyat*[104] nationalism), followed national policy, and thereby adopted Western-Modern disciplinary schooling structure as the only legitimate design for national uniformity. These 'imported' Western-Modern, indoor and linear ideals of modern education, in long run, became the dominant practice architecture. There continued the seemingly self-suicidal road to pedagogical modernity. The school neither recognized the transdisciplinary (which you may call, ecologically relational) nature of place upon which it stood, nor acknowledged its natural and cultural heritage (see chapter four) as an open curriculum for teaching and learning. The non-ecological schooling design with disciplinary routine and content teaching continuously romanticized deterministic and predictable cause and effect relationships in learning. To teach and to learn books inside the classroom just to pass the exam became the pedagogical culture. Continuing this national adaptation of educational culture, like many other schools in Nepal, Janahit School's pedagogical creeds were apparently displaced.

It is likely that the displaced school education, in long run, displaced the community life as well. 'Parents' continuous demand for 'good exam marks', the community's evaluation of the school through pass results in the national exam, and their continuous pressure for 'teach our children in English language', were its evidence (see chapter five). Unlike Hindu-Buddhist wisdom traditions (see Khaptad, 2000, Yogananda, 2002; Chinmayananda, 2011) and the ethnic lifeworld of Tamang

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[104] Panchyat nationalism in the history of Nepal is marked by a political movement of absolute Monarchy.

and Newari culture of Dapcha communities, which acknowledge learning as an ability

to realize the complex relationality of the ecological phenomenon and an ability to

live in harmony with this apparent chaos and order (see chapter three), teaching and

learning in Dapcha located Janahit School partly became a narrow 'people changing'

project. The nonlinearity and the ecological complexity of the lifeworld of Dapcha,

Dharmashala (see chapter five), in any way, couldn't be reduced to this hierarchical

classroom structure. But, instead of looking for the place authenticity, it seems that

the school went on rejecting many of the place virtues (see chapters three and four)

which couldn't fit in that structure. In long run, it began to develop Western-Modern

cultural expectations of having a 'good school' that eloquently prepares for 'future

job', which deviated teaching and learning from their greater ecological

responsibilities to foster ethical imperatives of interconnectedness.

Such 'open life-world vs. closed pedagogies' suggests an apparent

philosophical crisis in defining the pedagogical modernity of Nepal. Here follows,

how the western definition of pedagogical modernity weighed heavily on the Janahit

Schooland the Dapcha communities where the school was located. It serves as a

reference to realize the displaced (and therefore, rootless) destiny of other schools of

Nepal.

A Philosophical Crisis of a Kind

It seems that the school education in Nepal made a self-suicidal road to anti-

ecological modernity, and never at any stage, made an institutional attempt to define

ecological modernity from its own place essential. Doing so, to some extent, school

education emerged and continued with a philosophical crisis. We could observe this

philosophical crisis in Janahit School. Let's see-

As discussed in chapter three, the place is an extra rational (and embodied) phenomenon (see Morgan 2012: O'Neil, 2018), where life happens and continues through the inherent ecology of human and nonhuman dynamics. Lifeful education is supposed to align with this extra-rational embodied phenomenon of ecological relationality (Bainbridge& Del Negro, 2020; Williams, 2013). But, as evident in chapter five, Nepal's 'forceful' adopting of anti-ecological schooling and its dominant practice architecture of linear closeness created classroom walls, and kept school learning isolated from the place essential of Nepali communities. There, the schools began to prescribe curriculum that could fit the linearly closed school designs. In long run, the model became the dominant pedagogical culture and began deviating learners from their true ecological nature. It strived to 'school' the graduates to 'someone else' which they were originally not. Habituated in it, Nepali communities adopted the 'modernizing project' of linearly closed school education as the only 'good' and 'appropriate' teaching and learning. All other wisdom and virtues that couldn't 'fit' 'the good' and 'the appropriate' were seemingly rejected as backward and conservative.

Going back to Dapcha Dharmashala, like in any other place, Dapcha civilization was the continuity of its own traditional wisdom and virtues (see chapter four). The place has its own uniquely formed moral order. Its norms, values, customs, and beliefs are a longer development of individual and group experiences. Many symbolic sites of the place could reside to form self-protecting layers of Dapcha civilization that could hardly be replaced from outside. Despite this, as observed in chapter five and chapter six, the dominant Western-Modern practice architecture of Janahit School located in the community began to define the school's 'success' in its ability to break the self-protecting layers of the age-old civilization, and 'modernize'

their lifeworld. Seemingly, the anti-ecological pedagogical creed grounded on
exclusivist, essentialist, and foundationalist philosophical background not only
displaced its graduates, but also weakened community belief, their resources, and
rituals. It may be the reason, the place historicity of Dapcha civilization showed that
the preservation of the place essential had enabled Dapchali people to enjoy a
'culturally prosperous' life until 'modern education' and 'modern development' ideals
entered the village during the 1950s (see Chapter four).
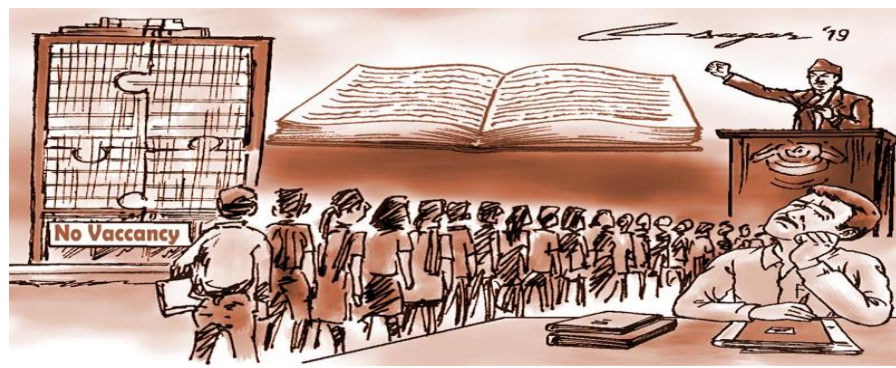
Figure 65: Philosophical crisis in school education

(Source: https://thehimalayantimes.com)

It appeared that the school education in Nepal entered the modern age, but
unfortunately, didn't bother to define 'modern' from its own place essential,
worldviews, and wisdom traditions. The ruined buildings, art, and architecture all
around the roadsides of this age-old Dapchali village without renovation reflects how
anti-ecological educational creeds have inserted 'distant hope' among school
graduates (and the villagers), making them unable to enjoy and appreciate the
immediate. The 'imported' educational ideals have been influencing their ecological
relations, social institutions, family ties, religious values, and cultural heritages.
Today, while new generations in the schools of Dapcha location are studying 'other's
prosperity' in their book inside the classroom, it appears that Dapcha is living the
tension arising from past memories and present predicaments. The school and its

dominant practice architecture have developed such a cultural expectation (of modern anthropocentric ideals) in the community that Janahit School couldn't possibly initiate emplaced pedagogies beyond the indoor expectations.

'Doctor Faustus' Syndrome of being 'Knowledgable'

Dear readers, till now we have come to realize that (1) educational policies in Nepal seemingly 'failed' to define modernity connecting it to Nepali culture, wisdom tradition, and ecological worldviews. It adopted partly anti-ecological (Western-Modern) objectivity as modern. And (2) the linearly closed (schooling) model was not open enough to integrate place complexity and relationality. These seemingly anti-ecological pedagogical practices gave further continuity to displacement.

Seen from this, Nepal's road to pedagogical modernity reminds the story of Doctor Faustus, an Elizabethan tragedy by Christopher Marlowe. In the story, Faustus grows dissatisfied with traditional forms of knowledge, and therefore, sells his soul for the sake of world knowledge and power. He enjoyed the outer knowledge and power until he realized that in the absence of his own soul, he was missing himself, and therefore, was not 'really' happy with what he had gained. The story of Doctor Faustus, to some extent, is metaphorical to the modern promise of Nepali school education, where in adopting 'anti-ecological standards' of modernity, Nepal repeatedly turned away from the Nepali soul, the place essential of Nepali communities.

I observed the weakened place-belonging of the school teachers and the students at school and in the community (see chapter five) so identical to the story of Doctor Faustus. It appeared that being indifferent to the symbiotic place dimensions of Dapcha Dharmashala, the school pedagogies of Janahit School were desperately running for distant promises. Growing with it, the school graduates (and the dropouts)

were 'leaving' the place to achieve the promises. Any attempt to emplace the pedagogies (like our PAR team had initiated) couldn't possibly sustain (see chapter seven) because many of those innovative authenticities of lifeful pedagogies were unlikely to serve the interests of the dominant anti-ecological classroom designs of the school.

Let's think about it more philosophically.

The Western-Modern ethos of education prefers general (and universal) to particular. Confined to this philosophical frame, Western-Modern school designers designed universally applicable schooling designs for teaching and learning (Etim, 2019; Ferrer et al., 2005; Kahn, 2010). It is likely that when educational institutions in Nepali communities replicated the model, the educational practitioners didn't bother to reflect on the question- are those (general) models of individualistic and utilitarian ethos applicable in Nepali communities of communal ethos? Maybe, in its seemingly vain attempt to institutionalize central policy provisions, Janahit School like many other schools in Nepal didn't, at any stage, bother to reflect on the question- Do Western-Modern principles of education that are supposed to be universally applicable readily fit the embodied spirituality and relationality of Dapcha Dharmashala? And likely there came postmodern reactions with doubts, mess, and scorns.

The 'Eco-Ego'Reactionary Mess and PersonalitySplit

The PAR action-reflections observed that the educators in Nepali (rural) communities at present are, to some extent, in between the moral dilemmas of the long-rooted communal ethos of the place and the Western-Modern principles of utility. In our two years of stay at Janahit School, for example, the SMC and the PTA didn't show their interest in enhancing lifefulness in school education through place

integration. Instead, their focus was more on 'pass marks' and the grades of the students. Their focus was more on school buildings, walls, and school gates (see chapter five). Maybe, anti-ecological 'contamination' as such partly legitimized expert-based[105](maybe ego-based) and professionally managed modern architectures of Janahit School.

On the one hand, the teachers would say, "Give us training". And the next time, they would say, "Outside training doesn't work in the classroom".Parents would say, "Teach our children the family norms and values". And the next time, they would say, "We don't want to see our children doing household manual works".There was widespread ambiguity of the kind. Long endorsed dominant ideals would say- a teacher at the center…centrally prescribed curriculum and course contents…pass marks and grades…strict discipline… and there would come the postmodern reactions- students' voices…student at the center, equity…mother tongue…liberal promotion…and local content. At Janahit School, we could feel such modern and postmodern ripples of various kinds. Adding the degree of ambiguities, the sudden outbreak of information technologies with postmodern ideals of non-linear openness (see Friedman, 2005) was rapidly changing socio-educational discourses. It appeared that the school could neither fully accept imported designs and make the best of it nor could move beyond its limitations. It was likely that the school stakeholder's resistance to fully accept linearly designed anti-ecological schooling was their subconscious will to protect their own long inherited symbolic sites. Maybe, because of this, many of the school administrators, teachers, and stakeholders were seemingly uncomfortable (but helpless) with linearly closed (lifeless) school designs. Despite the

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[105]Bainbridge & Del Negro (2020) has talked on it in their work, An Ecology of Transformative Learning: A Shift From the Ego to the Eco

discomfort, the anti-ecological closeness couldn't possibly allow them to move beyond the dominant design. And the pedagogical resistance would continue.

Ironically, it appeared that the resistance would make policymakers feel the need for a variety of interventions. Unfortunately, the 'particular expert types' of policy interventions which would come in the name of pedagogical innovation would add extra mess. It would take from school stakeholders the right to choose. In making them fit within the linearly closed practice architecture, teachers wouldn't bother to rediscover the authentic self. As Awasti (2004) observes, they would continue their profession with the 'split personality' between the traditional, the modern, and the postmodern.
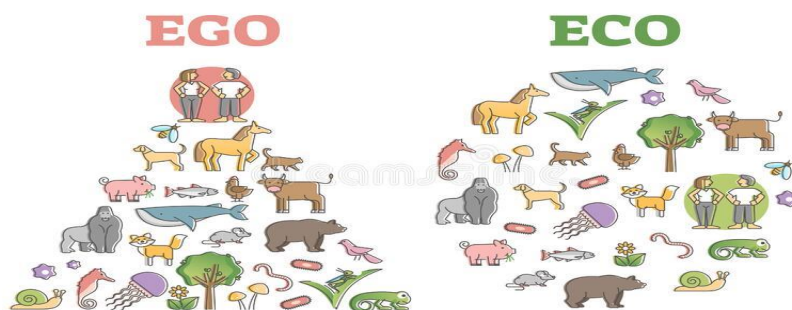
Figure 66: The Ego-Eco splits

(Source: https://www.dreamstime.com)

'Split pedagogies' would result 'split community expectations'. It appeared that even the community began to make (anti-ecological) expectations from the school which they believed could meet their 'modern' ideals-"Teach our children for 'office' job in their future" or something like "Teach books and prepare our children for the university exams in future". It was, therefore, very 'natural' that when Janahit School initiated school gardening, many parents (who themselves were from farming backgrounds) initially complained of making students doing manual works at the school. In the early phase, even some students were hesitant to hold mud diggers. It

reflects how the dominant (but anti-ecological) practice architecture had developed ego-based cultural expectations, which were seemingly contradictory to their lifeworld.

And out from the chaos, there would come the postmodern reactions in the name of student-centered learning, gender right, ethnic inclusion, local curriculum, liberal promotion, and indigenous knowledge among many others. As the reactions themselves were the 'imported' (and therefore, anti-ecological), it appeared that they could neither feel the place essential nor strengthen the linearly closed dominant practice architecture. The reactions would just add the mess of discomforts, blames, and humiliation among school stakeholders.

The Rise of Humiliation, Scorn, and Enmity

Many of the 'modern' ideals of the pedagogies endorsed by Janahit School were against the age-old traditions of the place, Dapcha Dharmashala, and its communal solidarity. Its indoor (anti-ecological) curriculum wouldn't recognize the *hatiyas*, the *chautaras*, the trees, the songs, the music, the dance, the myths, and the place-stories as the source of knowledge (Wagle, Luitel & Krogh, 2019). It was evident from the incidents that during the third PAR cycle, when students formed groups and went into their community to capture pictures of human landscapes, the school had to hear complaints from the community of letting students come out of the school during school hours. In schools' 'helpless' attempt to educate the students through displaced curriculum contents, students had developed low joy in learning, and seemingly a vague sense of purpose in life- 'I go to school to read books and pass the exam?' (See chapter five). Out of this monotony, many students would bunk their class after the first break. It was very ironic that the school couldn't hold students

until the last period, and without going to its root cause, the SMC chair had found ways to control students through the locked gate and the CCTVs.

I observed the tension, which I call an 'ego-eco' dilemma in Janahit School. Although teachers were seemingly accepting the modern practice architectures like 'teach books inside the classroom and prepare students for the coming exam', many of them were feeling displaced with a weaker sense of teachers' identity- why do I teach? Their repeated responses like, "I became a teacher because I didn't become that…", and "teaching is my *job*" showed that teachers were seemingly less connected to the teaching profession, and had developed a low sense of achievement as a teacher (see chapter V). Habituated in displaced schools with displaced pedagogies, teachers seemingly deviated from their teacher-*dharma*. Teaching had not been a moral duty for moral order, but a *job*. For students, with their modern ideals of 'I study because I have to pass the exam', their learning had not been a continuous journey for knowing, but an imposed ritual.

Many of the pedagogical innovations which promised to liberate education from disempowering modern hegemony, particularly those arising from decentralization, localization, indigenous and decolonial renderings were characterized by existential and epistemological doubt and distrust (see Wagle, Luitel & Krogh, 2019). Those 'innovations' would legitimize blaming culture instead of turning inside and emerging from the essential. And things would go scornful-centralization Vs. decentralization, nationalization Vs. localization, colonial Vs. decolonial, privileged Vs. indigenous…Schools would become an instrument for humiliation. The scornful reactions as such would install among students that their surrounding life was bad, and therefore the meaning of learning was to be able to move away from their surrounding life.

Section Two: 'Schooling' is not the Right Match

Exposing manifold dilemmas inherent in linearly closed anti-ecological schooling design of the schools in Nepal, this section, hereafter, makes home perspectives of school education and research. Education and educational research that celebrates anti-ecological disciplinary ideals often acknowledge place as 'passive context' where events happen (Tuck& McKenzie, 2015; Valentin, 2011). It is from there, the anti-ecological pedagogical architects observe lifeworld as simple, cause and effect relationships. Unlike this undertaking, moving ahead of the narrow vision of experiencing the phenomenon as closed and linear, the hermeneutic (re)view of literature and the embodied knowing of the study acknowledged the place as an ecological whole in its continuous *Leela* of ecospiritual, socioeconomic, and cultural relationalities (see chapter three). Appreciating the ecological views as such, the section puts the eco-spiritual livelihood of the Dapchali lifeworld and its complex relationality (see chapter four) at the heart of the meaning-making process. It is from there, the study discovers the limitations of modern 'schools' and their 'schooling' design.

By home perspectives, this section adopts the perspectives arising from the place essential i.e., ecological relationality, authenticity, and ethical responsibility. Such ecological ways of 'home-going' (Awasti, 2004) and 'soul-searching' (Etim, 2019) are also the process of adopting one's own true nature, the *dharma*, without which according to Hindu-Buddhist ecological worldview, harmonious sustainability cannot exist. Thus, this section brings the *dharma* metaphor (the metaphor of authenticity and relationality) into account. From there, the home perspectives of emplaced pedagogies for belonging, being, and becoming continuously unfold the question- what should be the goal of emplaced, and therefore, lifeful (school)

education? Is it, as *dharma* wisdom traditions claim, to learn to be in harmony with the essential, and to uplift the self from there (Chinmayananda, 2011; Khaptad, 2000), or is it, as dominant Western-Modern schooling culture prefers (see Ferrer et al., 2005; Valentin, 2011), to learn to change and to deviate from the essential one holds? Doing so, instead of McDonaldizing place spirituality[106] with capitalist commodifications, I make the sense embodying myself to multilayered place spirit of Dapcha Dharmashala.

As suggested in chapter three of this thesis, Hindu-Buddhist and ethnic lifeworld (and also the ecological worldview, Taoism, and quantum physics) acknowledge that all life is One, where the living world is bind together by ecological relationalities. This message calls for new ecological views of place relationalities and authenticities. Thinking ecologically, emplaced learning is, therefore, the learning to be in harmony with the essence of all the beings and non-beings (see Morgan, 2012; O'Neil, 2018). For such learning to be effective, it seems that one has to find ways to 'school' ecological holisticity and relationality. But the question is-

Can Ecological Holisticity and Relationality be'Schooled'?

It seems that our PAR teams' way of 'schooling' the emplaced lifeworld, and bringing ecological holisticity and relationality in the dominant schooling architecture of Janahit School was seemingly paradoxical. Its ongoing schooling architecture, in many ways, was seemingly less compatible with the place essential. School education around the globe has experienced similar stories. Though educational practitioners around the world have forwarded emplaced pedagogies as the most relevant pedagogical approach for the twenty-first-century lifeworld (e.g., Burns, 2015; Gulson & Symes, 2007; Klein, 2018), the approach as Valentin (2011) and Lange

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[106]See McDonaldizing Spirituality: Mindfulness, Education, and Consumerism (Hyland (2017).

(2018) claim, has not made an active entry in the dominant pedagogical practices. Unfortunately, there have not been enough studies to find the answer to the question-why this?

As suggested in chapter three and chapter four of this thesis, the ecological views of authenticity, place relationalities, and ethical responsibilities seek an educational design that appreciates these basic ecological principles. Hindu-Buddhist ecological traditions make similar claims. It suggests that a place sustains its life cycle through the 'essential', the *dharma*, which the place holds. The tradition further suggests that the self-sustaining essential, the *Rita* of the place provides a foundation for its cultural continuity (Chinmayananda, 2011; Radhakrishnan, 1985). Observed through this, the people (and also the place) making project of dominant schooling practice of the Janahit School (like many other anti-ecological schooling designs around the globe) is, in many ways, against this self-sustaining *Rita* of the place. As De-Angelis (2018) observes in mainstream education around the world, it is in many ways against the (ecological) notions of inner experience, the oneness of reality, and moral sustainable values.

The meaning-making is in line with *Pratityasamutpada* Buddhism, and *Advaita Vedanta* (see chapter three for the details), which makes many of the eco-spiritual (educational) ideals of the Brahmin, the Tamang, and the Newar communities of Dapcha civilization. Also supported by new humanism and new materialism (see Braidotti, 2019; Lewis & Owen, 2020), *Pratityasamutpada* Buddhism, and *AdvaitaVedanta*teach that all life is interrelated, and therefore, place belonging is, but dependent co-arising (seeChinmayananda, 2011; Rao, 2005; Swami & Yeats, 2005). As human intellect can only give fragmentary views, aspirants have

to open their whole being to establish personal (embodied) contact with this self-sustaining *Rta* of the place.

The place and the self, which *Advaita Vedanta* understands as the microcosm of the higher 'Self' (Khaptad, 2000), are so identical that place formation is also the self-formation process. And therefore, it is obvious that as indicated in the mandala metaphor (Vira & Chandra, 1995), the place formation and the self-formation cannot be separated. But, limited to indoor classroom design, schools separate self-formation from place-formation. Here, learning becomes an isolated, information-gathering process. Seen through this, 'modern schooling' and its dominant practice architecture is anti-ecological, and therefore, its practice architecture can hardly 'school' the ecological principles of place relationalities and authenticities.

Arriving at this stage of seeing 'schooling' in new ecological light, the study, however, is not advocating anti-schooling activism in the name of either *deschooling* and/or *unschooling* concepts by Ivan Illich and John Hot. Also, the study is not making a direction towards alternative education and/or homeschooling (see Cayley, 1992; Illich, 1971; Reimer, 1971). Rather, the study seeks a newer ecological space to harmonize dominant indoor pedagogies with an open lifeworld.

The Metaphor of *Vidhyalaya* and *Dharmachhetra*

It was evident from our reflective look at the pedagogical relevance of Janahit School that the schools with their linear 'people changing' ideals separate people from the place. In their aspiration for emplaced pedagogies, the PAR team in this study had to continuously negotiate the innovations with dominant indoor designs. It was visible that the anthropocentric ideals (see Braidotti, 2019; Lewis & Owen, 2020), and linearly closed architecture of Janahit School were not compatible with 'place-human co-arising'. It may be the reason that while there had been many initiations for

emplaced pedagogies, many attempts to mainstream these pedagogies within the dominant 'non-ecological schooling design' ended with just a few changes. Unlike those, the Khotang, and the Auraland models as discussed in chapter seven were seemingly emplaced in a way that they had challenged the boundary of the dominant schooling design and had added the human landscape and the lifeworld to their everyday curriculum.

Figure 67: Panchamahabhuta (emplaced) curriculum

(Source: https://harmonizeprovidence.wordpress.com

For example, Madan Rai from the Khotang model of emplaced pedagogies repeatedly mentioned *Panchamahabhuta*[107] (i.e., the fire, earth, air, water, and sky) to be the means and ends of the curriculum there. And the curriculum for him was the open lifeworld, often outside the classroom.

Hindu-Buddhist and ethnic wisdom traditions forward that unlike the 'closed schooling ideals', and 'closed curriculum' an ecology of lifeful teaching and learning appreciates education as a *Vidhya* process (Rao, 2005). *Vidhya* is supposed to initiate this self-formation process '*Pragya*[108]' through place formation '*Kshatragya*'[109](see

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[107] Five basic elements of nature, which according to Hinduism are fundamental to cosmic creation
[108] Wisdom

chapter three). Such undertakings undergo education as learning for the whole self, engaging multiple dimensions of being from spiritual to imaginative to somatic (Morgan, 2012). In the language of James Fowler (1981), the *Vidhya* process is about constructing knowledge and developing more authentic identity through "symbolic processes" and "unconscious structuring processes" (p. 103) manifested through image, symbol, metaphor, poetry, art, and music, which are but openly written and heard in the lifeworld around.

The *Vidhya* metaphor of teaching and learning in this ecocomposition enables one to appreciate 'emplaced schooling' through yet another metaphor, the metaphor of *Dharmachhetra.* As Radhakrishna (1980) writes, *Dharmachhetra* is a place where an aspirant exercises *Vidhya* of authenticities and ethical responsibilities, and learns through humble reverence, by inquiry, and by service. As such, thinking in terms of Metamodern ecological *dharma*, two of the *Vedic* metaphors i.e. (1) *Vidhya* and (2) *dharma chhetra* may define emplaced learning, which seeks ecologically relational and ethically responsible 'place-human co-arising for better goods (see O'Neil, J. K. (2018). *Dharmachhetra* is also the *Dharmashala,* which evokes an authentic response to the place that claims and reclaims images, symbols, and the ways of beings.

Thus, it appears that this 'homegoing' metaphor of *Dharma*, unlike people changing projects of modern schools, has increased interest in self-making through place embodiment. If the dominant practice architecture of 'modern schooling' is non-ecological (and displaced), then it seems logical that we begin re-defining 'school' adding in it the age-old Hindu-Buddhist metaphor of *Vidhya* (wisdom) and *alaya* (place), which together makes *Vidyalaya* (place of wisdom). Thus, in the context of

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[109] Aware of the place and the lifeworld

Nepal, among many other possibilities of 'bringing life to school and school to life', homegoing from school to *Vidhyalaya* could be a possible option.

Section Three: The Evolution of Future for Emplaced Education and Research

Now, bringing informed evidence from our PAR project in Janahit School and the nearby Dapcha communities, and reflecting the action-reflections through the lens of Metamodern ecological *dharma* of authenticity, relationality, and responsibility, I turn to the futures-oriented lens to discourses. The anticipated discourses, in the language of Floyd (2012) are a path to embodied foresight, where participatory mind and given cosmos interwind for future recoverability. Often going beyond the rational-perspectival mind, the multilayered postformal thinking herein co-creates the spectrums of improved futures through artifacts and processes (see Floyd, 2012).

The meaning-making is primarily based on the idea that for 'inquiry' and pedagogies to be place-authentic, it has to co-arise from the place rootedness, and extended sense of life (Burns 2015; Lange, 2018). Also, the meaning-making considers recent chaotic ripples of the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe, which illustrates the complex interdependence of the lifeworld. To this end, unlike 'fractured consciousness' (see Hathaway, 2017) of linear closeness, and never-ending fragmented locals, this consciousness is essentially ecological that reconnects and activates hope amid crisis.

Figure 68: Place rootedness

(Source: https://www.istockphoto.com)

The Evolution of Future for Emplaced Education (in Nepal)

Informed through the theoretical interpretation of the PAR action and reflection in chapter VII, the study proposes that what is required for bringing life to school and school to life is a new kind of attentive pedagogy (Egan, 2005; Payne & Wattchow, 2008; Williams, 2013). Such pedagogies may redefine 'transformation' 'pedagogical innovation' and 'sustainability' from and within the place essential. Also, it may acknowledge ecological holism (see Williams, 2013), the give-and-take ethical relations (O'Neil, 2018), and embodied authenticity (Braidotti, 2019). From there, the study makes a visionary attempt to addresses the problem of pedagogical displacement and suggests 'homegoing' (Awasthi, 2004) and 'soul searching' (Etim, 2019) in the education of Nepal. If education is to mean something beyond mere 'schooling', alternatively, the teaching and learning could be seen as a process of opening to earth's wisdom, a process to learn to be in harmony with the place essential.

Also, the study makes an informed claim that the already endorsed Western-Modern schooling architecture of Nepali schools is not compatible with the place essential i.e., its ontological relationality(ies). Therefore, any pedagogical innovation that seeks non-linear openness, ethical relationality, and authenticity is unlikely to fit into this dominant Western-Modern design of linear closeness. Within this limited frame, many of the talk-about innovations (Casey, 2013) for emplaced pedagogies are less likely to make a sustained continuation. They are likely to 'fail' and continue to add pedagogical mess, scorn, blames, and humiliation. Considered to this limiting and narrow space for the place-spirit and lifefulness to unfold in the ongoing schooling design of Nepal, it is seemingly logical that an authentic space could be made for such authentic learning to unfold.

Pedagogy of Authentic Lifefulness

Thus, emerging from Metamodern maturity, ecological principles of relationality, and place *dharma* of Dapcha Dharmashala, the study metaphorically shows a possibility for the 'pedagogy of authentic lifefulness'. Parallel to non-anthropocentrism, new humanism, and ecological holism (see Braidotti, 2019; Lewis & Owen, 2020), the pedagogy of authentic lifefulness this study forwards could be a Metamodern approach to make sincere (and matured) look at the manifold life processes in the pre-modern, modern, and postmodern era, and emerge with ecologically aware (and sincerely matured) modernity. It is to be aware of the essential nature of the place where learning happens, and to be ethically responsible for its complex relationality (see O'Neil, 2018). This attempt for seeking pedagogy of authentic lifefulness could be a way for returning and emerging from the essential one holds, and becoming free from cultural anxiety of making vain (and worthless) attempts to fit into imported (and displaced) cultural standards.

Pedagogy of authentic lifefulness as such may arise from the need to re-define Western-Modern pedagogical modernity, the need to turn inward, and the need to experience a wider sense of self. It may arise from the deep sense of self-realization, the need to turn homewards, and the need to emerge from within. Redefining modernity is also, to some extent, the way to learn to break the limiting cocoon of pre-modern cultural restrictions and superstitions (Valentin, 2011); to move from postmodern solipsism and detachment (Turner, 2011); to be aware of its mess; and to return to 'refined' modernity characterized by relationality, authenticity, ethical concerns, embodied sincerity, and interdisciplinarity. Such ecologically emplaced pedagogies may come together with the eco-spiritual metaphors like 'living pedagogies' and/or 'harmonizing pedagogies'. Also, aligned to ecological principles,

the pedagogies may acknowledge open place as curriculum, may engage in everyday activities as divine play, and make an ecopreneur journey of wellbeing ahead.

Most important, the pedagogies of authentic lifefulness may rest in strong ethical responsibilities. Taken from Khaptad (2000), when teachers' conduct conforms to the *guru dharma* (teachers' essential); when students' conduct conforms to the *sishya dharma* (students essential); when school's conduct conforms to *Vidhya dharma* (school's essential), the teaching and learning are supposed to conform with who the human beings are and what value they hold. Not limited to local/global and self/Self binaries, this micro-macro play of *bisesh dharma* (specific *dharma*) here-now widens to *Sanatan Dharma* (cosmic *dharma*) eternal around, fulfilling the needs of ontologically relational authenticities and ethical responsibilities. Seen from these attuning, it appears that the pedagogy of authentic lifefulness is also the 'pedagogy of *Dharma* (authenticity). Opposite to the pedagogy of *Dharma* is the pedagogy of *Adharma* (non-authenticity)'. Unlike 'Pedagogy of *Dharma*' 'Pedagogy of *Adharma*' is likely to rest in the deviation from authenticity, where individual and the cultural group forgets their ethical responsibility and passively follow externally imposed and accepted paths. Seemingly, it is nonconformity with one's essential nature, the very nature one holds.

The study, thus, forwards that relying on 'imported pedagogies' and 'imported schooling design', the dominant teaching and learning culture in Nepali communities is seemingly not in harmony with its place essential. It is from where Janahit School, rather than strengthening place belongings of the beings and the non-beings within the place, appears to separate the lifeworld from the very cosmic law that sustains the place, Dapcha Dharmashala. Its dominant pedagogical design is unlikely to attune with relational lifeworld. It is from this meaning-making, the study suggests an option

that the 'real change' may come from within societies. Maybe, it needs constructive awareness at the immediate lifeworld, which needs to operate through ecological wisdom.

The Living School/ Jivanta Vidhyalaya[110]

The lessons from Aurland School Norway and Khotang School Nepal show the global emergence of lifeful teaching and learning. If seeking transdisciplinary lifefulness within (and from) the linearly closed pedagogical designs of present Nepal is likely a deceitful mirage (which this study discovered), the lessons from Janahit School suggest Nepal to think and act in terms of living space for wisdom. This space could be a space for *Jivanta Vidhyalaya*, from where it might make teaching and learning lifeful in the future. Metaphorically, *Jivanta Vidhyalaya* is also a future vision for the 'pedagogy of authentic lifefulness' (see Krishnamurti, 2004). Rather than continuously making vain (and worthless) attempts to fit into imported (and displaced) cultural standards, such pedagogies may enable students, teachers, educators, and educational researchers to remain open to the earth's wisdom, experience a wider sense of self, and emerge from the essential one holds. Also, as Vedic wisdom tradition suggests, the aspirant in J*ivanta Vidhyalaya* may continuously engage for prosperity through righteousness actions that ensure psychological and spiritual values

For pedagogies of authentic lifefulness to foster, the study, thus, envisions this new, attuning and harmonizing models of *Jivanta Vidhyalaya*, which are also the space for creative place-based ecopreneurship and spirituality i.e., *dharma-karma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *moksha* (see Khaptad, 2000; Radhakrishnan, 1980). Embodying transformation through shifted worldviews, J*ivanta V*idhyalaya, through creative

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[110] Lifeful place for wisdom

place-based ecopreneurship and spirituality (also see Barane et al., 2018; Krishnamurti, 2004) may strive to foster aspirants with a strong sense of identity, who are connected with and contribute to the world, who have strong sense of purpose and wellbeing, and who are confident, focused, and engaged learner with a solution-focused growth mindset and wisdom. In these educational spaces for creative place-based ecopreneurship and spirituality, the proactive and innovative educational leaders are supposed to lead with purpose; maintain a strong collaborative relationship with co-educators, parents, and community; and initiate inquiry-based continuous professional development of the educational practitioners (see Barane et al., 2018).

Continuously informed through attentive inquiry, project, and experience-based strategies, the educational space (of *Vidhyalaya*) may initiate holistic approaches to teaching and learning, where the curriculum is developed through a participatory and generative model, and students' performances are continuously assessed through authentic strategies. Here, aspirants may learn from the community and human landscapes, and develop a strong sense of ecological (and cultural) belongingness. They may learn from gardening, agricultural land, elders in the community, and cultural heritages. Also, they may build a strong sense of technology and learn from community innovation labs, home, field, and kitchen. And committed to sustainability, happiness, and emotional wellbeing, also the V*idhyalaya* may look for holistic growth and development through life values, art, music, dance, theatre performances, yoga, and meditation. This journey of homegoing from school to *Vidyalaya* likely needs cultivating ecological wisdom through transformative activism that readily reconnects, entwines, and immerses the meaning and purpose of education.

The Evolution of Future for Emplaced Practitioner Research

Also informed from the experience of this study that displaced researchers are likely to promote displaced 'knowledge construction', my experiential reflections herein forward the possibility of the evolution of the future for emplaced practitioner research. Journeying from Tuck and McKenzie's (2015) suggestions for critical place inquiry to Tesar's (2021) suggestion concerning post-qualitative methodologies, this study envisions the evolution of Metamodern ecological inquiry, which focuses on place authenticity, openness, and responsibility. Taking 'ecological turn' as an emergent field of inquiry, the embodied foresight this study makes goes beyond the human-centric research paradigm (Braidotti, 2019) and human exceptionalism in knowing and experiencing the phenomenon (Lewis & Owen, 2020). It is from there, the study foresight relationally embodied and embedded performance philosophy of a kind, which I forward as emplaced practitioner research as/for authentic lifefulness.

The Living Inquiry/ Jivanta Khoj[111]

Emplaced research-inquiry as/for authentic lifefulness (*JivantaKhoj*) could be practitioner research arising from Metamodern maturity and ecological *dharma* of authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility. As suggested earlier, authenticity is the path of righteousness, a tendency to hold the order. Practitioner researchers when aligned to authenticity are supposed to be in balance. It is the balance arising from the alignment of research activities to the researchers'*svadharma* (outward life) and *svabhava* (inner being). The alignment may highlight research-act as ontologically relational that necessitates (1) a sense of obligation or duty towards others and (2) an absence of desire for rewards (Chinmayananda, 2011). Authentically lifeful practitioner-researchers are supposed to engage in active bodily action and

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[111] Lifeful inquiry

become equally responsible to the relationality and ethical responsibility of research-action. Also, this ecologically responsible research-inquiry is likely to see practitioner-researcher, not as a 'control agent with certain expertise and 'never to do mistake' ethos but rather a part of the web of life with humility and courage to be vulnerable.

Figure 69: Authentically lifeful practitioner

(Source: https://www.outlookindia.com)

The journeys and arrivals in this study process, therefore, forward a 'new' ecological vision for 'action confidence' in 'traditional' answers of *DharmaYoga*. The metaphor seems very near to the recent undertakings of connectedness (Heron, 2006) inherent in the ecological worldview. But, it is seemingly different in a way that the metaphor of *Dharma Yoga* adds to the ecological worldview the need for authenticity and ethical responsibilities of research-inquiry. Beginning from the question- how can I acquire that which I already *am* (Whicher, 1998) 'and what essential value do I hold?', the striving for the innate quality is likely to provide methodological space to look for the authentic nature of beings and non-beings. Maybe, it is a way to appreciate the world in terms of give-and-take relationships in every sphere of the life-world. This give-and-take relationship in the ecological web might be realized

through bodies-in-action; through selflessly shared feelings; and through a deeply felt sense of belonging (Buechner, et al., 2020). Therefore, it appears that the research as/for authentic lifefulness this study forwards is something to be involved in deciding how something is done (give and take) within shared ethos. It informs practitioner researchers' to live an ethically active life for the benefit of society, in perfect serenity and confidence of their action, creating in them a sense of duty or obligation.

Chapter Conclusion: 'Home-Going' from 'School' to *Vidhyalaya*

Delving on it, the study emerged with a meaning that it is the complex relationality of the human and nonhuman dimensions of the place that defines the belonging, being, and becoming of the people who live there. If the place sense, the place *dharma*, which holds together the apparent place complexity and relationality is not compatible with the human-made cultural practices like regular school pedagogies and routine-behavior, learning may lack ecological authenticity. Lack of ecological authenticity may increase cultural rootlessness. The displacement as such likely weakens the sense of purpose and achievement of the people within the cultural milieu.

The meaning-making of this chapter that the place, life, and lifefulness of Dapcha Dharmashala can hardly be integrated within the ongoing (linearly closed) Western-Modern pedagogical design of Janahit School is marked by an emphasis on non-linear relational ontologies. The non-linear dynamics of the place are subject to non-linear relationality and complexity, which likely demands schooling architecture compatible with this multi-pore relationality. If so, it appears that the 'real' problem of displacement is in the philosophical (and the pragmatic) construct of the 'school' and its 'schooling architecture'

Informed from the above discussions, it is now believable that looking from Hindu-Buddhist wisdom tradition, *Dharmashala* appreciates *Vidyalaya*, a place for wisdom rather than (linearly closed) school. *Dharmashala* and *Vidhyalaya* appear to be dependent co-arising. In *Vidyalaya*, the authentic self-expression and self-cultivation of inner depth may foster embodied learning. The learning may pass through the continuous chaos and order of the place relationality and authenticity. Unlike wisdom-seeking *Vidhyalaya*, school, however, is to train. It is supposed to prepare human beings for certain pre-defined future jobs. Therefore, it was seemingly natural that in importing the Western-Modern ideals of 'schooling', the pedagogical architecture of Janahit School was designed in a way to prepare students for future purposes, which could easily be simulated in the disciplinary classroom. The imported 'modern' design, to some extent, displaced teaching and learning from the Dapchali lifeworld. Ironically, the postmodern reactions in the name of pedagogical innovations added extra mess, scorn, and blaming. It appears that the increasing challenges, thus, call for new ecological thinking in education, which may require authenticity, place relationality, and ethical responsibility. It is from there, the chapter ends with an embodied foresight of possible futures in education and research through (1) pedagogy of authentic lifefulness, and (2) research as (for) authentic inquiry. This continuous movement from the 'school' to the *Vidyalaya* and from research to authentically attentive inquiry (*jivantakhoj*) may enable the educators and the researchers to go homewards and yet allow them to remain responsible to the widening global planet.

So, what is the overall wisdom from the Janahit School, Dapcha Dharmashala?

Figure 70: A cultural symbol of wisdom-bell in a temple of Dapcha

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION: THE WISDOM FROM DAPCHA DHARMASHALA

Dear reader, arriving at this stage, now I am to make a concluding reflection of the journeys and arrivals so far. Employing the metaphor of 'writing as living yoga[112]' of ecological relationality and 'research as living dharma[113]' of authentic sincerity, the ecocomposition of this chapter unpacks the research journey. While unpacking the research journey, I make a synopsis of the process of how 'being here yogic reflection' (Chinmayananda, 2011; Morgan, 2012) at 'being there PAR performance' to ecological ripples (Trickett & Beehler, 2017) recognized that the dominant Western-Modern schooling architecture of Janahit School was less compatible to the place essential (the place *Dharma*) of Dapcha, Dharmashala. It appeared that the seemingly displaced (anti-ecological) schooling design which was continuously inclined to displaced standards was partly responsible for weakened belonging, being, and becoming of teachers, and students in the school and in the community. Also, the study recognized that so long as the human conduct is not in conformity with the authentic nature of beings and non-beings (Lange, 2018; O'Neil, 2018), there might remain the ecological disharmony, which might weaken the place connectedness of its people. Emplaced teaching and learning could possibly bridge this gap, and as studies (e.g., Miller, 2010; Smith, 2002; Sobel, 1996) suggest, the pedagogies, to some extent, would bring life to school and school to life. But, as this study discovered, thinking and working for an open lifeworld in closed schooling design was seemingly

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[112] Yoga in this study is, but an embodied consciousness (see Chinmayananda, 2011). The metaphor of 'writing as living Yoga' suggests the performative reflexivity in research writing, which I used as a yoga performance of a kind.

[113] Also, the overall research (writing) process was metaphorical to 'reserch as living dharma' in a way that I employed it as a way of living, where authenticity (a continuous move to the essential) is not compromised.

anti-ecological. Under such circumstances, stepping on the lessons learned from the PAR project, I began to meditate manifold ways of authentic lifefulness in teaching and learning. Arriving at the end of chapter eight, stepping on the experiences and the lessons in this research project, I made a futuristic (philosophical) vision for such pedagogies and research. Thus, considering the very 'thesis' of the study, this chapter is a synopsis on a long reflexive performance on discovering-

1. What place, and emplaced pedagogies meant to us, particularly to the Nepali people of Hindu-Buddhist, and ethnic origin? (chapter 3)

2. How was the place *dharma* of Dapcha, Dharmashala? (chapter 4)

3. How did the displaced (and therefore lifeless) school pedagogies in Dapcha, Dharmashala located Janahit School suggest a need for pedagogical innovation, a need to bring life to school and school to life? And how the PAR team emerged with a plan to initiate participatory and generative approaches to emplaced pedagogies in the School? (chapter 5)

4. How the PAR team initiated participatory and generative approaches of emplaced pedagogies from and within the dominant pedagogical practices? And, despite some hopeful perspectival transformations, how the team experienced manifold messiness while in the process to implement it? (chapter 6 and 7)

   Also, we make reflective synopsis on-

5. What meaning did we make about the reasons that Janahit School (like many other schools in Nepal) could just partly 'act', and sustain the 'talk about' innovations for emplaced (and therefore, lifeful) pedagogies? (chapter7 and 8)

The chapter eventually ends with a synopsis of concluding answers to the questions- So what and what next? Maybe, considering the postformal dissertation structure (which is often rhizomatic and fuzzy), the conclusion drawn from these multilayered

chapters needs multi-layered reflexivity. It is to this end, from this micro-macro circular hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1982; Heidegger, 2002) between the whole and the parts of the overall ecocomposition, here I conclude this study. Let's move-

What Happened: Encountering Anti-Ecological Design

I begin by making reflective synopsis on how I (and my co-researchers) emerged with the research agenda, the research purpose, and the research questions. As it was a PAR project, I couldn't 'conceptualize' the research agenda before the engagement with the participants (co-researchers) and the school communities. Therefore, analogous to ecological flourishing, the emerging of the research agenda to explore the possibilities of place informed lifeful pedagogies for strengthened belonging, being, and becoming was seemingly a continuous (to and fro) process.

In chapter one, I allocated more time and space to shape my experiential and philosophical position on an emerging issue of displacement in (rural located) Nepali communities. My postformal positioning through (multilayered) autoethnographic excavation in the chapter suggests how I was emotionally and professionally growing within the sphere of the research agenda of displacement (and lifelessness) in Nepali schools. Later, as the PAR team (including PAR community of practice) began to explore the present educational status of the Dapcha community and the Janahit School located in Dapcha Dharmashala, the team began to realize the displacement in many spheres of community life. In school, the ongoing pedagogies were seemingly displaced, and therefore, lifeless. This is how (1) pedagogical displacement and lifelessness, and (2) pedagogical innovation for emplaced pedagogies (as a way to bring life to school and school to life) became the overarching theme of the study.

The PAR team's action-reflection for emplaced pedagogies and my 'embodied-philosophical knowing of the 'place' and the 'place spirit' of Dapcha Dharmashala

continued simultaneously (informing one another). The ecological ripples of manifold chaotic ideas on place and place historicity in school education of Nepal '(dis)orderly shaped' the writing process, which was but 'being here' and 'being there' reflective performance of a kind.

Figure 71: Reflective performance

(Source: https://www.trendhunter.com)

The ecologically circular hermeneutic (re)view of literature and embodied experiences enabled me to discover what 'place' means for this study (chapter three). From there, I built an argument that place is a complex of sociomaterial, economic and political practice. Widened to manifold spheres of the lifeworld, place is also the complex-built widening circle of mind-body integrated self wherein locates the belonging, being, and becoming of the beings and the non-beings in their relational totalities. Hindu-Buddhist knowledge tradition views 'place self' as identical to 'human self', which is the divided of the undivided 'One'. In other words, the place is 'one ecological whole', the cosmic *mandala*, a metaphorical tree, and the spider web. It suggests the need for ecological wholeness, inclined to sincerity, authenticity, and ethical responsibilities in education. Slowly, the growing awareness of the place as 'one ecological whole' characterized through relational complexities enabled me to

make place-awareness in terms of ecological wisdom. This wisdom of relational ontology(ies) enabled me to see the lifeworld beyond the global (modern) and the local (postmodern) binaries. Also, heterogeneity, porosity, and non-exclusive place-awareness enabled me to see the lifeworld beyond decolonial and indigenous renderings of romanticizing one and scorning the other. Additionally, the (re)view enabled me to discover the history of the place in education and research, particularly in Nepal. The exploring made me aware of the beginning and the continuity of placelessness (and therefore, lifelessness) in school education in Nepal. The policy literature suggested how Nepal had documented many initiatives for pedagogical innovations in the past. But, despite those initiatives for pedagogical innovations, often the innovations which couldn't fit the dominant pedagogical design (of linear closeness) wouldn't sustain. It appeared that the repeated 'failure' to bring 'open life and lifefulness' in 'closed schooling design' would just add extra messes. From there, I began to make sense of the reform agendas as 'trojan horse' and discovered the need for 'homegoing' and 'soul searching' in education and research.

Thereafter, addressing the need to integrate educational processes and ecological principles, the overall PAR journey (of constructive consciousness) put the 'idea' of place relationality and the actual place spirit, the place *dharma* of Dapcha Dharmashala at the heart of the study. It is from those human landscapes, cultural stories, myths, symbols, metaphors, memories, dreams, and aspirations of the place (which I called it a Dapcha curriculum in chapter four), I developed the 'awareness context' of this study. The awareness context (the living Dapchali curriculum) was poetic, mythical, and performative, often scratched, rhizomatic and multilayered. It was transdisciplinary and holistic. It was to this end, not predominately relying on the 'borrowed', and therefore, displaced theories, the eco-spiritual relationality and

ethical authenticity of Dapcha Dharmasala (the living Dapchali curriculum) made referential (theoretical) positioning of the study. From there, the study made an organic breakthrough.

As the study progressed, I observed that the social life of the Dapcha civilization was largely informed through Hindu-Buddhist and ethnic worldviews and cosmologies. It was not as sacred and isolated as commonly romanticized in popular literature on decolonial and indigenous renderings. Rather, it was continuously informing and was being informed by the spheres of the global circles. Also, it appeared that the civilization had its own 'darker hearts' of disempowering/ superstitious hierarchies and 'isolating norms'. I acknowledged both the 'ecologically empowering and disempowering' cultural narratives of Dapcha Dharmashala, and began to relate this place spirit with Hindu-Buddhist, and ethnic, particularly the Brahmin, the Newar, and the Tamang[114] wisdom traditions. Also, being mindful of the cultural complexity of Dapachali civilization, which is but a complex of the traditional, the modern, and the postmodern historicity, I began to see the phenomenon through present time and space, here-now. It enabled me to make sense of the PAR action-reflections through Metamodern maturity[115], ecological relationality, and ethical responsibility. The Hindu-Buddhist metaphor of *Dharma* added to it the primacy of authenticity. *Dharma* wisdom tradition believes that though the place is apparently a shifting articulation of social life, every place, and the beings and non-beings in the place hold their own place-authenticity. Problems like the loss of authentic identity and purposelessness arise when this place's authenticity is contaminated with displaced cultural practices (Klein, 2018; Lange, 2018; Sterling,

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[114] Dapcha civilization is a complex of Hill Brahmins, the Newar, and the Tamang ethnic communities
[115] which is 'modernity informed by post-modernity' (Stein, 2018)

2001). This inescapable embodiedness and relationality of the cultural milieu (here-now) informed the performative basis and the moral responsibility of this study.

Also, my conceiving of research design (in chapter two) was continuous dialogues between Western-Modern PAR 'standards' and the place essential of Dapcha, Dharmashala. Adopting Metamodern ethos, I embraced performative reflexivity (Denzin, 2001; Lewis & Owen, 2020). For this purpose, unlike dominant Western-Modern ideological modernity which celebrates linear disciplinary ethos, I embraced time and space informed modernity (which this study forwards as Metamodern) arising from place authenticity, openness, and complex relationality. The hermeneutic circle of performative reflexivity (Denzin, 2001; Heidegger, 2002; Lewis & Owen, 2020) enabled me to embody the collaborative nature of PAR performances through a kind of *Leela* writing (see Upreti, 2069 B.S.), the writing which is supposed to flow naturally through chaos and order; through evocative arts, multi-logics and genres. The *Leela* rhetoric appreciates the cosmic mystery of place as simply unique. Optimistic of some genuine future, the rhetoric doesn't leave the grounded authenticity. This *Leela*-like performance reflexivity (see Denzin, 2001) is eloquently reflected in this (postformal and multilayered) ecocomposition, where I responded to the research questions through 'being here' yogic observation at 'being there' PAR performances. It was like an emotionally thoughtful artist observing a performative art in the study canvas (the cosmic mandala), where the artist and the co-artists are the arts in themselves.

What Happened in Janahit School?

Passing through participatory needs assessment, our PAR team identified that (1) the weaker place sense and (2) the displaced schooling culture, to some extent, were resisting pedagogical practices for strong belonging, being, and becoming of the

people in the Dapcha community. Therefore, emplaced pedagogies for lifeful teaching

and learning at Janahit School were seemingly an overarching need for pedagogical

innovation (chapter five). Literature (e.g., Ahmad, Gjøtterud & Krogh, 2016;

Constantinou & Ainscow, 2020; Roberts, Brown & Edwards, 2015) would suggest

participatory and generative models of pedagogical innovation as effective to initiate

and sustain emplaced pedagogies. From there, through hands-on experiences, we

began PAR cycles (plan, act, reflect) and explored the prospects of participatory and

generative approaches to place-informed lifeful pedagogies at Janahit School.

The period of initiation that involved three different action-reflection cycles and

experimentation with a kind of participatory and generative approaches to emplaced

pedagogies influenced teachers' willingness to 'do something new'. It appeared that

though the action-reflection cycles motivated teachers to work on a participatory and

generative model of emplaced pedagogies, some root constraints like the habituated

classroom structures, bureaucratic linearity, and 'teach and learn for exam result' just

partly allowed the initiation to become an integral part of the regular routined-

behavior of the school. We observed that the constraints were further strengthened by

later developed (anti-ecological, utilitarian, and ego-centric) cultural expectations of

Dapcha communities (like, 'make my son and daughter study books; get good marks

in the exam and get prepared for office-job in the future).

Therefore, trapped in this mess of ecological ripples, our PAR team just partially

met our commitments for emplaced, and therefore, lifeful pedagogies as imagined and

decided in the action plan. In chapters five, six, and seven, I made detailed reflections

on those school factors, which possibly constrained us to meet the commitments. Pre-

designed and pre-constructed classroom designs were the ones. Most often, the

classroom designs (in the form of policy documents) were prescribed from others

outside the school, and therefore, they were seemingly less compatible with the place authenticities. Also, growing and being habituated in that Western-Modern (displaced and anti-ecological) classroom design, it appeared that the students and teachers had developed seemingly anti-ecological cultural expectations for how they should act. Despite the headteacher's, teachers' and students' willingness to initiate innovative pedagogies, they were, to some extent, a 'cog' in the practice architecture of linearly closed modern schooling. Under such circumstances, we learned a lesson that any innovative models (emplaced pedagogies in our case) that couldn't fit the linearly closed dominant architecture would remain sandwiched between the dominant practice and cultural expectations, and therefore, couldn't make continuity. The innovative models, when failed to continue, would add extra chaotic ripples in the ongoing practices.

So What: Education as Cultural Reconstruction

The initiations brought some forms of cognitive shifts among teachers, students, and parents on the need for lifeful teaching and learning through the place. Also, it appeared that the students were becoming more familiar with the practices, and they were possibly enjoying the fundamental of emplaced pedagogies. Despite these, the innovative pedagogies just partly continued as the everyday culture of the school. As Fullan (2007) argues, it takes 2-3 years for any

pedagogical innovation to continue as regular (habitual) practice. Seen from this, maybe one possible reason for weaker recognition and adaptation of the innovations was our limited time for the initiation. The Rupantaran Project is still continuing and other researchers are adding extended efforts to the initiations. Maybe the ongoing continuous efforts (through balance in indoor-outdoor learning spaces) may bring some visible transformation to bring life to the school and school to the life. But the indoor (and closed) nature of dominant pedagogical practices 'to teach and enable students for high exam score' was apparently so ingrained in the institutional practices that there were hardly the spaces for outdoor (open and interdisciplinary) pedagogies. The PAR team's reflection as such enabled me to 'view' why many of the pedagogical innovations and reform programs (especially the outdoor pedagogies) remained as 'talk about pedagogies' (Casey 2013), and why many innovations were not adequately 'actioned' in the past.

Among many reasons for weaker recognition and adaptation of pedagogical innovation in Nepali schools, the literature suggests that non-participatory reform packages were the ones (see Acharya et al., 2020). But, is democratic participation of the concerned stakeholders for pedagogical innovation the only solution? Maybe, one of the major contributions of this study is the discovery that even the suggestions for participatory approaches are partially true. In the linearly designed complex bureaucratic structure like ours, the participatory approaches for pedagogical innovation are less likely to sustain in case the innovation 'fails' to move parallel with the shift in dominant pedagogical architecture and cultural design. Also, the study makes an informed claim that as the already endorsed Western-Modern schooling architecture of Nepali schools is seemingly less compatible with the place essential, many pedagogical innovations that seek non-linear openness, ethical relationality, and

authenticity are unlikely to fit into the dominant Western-Modern design. Within this limited frame, many of the talk-about innovations for emplaced pedagogies are less likely to make a sustained continuation. They may 'fail' and continue to add pedagogical chaos, scorn, blames, and humiliation. The study observed very limiting and narrow space for the place-spirit and lifefulness to unfold in the ongoing schooling design of Nepal. Therefore, it was apparently logical that an authentic space must be made for such authentic learning to unfold.

The PAR experiences informed the way educators and policymakers view the sustainability of pedagogical innovations for emplaced teaching and learning. To ensure the sustainability of pedagogical innovation, the study appreciates the idea of Burns (2015) that instead of trying 'hard' to fit emplaced teaching and learning within the linearly designed dominant approach, maybe our participatory approaches need to learn from the wisdom of the ecological system. It is to say that the approaches need to explore ways for ecological design, the design that considers relational whole. Together with the way we understand 'participatory' and 'sustainability', also the study informs the way we understand transformative learning during pedagogical innovation. The cognitive shifts and the shifts in habituated ways of acting and valuing may be a means for transformative learning to occur (Meziroe, 2005) but not the ends. It appeared that shifts in human perspectives have to move together with 'more than human' shifts in body, culture, and eco-social systems. Doing so, the study seems near to Luitel and Taylor's (2019) claim that for ensuring the sustainability of pedagogical innovation "we need to radically restructure education systems in accordance with the metaphor of education as cultural reconstruction" (p.5). In line with Lee (2007), maybe such an ecological restructuring of participatory approaches

to pedagogical innovation (for contextualized teaching and learning) involves openness, creativity, uniqueness, and networking abilities.

(Re) Defining Pedagogical Modernity

Being thoughtful on the limitations of linearly closed Nepali schools to incorporate 'out-door space' 'place' and 'lifefulness' as integral to teaching and learning, the study forwarded (chapter eight) Metamodern ecological reflections that the problem likely was somewhere in Nepal's inability to define pedagogical modernity from its own place authenticity. It appeared that, for a long, Nepal understood pedagogical modernity as a mere Western-Modern ideological (and linear) worldview in education and research. Thus, instead of emerging from within the eco-spiritual cosmologies and cultural stories, the rapid expansion of mass education imported Western-Modern educational visions of 'schooling' the mass for future purposes. It began to design indoor and disciplinary schooling architecture in a way to 'modernize' the school learner. The seemingly non-ecological schooling design with disciplinary routine and content teaching continuously romanticized somewhat deterministic and predictable cause-and-effect relationships in learning. To teach and to learn books inside the classroom just to pass the exam appeared to be the pedagogical culture. It was to this end, Nepal's road to (anti-ecological) pedagogical modernity was seemingly self-suicidal. Unlike traditionally attuned awareness of place as 'one ecological whole' of relational complexities, many other postmodern reactions in the name of local, indigenous, decolonial, and decentral continuously mesmerized pedagogical displacement in school education. It eventually emerged with scorn, blame, and self-humiliation. Under such circumstances, (re)defining modernity arising from Nepal's own place awareness could be one possible way for 'home going' and 'soul searching' in the school education of Nepal.

The Need to (Re) Define 'Local' in Local Curriculum

The study makes a reflective observation that the local curriculum, to some extent, envisions emplaced teaching and learning. This policy provision, in case it adopts ecologically harmonious relational ontology(ies) and moves beyond the global-local binaries, may work as a gateway for place-informed transdisciplinary pedagogies. But, it appears that many of our schools in Nepal are designed entirely for indoor preparation of the learner, and therefore, implementing outdoor (and lifeful) local curriculum policy provision within the existing indoor (and closed) school structure was seemingly a deceitful dream of a kind. Maybe, this was the reason many schools in Nepal failed to develop and implement the local curriculum. It appeared that those schools which have made some initiations, they have prepared the curriculum in the form of a coursebook to teach in the class and prepare students to pass the exam. Seemingly, the practice is against the basic principle of participatory and generative models of the local curriculum. Thus, it appeared that the provision of local curriculum and re-designing of transdisciplinary schooling architecture needs to move together, complementing one another.

But, recognizing the need to reform school pedagogies within the relational ontology(ies), the study doesn't glorify 'local' in the local curriculum. Unlike ecological connectedness and holism, it seems that the local curriculum has a growing tendency to look backward, to overly celebrate 'self-isolation', and to blame 'others' for the problems. Glorifying binary oppositions, such postmodern ironies like 'liberating education and research from Western-Modern (universal) hegemony through local curriculum', appears in many ways, the catalyst for self-isolating, enemy seeking, and the blaming tendencies. It is to this end, the study partly reflects that leaving the self-isolating and 'enemy seeking' political interests behind, maybe

the curriculum has to stem from the basic principles of place authenticity, ecological relationality, and ethical responsibility. One possible way is that, unlike essentialist, foundationalist, and exclusivist definitions of locality and the locals, the process begins (re)defining 'local' in the local curriculum from heterogeneous standpoints. Through living schools, the pedagogical practitioners may begin an authentic journey for 'home going' and 'soul searching', which may continuously extend to the widening circles of the universe as one ecological whole.

What Next: Discovering my Futuristic Philosophical Voice

Observed in Dapcha Dharmashala, people belonging to a particular community have a unique but heterogeneous place authenticities, the unique *Leela* of ecological cosmologies and cultural stories that have long been sustaining (and informing) the lifeworld. It appeared that these place-authenticities can neither be generalized nor be judged as 'right' and 'wrong'.Therefore, it seems that the metaphor of *Dharmashala* (place of wisdom/ place of authentic rightness) seeks 'evolve' than change. Evolve seems to be ecological. Evolve is likely to come from within societies, integrating with it the self-sustaining dimensions of life. The continuous failure for 'centrally (and externally) prescribed' pedagogical innovations in the schools of Nepal suggests that 'the change' which seeks external instructions and frameworks might not work effectively. Evolve, on the other, might be a continuous process of soul searching, and re-discovering the essential in the process of belonging, being, and becoming.

Unlike the ecological principles to evolve from within, many of the 'one-size-fits-all' educational ethoses of Western-Modern pedagogical architecture romanticize change. In this linear pedagogical design, it appears that changing human beings means changing their way of seeing the world. These basic ideals of Western-Modern

schools rest in the philosophy of 'changing' human beings from one form to the next. Histories have shown that these philosophies repeatedly legitimized the way Western-Modern 'knowers' impose their own ways of knowing and seeing. They forwarded the ways for change through intervention. Unlike fostering self-forming creativity, pedagogical innovations through intervention were seemingly anti-ecological.

Seen from these lenses, the study suggests that in the name of modernizing school education, schools in Nepal have institutionally run seemingly anti-ecological and reactive programs in the past. It appears that, in long run, the practice has left unconscious impressions, the *samskaras* that meeting 'other's *Dharma,* the Western-Modern standards of education is the only goal of school teaching and learning. It is from there, schools in Nepal hardly showed interest in self-reflection. It seems that the tendency to follow other's standards created 'school boundaries'. The boundaries displaced the pedagogies from its eco-spiritual cosmologies and cultural stories. In the long run, the linearly closed practices isolated the self-fostering life process of the school and the community. There began some forms of cultural rootlessness. As this study suggests, Nepal is unlikely to imagine lifefulness in already displaced pedagogies arising from the imported (and therefore non-authentic) *samskaras* of linear closeness. If so, it appears that the innovative place pedagogies have to evolve free from within. Looking back to the efforts for pedagogical innovations in Janahit school, it is apparent that for emplaced pedagogies to foster, the schooling system has to move in harmony with the ecological (living) system. Thinking like *Peepal* (extending all around but continuously returning to the root), 'pedagogy of authentic lifefulness', which is constructive consciousness of present time and space, may let education matured from one's own true nature, *swarupa*. Unlike disciplinary linearity

and duality, such teaching and learning within *swarupa* is supposed to reside in 'One' cosmic relationality of the place.

Thus, reflecting on this overall PAR project to bring life in school and school in life, Dapcha Dharmashala shares the wisdom of the living system. It suggests-

1. Continuous improvement is the law of nature; and therefore, 'don't try to 'change' and 'get changed'. Instead, evolve from within. And following the ecological principles of authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility, let others evolve so naturally and spontaneously.

2. The (pedagogical) transformation is but the transformation in individual consciousness that co-evolves with shifts in the collective consciousness.

3. These shifts in collective consciousness come from authentic shifts in cultural stories, socio-economic and political dimensions, and ecological systems (also see, Esbjörn-Hargens & Zimmerman, 2009).

4. For this shift to occur, maybe, we need to shift our worldview and the shared meanings, where we can possibly connect authenticity more to it.

5. One best possible way is attuning and harmonizing schooling structure and pedagogical design with place authenticity characterized by non-exclusive circular heterogeneity.

This meaning-making foresights future of education and research in the name of the living school and living inquiry, where learning (and researching) may get attuned to the wisdom of place and emerge with life and lifefulness. This educational journey for authentic lifefulness, in the context of Nepal, could be the journey of 'homegoing' from school to *Vidyalaya*.

…

The Epigram

It appears that place and the lifeworld are not linear phenomena. They are complex-build widening circles of authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility. Human organizations and cultures that are not attuned and harmonized to this place wisdom are seemingly anti-ecological. The Western-Modern ethos of dominant indoor schooling design seems anti-ecological in a way that they value school organization as mechanical clockwork. This 'school as clockwork', to some extent, is governed through law-like regularities.

At present, the dominant schooling design of Nepal is heavily influenced by those indoor ideals. Also observed in Dapcha communities and in the Janahit School, in long run, the linearly closed educational values have shaped group norms, where communities have begun to perceive school (and their lifeworld) in terms of linear regularities. It appears that the communities have developed cultural conformity in

favor of dominant schooling ideals. From there has continued the Western-Modern cultural influence of indoor and lifeless schooling. The normative social influence, thus, continuously developed as integral to the community (and even the national) culture.

Parallel to this, it is also that the world has experienced many educators who have eloquently advocated for life and lifefulness in school education. Around the world, and also in Nepal, there have been many initiations for emplaced pedagogies. Despite these, many initiatives to emplace school pedagogies have ended with disappointments. This study arranges the meanings and makes an ecological sense that our change-initiatives in the past obsessively favored closed schooling. It appeared that their conformity with Anthropocene ideals favored human dimensions only. Against this background, this study observed that human dimensions like participatory and 'changing perspectives' are somewhat essential for pedagogical innovations. But, non-human dimensions like pedagogical design and schooling architecture are equally important, which need ecologically attuned move ahead.

Next, the study observed that the closed schooling design is unlikely to foster an open lifeworld. Therefore, it appears that if we are to bring life to school and school to life, maybe we need to begin shifting our meaning and purpose of education. Among many possibilities, education as/for authentic lifefulness could be a purpose of education. For this, it seems that we need to begin to see school as a 'living system' and begin to redesign indoor-outdoor 'living space'. Additionally, we likely need to revisit our research standards in a way that our journey for the pedagogy of authentic lifefulness needs evidenced supports from the authentically lifeful (living) inquiry. The 'living inquiry' needs to be attuned to the ecological principle of authenticities, relationalities, and ethical responsibilities.

Implications of the Study

Dear reader, arriving at this stage, now I wish you to see the implication of this study from the authentic essential, the relational complexity of the lifeworld, and the ethical responsibilities of school education to sustain place informed life and lifefulness. As Esbjörn-Hargens and Zimmerman (2009) suggest, this study is in a similar conclusion that for any transformation to happen, shifts in individual and collective consciousness have to move together with the shifts in the body, the culture, and the eco-social systems. It is from these basic metamodern ecological principles of education and research; I forward a few implications of this study.

Implications for Myself

As a transformative educational practitioner, the study has inspired me to live my future professional days advocating for life and lifefulness in the school education of Nepal. The ecological wisdom and transformative learning of this study have changed the ways I visualize the future of the education of postpandemic Nepal, which may manifest in the form of *Vidhyalaya*, an authentic exercising for ecologically attuned wisdom in teaching and learning. Adopting the continuous learning principle of transformative education, I may l continuously work for exploring schooling architecture and pedagogical design compatible to place essential, where students and teachers can possibly make an authentic expression of authentic Self which resides in all. I find the implication of this study in my professional role as a social science researcher as well. Rather than relying on exclusivist belief systems, dualistic perceptions, and consensus realities from external authorities, the study has enabled me to accept my role of a researcher as the *yoga sadhak* (practitioner), and

see the phenomenon not from fragmented dualistic consciousness, but from an unconditioned state, *Swarup*. For this, even moving beyond PAR (which I adopted in this study), maybe, have to turn my knowing of the phenomenon to *swadhyaya*. In the yogic sense, *swaadhyaya* is knowing the true self through constructive self-consciousness. Inspired by this, I have begun to write and speak on 'Dharma Yoga Paradigm' in education and research. It is an embodied philosophical inquiry frame that seeks ethically aware authentic knowing through unwavering focus and attention to the multi-porous phenomenon.

Implications for Janahit School and the community

Janahit School and the community, Dapcha Dharmashala can make a lot from this study. Passing through the collaborative nature of PAR, the action-reflections have fostered and emplaced a sense of communal and shared experiences in the school and in the community. The study has gone far enough to explore the place spirit of Dapcha Dharmashala. It has also made detailed explorations on the 'real' problems and the prospects of the school teaching and learning. Based on the learned lessons, Janahit School can be proactive enough to move ahead from an on-going closed and linear schooling structure, and look for the pedagogical design that is eloquently compatible with the relational authenticity of the place. In other words, Janahit School can be a change agent for creative place-based ecopreneur schooling in Nepal, where *Vidhya* could eloquently be exercised. The sense-making of this study is seemingly in the right time that informed from the concluding meaning of this study, Janahit School has already begun to think in terms of revisiting school routine that seeks balance between indoor and outdoor activities. It has begun to seek ways for formative assessment of students concerning their real-life performances (debriefing workshop, August 6, 2021). Also, informed from this study, many other schools in

Nepali communities may begin to look for their own place-informed schooling design, which is open and empowering enough to foster life and lifefulness in education. Also, the community and the local authorities may use the sense of this study to move beyond habitual illusory prisons framed in fragmented duality and separateness. The ecological ethos the study has developed, in long run, may enable people to connect, share and act upon each other's stories, and emerge from within.

Implications for Teacher Education Programs and the Universities

The study suggests that by being graduated with displaced course contents and research practices from the teacher-education program in the university, many teachers are disoriented. Often, future teachers learn the ways to fit their professional practices within the 'imported knowledge frame'. By doing so, the legacy of pedagogical displacement is likely to continue. To address this problem, the study suggests teacher education programs to enable student-teachers and student-educators to focus more on 'constructive attentiveness' than information gathering. Also, the university and other higher educational institutions may find the implications of this study's 'findings' to keep their research 'standards' open and flexible. Until researchers are asked (and taught) to fit their research practice within the dominant Western-Modern research design, the 'home-going' and 'soul searching' in education and research is almost impossible. The *Dharma-Yoga* paradigm, and the metaphor of *Vidyalaya*, which this study suggests, may open a possibility for such authentic transformations.

Implications for National Policy and Curriculum

The national educational policy of Nepal came with many pedagogical reform initiatives in the past. Recently, it has provisioned decentralized educational policies. It has a long 'failure' experience in implementing the local curriculum. Despite 'poor'

implementation histories of pedagogical innovations, it has begun to work for an integrated curriculum. As this study suggests, many of those initiatives for lifeful pedagogies are likely to continue only in case the initiatives negotiate to 'fit' in the dominant indoor, closed, and linear pedagogical architecture of Nepali schools. Otherwise, the initiatives are more likely to be rejected. As the dominant architecture is inherently displaced, either continuity of 'cultural fit' or rejection of 'cultural non-fit' both outcomes are unlikely to make any differences. Under such circumstances, maybe, one possible way is to re-visit schooling architecture attuned to immediate ecology. To pursue an interdisciplinary outdoor approach, particularly in local curriculum development and implementation, schools may think and work for the pedagogical design that foregrounds differentiality through a renewed emphasis on place authenticity. This increasing interest in self-making from what one holds (the *dharma*) eloquently stands on a strong ethical foundation. So, rather than just bringing many initiatives, and adding pedagogical mess in the name of life-based education, this study suggests national educational and curriculum policies to give an eloquent look for place-informed, open, non-linear, and relational schooling design. Also, this study suggests policymakers and curriculum planners to consider the limitations of dominant schooling architecture, and think in terms of changing the structure before they bring any reform program concerning life and lifefulness.

Implications for Students and Researchers

This study makes a call for an authentic expression of the self for the students and the (social-science) researchers, particularly to those who are aspired to research on place and life-based education. It demands students and researchers not to fall into imported (and therefore displaced) ideological traps of any kind. Most often, the displaced, detached, and distanced structural viewpoints limit authentic inquiry, and

forbid students and researchers from seeing things 'as they are'. To move away from these traps, the study shows possibilities for profound moral or ethical responsibility from the side of the students and the researchers. Such freeing from artificial conditionings may enable the seekers to align with the authentic ecological Self, practice *Vidhya*, and become 'authentically sincere' to one another.

Implications for Research Practitioners in Nepal

While still working with PAR, this study came to recognize that many of the practitioner research approaches which generalize larger space from the global North and global South were less relevant in the cultural settings of Dapcha communities. In these communities, the social process would happen naturally through collectivist culture and kinship. Also, the communities were largely situation-oriented rather than system-oriented (see chapter four). It is to this contextual background, still working with and embracing the already established 'mainstream' approaches to PAR, I continuously encountered many limitations of doing PAR. From there, I began to explore PAR methods and methodologies arising from the local worldviews and wisdom tradition of Nepali communities. In this 'emergent space', I could reflect upon Hindu-Buddhist and ethnic wisdom traditions, and come with a contextually relevant model of practitioner research. Also, I could add in it a seemingly new discourse on psycho-social, ecological, and spiritual relations that may exist between practitioner-researcher and all that s/he does and acts throughout the process. Thus, not relying solely upon established research design from the global North and global South, the practitioners for school improvement in Nepal may use this study to envision a new ethical possibility of 'practitioner research-inquiry' that eloquently respects ecological principles of place authenticity and relationality.

Limitations of the Study

Now, arriving almost at the end of this thesis, I wish you to make a relational understanding of this study considering its limitations. Here, I forward four major limitations of the study. The limitations arise from (1) limited time, (2) limited study area, (3) need for negotiation, (4) limited participation, and (5) domination of (but not limited to) researchers' subjective impressions. Time was the first visible limitation of this study. Because of the time limitations arising from researchers' needs to 'finish' the work on allocated time and meet academic requirements, we, the student-researchers minimized facilitating the PAR activities soon after the third cycle ended. Some colleges are still continuing with the project, and some visible changes have begun to get manifested in Janahit School. It shows that the messy turn, to some extent, would get institutionalized, and the result would have been (slightly) different in case we had continued our facilitation for a few years more (also see Fullan, 2007). The limited study area was the second limitation. The meaning-making of this study is largely dependent on PAR action-reflection in Janahit School and the nearby communities only. Since the generative and participatory model of pedagogical innovation and its implementation is largely context-dependent, the case would have been slightly different in other schools with bigger land areas, with proactive teachers, the Headteacher, the SMC chair, and the parents. The need for negotiation was the third limitation. Appreciating the democratic participation, embodied action, reflective praxis, and transformative potentials of PAR, this study adopted those fundamentals. But, as the study progressed, (to meet the academic requirements) often the study team had to negotiate between the prescriptions from the established PAR and how we would experience the lifeworld. It is only at the thesis writing stage, enjoying the creative (and organic) space in transformative research design, I added in

it the Metamodern Ecological gaze and began making impressionistic reflections on the PAR experiences through the metaphor of research as 'living *dharma'*. Otherwise, instead of fully relying on authentic inquiry approaches like yogic transcendence (for example) my use of PAR is itself a methodological limitation to exercise authenticity. Another limitation was that of people's active participation. Despite the 'participatory rhetoric', there was a visible 'imposition' of new ideas and activities in the school and the community by the Rupantaran Project, and the university researchers. The meaningful people's participation was largely affected by villagers 'pre-constructed' grim perception towards donor-agency-driven project activities (see chapter five). In terms of sense-making, there appears a limitation that, appreciating the impressionistic frame, many meanings are dependent on (but not limited to) the subjectivities of the principal researcher. This is very much in evidence in several chapters in this thesis.

REVIEWERS' METALOGUE

A metalogue is conversational stories and narratives about some endeavor on progress. Marked by evolutionary intersubjectivity and interdependent co-arising, the multiplicity of perspectives in metalogue focuses more on patterns and processes. To this appreciation, some of the conversations that I present in this metalogue are the reviewers' onto-epistemological observations inherent in this study process. Also, this metalogue suggests how knowledge production has been a relational process; a process to engage in emergence, enactment, and transcendence. In this holistic metaphor of interacting and co-creating, five reviewers (two of them are my external examiners; the other two the supervisors; and the remaining one with good understandings of oriental cosmologies) are engaged in integrating additional perspectives to enhance the quality and rigor of the study process. Particularly focused on (1) the ecology of oriental cosmologies, (2) the ecology of transformative learning, and (3) the ecology of forms and contents, the metalogue may enable the readers to perceive the meanings of this study relationally. Let's begin-

Concerning the Ecology of Oriental Cosmologies

R1. *I am very impressed by the way you have entered into this process and have taken risks to uncover realities embedded in the areas of investigation. At this stage (of presenting the first draft), I wonder what logical links have you begun to see between place pedagogies, eco-spiritual cosmologies, and cultural stories that make your thesis title (?)*

S: Here, I begin with sharing the study process. I had not entered the study field with pre-planned objectives to establish relationships between place pedagogies, eco-spiritual cosmologies, and cultural stories. Backed from my MPhil study that school

education of Nepal is decontextualized (Wagle, 2016), my initial objective of doing a Ph.D.was just to extend the study field exploring the ways to contextualize school teaching and learning. Slowly, my continuous engagement in the field began to evoke the phenomenological essence and meaning of displacement. The more I (and the PAR team) concentrated embodied interactions with the place Dapcha Dharmashala, the more I began to discover multiple levels of displacement. There, I began to realize that emplaced pedagogies for belonging, being, and becoming are not an isolated (and linear) process, but an ecological phenomenon. My attentive observation then not only concentrated on Janahit School, but also the human landscapes, the memories, the aspirations, and the dreams of the communities where the school was located. The encounters continuously shaped my belief that successfully addressing the problem of displaced pedagogies needs shifts in the worldviews and the meanings of the individuals. But, these shifts in educational meanings have to shift with supportive shifts in the economic and political systems, the technological advancement, and overall cultural stories, one informing the other. It is to this end, I brought place pedagogies, eco-spiritual cosmologies, and cultural stories together, which eventually shaped the title of this thesis.

R1: *If so, it is very logical that your selection of the keywords needs to be timely and place-relevant. Would you please elaborate how they are interconnected in relation to Nepal's construct of education?*

S.The review of the literature suggests that the history of modern education in Nepal goes back to the Rana regime, particularly the time of the establishment of Darbar High School. The very beginning of modern schooling was seemingly anti-ecological. With displaced curriculum, teaching and learning were largely displaced (see, Onta, 1996; Sharma, 1990). Arriving at present, many reforms and pedagogical innovations

are introduced in school education of Nepal, but unfortunately, most of the reform for life-based teaching and learning negotiate with dominant in-door design, and remain sandwiched with no further progress. This study shows that if displacement (of school education) is a problem then our tendency to see educational endeavors through the (nonecological) linear and isolated lens is the root of the problem. The realization, to some extent, gives direction for the future of education in Nepal. The study stresses that one possibility to fully realize the emplaced pedagogies is to go homewards, and evolve from within, attuned to the ecological principle of authenticity, relationality, and ethical responsibility.

R1: *And most importantly, why has 'Dharmashala' been presented as an emblem of wisdom? The underpinnings of oriental cosmologies have enriched the research. Maybe a clear point of reference from the local cosmology becomes inevitable in this kind of undertaking?*

S. Very true. It may be a coincidence that the name of the place where the Janahit School is located is Dapcha Dharmashala. Exploring the Hindu-Buddhist and tribal wisdom traditions of the place, I found that *Dharmashala* was the most suitable metaphor to make sense of onto-epistemological and moral imperatives of the place. *Dharmashala* is also the *Dharmachhetra. Dharma* is a moral duty, and *chhetra* is the place. Used together, *Dharmachhetra* is a ground of moral struggle, which needs to be understood through relational ontology(ies), where the intrinsic value (*dharma*) of every being and nonbeing within the widening circle of place is not compromised. This *Dharmachhetra* is also the *Karmachhetra*, where every beings and nonbeing engage in *Karma* within the frame of their *Dharma*, realizing that every *karma* in this *Karmachhetra* leaves a high-order moral impression for the present generation that spreads to the generations yet to come. As this study stresses, among many other

possibilities, this might be a possibility from where the future of education in Nepal journeys homewards, likely from school to *Vidyalaya*.

R1. *PAR and Sworoopa (the authentic nature) do not seem to go hand in hand. It appears to me that PAR has marred the beauty of such a very innovative piece of research. Could PAR be employed differently?*

S. Of course, PAR and *sworoopa* are two different onto-epistemological entities. My way in this research is not to use these two different ways of inquiry interchangeably, but in a way to inform and transcend one another. *Swo* means self and *roopa* means form. Bringing together, *Sworoopa* means one's true nature. Ecological PAR extended from embodied action to the ecology of self-realization *(sworoopa)* has been an endeavor to open and to attune with the essential nature of the being and the non-being. Also, the mutuality and reciprocity (between the ecological PAR and cosmic *sworoopa*) have been operative to reconnect a wider sense of embodied self and ecological consciousness. Despite all these, it is my honest realization that if I am to do similar research in the future, I will be completely aligned to embodied self-realization (like yogic transcendence) without messing it with other approaches of research-inquiry. Other researchers, who are interested in this area of authentic inquiry, may follow this suggestion.

R1. *Would you please bring further explanations to justify the analogy of the metamodern concept to be employed in Nepal's local reality? Maybe, modernity defined by the West cannot be the modernity represented by the field the researcher has entered.*

S. Eloquently used in this study, Metamodern is the postmodern informed modern. In another word, it is post-postmodern. Metamodern is not the latest stage of human civilization but the wave, the wave of authenticity, relationality, maturity, sincerity,

and ethical responsibility. If so, the Metamodern wave is also the ecological wave, which can be employed to understand place ecology beyond local-global binaries. Metamodern, in many ways, is different from the Western-Modern views of the world. It is this Metamodern wave, which readily inspires human beings to move beyond the 'Western-Modern' definition of modern and (re)define it from their own place realities (which is but relational ontologies).

R4. *You have arrived with the ecological perception of time and space. But in critiquing the Western-Modern thoughts and beliefs, isn't it that you have overly romanticized Nepali culture and the lifeworld? Isn't it that Nepal (and particularly the rural Nepali lifeworld) also has many limiting beliefs and cultural practices that have rootedly resisted ecological knowing and living?*

S. Critiquing the Western-Modern views of the world, this study is neither against the Western-European ecologies nor against the 'progressive' connotation of the 'modern'. It just critiques the anti-ecological beliefs inherent in the Newtonian-Cartesian school of thought which dominated present humanity as only 'standard' and 'progressive' for long. Next, Nepali (rural) communities indeed have many disempowering beliefs and superstitions that have long resisted the healthy growth of Nepali civilization. Going homewards as I referred in this study is not returning to the traditional. Rather, it is to attune with immediate ecology and emerge from within, without compromising the authenticity of the self. It is ecological transformative activism to cleanse the self from renewed maturity and sincerity.

Concerning the Ecology of Transformative Research

R2. *The methodology of the study is explained extensively in theoretical (philosophical) terms, with key concepts drawn from the scholarly literature on a Hindu-Buddhist worldview and participatory action research. In merging PAR and*

ecological knowing, I wonder the study needs further explanations on how you legitimated your knowledge claims about your co-participants' evolving meaning-perspectives - thoughts, beliefs, feelings – about their engagement in the project, especially their evaluation of each cycle.

S. Though the embodied reflexivity of PAR is the major inquiry approach of the study, the study is partially (auto)ethnographic and partially phenomenological. My use of 'being here' 'being there' hermeneutics ensures justice for it. For example, while in the field (being there), I worked in collaboration with the co-participants. There, in many cases, I followed the suggestions for recognition, autonomy, empowerment, ownership, and sustainability as suggested in established PAR literature. Thereafter, in the writing stage (being here), I engaged in making wisdom out of the PAR reflections. The overall ecological process of 'research-inquiry' enabled me to reconnect with my co-participants, entwine their stories, and emerse with embodied envisioning. The participatory legitimacy is ensured through pedagogical thoughtfulness for 'higher goods'. Overall, it appears that the study has made a transformative ecological turn in transformative research trends so far.

R2. *And most of the evidence comprises observational descriptions of innovative teaching and learning activities which, in itself, is compelling. But, isn't it that the process tends to privilege the perspective and voice of the researcher. For me, a way of addressing this issue is to refer to the study as an autoethnography about the researcher's lived experience, focussing on his PAR facilitation actions, critical reflexivity, and subjective 'impressions' of the unfolding project (ref. John Van Maanen's 'Tales of the Field'), and using a perspectival voice to express what he thinks/feels his co-participants 'appear to be' or are 'seemingly' thinking/feeling.*

Maybe in this kind of research, we have to think in terms of avoiding the researcher's narcissism.

S. Your suggestion is really thoughtful. In participatory (realist) epistemology as such, there is always a risk that self-absorption in autoethnographic excavation undermines the truthful portrayal of participants' voices and their lifeworld. I had used many impressionistic vignettes throughout the thesis chapters. After hearing from you, I added in the methodology chapter the descriptions on how impressionistic and confessional writing has been the best means to portray co-participants' stories and strengthen the pedagogical thoughtfulness of the text. But, as you eloquently stressed, there was also a risk that the autoethnographic excavations of the texts and subjective impressions were more likely to undermine the communion domain, and remain egoistically self-centered. In this case, I made a constructively doubtful look at the phenomenon, without compromising self-regard, self-respect, self-love, and the greater good. The tone of humility and altruistic care for participants' contextual subjectivities were equally considered.

Concerning the Ecology of the Forms and the Contents

R3. *The title of the thesis is very appealing and complex. However, when it comes to drawing conclusions and making meaning after 'unsatisfactory' results of the PAR project, an ordinary reader may come up with a query if you were able to do justice to the title and the very passionate expressions especially from Chapter I to Chapter VI.*

S. Ecology is the complex of mind and body, the order, and the chaos. It is multilayered and rhizomatic. Particularly in chapters three and four, I have entered to the very spirit of the place Dapcha, Dharmashala; and therefore, parallel to the rhizomatic place ecology, the textual expression in these chapters are partially mythical, partially poetic, and partially performative. Beginning from chapter five to

chapter seven, I have entered to the linearly closed schooling design of the Janahit School; and therefore, parallel to the closeness, the textual expressions in these chapters are seemingly monotonous and lifeless compared to the earlier two chapters. The wisdom making in chapters eight and nine has balanced the ecology of the linear closeness of modern schooling and transdisciplinary openness of the place. Maybe, the cohesive form and contents have strengthened the title even more. Next, the study's purpose was to explore ways for emplaced pedagogies; the ways to bring life to school and school to life. As it was a process (without any attachment with the end result), the result is beyond the 'satisfactory Vs. 'unsatisfactory' duality. It is just a process, where no effort is a loss, but every effort is an embodied learning to inform even more matured meanings and actions in the future.

R3. *If so, maybe the readers, particularly the researchers interested in this area of knowledge may find it very supportive if you articulate the process, the twists, and the turns.*

S. I appreciate the suggestion in a way that cultivating embodied wisdom is an ongoing process of transformative learning. In my experience, it is not linear and finite. Instead, it unfolds over the years, reorienting many twists and turns. At some stage, the series of shifts may not only change the roles and identities of the learner but may also involve deep structural shifts. My attentive observation of the place spirit of Dapcha Dharmashala enabled me to perceive lifeworld as 'ecological One'. But, series of PAR engagements at school made me realize the gap between open lifeworld and closed schooling architecture that had isolated school from 'One ecological wholeness'. There, I began to meditate on what actually was limiting the efforts to bringing life to school and school to life. The attentive observation enabled me to 'see' limitations in the Western-Modern beliefs, which Nepal (and many other

countries in the world) had uncritically accepted as the only 'standard' and 'progressive'. The more I entered into the depth of oriental wisdom traditions, the more I realized how human beings were originally the ecological being entangled in anti-ecological ideals of linearity. The realization enabled me to appreciate the metaphor of 'home going' and 'soul searching'. Again, the metaphor of place as *dharmachhetra* enabled me to see ecological lifeworld with moral imperatives. From there, I envisioned the future of the school in a way to home-going; the way to *Vidhyalaya* (the place of wisdom).

R5. *And in the situation where the Rupantaran Project activities are still continuing at the Janahit School, and that other researchers' are still facilitating the process with some visible changes, isn't it that you are too early to arrive at the conclusion, particularly your final remarks that questions the sustainability of pedagogical innovations?*

S. So true. Two of the Ph.D. researchers (including me) joined the Rupantaran project in July 2017. Many of the impressionistic vignettes in this study are from 2018/19. These were the beginning years to unset the PAR project in the school and in the community; and therefore, our focus initially was more on establishing and strengthening communicative space among the collaborating partners. It had limited our time and efforts for innovations. As the Rupantaran Project is still continuing, my meaning-making in this study is more of the process (and process-informed envisioning) than the overall project outcome. Only the position this study takes is that the open lifefulness of the place can hardly get fostered in the closed-linearity of the school. Other meanings are always open for informed revisits. Many other researchers, who joined the team after our return, are still continuing with similar innovative projects in Janahit School. Backed from the strong support of the durable

relationship established in the early years, the school, the community, and the researchers have begun to experience some visible shifts these days. Also, informed through the concluding remarks of this study, the school has begun to revisit the school routine in a way to balance indoor and outdoor activities. It has begun to think in terms of formative assessment of students' real-life performances (debriefing session, August 6, 2021). The facilitation is supposed to continue till 2023. The researchers are still continuing with PAR activities. In case the researchers experience many shifts, they can add their sense-making to this study in a way that the continuous collaboration and efforts for years readily bring changes. At present, as reflected in the debriefing, the PAR researchers and school teachers have appreciated that 'homegoing' from school to *Vidhyalaya,* among many other options, is a possible ways-out for the pedagogy of authentic lifefulness.

R5. *There appears the view that Rupantaran should be sustainable, and this is somewhat antithesis to participatory and transformative ethos, for both of them are not eidos rather they are activities in contexts. From a Buddhist and Vedantic point of view, nothing can sustain apart from Emptiness/Brahman. I think it is the generative nature of ecology that is important rather than the activities that we performed in the school. The activities might be discrete and unsustainable in the idea of Leela and samsara.*

S. Drawn from ecological wisdom, the study has enabled me to come with similar meanings that sustainability is but an organic emergence and transcendence, and therefore, no effort is lost. Our efforts in Janahit School have just left either *dharmic* (ethical right) or *adharmic* (ethical wrong) impressions. Maybe, the *karma* impressions need to be understood not only in terms of apparent context but also from high-order system relevance. The meaning stresses the ecological need to (re)define

pedagogical innovation and sustainability which readily implies a shift from ego to

eco. Parallel to the ecology of the living system, the living pedagogies have to travel a

continuous growth and movement. If so, it is likely that any human-made system

(like linearly enclosed modern schooling architecture) that limits the organic

emergence of pedagogical space is inherently anti-ecological (*adharmic*). The need

for a continuous shift from school to *Vidyalaya*, which this study suggests, arises from

the need to harmonize pedagogical emergence and transcendence in accordance with

the continuous emergence and transcendence of the living system.

EPILOGUE: THE OPEN CLOSURE

Dear reader, I began writing this thesis starting from March 2020 when the

Nepal government had just announced the lockdown arising from the COVID-19

pandemics. In August 2021, it has already been months and years that the pandemic

has shaken and magnified many of the long-standing beliefs and cultural practices of

modernity (Brooke, 2020; Hynes et al., 2021; Paul, Brown, & Ridde, 2020).

Revealing the Metamodern ecological turn of relational ontologies (see Hynes et al.,

2020; Hynes et al., 2021), the move has been uncovering the need for authentic

integration of ecological principles in every sphere of the lifeworld.

In this relational-ecological turn, like in many other sectors, school education

is also on the doorstep of challenges and opportunities. There is a challenge that the

chaotic butterfly effects of the pandemic have been a warning bell against the

deterioration of global solidarity and the rise of anthropocentric egotism (Hynes et al.,

2020; Hynes et al., 2021). Climate change, deadly diseases, and the increasing

number of educated unemployed have questioned the relevance and continuity of long

endorsed mechanical model of education.

Also, there is an opportunity that the challenges are likely to emerge with and

strengthen from deep down the educational commitment for authenticities,

relationalities, and ethical responsibilities. In these recent developments, the research-

informed call for place-engaged and wisdom-led authentic teaching and learning is

seemingly more relevant and timelier (see Braidotti, 2019; Lewis & Owen, 2020;

Tesar, 2021). Arising from place authenticity, such wisdom-led emplaced pedagogies

may synchronize the reason and the emotion, the practical and the creative arts, the

nature and the technologies, the dream and the memories, and the true, the good, and the beautiful that every sphere of human civilization has stumbled so far.

Additionally, the recent scenarios have shown the need for more flexible and grounded teaching and learning through aesthetic appreciation and scientific understanding of the lifeworld. The scenario has revealed the need for synergic integration of scientific facts, technology, and eco-spiritual dynamism. With it has increased the massive importance of digital connectivity. On the positive side, the digital revolution has broken many of the dominant pedagogical designs, and unlike the Western-Modern ideals of top-down hierarchical order, it has provided autonomy and flexibility for educators to act creatively and collaboratively.

But, it is equally important that instead of over-romanticizing information technologies, the recent changes demand ecologically conscious ethical reconstruction in teaching and learning. To this end, maybe the Metamodern maturity of present time and space is the right time for policy architects of Nepal (and around the world) to move beyond dominant Western-Modern ideals for 'teach and learn inside the classroom for the exam result'. Responding the turn, the educators in Nepal, who are aspired for emplaced pedagogies, may come with a new (postformal) ethical framework of sincerity and maturity that readily integrates the educational process and ecological principles; that readily rethinks anti-ecological schooling design, and that readily exercises 'homegoing from school to *Vidhyalaya*. Eloquently discussed in this thesis, this journey is a journey from 'clock-like mechanical school' to authentically lifeful 'living school'

…

Through this study, I don't suggest that pedagogical modernity is inherently harmful. The study is neither against modernity nor against modern science and

technologies. Instead, the question the study raises is- what kind of modernity? It seems, now is the time that instead of fanatizing the meaning of modernity as mere 'Western-European' standards to get cultural fit into 'external prescriptions', educational practitioners in Nepal may begin re-defining modernity arising from their own place essential. Maybe, they have to redefine modernity from place authenticity that readily matures through the ecologically responsible synthesis of modern and premodern values.

Also, I don't suggest that this call for ethically responsible pedagogy of place authenticity within the Metamodern *dharma* framework, which is but emerging from one's own essential nature, is the only way for lifeful pedagogies in the days to come. It could be one way among many other ways. But, certainly, thinking of school organization as a living system, we cannot possibly imagine a healthy growth of the system ignoring the soil and the roots upon which the system stands. Also, we cannot possibly realize the living system in isolation, disconnecting it from anything around it. My approach of homegoing from school to *Vidyalaya*, therefore, 'thinks like a tree' and seeks ecological principles in the educational process.

Such 'meanings' drawn from this study may annoy many of the 'educators' (and educational researchers) who are habituated with the ongoing pedagogical architecture of modern schools. It may annoy many of the 'pedagogical innovators' who are doing their 'great job' to fit their 'innovations' within the linearly closed architecture of a kind. It may also annoy university architects in Nepal, who have a firm belief and faith in pre-constructed, and therefore, imported research architecture they are habituated with.

Nevertheless, this research-inquiry may also encourage many educators and educational researchers to think and act beyond the dominant cultural milieu of

Western-Modern schooling, and may encourage co-evolving (with renewed maturity) in both the cultural structure and the human (and also the nonhuman) dimensions. The recommendation for lifeful pedagogies as such seeks eco-praxis in teaching, learning, and researching from within the place cosmologies and cultural stories, where every being's (and nonbeing's) belonging, being, and becoming are likely to reside within ecological relationalities and ethical responsibilities. Unlike, deschooling and anti-schooling activism (Illich, 1971), the living-school this study forwards seeks ecological balance between indoor pedagogies and real-life open learning. From there, I proposed redesigning dominant Western-Modern indoor architecture in a way to make it open enough to get attuned to the immediate place and the lifeworld

It is, thus, I lived my Ph.D. *dharma* of exploring ways to bring school to life and life to school through place pedagogies, attuned to eco-spiritual cosmologies and cultural stories of the place.

Thank you for reading this thesis.

GLOSSARY OF GEOCULTURAL AND VEDIC TERMS

Advaita Vedanta: Here, 'a' means not and 'dvaita' means duality. Together, it means non-duality that Brahma alone is ultimately real and that the soul is not different from Brahma. Consolidated by 8th-century Indian sage Adi Shankaracharya, Advaita Vedanta is a school of nondual thought in Vedic tradition for which this apparent world is just an illusion.

Ashvatha: Ashvatha is another name for the peepal tree. Often called the tree of life, ashvatha represents the combined image of the cosmic world, where roots symbolize creation, the main stamen to existence, and the tips to involution. According to Swami Chinmayananda (2011), the term Ashvatha refers to something that is ever-changing. The life and seed of the tree ever change (and therefore are eternal) in the course of their own ecological Dharma. Also, as the tree grows, its branches move downwards, which is but returning to the origin, 'home-going'.

Brahma*:* Brahma is the God, the Creator in the Hindu Trinity. Brahma is a metaphor for cosmic wholeness. Also, known as Svayambhu (self-born), Hindus worship Brahma as Vedanta (God of Vedas).

Dharma: Dharma (in Hindu-Buddhist wisdom tradition) is a mode of being, the essential nature that determines its behavior. So long the humans (and also the non-humans) act following their essential nature, they are supposed to act the right way. Opposite to Dharma is Adharma- 'a', "not"; 'dharma', "the essential nature of a being". Every being and non-being engages in their karma according to their dharma. Even place has place dharma. Place spirit in this text refers to place dharma, the fundamental (the essential) nature the place holds.

Dharmachakra: Dharmachakra is the wheel of ethical actions. In Buddhism, Dharmachakra represents the wheel with eight spokes, which are but the eight-fold paths. Subscribing to the performative nature of the lifeworld, this text has metaphorically used 'place' as a canvas. This place canvas is also a metaphor for Dharmachakra. It is something to hold the essential.

Dharmashala: The word is made up of two terms 'Dharma' and 'shala'. Dharma suggests natural law, and shala suggests the place. Thus, Dharmashala is the place of natural law.

Kshetra: Kshetra is the field in which events happen, and events happen when elements (either subject or object) in the field are modified. In Hinduism, Kshetra is a complex of cosmic physical Nature (macrocosm) and the human body (microcosm). The field is supposed to hold its own dharma, which is called Dharmachhetra. In other words, dharmachhetra is the field of righteousness. Also, dharmachhetra is a metaphor for development from within. As mentioned in Bhagavad Gita, chapter XIII, Kshetrajna is an absolute witness and the knower of the field.

Leela: Leela in Hindu wisdom tradition is a cosmic play of chaos and order; of the apparent and the real. Under the veil of Maya (illusion), Leela is often perceived as a mystery.

Leela-Rata Tandav: Hindu worldview sees the idea of Leela in relation to Rata. If Leela represents chaos and disorderliness, Rata represents the order developed out of series of Leelas. Leela-RataTandavin this text is the nature-culture dance of chaos and order that makes a civilization.

Leelawriting: Leela writing is an alternative form of writing, particularly popularized by Nepali writers like Indra Bahadur Rai, where the theme of human existence as

divine play is also manifested in the writings and the language use. It is a partially grounded and partially mythical flow of chaos and order in writing performance.

Loksangraha: Hindu wisdom traditions understand the place in terms of loksangraha. Here, Loksangraha stands for the unity of the world.

Mandala: Mandala is a cosmic diagram (particularly in Hinduism and Buddhism) that represents wholeness, unity, and integration. This mandala, the psycho-spiritual organic realities undertakes place-ecologies as dynamically connected in a complex karma-web of integration, disintegration, and reintegration.

MithyaGyan*: Mithya Gyan is surficial understanding without any depth. Mere conceptualization (without embodied exercising) is more likely to take an aspirant to false perception, Mithya Gyan.

Para-Dharma: Para-Dharma is a term used in the sense of unrighteousness, Para-Dharma is other's Dharma, which is essentially unnatural to the value one holds. In other words, it is nonconformity to one's essential nature.

Prakriti-Purush: Purusais the knower of the field (Radhakrishnan, 1985). But, the Purusha in itself has no expression of any kind. It is an inactive consciousness, which functions through matter. Prakriti, on the other, is the cosmic nature. While Purush represents the mind Prakriti represents the body. Together, this complex Prakriti-Purusha integration represents the overall cosmic process.

Sat-Chit-Ananda: Sat chit ananda represents existence, consciousness, and bliss. It is the subjective experience of Brahma, the absolute one.

Swarupa: our true authentic nature. It is also the Brahma (the sat chid ananda) state.

Tirthayatra: (a pilgrimage) is a spiritual journey, where 'the journeying' is of higher value than the destination itself. The outer journey is metaphorical to the inner journey within.

Vidhya: Here, Vidhya, the wisdom is not to be confused with theoretical learning. Unlike information gathering, Vidhya is a direct experience of the seeker realized through the removal of our casual apprehensions, baked by our wishes and prejudices. Opposite of Vidhya is Avidhya. It is a state where an individual is in ignorance of one's true nature.

Vabasaagar: Vabasaagar is the illusionary movement that continues through a complex web of chaos and order. Maya is sometimes said to be the source of this delusion.

Vidhyalaya: Vidhyalaya (the place of wisdom) is an authentic place for knowledge generation' (Yogananda, 2002). Vidhyalaya(not the school), is supposed to be a catalyst to realize this interconnected, and relational knowing through the right perception (Vidhya).

Vikriti: vikritiis a state of being deviated from the essential.

Yagna: Yagna is the Vedic fire ritual of sacrifice. Symbolically, it is a means of self-control and discipline. The lower impulses are burned through Agni (sacred fire). A ritual is a symbolic act of sacrifice for larger social welfare.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1A: Rupantaran Project Proposal, an Overview

In line with the recently adopted Global Goals for Sustainable Development, this project aims to catalyze improvements in the quality of teaching and learning at the basic education level in Nepal through innovative, transformative, and contextualized pedagogical approaches. The project will strengthen the motivation and capacity of a range of stakeholders at the local level, but also at the higher education level to enable Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University to take a leading role in establishing dynamic networks of innovative, transformative, and contextualized educational programs. The following approaches will be used to realize these main objectives: a) piloting of innovative approaches at schools in diverse settings in Nepal to stimulate improvements in education, health, sustainability, productivity, and livelihood prospects; b) intensive teacher training and leadership training for teachers and headteachers to support their professional development, d) inclusive approaches to engaging marginalized groups in all aspects of the project e) capacity development at Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University to undertake rigorous research that informs policy development, and f) sustained engagement with key stakeholders to scale models that demonstrate promise in improving teaching and learning outcomes in Nepal.

Objectives of the project:
The objectives of this project are two-fold:
1) To improve the quality of teaching and learning at the basic education level (grades 1-8) in Nepal through innovative, transformative, and contextualized pedagogical approaches to building the motivation and capacity of headteachers, teachers, and students to improve health and livelihood prospects at the local level, and
2) To build capacity at the higher education level to enable Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University to take a leading role in establishing dynamic networks which focus on the development of innovative, transformative, and contextualized programs to improve teaching and learning.

The overall approach of the project:
This project is a transdisciplinary endeavor that is organized around distinct, but highly interconnected themes. The three themes that underpin this project cluster around stimulating improvements in: education, health outcomes, and livelihood prospects. This will be achieved through a whole school approach including interventions that target: teacher training, model schools that pilot innovative, contextualized, and transformative teaching and learning approaches, education policy, parental and community engagement. This integrated triadic approach is essential given that positive health secures the physical preconditions for learning, whilst a relevant, high-quality education fosters motivation for teaching and learning,

and increased potential for livelihood prospects enhances the relevance and applicability of what is learned.

A participatory action research (PAR) approach will be adopted to engage administrators, teachers, students, parents, the wider community, and policy stakeholders in the development and evaluation of innovative strategies to improve each of these themes in ways that will benefit the most marginalized groups. Such an approach differs from most other approaches in that PAR is based on reflection, data collection, and action involving the community in all phases of a project.

Addressing the nexus between education, health and livelihoods require a highly contextualized pedagogical approach that emphasizes the primacy of the local setting[13]. This project is situated within an appreciative inquiry-based framework that acknowledges the importance and value of local knowledge and culture to the development of relevant, sustainable strategies to improve education, health, and livelihoods[14]. Inquiry-based learning is a pedagogical method where the teacher provides students with opportunities to address problems they themselves are interested in and that are relevant for the society they live in. This method is used to advocate student-active learning, including inquiry-based learning[15,16,17]. Instead of simply presenting established facts, inquiry-based learning starts by posing questions, problems, or scenarios. The students become active learners in searching for answers to connect problems with their experiences, while the teacher has a role as facilitator or guide[24]. Recent results from international research indicate that students learning from inquiry-based teaching perform better than students in traditional courses[18,19,20]. It is however demanding for teachers to change their teaching strategies from a predominately rote-based approach of presenting facts towards facilitating students' inquiries. Therefore, it is vital to support teachers through professional development within collaborative communities.

Structure of the project

The project consists of several interrelated phases as outlined below, each closely aligned with the dual aims in the project of fostering improvements in teaching and learning through innovative approaches, whilst building the capacity at the higher education level through intensive engagement in a dynamic research project. Close collaboration between faculty in Norway and faculty and graduate students from Nepal will underpin the development of each phase. As they will be taking a leadership role in all phases of the action research and will serve as a vital link between the model schools and the partner institutions to ensure knowledge translation, Ph.D. students and Post Docs will be recruited at the outset of the project. These students will conduct their field research on a range of themes relevant to the project, including but not limited to: sustainable development, health education, inquiry-based teaching and learning, leadership development, approaches to foster civic engagement, social transformation, and transformative education.

Phase I – Stakeholder engagement to establish the action research cycle

To ensure a relevant approach and community ownership for the project, a robust, multi-level stakeholder engagement strategy will be developed. This process will be important to ensure collaborative identification of areas and schools to be included, challenges to be addressed in the action research projects, as well as the strategies and approaches to be piloted, and engagement in the evaluation process. Important

stakeholders that the research team will involve to inform project development from the outset include teacher trainers and other relevant university staff, headteachers, teachers, education and health officials, policymakers, and others. A cyclical engagement strategy to guide interactions with the community will be developed, as well as a strategy at the partner institution level with the Ph.D. candidates and academic staff, to facilitate continuous dialogue, reflection, analyses, and evaluation of project progress through each phase.

Phase II – Assessment of school needs, including physical infrastructure and curricular needs
Nepal is geographically, culturally, and linguistically heterogeneous and there are wide contextual disparities between urban and rural locations in the country, highlighting the need for flexibility in order to ensure a relevant curriculum. Efforts will focus on selecting a diversity of schools and beginning a process of intensive engagement with schools to assessing their needs through participatory mapping exercises which focus on identifying physical infrastructure needs (sanitation and hygiene facilities, ICT, school fields for research and cultivation, water sources and storage, etc.).

To understand the current status of the national curriculum, faculty and graduate students from Nepal will collaborate closely with teachers at participating schools to conduct a rigorous review of existing curricula with respect to content, design, and pedagogical approach in order to identify strengths and gaps, and what might be most culturally relevant, effective and sustainable in the Nepali context. In line with an assets-based approach, specific attention will be focused on the incorporation of indigenous knowledge, culture, and customs and the positive features that are found in the setting. Based on the review, community engagement, and consultation with key stakeholders including health and education officials, as well as policymakers, a collaborative effort to develop and pilot curricula will be undertaken. Emphasis will be placed on innovative approaches for instance in science education, EcoSan with WASH facilities, student empowerment, and engagement to serve as change agents in their communities through the incorporation of social transformation curricula to foster transformative learning and a sense of ownership and commitment to among participants[21].

Model schools will exemplify quality in teaching and learning, as well as in terms of the overall school environment and governance. The model schools would incorporate evidence-based practices and pilot new innovative practices to serve as a resource, research, and learning hub for both teachers and students. The powerful impact of modeling is firmly established in the literature and anchored in theoretical perspectives such as Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory[23]. Learning experiences will be designed that emphasize interactive, practical, collaborative, and participatory dimensions over rote-based approaches to encourage the spirit of critical inquiry and enhance learning

The discourse of social transformation puts primacy of critical reflective awareness of many taken-for-granted assumptions held by educational practitioners[22]. Such unexamined assumptions often become unwittingly the key barriers for the change in the process of educational restructuring that Nepal is expected to launch. More specifically, such unexamined assumptions result from a person's cultural,
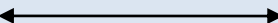
educational, ideological, and physiological conditionings over a period of time. Intending to transform educational processes in general and basic education in particular, these conditions are to be made visible so as to enable the practitioner to take justifiable, inclusive, and emancipatory actions that contribute towards the greater good for learners.
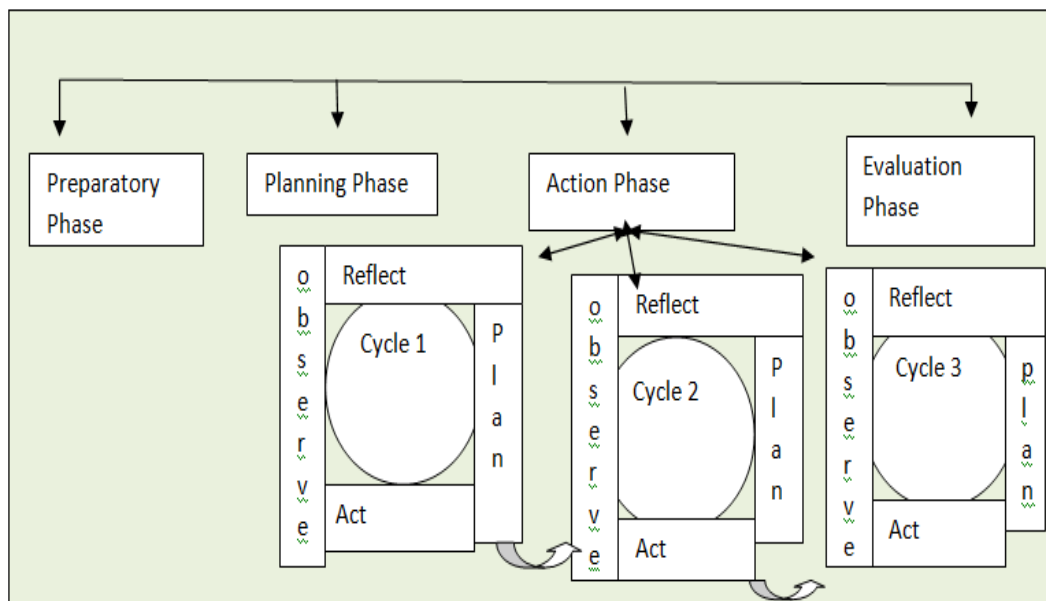
In this attempt, the idea of social transformation is translated through three possible ways. Primarily, the program envisaged introducing a training package on social transformation for school headteachers in participating schools. Intending to facilitate headteachers to develop an acquaintance with the notion of transformation and apply it in their personal and professional contexts, the professional development package primarily draws from the extant literature on transformative learning, mindfulness, holistic learning, and wisdom traditions of the East, West, North, and South in designing activities.

Phase III – Piloting innovative approaches to improving education, health, and livelihood outcomes

The implementation phase of the project will focus on building the capacity of teachers to apply innovative, inquiry-based learning approaches as a means to engage and link schools and local communities to secure the quality and relevance of the practical school projects. Having worked with schools to identify local challenges and potential strategies for improvement, Ph.D. candidates and Post Docs will continue to take a leadership role with support from faculty in working with schools to pilot and revise innovative approaches to improve education, health, and livelihoods.

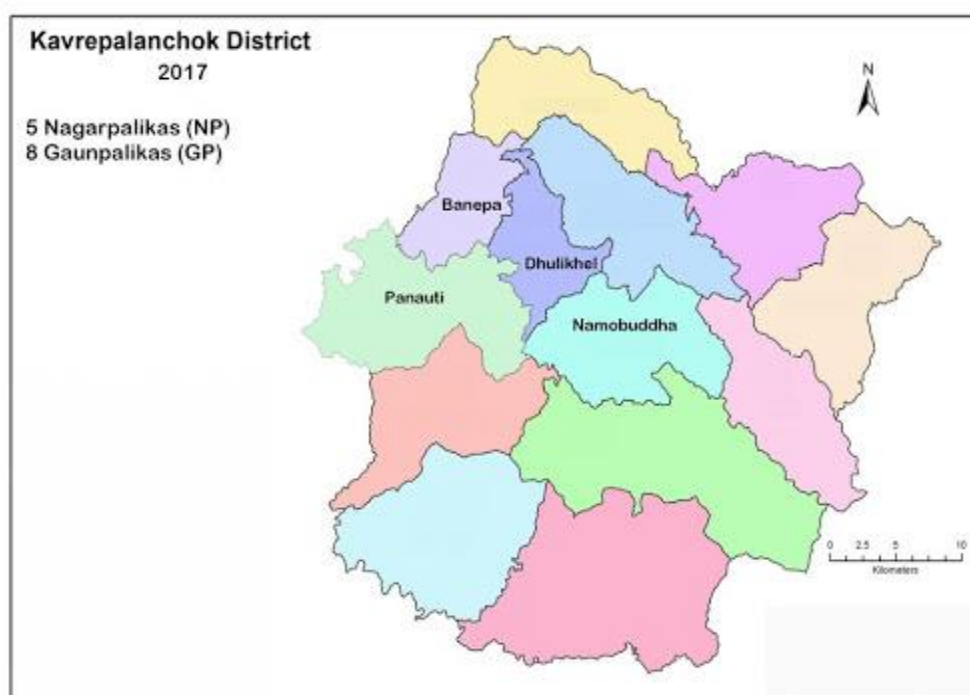**Annex- 2A: PAR activities in four different phases of this study**

Preparatory Phase	Planning Phase	Action phase	Reflection Phase
Year one (first six months) July 2017- December 2017	Year one (second six months) January 2018-June 2018	Year two (one academic year) June 2018- June 2019	Year three (one academic year) June 2019-June 2020
Participated in the university courses on Advanced Qualitative Research and Curriculum studies Studiedrelevant literature Examined everyday practices of the school and the community Arranged formal/ informal meetings with community stakeholders	The principal researcher and research team discussed the outcomes of phase 1 to reflect on current pedagogical practices. In July, conducted four days (three hours each) workshop and dialogue conference in the action school. It followed (1) In-depth interviews and FGDs among subject teachers, parents, and students, (2) Class observation, and participatory discussion on teaching performances of individual teachers, and (3) Resource mapping and situation analysis of the school, and the community.	Implement the action plan for participatory and generative models of emplaced pedagogies in three different cycles Cycle 1, May-August, 2018: *Working within the milieu of practice architectures* Cycle 2, September-December, 2018*: Moving forwards with the mess* Cycle 3, Januar-April 2019: *Emerging beyond the mess*	Ensuring Sustainability through Activity plan for the next academic year through end-of-the-year residential workshop and follow-up meetings. Experienced continuity and the rejections Visited NMBU, Norway (August 2019- January 2020), and participated in various academic forums, and school visits.
Documentation	Documentation	Documentation	Documentation

Annex 2B: PAR phases and cycles of this study

Annex 2C: Collaboration model of Norhed Rupantaran Project

Norhed Rupantaran Project

Tribhuwan University Nepal	Kathmandu University Nepal	University of Life Science (NMBU), Norwey
Five PhD researchers	Three PhD Researchers	Joint supervision, expertise and teaching resources
Five schools from Chitwan and Nawalparasi district	Five school from Kavre district	
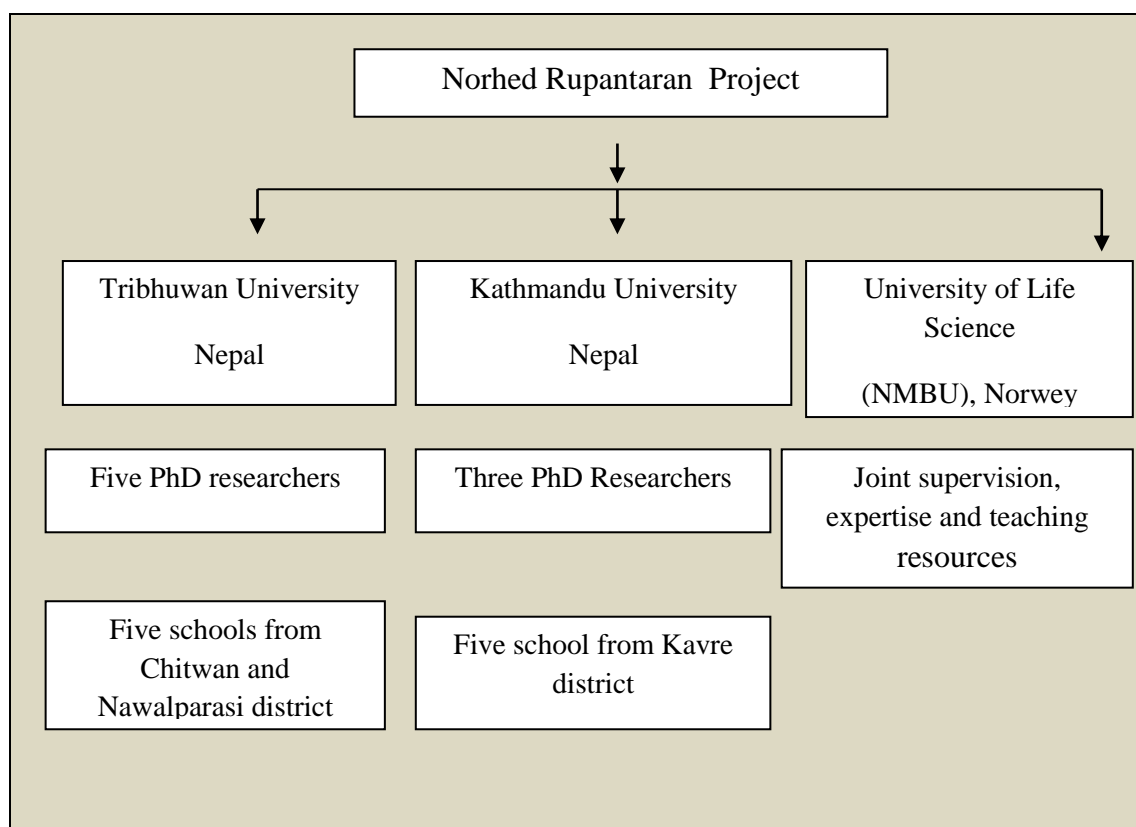
Annex 2D: PAR stages and co-creative activities of this study

PAR stage	Co-creative Activities
Reflect	Review current practice Identify an area of improvement
Plan	Brainstorm and research improvement plans
Act	Communicate the plan to all the stakeholders Act the plan
Observe (Cycle continues)	Review and analyze the action Elicit stakeholder feedback Plan for the next cycle

Annex- 3A: Dapcha, Kavre in the Map of Nepal

Annex 3B: Map showing the way from Kathmandu to Dapcha

Kathmandu - Changunarayan	20 KM
Kathmandu - Dapcha Chhatrebanjh	42 KM
Kathmandu - Panauti	32 KM
Kathmandu - Pragatinagar	6 KM
Kathmandu - Pokhara	201 KM
Pokhara - Tangting	27 KM

Note: Map not to scale. Altitudes are shown in the map

(Source: **http://www.martinchautari.org.np**)
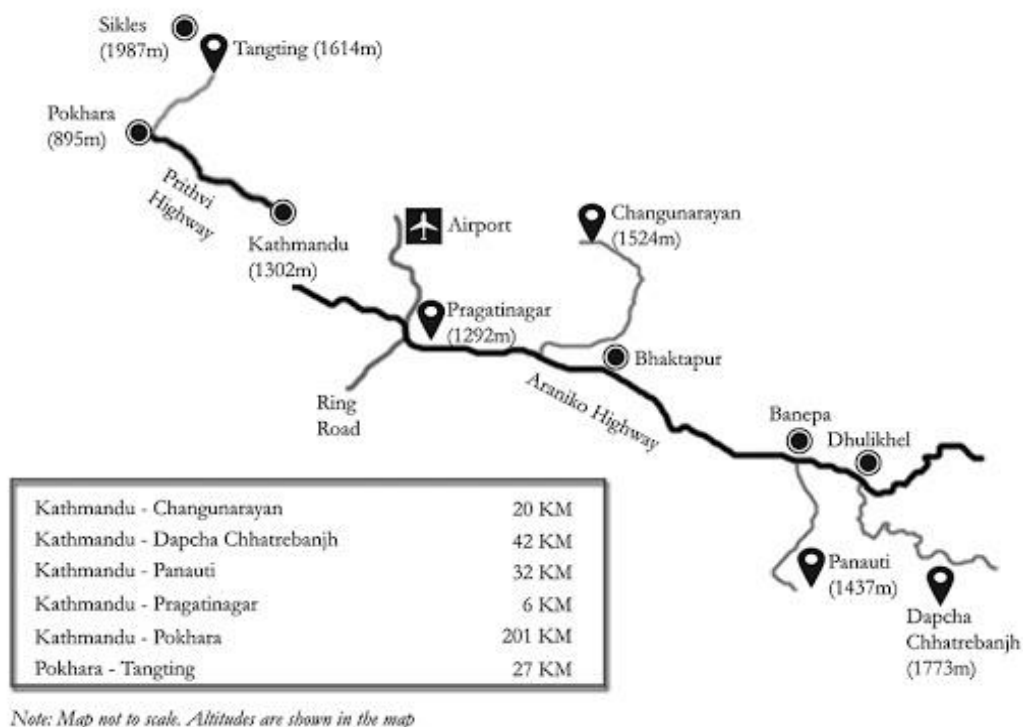
Annex- 4A: Demographic composition of Janahit students by caste and ethnicity, (2017- 2018)

Class	Ethnic groups (Tamang, Newar)	Brahmin, Chhetri	Dalits	Total
ECD	3	2	2	7
1	3	1	2	6
2	2	-	-	2
3	3	2	2	7
4	2	1	2	5
5	2	2	2	6
6	11	7	5	23
7	13	8	3	24
8	18	3	4	25
9	17	9	5	31
10	14	14	2	30
Total	88	49	29	166

Annex 8A- Sample of activities during needs assessment with teachers

Annex 8B- Sample of activities during three different PAR cycles
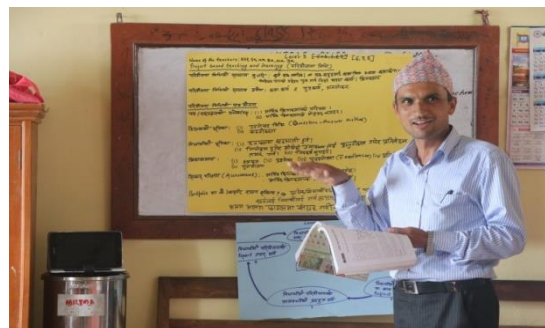
Annex 9A: The *Vedic* knowing of place as *Dharmachhetra* and the lifeworld as *Dharmayoga*: The ecological thinking in the Bhagavadgita

This annex brings a picture of how the *Bhagavadgita*, one of the texts in the Oriental wisdom tradition, informs ecological thinking. Though ecological thinking has been escorting human civilization since its origin, it is only recently that the worldview has begun to find its academic recognition. Still, there has been a risk that present academia continuously turns to the Western-Modern definitions of ecological thinking (as mechanical clockwork system), and fails to appreciate the age-old knowledge heritages that have been informing the Oriental lifeworld so far. Considering it, the annex herein details how this study continuously turned to these wisdom traditions, and how the heritage informed my 'framing' of the ecological worldview throughout my Ph.D. journeys and the arrivals. I have added it in the annex so that future researchers interested in this area of knowledge may recognize the journeys and arrivals of this study. They may step onto it, and begin their inquiry journey from these departures.

Bhagavadgita meditates on ecological authenticities, relationalities, and ethical responsibilities. The very first world of the text is *Dharmachhetra*. *Dharmachhetra* is the field of righteousness. Therefore, in the ecological thinking of Bhagavadgita, the field (the place), and the *dharma* (the righteousness) are too identical to one another. If 'battle' is a metaphor for the choice human beings make for their living in the 'battlefield', the metaphor of *Dharmachhetra* is a continuous reminder that certain ethical responsibilities of human beings bind their *karma* of either being good or not. Such ethical responsibility rolls up from the idea of ecological temporality and

eternity. Human beings get birth and so do they die. They get changed from one form to another. The same process goes with all the beings and the none-beings. Compared to the temporality of human life, the ecological lifeworld (in its totality), however, goes on. Therefore, what footstep the earlier generation left has higher impacts for the future generations.

Often used in the text *Bhagavadgita*, the pronoun 'I' is the 'Brahma', the 'One ecological whole'. This ecological whole, this field, and the knower of the field is the complex of all the Beings and Nonbeings sustained in their authentic relationalities. Also, saying that this field (*kshetra*) is also the body (*sariram*), the text passes the meaning of micro-macro hermeneutic relationalities between the individual self and the cosmic ecological Self. One, who knows the self, therefore knows the Self, and this knower is *kshetrajna*, the knower of the field.

But, veiled by the creative power of ecological complexities (*Yogamaya*/*BrahmaLeela*), these ecological relationalities as such are not revealed to all. Only the *Yogi* (harmonized and attuned to *Bramha*) with intense attention and an equal eye to all the beings and non-beings realize it. It is for this realization, the Bhagavadgita suggests wisdom seekers to cut doubt and ignorance with the sword of wisdom, resort to *yoga*, and live in harmony attuned to the *Brahmic* principles of the 'One' ecological whole. The overall wisdom is revealed in the following text-

…

I am here because of my past actions (*Karma*). My current actions decide my future *Karma*. If I suffer, this suffering is caused by my attachment to the illusionary (external) world beyond my true nature, where I mistakenly believe that it is the source of happiness. By understanding my true nature (my *dharma*) and my relationship to this place-ecology (*dharmachhetra*), I discover my purpose, and when aligned to the purpose, I become happy. God is, but the eternal cosmic play between the material (*prakriti*) and the intellect (*purusha*). I just need to realize that the God (the eternal cosmic play) is in me and everyone else. In this realization, aligned to my true nature, I should perform the right action, with the right attitude, without being attached to the fruit of action. *Vidhya* (right wisdom) enables me to discover my purpose (*dharma*). This cosmic world is the *Vidhyalaya* (place of wisdom). I just need to be attentive and act accordingly.

-Bhagavadgita