



Far Western Review

A Multidisciplinary, Peer Reviewed Journal

ISSN: 3021-9019

Published by Far Western University

Mahendranagar, Nepal

Perspectives of Teachers Towards Students with Diverse Disability: A Case of Special School in Kailali District

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Abstract

Working with differently able children in the classroom is challenging in under-resourced contexts for Nepal teachers. This study explores teachers' perceptions toward managing the diversity of the students in terms of disability, teaching-learning activities, assessment practices, and interpersonal skills in a special school. This qualitative study adopts a case study design. In-depth Interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and participant observation were the major methods for data collection. Six teachers (three ordinary and three with disability) for FGD and two key informants (head teacher and chairperson) were selected purposively for in-depth Interviews from a special school located at Attariya in Kailali district. The study shows that teachers have positive perceptions toward disabilities, especially teachers with disability. Teachers have invested efforts in managing diversity in instruction and in assessment; however, it is challenging due to the traditional approach of teaching and evaluation, lack of training and resources, and the gap between policies and practices. The study further indicates that teachers' positive perceptions and extracurricular activities are crucial for developing students' interpersonal skills.

Keywords: Disability, pedagogical practice, interpersonal skills, case study,

Introduction

Nepal is a democratic federal republic with a multiparty system of government and sovereignty vested in the people; the Constitution of Nepal (2015) has set education as a fundamental right of the people and ensures access to quality and equitable education for all people with diverse backgrounds by setting the directive principles of the federal state,

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provinces and the local bodies on education and its right. In this connection, addressing the issue of diversity has significant implications in the general and special education sector for bringing diverse ethnic groups and underachiever groups into the mainstream of education to provide equitable access to quality education for all, mainly in relation to the provisions of education for all, flexible curriculum, comfortable, educational environment, learner-centered cooperative teaching and learning, teacher training, and in using local language in teaching (Pandey & Young, 2018; Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Nepal Law Commission, 2015). Realizing the existing diversities in terms of culture, language, religion, socioeconomic status, and education for underachievement groups, education for special needs children, and its significant role in educational pedagogies, the government of Nepal (GoN) has established three types of schools - general, integrated, and special. Moreover, to meet this purpose, GoN has established 380 resource classrooms, 22 integrated schools, and 32 special schools so far (Pandey & Young, 2018). Each classroom in those schools is full of diverse phenomena in relation to student's mother tongue, culture, religion, values, beliefs, and economic status. This multicultural phenomenon can also be a major factor affecting classroom teaching and learning activities, and ultimately it can affect students' learning achievements.

Regarding children with disabilities, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) has focused on 'free and appropriate' education for such children. Likewise, to provide equal educational opportunities to students with disabilities and ensure their rights, the Jomtien Conference-2004, the Salamanca Conference-2007, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities-2006 were significant global efforts (UNESCO, 2009). Participating in these conferences, GoN is committed to the voice of the world communities to ensure the educational right of all children, including children with disabilities, through the practices of special needs education and inclusive education (Young & Niure, 2017). In this connection, the formation of the special education council-1973, the launching of special education policy-1976, the introduction of inclusive educational policy-2017 and currently national education policy-2019 can be viewed as some of the important efforts of Nepal for educating children with disabilities (Ministry of education, 2019). For students with disability, there are specified categories based on which they are provided special education services. However, many children may not fit exactly into a particular category. In this line, Heward, (2006) states that educational services should be provided according to children's needs and interests rather than their category; and special education works better in many ways like special teacher's regular communications with the children and their family members regarding their habits, behaviors, learning differences and progress.

In schools, diversity can be viewed and managed by understanding and valuing the various characteristics and beliefs of children related to their ethnic and racial backgrounds, age, sex, physical and cognitive abilities, socioeconomic status, religion, customs, and geographical location is the diversity (Council for Exceptional Children, cited in Pandey & Young, 2018). Understanding diversity this way ensures equitable access to quality education for all. In this context, GoN, Ministry of Education (2015) has developed a long-term (2016-2023) School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) for addressing the needs and interests of students through managing diversity and continuing the efforts to achieve optimal educational goals. In an under-resourced classroom, diversity can be an important factor for enhancing teaching-learning activities, classroom assessment, socialization of students, and developing different personal skills and abilities. Therefore, this article aims to explore the perspectives of teachers and administrators toward students with disability and issues related to pedagogical practices in a special school in the Far Western part of Nepal. To achieve the aims, the study primarily deals with some fundamental questions such as, what are the teachers' perceptions about disabilities of the students in a special school? What is the practice of teaching learning and assessment in the special school? And how do students with disability develop their interpersonal skills?

Classrooms with diversity may have several advantages and disadvantages at the same time when they are not properly addressed. Many schools and classrooms have diversity regarding students' ethnicity, religion, culture, language, customs, beliefs, values, physical and cognitive abilities, and needs and interests (Banks, 2016). Therefore, the principle of 'one size fits all' in different dimensions of education, such as curriculum, pedagogy, and assessments, cannot accommodate diverse classroom settings. In this line, GoN has aimed to provide quality education by developing a policy for making local curriculum in mother tongues and allowing teaching in mother tongue in the basic level of school education so as to address linguistic diversity (UNESCO Kathmandu Office, 2015). In fact, the various factors of classroom diversity have been the barriers to effective and efficient teaching and learning in general and special education. Apart from this, adjusting and providing equitable teaching and learning environment has also been problematic. Similarly, due to the students' diverse backgrounds and varied physical and cognitive abilities, they have been facing difficulty in different types of learning activities in the classroom and collaborative learning. Moreover, a teacher's knowledge and sensitivity toward students' linguistic and cultural differences are significant in planning and conducting teaching-learning activities (Gollnic & Chinn, 2004). In Nepalese scenario, there are issues in terms of trained teachers in special schools, the application of traditional pedagogy, and classroom diversity (Eide et al., 2016; Young & Niure, 2017; Pandey & Young, 2018;

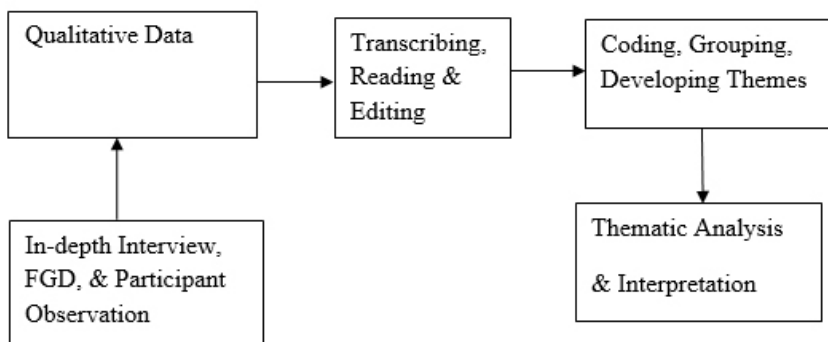
Holmes et al., 2018). On the other hand, enrollment in special education is continuously increasing. This scenario in the school setting is creating complex problems in learning achievements and hence in achieving the overall goals of education. To mitigate this problem, managing classroom diversity is essential, in which teachers' role is significant. Despite the efforts made by GoN, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and concerned associate agencies, there are still challenges in managing diversity and ensuring equitable access to quality education for all.

Research Method

Considering the exploration of teachers' perceptions toward managing diversity in special schools as a central phenomenon, the researcher applied the qualitative method in the study. In this regard, Cresswell (2012) stated that a qualitative approach is most suitable for exploring and developing an in-depth understanding of a central phenomenon. As the method of study, the researcher chooses a case study to examine the case very closely. A case study is a comprehensive study of a social unit; a social institution, a district, a community, a group, or a person (Young, 1998). In this study, a special school is a social institution.

As the research participants, the researcher purposively selected six teachers, three with a disability, the head teacher (K₁), and the chairperson (K₂) of a special school located at Attariya in Kailali district. For collecting comprehensive data, the researcher had taken in-depth Interviews, FGD, and participant observation as the methods. As the tools, interview guidelines, FGD guidelines, and observation checklist were designed. For this purpose, following the guidelines and taking the consent of the head teacher, the researcher conducted FGD with the participants, took in-depth Interviews with K₁ and K₂ and observed the classroom separately. The data were collected via note-taking, audio recording, and filling out the checklist.

Data Analysis and Interpretation



The collected textual data were analyzed through a qualitative data analysis procedure: editing, coding, grouping, developing themes, and interpreting thematically, as shown in the above diagram.

The Research Context

The local community established the selected school for research in 2067 B.S. with the goal of providing basic general education to children with physical disabilities from diverse backgrounds. Enrolled students are from different ethnic groups, geography, low economic status, differently able, and orphans. The school was started with ten local students with a physical disability. There are 75 students from 11 districts of two provinces: Far Western Province and Karnali Province. Six students without a disability are from low economic backgrounds and orphans, whereas 69 are physically disabled. Almost 90% of students are staying at the school hostel. Eight teachers, including three physically disabled, have been currently teaching in the school and are also responsible for taking care of students at the hostel. Three non-teaching staff are also working in the school. At present, the GoN has taken major responsibility for running the school. For many reasons, the researcher considered this school a case to conduct the research.

Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are presented as per the themes developed from the analysis of collected data as follows:.

Teachers' Perceptions about Student's Disability within Special School

Teachers were found to have an understanding of physical and mental disabilities and the complexities faced by the students with disability in learning and in other daily life activities. In this regard, K2 stated this way,

We have the experience and understanding of the feelings, habits, and behaviors of students with disability (SWD) and of the problems faced in handling and accommodating such students in the school environments.

In the school, the researcher identified that teachers with a disability had been facing complexities in their educational and daily lives. They had their own feelings and experiences of the discrimination and the support they received in the family, community, institutions, and public places. Moreover, they intended to use their experiences, knowledge, and skills to change students' lives. In this connection, regarding the choice of this school, a teacher with a disability explains,

I do not want to go anywhere as this school's nature matches me. I have to use my experiences and knowledge to prepare students for their maximum benefits" (a participant with physical disability FGD).

In the Initial days, ordinary teachers in the school were found uneasy and humiliated by their family and peers. In this concern, a participant teacher expressed his family member's statement as,

It will be better to stay with the unemployed than to teach disabled children, and we are dominated among neighbors due to our job.

The Chairperson of SMC (a founder head teacher) put the nearby peoples' responses while establishing the school this way,

School should be far from the local area as it will diminish the prestige of the local community, and viewing disabled children on the roads in the morning prayer time will be bad luck for us.

Similarly, the head teacher expressed her problematic perception of collaboration with parents and guardians like this,

Most of the guardians visit school not more than twice in an academic year, during enrollment and result publication. Guardians in rural areas keep poor phone contact to take their children's information regarding health conditions, learning achievement, behavioral changes, and soon. Only nominal local guardians participate in various school programs, and the majority of them become absent even though they are pre-informed to attend the programs; besides, the guardians hold their child's disability ID card, use its benefit for the family, and do not provide it to the child.

Similarly, a participant expressed,

We need more efforts, and we struggle to understand the language, beliefs, habits, and nature of newcomers and adjust them in classrooms" (a participant of FGD).

Thus, sociocultural misconceptions regarding disability, poor economic status of parents and inadequate collaboration of guardians with the school are the obstacles perceived by the teachers and the authority of the school. This finding is similar to the result of the studies by Human Right Watch, 2011; Lamichhanne, 2013; Young & Niure, 2017 indicated poor collaboration between school and community, school and parents; the sociocultural misconceptions toward disability and poverty of the parents are some major barriers to the effective operation of special and inclusive schools. Thus the finding of this research is well justified.

During the participant observation, teachers were found supporting, valuing, and behaving the students very positively in the school. They were especially observed smiley with their students while teaching and talking, using mostly local language, serving Tiffin to the SWD, helping them in playing sliders, rotators, and swing chairs, supporting in moving wheelchairs, and paying attention to students' talks and matters. Besides, they take proper care of the students. In this context, one of the lady participants, a hostel teacher, stated, "Many nights I remained without taking sleep for taking care of sick students who requested not to leave them alone. Likewise, a hostel teacher with a disability during FGD put his words this way, "Some students do not want to go home during vacations as they enjoy living in a hostel and working with teachers of this schools, and we also enjoy working with these children in a homely environment in school and in the hostel as well". It shows that teachers' perceptions were found positive about the disabilities of the students in the school. This result also aligns with the findings of Kis, E. (2010), who states that teachers' perceptions toward disability and special needs education depend upon the type of school, school policy, experience, and qualifications. In this regard, Kabe et al. (2021) found that teachers with disability are more experienced in dealing with and behaving SWD, supporting this study's findings. As the school is special, its policy is to provide education mainly to the physical disabilities, and most of the teachers have self-experience of disability; they have positive perceptions toward disability. Teachers having some sort of disability are more positive than other teachers (Sharma, 2020), which justifies the result obtained by the researcher.

Teaching Learning and Assessment Practice in the School

The strategies, techniques, and activities followed by the teachers that enable students to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the contents within the classroom are considered as teaching-learning pedagogies. The selection of appropriate pedagogy ensures equitable quality education to diverse students as per their learning styles (Cartledge, Gardner & Ford, 2009). However, the pedagogy teachers follow depends upon various factors such as teachers' qualifications, knowledge of pedagogies, nature of subject matter, available materials and resources, and students' diverse backgrounds. Besides this, in special education, teachers require a focus on students' diversity, different abilities, needs, and access to resources and need to use multiple teaching methods for effective learning (Pandey & Young, 2018). In this context, the researcher found that teachers are more conscious about students' effective learning. They were found focusing more on enhancing learning through additional efforts in classrooms, managing extra classes, and assigning some leader students in collaborating with other low achievers. However, in some cases, teachers were found to follow the teacher-centered lecture method without using proper teaching aids.

In this connection, the researcher observed, in the fifth-grade science classroom, a teacher was giving a lecture on the lesson: Parts of Flower by showing and explaining its figure in the book, though there were flowers in the school garden that could be used for concrete teaching through interactions and demonstrations. Similarly, in sixth-grade social study classroom textbook was the material for teaching the geographical structure of Nepal. Researchers noticed the lack of necessary teaching aids like natural and political maps of the world, continents, and Nepal, such as scientific charts and instruments such as the periodic table, microscope, compass, measuring cylinders, etc. This reflected the practice of traditional teaching, lack of trained and special educators, and inadequate resources for enhancing learning. In this regard, the head teacher put her views in the following ways:

Teachers are not provided any special training, so there is a lack of specially trained teachers for special students with disability. There is also a need for proper teaching aids, ICT facility is only in the office but not in all classrooms. We need an adequate number of digital devices and reliable internet network. Therefore, the lack of an adequate number of qualified and trained teachers, special teachers, digital devices and technical support from the government side and the weak financial condition are the major problems.

The two trained teachers with educational backgrounds were found self-motivated to accelerate the better teaching and learning environment despite the school's low financial status and facilities. However, they had difficulty in managing disability in the classroom teaching learning processes due to a lack of enough resources and informed ideas, new techniques, and innovative pedagogical practices. In this line, Anderson, R. C. (2006); Kabe, et al. (2021), explain that to address disability in a classroom setting, teachers need to be sensitive to the diversities among disabilities and have experience and knowledge of critical pedagogy. Similarly, Pandey and Young, (2018) claim that in special schools of Nepal, teachers feel difficulty in teaching students with a disability because of the complex and diverse needs of the students, lack of flexible curriculum, lack of training, and lack of teaching and learning resources.

Assessment is an integral part of the educational process through which the quality of students' learning outcomes can be judged, recorded, and reported. It is the process that supports teachers to identify students' level of learning, weaknesses and strength of teaching and provide feedbacks for improving classroom instruction (Freeman & Lewis, 2004; Elhage & Sawilowsky, 2016). The Judgments of learning outcomes of the students need to be made through appropriate continuous formative and summative assessment tools (Wagley & Poudel, 2011). In the school, the researcher identified the utilization of similar formative

and summative methods of assessing students that can be inappropriate to respond to diverse disabilities. Similarly, NCF (2019) provisions and guidelines for assessing students were found less followed in the school. In this regard, key informant stated,

We use unit tests, class tests, homework completion, terminal exams, yearly exams, and attendance to assess students' achievements. (K₁ in-depth Interview).

Key informants further responded that teachers had difficulty constructing tests, using multiple evaluation methods, maintaining student portfolio records as they lack knowledge, and adjusting slow writer and learning disability students in written tests. However, flexibility in assessment in terms of time to complete the written test was applied as per the need of the students. In this reference, a teacher explained:

Though there is difficulty in conducting assessments due to lack of clear guidelines and policies for considering students' disability, we give additional time to slow writers. Sometimes when an examinee cannot write, we assign students from junior grades to write for the examinee. Likewise, we focus on continuous assessment and alternative exam dates for those who become absent from exams due to illness or other problems. During checking answer sheets, we emphasize on the creativity of the students rather than fact knowledge and writing skill. For some students, we also revise the lessons if they do not properly comprehend and complete the assigned tasks.

Thus, there is a need of proper implementation of policies and guidelines and innovative approaches of assessments for managing special students' diversity in assessments. In this line, Gutuza, et al. (2015) indicate that assessing students with disability in the formal trend creates the problem of struggling for traditional curriculum and examinations which ultimately restrict their right to equity in education and to reduce the problem, there is need for legal frameworks for modified examinations. In the same way, Chongbang (2021) explains that the continuous assessment system (CAS) is good in assumption but its process and practice is inappropriate in the complex context of special school. There is need for an innovative approach to classroom assessment guided by practical policy which will promote the emerging nature of assessment systems in the complexity of special school contexts.

Development of Students' Interpersonal Skills and Teachers' Role

Dealing and establishing relationships with others are essential skills for the successful future life of all students, including students with disability. The researcher observed good interpersonal skills with the SWD. However, some students with mental

disability, communication difficulties, and multiple disabilities were poor in this aspect. He found that teachers had made efforts to enhance such skills and abilities. As an example, the researcher observed students expressing greetings to the teachers, peers, and persons coming into the school; besides this, he observed students and teachers helping wheel-chair students to bring them into the classrooms and playgrounds, students talking, questioning, behaving frequently with teachers and teachers found properly responding their students, showing love and affection toward them. Moreover, students were observed playing in groups; supporting each other and sharing things with peers, which play vital role in developing interpersonal skills (Garcia, et al. 2018; Newa, 2022). In this regard, the chairperson of the SMC expressed,

We arrange extracurricular activities such as singing and dancing programs, acting drama, speech programs, debates, designing art and drawings, quiz contests, and games in regular schedules. Our teachers are motivated to support students in every activity within and outside classrooms and mostly stay among students. They encourage students to do the tasks in groups, interact positively with peers, and assist each other in completing assignments and other jobs, debate politely and openly in the programs. On the other hand, external agencies like government organizations, NGO's, institutions and individuals provide financial assistance, food, clothes, and learning materials to support the students and organize programs in which school children frequently take part. All these environments of school enhance students' interpersonal skills and abilities.

These remarks of the chairperson clearly indicate that interaction among the students through various interactive programmes conducted at school facilitates in developing of interpersonal skills of the students. Head teacher, in this connection, the head teacher opined that to develop social skills, students participate in local social activities. In the same line, one of the participants stated,

A part from extra activities, the school has made efforts to teach basic computer skills, vegetable farming, poultry farming, pig keeping, through which they learn managing waste food and income generation and help to build interpersonal skills.

In this concern, the researcher noticed a set of musical instruments and dancing dresses, sound box and speaker; two computers; house gardens, a playground with equipment as swing chair, sliders, a seesaw, rotator; a small pigpen, a chicken coop and a vegetable garden within school compound.

Thus, proper school environment, extracurricular activities, collaborative activities and teachers' role seem to be important factors for promoting the interpersonal skills of

the students. In this context, Ivaniushina and Zapletina, (2015), emphasizing the role of extracurricular activities performed within and outside school, states that extracurricular activities positively impact the development of students' personality and interpersonal skills and activity uniquely affects in developing such skills.

Discussion

The rapid developments in the world are increasing diversity in communities and in schools. School diversities are found mainly related to students' multiple languages, cultures, religions, customs, beliefs, values, socioeconomic status and ethnicity (Polloway, Patton & Serena, 2008). In special schools, diversity is further widened with the involvement of students having various types of disabilities. These diversities in classroom setting have created challenges and opportunities (Howard, 2010). In such a scenario, to provide optimum opportunities to the children with diverse backgrounds, school reform movement, public policies, court decisions, and legislative mandates have been enforced (Obiakor, 1994). In this context, various efforts have been made and implemented to accommodate the diversities in classroom settings within schools of Nepal. Specifically, CDC has developed a local curriculum in 22 local mother tongues with mother tongue as a medium of instruction for basic level of school education to address the lingual and cultural diversities in classroom settings (Curriculum Development Center, 2007). However, this effort seems inadequate as there are 123 mother tongues in Nepal (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Nepal law Commission, 2015) and each school holds multi-lingual students, and there is difficulty in developing local curriculum in the local language. In special schools, to accommodate diverse disabilities, proper arrangements have to be made for providing special education and the arrangement of special teacher is also important (Special Education Policy, 1996). This shows that teachers' role in managing diversity in special schools is significant. In particular, teachers' positive attitude towards students with disability, the application of flexible teaching-learning methods and assessments are crucial.

Teachers' perceptions toward students' disability generally refer the feelings, emotions and actions that teachers hold about disability, complexities and effects created by it in their normal life. Killian, (2017) claim that teachers' perceptions of disability and method of teaching are major influencers of students' achievement. This statement indicates that teachers have positive perceptions toward students with disability are physically, mentally and socially prepared to accommodate them in classroom activities. In this study, the researcher observed that all the teachers, disabled and normal, had positive perceptions about disability and the students with disability. They had well understood the students' disabilities, complexities and its impact in conducting normal life. Moreover, they had the

feeling that the disabled are part of the community; they should be accepted, loved, valued, supported and participated or included equally in school activities without any restrictions so that they achieve success in school education and to live a normal life. This justifies teachers' positive perceptions regarding disability which seems necessary for managing diversity in the school. This understanding was found more prominent in teachers with disability and found induced in normal teachers as well. Thus, this discussion suggests that to manage diversity in special education, every teacher should have positive perceptions for disabilities and special school should be the work place for teachers with disability.

Teachers having positive perceptions about disabilities of students are naturally intended to teach them successfully. For this purpose, they need to have skills, and knowledge of using student-centered teaching methods so that every student actively participates in classroom activities and gets opportunities to learn at his/her pace. Apart from this, for effective and equitable teaching-learning, teachers' training and availability of appropriate teaching aids are necessary. In this regard, National Center for Educational Development (NCED) imparted 30 days (10/10 days) of training for enhancing capacity, skill, knowledge and professional qualities of teachers and for managing diversity and conducting effective teaching (Curriculum Development Center, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2017). However, the study found that teachers in the school were untrained and had been following teacher-centered traditional approach without using updated teaching materials which created difficulties in accommodating classroom diversity. Though the teacher's methods were traditional, their efforts were primarily important in managing diversity by arranging additional classes for low achievers and by assigning some leader students to collaborate with others in groups. It mainly suggests for managing proper teaching aids and training for using child-centered effective teaching in special schools and accordingly managing diversity.

Managing diversity in schools is also necessary within the practice of assessment in regular and special schools. In this context, Harris & James, (2006) claimed a need for investigating and implementing new assessment practices so as to assist students with disabilities in achieving learning outcomes and ensure them gain the necessary skills to become self reliant, informed and productive. In this sense, National Curriculum Framework 2019 had outlined a continuous assessment system through formative assessments for school education in Nepal but it is guided by traditional textbook instruction and put more focus on paper pencil test. However, Baral et al., (2020) argue that though the teachers, students and the education system are aligning the traditional pedagogy and evaluation procedures, there is need of a paradigm shift in the assessment system so as to assess students' behavior, creativity, critical thinking, soft-skills, and life-skills to make learners independent in

their practical life. This study identified class tests, unit test, terminal exams and annual exams as major tools for the student's assessment which are conducted as per the norms and standard of the test and with flexibility as per the complexity of the examinee such as giving additional time to slow writers, taking alternate test; focusing on creativity and writing skill. All these practices accommodate a physical disability. However, it does not cover students with learning disability and emotional disturbances present in the school. Moreover, linguistic and cultural diversity are not critically analyzed and addressed during the construction of written tests. Thus, to accommodate disability and linguistic and cultural diversity in assessments, utmost attention should be given to constructing tests; continuous modification and innovation in existing assessment practice is required.

Students' interpersonal skills include their abilities to communicate, interact, and build relations with others. Such skills are significant for developing students' personality, socialization and success. In this regard, McConnell, (2004) argues that interpersonal skills are the essential skills to deal with and build relations with others (Barakat, 2007). In dealing with others, communication skill is significant. It helps students make interpersonal relations and socialization. However, students with voice disability, autism, and mental and emotional disturbances have poor communication skills as a result, they lack in interpersonal skills. This study identified the students having a learning disability, problems in communication, and multiple disabilities were found to be less interactive, while other students had good interpersonal skills. In this regard, Karnas, (2020) claim that children with severe disabilities face difficulties in communication that limit their social interaction and communication with others. Teachers' interpersonal skills enhance students' socialization and learning (Majid, 2017). Similarly, extracurricular activities uniquely develop students' personality and interpersonal skills (Ivaniushina & Zapletina, 2015). In this way, teachers' skills and extracurricular activities are important for developing students' interpersonal skills. In other words, a proper environment for more interactions, group discussions, project work, collaborative learning, extracurricular activities, disability-friendly classroom, least restrictive environment enhance the interpersonal skills of students with a disability, which helps manage diversity in special schools.

Conclusions

To conclude, teachers' positive perceptions towards disability, student-centered pedagogy, use of disability-friendly resources, cooperative learning, flexible assessment system and socialization help to manage and address diversity and different abilities. Students' involvement in different programs like gardening, poultry farming, useful extracurricular activities and meaningful engagement with teachers and other students

enhance the interpersonal skills of students with disability. Teachers having positive perceptions toward disabilities of students assist students to be prepared physically, mentally, emotionally and socially to bring their potential in action in the classrooms and the outside. The study concludes that the Government of Nepal needs to formulate decentralized, flexible and practical policies and programs to improve the quality of special education. In addition, the study highly seeks the attention of all stakeholders in how special school teachers play a key role in enhancing the learning and overall development of students with disability. The study also shows an urgent need to shift their existing curriculum, pedagogies, assessment practices and other activities to address diversity in the classroom with diverse disability.

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