



Values-based Curriculum and Pedagogy for 21st Century Learners: School Practices in Nepal

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Abstract

Integrating values in curricular and pedagogical activities has become a pressing need to produce responsible social citizens with good hearts and great minds. To cultivate these traits, values need to be reflected in and be the part of school curriculum and pedagogy. In this context, school practices play a pivotal role to make values a part of everyday activity. This study attempts to examine such practices in public, private, and traditional/religious schools in Nepal. Schools were selected purposively by visiting their online profiles. Information was collected from twenty school heads via a semi-structured interview, school visits, and classroom observations. The study found that private and public schools have initiated teaching/integrating values through a range of curricular structures and pedagogical practices like happiness curriculum, IB curriculum, education in human values curriculum, living school curriculum, culture-based [sanskar] curriculum, progressive learning approach, and innovative pedagogical models. It was also found that schools have designed their internal curricula within the spirit of the national curriculum framework to integrate soft skills and values in regular lessons. Traditional/religious schools have been found blending general courses and certain religious values like Gurukul schools- teaching Vedic values, Madrasa schools- teaching Islamic values, Gonpas/Monasteries- teaching Buddhist/Tibetan values, and St. Xavier schools- teaching Jesuit values. Having these noticeable initiatives in values education in Nepal, effective endorsement from the policy level is required for visible impacts.

Background: Education in Nepal

Nepal has a brief history of modern education. It is even shorter so far as education for the commoners is concerned. Tracing educational history in Nepal falls roughly under three periods: before the *Rana* rule (till 1846), during the *Rana* rule (1846-1951), and after the *Rana* rule (1951–present). In the first period, education was primarily based on the teachings of religious priests or gurus in *Gurukul*, *Gompas*, and *Madrasas*. In the second, a modern English education system was introduced but limited to the *Rana* families, people from high castes, and classes. After the end of the *Rana* rule, education became accessible to the public. Dr. Hugh Wood, the education specialist who was hired to design the education system for newly democratized Nepal, recalls his observation:

I found a unique situation in 1953 when I was asked to help in the development of an educational system for Nepal. School records in 1952 revealed about 50 Gompas, a Sanskrit system including a few primary schools, 3 secondary schools, and a college that followed the British system for the *Ranas* and a handful of other elites. An increasing number of, perhaps 100 vernacular schools near the Indian border (following Indian prototypes of British schools but in the local language), and few basic schools are forgoing Gandhi's indigenous schools in India (Wood, 1976 p. 155).

Reflecting on this situation, in a seven-decade journey of modern education, Nepal has made remarkable progress in the field as the number of schools has reached 35,674 with a 97.3% net enrollment rate, and 78% literacy rate (Center for Education and Human Resource Development, 2022). Several commissions,

frameworks, initiatives, and programs since 1956 to the date such as the Report of National Education Planning Commission (NEPC) 1956, Report of *Sarvangina Rastriya Shiksha Samiti* (SRSS) 1961, Primary School Curriculum (PSC) 1968/ 1992/2009, Report of National Education System Plan (NESP) 1971, Primary Education Project (PEP) 1979, World Conference on Education for All (EFA) 1990, Report of National Education Commission (NEC) 1992, Education for All (EFA) by 2015, School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP), 2009-16, School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) 2016-21, Basic Education Curriculum (BEC), 2012, National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF) 2007 and 2019, National Education Policy (NEP) 2019, SDG 4: Nepal National Framework (NNF) 2019), Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2021-2030 have contributed for these achievements (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2019).

Policies and plans formulated over the period envision the development of students' potential in an integrated manner, making learning a sustainable, life-long, and holistic project, producing 21st-century citizens who are physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually balanced and responsible to the society they live in. These frameworks extensively contemplate indigenous knowledge and skills, cultural values, and history as the foundation.

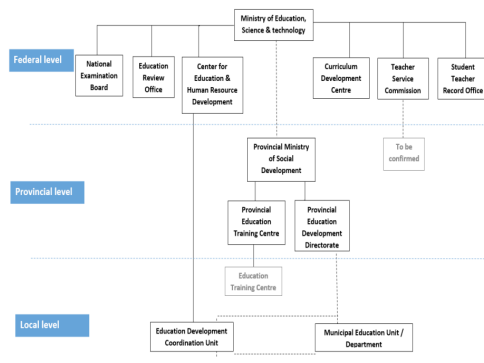
School Education Governance and Service Delivery in Nepal

To address the rapidly developing and expanding educational sector, the government of Nepal has decentralized the education system for effective implementation and monitoring of the policies, plans, and programs run by the Ministry of Education. Under the new federal structure, 753 local governments have been given the responsibility to deliver

public education and monitor the private sector. The report of Nepal: Education Sector Analysis 2021 states that the federal level is primarily responsible for policy formulation, coordination, quality assurance, and setting standards and measures to strengthen local governments to deliver school education effectively and efficiently (MoEST, 2021).

Figure 1

School Education Governance and Service Delivery in Nepal



Source: Nepal Education Sector Analysis, MoEST, 2021

The eighth amendment of the education act in 2016, restructured school education in basic (ECED/PPE to grade 8) and secondary (grades 9 to 12) levels of education. There are mainly 3 types of schools in Nepal- Public schools (also referred community schools, supported by the government), private schools (also referred institutional schools, supported by the parents and trustees), and traditional/religious schools (supported by the government, charity organizations, and community volunteers). There are 35,674 schools in operation throughout the country including community/ government schools 27813, institutional/private schools 6732, and traditional/religious schools 1129 (Ministry

of Education, Science, and Technology, 2021).

Values Education Initiatives

A synoptic review of the educational history in Nepal reveals that the inculcation of values in its educational policies and objectives has been emphasized from the very beginning. Going back to the 1950s, the report of the Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NEPC, 1955) clearly stated the need for values education. The report has given prominent space to the importance of values (personal, social, and global) in education and the holistic development of a child. The objectives of school education, the report outlines, are:

To develop civic competencies- attitudes of responsibility and cooperation, feeling of national unity and solidarity, a desire for self-sufficiency and willingness to help oneself; to develop aesthetic competencies- the appreciation of art and culture, music, dance, literature, and folklore; to develop personal competencies- good mental, emotional, and physical health and moral and spiritual values; to develop talent... enable an individual to make a maximum contribution to the social welfare; and to develop a broad understanding of life, the world, its environment, the universe, etc. (NEPC, 1955, p. 91)

The report stresses the importance of integrated pedagogical practices to inculcate these values. "it should not be assumed that these experiences are unrelated or provided in separate subjects; the commission believes that primary education should be highly integrated" (p. 94).

From the very first commission to the date, school education envisions producing students who can explore new knowledge, connect learning with life, develop good moral character, combine theory and practice for self-transformation, and update them with the changing global scenario. It also aims at making students responsible social citizens who are conscious about their duties and capable enough to promote human rights, freedom, justice, and equality. They are also expected to contribute to the sustainable development of the individual, society, and nation by practicing their creative, critical, analytical, and good decision-making skills. Furthermore, it also believes to produce students who are moral, cultured, sensitive towards social harmony, ecological balance, and conflict resolution and committed to sustainable peace, equipped with modern knowledge, and 21st-century skills (NCF, 2019).

The national objectives of school education equally focus on the goal of educational practices for the holistic development of an individual child and the relationship with society. The national objectives of school education would be to help prepare citizens with good conduct and morals for a healthy social and collective lifestyle by promoting supreme human values inherent in each individual, national culture and dignity, social values, beliefs, and experience; ... foster the feelings of peace, friendship, goodwill, tolerance, and fraternity in the local, national and international context and adopt one's conduct accordingly; ...prepare citizens respectful to the nation, nationality, democracy, judicious, creative, self-honored, respecting others and feel proud of being Nepali; help prepare citizens committed to conserve and promote Nepali art, aesthetic values, ideals, and other specialties (NCF, 2019, p.44-45).

This shows that importance is given to developing productive, creative, qualitative, nationalistic, socially responsible, and globally competitive humanistic citizens to cope with the changing world. For this, it is necessary to design a framework for the effective execution of the constitutional provisions, national objectives, and international commitments. The education needs to inculcate eastern thoughts like *Buddhism*, *Sankhya*, and *Shaiva* introduced in Nepal. It is equally important to balance the overpowering of western culture over our traditional cultures.

Education policies and school practices need to be guided in this direction (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2018). Having said this, values education, more than a separate discipline to be included in the national curriculum, is an approach or an educational philosophy to be integrated into our pedagogical practices to bring the fundamental aspects of being human into the real-life situation. It is not an educational program to be graduated to join a profession in life but rather a means to pursue the purpose of life (Pokhrel, 2021). Therefore, this paper aimed to explore the school practices concerning values teaching and integration under the existing educational structure in Nepal.

Methodology

This paper is based on a qualitative-phenomenological study that explores the 'lived experiences of the participants. The information was collected from 20 educators (teachers, principals, and experts) from different schools in Nepal. A semi-structured interview guideline was used followed by school visits and classroom observations. Schools were selected purposively via online profiles and participants were mailed an

invitation letter with a clear statement of the research's purpose (SRP). The interview date and time were fixed via telephone conversation. Instead of pseudo names, all the participants were given codes representing abbreviated names and participant numbers (eg NK_P21) to maintain research ethics of confidentiality. All the interviews were audio recorded, thoroughly transcribed, coded, categorized, and developed into concepts/themes. The themes were further corroborated by the information obtained from the school visits, classroom observations, and discussions. The use of multiple methods aims to increase the reliability and trustworthiness of the results.

Results and Discussion

The school practices were studied at two levels: a preliminary survey of school profiles through their websites followed by a school visit, an interview with teachers/authorities,

and classroom observation. Information collected from these multiple sources reveals that despite several constraints of survival and quality goals, schools have internalized the importance of values education and taken good initiation via various practices. Community schools receive frequent training on professional development, STEAM education, integrated curriculum, and innovative pedagogy. Similarly, institutional schools are found profoundly working on values through different approaches. On top of that traditional/religious schools have their courses on values along with the mainstream curriculum. On the foundation of the national curriculum, school practices are diversified with additional curricular activities on values as presented in the table below:

Table 1

Schools Practicing Value-Based Curriculum (the figure in parenthesis indicates the number of schools selected for this study)

Values-based curriculum and pedagogy	Practiced in...
STEAM and integrated curriculum (4)	Both Community and institutional schools
Education in Human Values (2)	Institutional: Sathya Sai Schools
School Made Curriculum for values integration (4)	Institutional schools
IB Curriculum: IB learners' profile for values (2)	Institutional schools: IB Schools
Vedic/Hindu values (2)	Traditional/Religious schools: Gurukul/Sanskrit/ Ashram
Islamic Values (2)	Traditional/Religious schools: Madrasa
Buddhist/Tibetan values (2)	Traditional/Religious schools: Gompa/Monastery:
Jesuit values (2)	St. Xavier's/St. Mary's Schools:

School Practices

STEAM Curriculum and Values

STEAM education or curriculum has now gained popularity as an educational movement in various parts of the world (Liao, 2016) which originated from the

STEM initiative and the recent addition of the arts (A) in it. STEAM, abbreviated to science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics, is a transformative curricular and pedagogical approach (Mehta et al., 2019). Schools in Nepal have started this as a process of transforming school education

by reforming curricula, textbooks, and pedagogical approaches for more integrated education at the basic level and secondary levels. Kathmandu University, School of Education (KUSOED) has collaborated with many community and institutional schools.

STEAM is a radical response to the compartmentalized education system and a roadmap for holistic learning (Luitel, 2021). STEAM practitioners use more diversification of teaching-learning methods to ease the learning process. Sachpatzidis (2022) opines that STEAM provides an opportunity for collaborative teaching, exchange of ideas, easier substitutes, and more importantly productive common planning times and a feeling of the shift from ME to WE among the practitioners.

STEAM is a transformative education that aims to bring some change to the existing pedagogical system. We have focused so far on teaching knowledge and skills at the school level but the 'A' of STEAM refers to the Arts, encapsulating norms, values, traditions, and culture. After teaching the student that there are people who have done many professions in society, not by telling the student, but by keeping it in the group, the student finally knows the importance of the group and its good side. Therefore, students should be taught to work together in groups rather than competing. There should be a competition without making others feel weak. (Panta & Luitel, 2020)

Furthermore, one of the practitioners of a community school opined during the interview that STEAM has clear strategies for investigative tasks, project-based learning, reflective thinking, place-based pedagogy, a democratic learning environment, and

art-based teaching. Collectively, it helps to transform a learner from a mere disciplinary learner to a complete human being. In addition to this, Luitel (2022) advocates that STEAM is a shift in the existing approach:

A shift from knowledge giving to knowledge constructing; a shift from a blind copy of the global curriculum, pedagogy, and textbook to a blending of local knowledge, culture, costumes, values, and practices to global; a shift from educating silos (stand-alone disciplines) to interdisciplinary approach as the real world is not categorized in a disciplinary way; a shift from information to values, information is just a click away now but what we need to enrich our students with values, culture, and the locality; a shift from a general curriculum/pedagogy to a place-based curriculum/pedagogy that can address the local needs and values; and finally STEAM is a shift from problem-centric approach to a solution-centric.

In this context, STEAM, apparently, looks more about integrating core science subjects but the 'A' of STEAM i.e. arts adds the beauty by incorporating arts, literature, culture, values, norms, and various practices. This is how STEAM curriculum can be helpful in integrating values.

Schools with Values-Based Curriculum

Many schools in Kathmandu have designed their internal curriculum to integrate values based on the national curriculum framework. While designing so, schools have adopted both integrated and separate teaching of values via different curricular and co-curricular activities.

In our school, we have been following the national curriculum but within this, we have designed our curriculum to integrate values; we have taken out a few hours from the government's design to allot time for values teaching. It is more challenging for grades 8, 10, and 12 as we are bound to complete the course and syllabus. In other grades, we have been taking 60/40 of evaluation and practices; we have our SMC- school-made curriculum, in which we distribute at least one class a week on values in which we focus on local practices connecting with the course content. The ever-increasing social complications demand more classes on values; we have been integrating soft skills and values designing our curriculum and lesson plans based on the national curriculum framework. (AT_P10)

Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV)

SSEHV was founded in India by educationist and philanthropist Sathya Sai Baba (Jumsai,

1997). SSEHV as a holistic pedagogy is under successful operation in 160 countries all over the world (Taplin & Parahakaran, 2021). SSEHV a secular pedagogy concerned with character formation and balanced development of mind, body, and soul via everyday educational practices. SSEHV has been practiced in different schools in Kathmandu, Pokhara, and Dharan in Nepal. It includes all domains of human personality-physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and more importantly spiritual with a greater aim of bringing out human excellence at all levels by connecting 3H (head, heart, and hand), helping students realize their potential, and preparing students for selfless services (Taplin & Parahakaran, 2021). The SSEHV program does not impose religious ideology but encourages educators to look for the values and messages inherent in their own cultures (Taplin, 2014). It is based on five independent and universal human values truth, right conduct, peace, love, and non-violence (Bhargava, 2015). These five human values are further divided into sub-values but are not exhaustive.

Table 2

The Fundamental Human Values and their Components

Core Values	Sub-Values
Truth	Accuracy, curiosity, discrimination, honesty, human understanding, integrity, self-reflection, sincerity
Right-conduct or Righteousness	efficiency, dependability, endurance, healthy living, determination, independence, initiative, perseverance, courage
Peace	Calmness, concentration, contentment, equanimity, optimism, self-acceptance, self-discipline, self-esteem
Love	consideration, compassion, humaneness, forgiveness, tolerance, selflessness, interdependence
Non-violence	Benevolence, cooperation, concern for ecological balance, respect for diversity, respect for life, respect for property

Adapted from (Taplin & Parahakaran, 2021)

SSEHV combines spiritual education and secular education by integrating human values and creates an environment and culture of love by adopting five teaching techniques - silent sitting, prayers/quotations, storytelling, group activities, and group singing where a teacher is an exemplar. An SSEHV facilitator also revealed that there are some additional practices such as acceiling on desires, W.A.T.C.H., mind mapping, and selfless service. The first component helps students to develop self-control and prepares them to know the limit as well as the right use of resources like time, money, food, and others (NP_P9).

Similarly, the W.A.T.C.H technique which is abbreviated to watch your Words-Actions-Thoughts-Character-Heart helps in reflecting upon the self. The third part, mind mapping, is more helpful in developing students' cognitive power by reflecting upon a series of 'Wh' questions like what is it? What does it look like? How does it make me feel? How does it make others feel? What are the limits of the value? What is the opposite of the values? What are related values? What are the obstacles to practicing the value? What are the benefits? (Taplin & Parahakaran, 2021). Community service is another part of values teaching. Here, students learn through first-hand experiences.

Schools with International Baccalaureate (IB) Curriculum

The International Baccalaureate (IB) imagines a world community of academic institutions, educators, and students with a shared mission to empower children with knowledge, values, and skills to create a better and more peaceful world (IBO, 2019). IB is based on the pedagogical principle that enables children with the intellectual, emotional, and social skills needed to live, learn, and work in the globalizing world. IB has been focusing

on school education with its four different programs in over 159 countries worldwide. IB Primary Year Program (IB-PYP) for the kids of age group 3-12 years.

In this program, students are encouraged to have queries, and inquiry-based learning and they learn to ask questions connected to real-world situations. IB Middle Year Program (IB-MYP) for the age group 11-16 years. It focuses on students' understanding of the self in a global context, knowing about their identity, culture, and relationship, globalization, and sustainability along with language, literature, arts, and physical education. IB Diploma Program (IB-DP) and IB Career-related Program (IB-CP) for the 16-19 years age group.

In Nepal, there are seven IB-accredited schools and five IB candidate schools under operation with IB-PYP, IB-MYP, and IB-DP programs. In IB schools learning moves beyond the classroom to the community for real-life experiences.

In our school we don't prescribe any books for students, they are taken to the community, or the community is brought to them based on the themes designed. Moreover, we attempt to instruct our students about real-world situations by making them involved in every local festival, ritual, and practice either in school or out of school. We prepare our students for life, not for exams. For this, we adopt creative, critical, and higher-order thinking, community outreach, and connecting to the globe. (PM, R14)

IB programs in schools provide an education that enables students to make sense of the complications of the world around them and the skills and dispositions needed to overcome through four fundamental and interrelated concepts like International Mindedness,

IB Learner's Profile, Broad, Balanced, Conceptual, and Connected Curriculum, and Varied Pedagogical Approaches (IBO, 2019).

International Mindedness

It encapsulates shared humanity, and a sense of openness and connectedness in an individual's way of thinking, being, and acting. Students reflect on their perspectives, culture, and identities and then compare with others by engaging with diverse beliefs, values, and experiences. Multilingualism is an effective

tool to develop international mindedness as IB students must study one second language. While doing this, along with language they learn the culture and develop intercultural understanding and mutual respect.

IB Learners' Profile

The ten attributes of the IB learners' profile make the educational activity more holistic and life-long. These attributes can be the means to integrate values discussed in this study:

Table 3

Attributes, Learning Outcome, and Values

Attributes	Learning outcomes	Values
Inquirers	uncovering and nurturing curiosity, developing interest and skill in research, providing greater enthusiasm for life-long learning; developing a passion for innovation	curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking are integrated through this attribute.
Knowledgeable	exploring the inter-, cross-, and trans-disciplinary knowledge including the issues of local and global significance	values of connectedness.
Thinkers	developing creative and critical thinking, reasoned, ethical and rational decisions, questioning and reflecting	values of creative and critical thinking
Communicators	multilingual and intercultural communication, being good listeners, and speakers, and collaborating with others	openness collaboration and the common good,
Principled	high level of honesty and integrity, an intense sense of justice, respect, and fairness, value the individual and collective dignity, accountability for their actions and the consequences	integrity, honesty, fairness, justice, respect for dignity and rights, responsibility
Open-minded	critical appreciation of own cultural values, traditions, and the values of others; acknowledging the multiple perspectives	solidarity, living together, mutual respect,
Caring	showing empathy, compassion, and respect towards the needs and feelings of others, committed to service and making a positive difference in the lives of others and the environment	empathy, compassion, respect, selfless services, caring for the non-human world
Risk-takers	approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, explore new roles, ideas, and strategies, show resilience and determination in their work	brevity, independence, resilience, confidence determination,

Balanced	understand the importance of balancing intellectual, physical, and emotional aspects to achieve personal and collective well-being	values of emotional management
Reflective	consider their learning and experience, able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations, develop an ability to reflect on their learning, and articulate how they learned	Understanding the self

Adapted from IBO and modified by the researchers

Broad, Balanced, Conceptual, and Connected Curriculum

IB curriculum framework is designed to promote conceptual learning with a due focus on knowledge construction and organization knowledge. The program head of an IB school explains the diversity and connectedness of the IB curriculum as:

...in the PYP, students explore six trans-disciplinary themes of global significance: who we are, where we are in place and time, how we express ourselves, how the world works, and how we organize ourselves and share the planet. Similarly, in the MYP, students explore six global themes: identities and relationships, personal and cultural expression, orientation in space and time, scientific and technical innovation, fairness and development, and globalization and sustainability. In the DP, the curriculum consists of six subject groups with three core elements including the theory of knowledge (TOK). This course encourages students to become more aware of their perspectives and assumptions through an exploration of the fundamental question of how we know what we know. In the CP, students combine the study of DP courses with career-related studies (Lamichhane, 2020).

The Pedagogical Approaches

In all IB programs teaching is inquiry-based, focused on conceptual understanding, developed in local and global contexts, focused on effective teamwork and collaboration, designed to remove barriers to learning, and informed by assessment. The approaches are centered on a cycle of inquiry, action, and reflection that informs the daily activities of teachers and learners. They also place a great deal of emphasis on relationships. This reflects the IB's belief that educational outcomes are profoundly shaped by the relationships between teachers and students, and celebrates the many ways that people work together to construct meaning and make sense of the world. Like teaching approaches, IB programs focus on certain learning skills that are grounded in the belief that learning how to learn is fundamental to a student's education with due emphasis on thinking skills, research skills, communication skills, self-management skills, and affective skills.

Religious/Traditional Schools

Religion is a form of social capital that acts as a source of social control and provides reinforcement for social behavior, and punishment in case of lack of altruism. Religiosity provides youth with moral directives to lead their decisions and behaviors. Values/character education cannot be separated from religion as the positive values from various religions are the source of attitude and behavior. Thus,

absolute morals that come from religion must be instilled from an early age because it is related to the good and bad doctrine in behavior (Dewi, 2020). To practice, preserve, and promote the traditional values, norms, customs, and practices and make them more practical and continue them children can be provided such education through traditional/religious institutions (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, 2018). The government of Nepal has institutionalized and recognized *Sanskrit, Vedvidhyaashram/ Gurukul, Madrasa, and Gonpa/Monasteries* as traditional or religious, and *St. Xavier's* are acknowledged as missionary schools in Nepal.

Sanskrit / Vedvidhyaashram / Gurukul Schools

The Gurukul system of teaching was widely practiced in the Vedic age when *Acharana* (discipline) and *Sanskara* (values of living a cultured life) were in priority. The Gurukul system of education was the primary education system in Nepal before 1846. Gurukul means the home of the teacher (*guru*- teacher, *kul*- home). In this system, students visited the guru's home to acquire knowledge. Both gurus and *shishyas* (students) used to live together which created a stronger bond between them. The gurus did not charge any fee. However, the *shishyas* used to offer some goods and services to the gurus as '*Guru Dakshina*'. The gurus were given high respect and positioned next to God (*Acharya Devobhava- a teacher is like a god*). Contrary to present-day education, in the Gurukul system homework, assessments, marks, and ranking were not important. The most important thing was acquiring life skills, good culture, morality, and values. Overall, the Gurukul system focused on the art of living, and emphasized the holistic learning of an individual, leading to a balanced life. Under a similar principle, at present Gurukul

system is institutionalized and brought under the mainstream education in Nepal.

The government of Nepal has recognized Gurukul schools under its umbrella of traditional/religious schools. *There are about 150 registered (formal and informal) Gurukuls all over the country* (DrKNS_P14). These schools are providing education in modern subjects like English, Nepali, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and some traditional courses on *Veda, Upanisid, Karmakanda, Sanskrit language/literature, Astrology, Yog, Ayurved, and Naturopathy* to name a few. The rules are equal to all from morning to evening. All wake up together; go for *Dhyana, Japa*, dining, regular classes, and Seva activities, all come under a particular system called *Dharma*.

All the studies are done together, students in Gurukul learn everything that they need in their real-life situations; students don't have fixed time like 9-4 in other schools; students learn everything at any time even at midnight on some occasions staying jagram (stay awaken whole night). (DrKNS_P14)

Gurukul system has five *shalas* (home): 1) *Pathshala*- a place to study; *Yagyashala* – a place to perform different rituals; *Goshala* (shelter to cows): serving cows – worshiped as the goddess Laxmi in Hindu culture; *Athithishala* (the guest house): all the visitors, guests, parents, passersby may stay and they need to be provided services; and *Pakshala (the kitchen)*: where food is prepared. Purity in food and preparation, *Sahabhoj* (eating together) helps to create harmony. How much to eat, how to eat, silent eating, remembering the providers, and being grateful to all associated to bring the food to the plate are some dining etiquettes in the Gurukuls.

Students learn the value of living together, eating together, and working together, just like the sloka goes [ॐसहनाववतु। सहनौभुनक्तु। सहवीर्यंकरवावहै। तेजसवनिवधीतमस्तुमावदि वषिवहै। ॐशान्तःशान्तःशान्तः॥] meaning- *May the lord protect us all, May he nourish us all, May both of us make effort/work together, May what we learn to be intellectually clear, let there not be any misunderstanding among us.* In this sense, the Gurukul teaches us the values of togetherness and harmony.

One of the most effective ways Gurukul/ Ashrams/Sanskrit schools can integrate/ inculcate values in students is through the Sanskrit language. *Sanskrit is not only a language but also a source of culture, values, norms, philosophy, and science, opines Dr. KN Swami, Ex-Principal at a Gurukul school.* Every language bears culture. An individual who is unaware of the language can't learn the culture and vice versa. As a sloka goes:

[जानातविविधि भाषा जानातविविधिः कलाः। आत्मनं स न जानातयौ न जानातिसंस्कृतम्॥] meaning: one who knows multiple languages knows the art, architecture, festivals, rituals, and many more cultural things; but the one who does not know the language, particularly Sanskrit, can't know himself/herself.

The problem with our education system is we imported English culture along with the English language. Teaching English as a language is necessary but adopting their culture over our local culture is attacking our values. Students know how pizza is made but don't know about *selroti* (a traditional sweet food item), this is the major question. (DrKNS_P14).

The *Sanskrit/ Vedvidhyaashram/ Gurukul* Schools are the platform where students can

learn their native culture, and values, and connect them to the modern world.

Gonpa/Bihars/Monasteries

“Education is not merely the basis of attaining happiness in one's own life, one should also serve humanity and the people of one's country and region”, opines a Buddhist guru Rinpoche at Namobuddha monastery. The central aim of the Buddhist Education system is to facilitate the all-round and holistic development of a child's personality, be it intellectual, moral, physical, or mental development. It focuses on incorporating mutual reverence and affection between a teacher and student. Teachers focus on imparting etiquette, discipline, abstinence, and simplicity. While formal education is focused on the relationship between a teacher and their students for a particular grade or period, the Buddhist education system emphasizes ensuring a lifelong relationship between pupils and their teachers.

We give importance to secular education along with religious and philosophical teachings. We offer a general education in Tibetan, English, and Nepali with complete training in religion and culture to inculcate values in students. The teachers give a Dharma-related talk every other week. In addition to the religious activities of listening, contemplating, and meditating, the students also learn lama dancing, ritual practice, chanting, playing instruments, Tibetan spelling, grammar, writing, and recitation to foster a monastic community. (Team Liverate Education, 2021)

The goal of Buddhist teaching is to bring everyone on a common platform and help achieve the highest form of human satisfaction through knowledge, meditation, and self-

introspection. Buddha argued that ultimate wisdom or ‘*Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi*’ is not something that can be acquired but it is intrinsic to one’s nature and a person needs to delve into the realm of self to explore it. The Buddhist education system gained popularity when it started imparting education to people from all races, across continents. It focuses on the moral, intellectual, and spiritual development of a student to dive into the state of ultimate wisdom and equality. One of the organized and effective education systems that continue to influence society in modern times, Buddhist thought was intended to bring harmony which is essential for progress in all forms.

Madrasa Schools

Zaheed Pervej, a professor at Tribhuvan University, says that there are about four thousand (registered and unregistered) Madrasas currently operating in Nepal and about one-fourth of them are registered in the mainstream education system. According to him, they follow the national curriculum framework and receive government aid. A madrasa blends traditional education with modern to keep up with the changing times. Madrasas are dedicated to Islamic teachings with their curriculum centered on the holy Quran.

Madrasas teach Nepali, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, General Knowledge, and Computer Studies along with the Urdu language and their religious scriptures. Unlike the traditional approach, most Islamic communities have decided to modernize basic teachings to prepare Muslim children capable to compete with other English medium schools (Rajbansi, 2019). Addressing the changing scenario, the chairperson of the management committee of a local Madrasa, said

...our children had to make a tough choice between an English-medium school and a madrasa but now our children can study all subjects. We took a different approach to run the madrasa since knowledge of Urdu along with other subjects is important for our children (qtd. in Rajbansi, 2019).

Urdu ki Paheli, a book of the Urdu language is prescribed to make students aware of the language, culture, history, tradition, rules, and regulations, customs of Islam, said the principal of a local Madrasa. As there are teachers and students from the non-Muslim communities, it is helping to develop solidarity among us, the greatest value to be learned, remarked the principal further. Urdu is important for our children, as they learn about our history, culture, and traditions, said Ansari but receiving modern education is also equally important as it enables them to prepare for their lives ahead. The madrasa offers both remarked one parent.

Madrasas are primarily set up to teach Islamic values and tradition but now they are also serving as a prime model of how religious education can go hand in hand with secular values. Madrasa now is an example of religious coexistence. The schools are committed to providing quality education for Muslims and non-Muslims alike (Bichir, 2018).

The educators in Madrasas ensure that they never encourage or impose any religious ideologies or oblige any Islamic rituals to the non-Muslim children instead they learn mutual coexistence. The comfortable presence of non-Muslim teachers and students proves the practice of conscious secularism. However, there are a lot of misconceptions and misunderstandings about Madrasas and

the students enrolled there which need to be altered remarked a principal of a Madrasa in Kathmandu.

Jesuits Schools

Nepal Jesuit Society started St. Xavier's in 1951 in Godavari at the invitation of the Government of Nepal. It started with 60 students as a boys' school but was later converted into a co-ed and now supports more than 10,000 students at all levels throughout the country. Jesuit education, guided by the Ignatian pedagogy, is dedicated to the holistic development of individuals engaging young minds in the physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social domains. It attempts to develop the whole student- the mind, the body, and the soul (Semick, 2022). It highly regards values and academic excellence. Encourages learners to look within, the inner self, and see the God within and in every creature that exists on earth. Special attention is paid to ethical issues, values, and character development preparing students to become lifelong learners. Furthermore, Jesuit education helps students to be open-minded, intellectually competent, religious, loving, caring, compassionate, and dedicated to service to humanity and social justice.

The pedagogical approach is more interdisciplinary and rigorous. The pedagogy comprises five themes: context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation (Leighter & Kathleen, 2019). Students are engaged through a detailed analysis of context, engage in dialogue, involve in the lived experience of things, and internalize through reflection. While doing this, students develop analytical, critical, and creative thinking skills, develop accountability and responsibility, and leadership qualities- a complete individual.

The values of Jesuit education are rooted in the vision of St. Ignatius, founder of the Jesuit Order. These values prepare students to be wiser and more compassionate. Some of the values practiced in Jesuit education include:

- Care for the whole person: it emphasizes that each person is a unique creation of God, a deep respect for diversity and difference, and an emphasis on holistic care for the mind, body, and spirit.
- Discernment: it is another value that encourages students to act for the greater good. It is practiced through prayer, reflection, consultation with others, and considering the full impact of actions from diverse angles.
- Presence of God in all things: students value that god is presented in the all peoples and cultures, in all areas of study and learning, and every human experience.
- Magis: it means 'more'. This is a hallmark of Jesuit education that challenges students to go beyond what is expected, interacting with the world with generosity, excellence, and empathy modeled by personal accountability and high expectations of achievement.
- Reflection: it is another foundational value of Jesuit education. Students are invited to pause to consider the world around them and their place within it before making decisions. This includes challenging the status quo, acknowledging biases, and accepting responsibility for actions. Service to mankind: this value is illustrated through community service programs, service-learning semesters, immersion

experiences, and various volunteer opportunities for students. Solidarity and kinship: students work together, develop relationships with their surrounding communities and share their talents and skills to help and serve others. This value is practiced through community-engaged learning, where students work with community members to come up with innovative solutions.

Conclusions

Irrespective of the school type (public/private/religious), policies, curricula, and pedagogies, the education system succeeds in its core objectives when it addresses the humanistic aspects of students' development. All the sophisticated infrastructures, modern facilities, innovative methods, child-centered pedagogies, and creative activities stand futile if they do not impart humanity among learners. Nothing restricts a school from an honest execution of the concept of values inculcation. No matter what the affiliation is, what curriculum is adopted, how it is funded; if there is a readiness to work keeping the learner in the center, everything is possible. For this, any institution needs to go through certain steps such as creating values consciousness (as perception precedes practice), developing the language of values, starting to live in the values, and then helping in transferring values. Values need to be underpinned in every aspect within the school like school ethos, policy, infrastructure, classroom, curriculum, pedagogy, human relationship.

The whole school practices need to be conducive to inculcating universal positive human values like justice, tolerance, love, truthfulness, generosity by helping students to overcome restricting values such as greed, envy, intolerance, selfishness. In this

connection, regardless of the strategies and approaches adopted for values integration, it is equally crucial to have a consistent attitude, honesty, integrity, and serious priority of all stakeholders regarding the values being integrated. To address the learners' holistic experiences, the whole school community and culture shoulder greater responsibilities including values education. Schools need to design their curriculum and pedagogical approaches to materialize this concept.

Declaration

Ethical Standards

The authors assert that ethical approval for the publication of this perspective piece was not required by their local Ethics Committee.

Conflicts of Interest

None.

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RKP conducted the fieldwork, conceptualized and drafted the article. BA and MSB supervised the research work and revised the article for submission. BA corresponded the publication procedures. All authors gave final approval of the version to be published.

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