

An Analysis of Educational Practices in Karnali Province through an Inclusive Education Perspective

Ravi Lal Bhatta

Mid-West University, Nepal

Email: rbhatta2008@gmail.com

Article History: Received: 5 October 2025, Revised: 5 September 2025, Accepted: 20 January 2026

Corresponding Author: Ravi Lal Bhatta ✉ rbhatta2008@gmail.com

Copyright Information: Copyright 2026 © The author(s). This journal is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\) License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Abstract

The objective of this study was to examine the effective management of educational processes from the perspective of inclusive education practices in Karnali Province, Nepal. The study used a convergent mixed-methods research design. The quantitative data was collected through online survey form from 25 academicians from teachers, University Lecturers, Administrators, and others, regardless of their affiliation with public or private educational institutions in Nepal and the qualitative information was collected from Random and purposive sampling techniques that were used to collect data from the respondents. Data and information were analyzed using quantitative and thematic technique, respectively. Inclusive schools have barriers and difficulties in managing teachers and students to attain curricular goals. Political influence, lack of training, retaining qualified and experienced teachers, lack of welcoming environment to all kinds of children with disabilities or without disabilities, managerial challenges related to leadership, teachers, students, pedagogic approach, technical, financial, administrative and health are critical for managing Inclusive schools and new opportunities have also began for head teachers' capacity development, teachers' professional development, use of new learning and teaching approach and pedagogical shift in teaching learning processes. There is a need for various pedagogic approaches and local community and government' involvement to motivate students and develop inclusive schools. The study concludes that schools have difficulties in managing teachers and students to attain curricular goals. As the local governments have the constitutional and contextual roles to formulate educational policy and manage to suit the local context. They must be responsible for, and accountable to, managing, supervising, and supporting the schools in their jurisdictions.

Key Words: Leadership, Persons with disabilities, Policy, Strategies, Inclusive Education

Introduction

When I visited the schools in Surkhet in Karnali province, I found the discrimination among students who were from different group of people. The children behaved differently from the leadership and teachers on the basis of their caste and backwardness. As a result, I decided to conduct research to examine the leadership roles in schools in Karnali Province through online digital questionnaires to identify challenges and opportunities in implementing inclusive education practices. I have delimited my data collection for two weeks through an open digital questionnaire within academic institutions in Karnali province. The respondents were the educational leaders, professors, researchers, lecturers, teachers, students and academicians. The Government of Nepal realized the need and importance of inclusive education when the concept of education for all had developed. 'Dakar framework for Action' describes the challenges of education in this way, Vayrynen (2000) said,

Education for all must take account of the needs of the poor and the most advantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic

minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflicts, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs (p. 130).

Different people have different understandings of inclusive education. In Nepal, the concept of inclusive education had initiated in around 2000 and the practice is going on. There are diversity and discrimination in terms of caste, color, rich, and poor, competency such as slow, medium and fast learners, patriarchal norms and values. Unless and until the people understand the knowledge of diversity, we don't understand the value of inclusive education and we cannot manage the practice of Inclusive education. People behave each other differently and seem somehow discrimination in terms of capacity, ethnicity, colour, caste, rich and poor. People have problems of equality and equity. Ideally school is the place from where a formal education is provided.

Objectives

The main purpose of study was to examine the management of implementing inclusive education practices in the Karnali Province of Nepal. The Questionnaire based on the specific objectives of the study, included:

- How do educational leaders support or hinder the implementation of inclusive education practices in their institutions?
- What practices, strategies, and policies are currently used to promote inclusive education in the Karnali Province?
- What challenges and opportunities related to the Karnali Province—such as geographic isolation, socioeconomic conditions, and cultural attitudes toward persons with disabilities—affect the promotion and sustainability of inclusive education by educational leaders?

On the basis of above questionnaires, the role of educational leadership examined and explored the existing problems of inclusive education in Karnali province of Nepal. There is a gap between perception and practice in management in implementing Inclusive education. The reality is one but the activities are different. Conclusions has been drawn on the basis of findings. Some major conclusions reflecting immediate concerns and practical implications to ensure inclusive education in Karnali Province in Nepal. After deriving the major conclusion, an attempt has been made to discuss them and reflect upon their implications for the inclusive education in Nepal.

Literature Review

Policies on Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education (IE) has been a topic of major and worldwide educational discussion during the 1990s decade (Holst, 2000). Nepal's first attempt at educating children with disabilities was initiated through a Special Education Programme for children with visual impairment, hearing impairment, mental retardation and physical impairment. The Special Education Council founded in 1973, oversaw the nation's special education initiatives and created schools under its control around the nation. Depending on the particular handicap, the special education services were tailored to the children's needs. As a crucial component of the Basic and Primary Education project's first phase BPEP, 1992-99. Similarly, as per article 31 of Constitution of Nepal 2072, right relating to education section 1, every citizen shall have the right of access to basic education. However, the management

has not been covered all children to bring in the main stream of education as children are out of education as the national data said.

The concept of inclusive education came in to discussion by Scandinavian countries in international forum from Salamanca statement (1994) coining the term as inclusion. The concept of inclusion initiated soon after it was developed and implemented this principle in Scandinavian countries. In the light of concerns raised over the effective inclusion models (Mills, 1998). In addition, Riehl (2000), reviewing the literature, mentions that school cultures are reflected in the norms, values, and understanding that are manifested implicitly or explicitly through structures, activities, and interactions within the school. The Nepal Disability Rights Act, passed in 2017, aims to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of people with disabilities, including access to education and employment opportunities (Government of Nepal, 2017).

For the education of children with disabilities, special education and integrated education are the two primary forms of service. Special, integrated and inclusive education are topics of discussion in the nation. While some experts support integrated education in regular schools, others support special education. Some contend that without infrastructure, professional training, and awareness, implementing inclusive education is not feasible. Children without disabilities do not have enough teachers (CERID,2016). Since there is no custom or culture in Nepali society to foster a favorable view of people with disabilities, schools are affected, and teachers' professional abilities are weakened (Regmi,2017). Concept, ability and knowledge are lacking. Restricted access to education and healthcare, along with discrimination and negative attitudes towards children with disabilities remain major obstacles. Moreover, a large number of disabled individuals in Nepal reside in rural areas with inadequate services and infrastructure. In Nepal, people with disabilities encounter significant obstacles in accessing education, healthcare, employment, and other essential services (UNICEF, 2021). Similarly, according to the constitution of Nepal 2072, part 1, section 24 right against untouchability and discrimination, sub section 1, no person shall be subjected to any form of untouchability or discrimination in any private and public places on grounds of his or her origin, caste, tribe, community, profession, occupation or physical condition. However, the management of schools has not implemented effectively as mentioned in our constitution.

The creation of an inclusion policy in Nepal is hampered by the separation of special and general education policies. The lack of comprehensive policies and legal procedures for protecting the rights and interests of children with special needs has led to widespread criticism of special need education, particularly in developing nations like Nepal (Kafle, 2010). Three categories are distinguished by the government's education policy: education for children in general, education for children with disabilities (primarily through special education and integrated education), and education for other vulnerable children, including those from ethnic groups, women, low-caste, poor, and out-of-school children. The majority of special education programs receive funding from donors. Donors have a big say in how programs are designed.

Professionals and disability rights groups are increasingly in agreement that the best approach to ensure that all children receive an education is through inclusion in mainstream schools. Encouraging inclusive education means that rather than sending the child to the support services, the

support services will come to the child; classrooms and teachers will need to adjust, not the other way around. The policies and practices in Nepali education for children with disabilities are the main subject of this study. Initiatives that practice inclusive education in Nepal are also documented in the paper. The fundamental idea underlying inclusive education is that all students should have their educational requirements met by the school, regardless of any physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other factors that may be impeding their ability to learn (Jangira 1997).

These initiatives have not yet been thoroughly reviewed and analyzed. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to conduct a study that details Nepal's inclusive education and special needs conditions in terms of practices, policies, and resources. In order to expand the body of information and enhance the ability to create or enhance current programs, this study also makes use of a number of inclusive education on the basis of management. Additionally, it is anticipated to be used as a tool for lobbying in support of inclusive education.

Government of Nepal has formulated educational policies for quality education on the basis of inclusive education. According to the constitution of Nepal 2072, part 1, section 24 right against untouchability and discrimination, sub section 1, no person shall be subjected to any form of untouchability or discrimination in any private and public places on grounds of his or her origin, caste, tribe, community, profession, occupation or physical condition. However, there is a discrimination on basis of gender, caste, superstition like chhaupadhi etc. Similarly, as per article 31 of Constitution of Nepal 2072, right relating to education section 1, every citizen shall have the right of access to basic education. Many children are out of the main stream of education in Nepal especially in rural and remote place of Nepal. The school management has been able to manage inclusive education as Shrestha said, "the schools do not have the disabled -friendly infrastructure and supportive teaching materials (Shrestha, 2017).

Nepal has undertaken a variety of initiatives to implement quality education for all children. For instance, the *School Sector Reform Programme (SSRP, 2009-2015)* prioritized the equitability of quality basic education for all children (aged 5 -12 years) in line with universal education for all children (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2009). However, UNESCO (2007) reported that Nepal would not meet *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* no. 2: Achieving universal primary education for all children (United Nations, 2000) by 2015. UNESCO argued that students' enrolment rate was increasing in grade one, but the retention rate of students across grades was inconsistent. In particular, the retention of disabled children in school indicated high levels of non-attendance (GoN, 2014). It appears that children with disabilities are still not attending school even though the government of Nepal has committed itself to providing free quality education for all children up to high school level. Government policies state that education should be available for all students, including children from *Dalit* communities, marginalized children and disabled children (GoN, 1998). However, day-to-day Nepali school practices are influenced by deficit-thinking, a neoliberal approach to education, the traditional caste system and socio-cultural beliefs of teachers and school administrators (Poudel, 2007; Sharma Poudyal, 2016; Thapa, 2012).

Methodology

Research Design

This study is primarily qualitative and quantitative in nature. Qualitative method has no any particular theory or paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.6) in order to interpret and analyze the natural and social behavior. Every research starts with paradigm because paradigm is a basic set of belief that guides action (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 183). According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), “a paradigm encompasses three elements: epistemology, ontology and methodology” (p. 99). These elements are philosophical assumptions which are used to interpret the social realities. Epistemology is related to theory and nature of knowledge; ontology is nature of reality of basic question and methodology is gaining knowledge. Every research is interpretive that is guided by researchers feeling, beliefs and assumption (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.22). The common interpretive paradigm includes basically four paradigms namely positivists, post positivist, critical theory (Marxian Theory) and constructivist. In this study tried to critically analyze the field data and information.

Data Collection Tools and Process

As far as the data collection tools are concerned, I used guiding questions developed and opened in online. These are important in collecting field data. Experiencing is related to seeing and studying, which can be obtained through participants’ online form, whereas enquiring is a process of asking about the situation which is generally conducted online. Moreover, those methods not only provided multiple, alternative and supplementary ways of accessing data, but also assisted me in becoming reflexive. It is the process of gathering close-ended and open ended first-hand information by research site. Participants’ observation and data interpretation side by side was done in research for theorizing or more formal theory building.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data Analysis and interpretation both descriptive and analytical methods are used in presenting the collected data. Codification, classification and tabulation of the data were done and significant findings were analyzed with the help of own reflection and interpreted as well. Before proceeding further, I transcribed all the data that I generated from my participants. The transcribed data was edited with original record and the data was coded. The coded data was categorized to develop themes and to seek themes. The meaning thus obtained was finally interpreted with inclusive education. Data analysis steps: transcribing data, developing themes. Interpreting data with theory is seeking meanings through coding and categorizing in course of data analysis. The above model has been discussed as follows. I searched for answers to the questions that the generated data raised. Research questions were always linked to the data which was hidden in the text. As sampling is considered to be one of the most fundamental aspects of the total methodology of how elements from a population are to be sampled and how many are to be selected (Pandit, 1992), utmost care was taken in selecting the sample to make it truly representative of the quality or characteristics of the whole population by paying heed to what Mouley (1984) said about sampling probably no concept is as fundamental to the conduct of research and the interpretation of its results as sampling.

Selection of Research Participants and field

The research participants were principals, teachers, professors, and academicians, etc. who have the qualification from a bachelor’s degree to PhD. The field site was Karnali province Nepal. 25 respondents had participated in the online form. It was made open to fill the online form and could

submit. I have kept all the documents that the participants have filled up the form and answered on online so that my data has validate and reliable. I checked the data whether these persons are from these institutions or not.

Quality Standard of the Study

Anderson defines qualitative research as “a form of research that explores phenomena in its natural setting and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to that which is being investigated” (1998). This statement clearly indicates that multi-method is a characteristic feature of the qualitative research methodology. Further, Patton (1990) observes that recent developments have led to the use of multiple methods. Robson (1993) emphasizes the virtues of multi-methods inquiry. He advocates the multi-method approach because it contributes to increasing confidence in the validity. In Patton (1990) opinion, field work is not a single method or technique. In the combination of observation, interviewing, document analysis, the field worker is able to use different data sources to validate and cross check findings” (1990) Similarly, Marshal and Rossman (1990) observe “many qualitative studies combine several data methods over the course of the study” (1990). The concept of multi- method approach is common to use more than one method to enrich the quality of research. “Most research projects in the social science are, therefore, in a general sense, multi method” (Blaxter et al., 1996, p. 77). Multi methods are useful to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning through conversation and observation in natural setting” (Arsenault & Anderson, 1998).

Ethical Considerations

Quality standard of the research and Ethical consideration of the research were followed. Data and information for the study were collected online from researchers, professors, teachers, head-teachers, school administrators, university lecturers, and academicians. The study used an online survey research design. It is a method widely used in social science research. The study design primarily followed the mixed methodological approach. An online survey questionnaire was designed to collect data and information from the participants. The survey tool consisted of main problems/issues, challenges and opportunities, strategies, and suggestions about school management. The survey tool was designed in two parts: personal information and main questions related to school management with a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree). In addition to this, some open-ended questions related to challenges, opportunities, and overall suggestions for managing schools in an inclusive concept.

Separate analyses were conducted for numerical and non-numerical data. Software was used to analyse all numerical data. Similarly, content analysis (qualitative analysis) methods were used to examine non-numerical data. Peer reviewers were asked for their opinions, especially about the primary findings.

Results

Profile of the Participants

The study participants comprised teachers, head-teachers, school administrators, university lecturers, and others. The highest percent of the participants (41%) was from 14 personalities were M Phil graduates whereas the lowest percent of the participants (11.76%) was from PhD holders. Besides, nearly half of the participants (39.41%) were from working professionals from master's degree and 13 percent of the participants were from the others.

Seventy-six percent of the participants were from the age group of 36 years and above. Male participants accounted for 88 percent, whereas female participants accounted for only twelve percent. In terms of academic qualification, 41 percent of the participants had an MPhil degree. A few of them (12 %) had PhD and 53 percent teaching professionals from schools and colleges. More than 70% of the participants had more than 10 years of experience.

Managerial/Administrative Problems

Different Participants reported different managerial and administrative problems they had faced. The problems-related data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: *Managerial and Administrative Problems*

Managerial/Administrative Problems	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
There is a difficulty in involving and retaining qualified and experienced teachers.	35.29	47.05	5.88	11.76	-	5.88
In the case of private schools, there is a big problem with paying rents, bank loans, and staff salaries.	17.64	58.82	17.64	5.88	11.76	5.88
Parents/guardians are facing a critical financial crisis to pay fees for their children.	23.52	52.9	17.64	-	11.76	5.88
Schools have problems regarding in which area and how the students are to be involved.	17.64	52.9	17.64	-	11.76	-
Students' enrolment in schools has been a key concern for both schools and parents	35.29	47.05	11.76	-	-	0.0
Managing professional development programs for teachers (between those who used technology.	35.29	47.05	11.76	-	-	5.88
There is a problem/issue in the continuation of students' admission, examination and result, parent-teacher meeting, and so on.	17.64	58.82	5.88	-	11.76	5.88

Source: Survey October 2024

Data in Table 1 show that nearly 18 percent of the participants (strongly) and 53 percent of the participants mentioned that schools have problems regarding how and in which area the students are to be involved. Similarly, 35%strongly and 53% normally agreed that there is a difficulty in

involving and retaining qualified and experienced teachers. The data also show that nearly 18 percent and 59 % of the participants strongly and agreed that private schools are facing some big problems such as paying rents, bank loans, and staff salaries; whereas 59 % of the participants mentioned the same. Students' enrolment in schools has been a key concern for both the schools and the parents. Nearly 24% strongly and 53 % percent of the participants agreed that parents/guardians are facing a critical financial crisis to pay fees for their children. They also strongly agreed that managing professional development programs for teachers. While some participants somewhat disagreed that there is a problem/issue in the continuation of students' admission, examination and result, parent-teacher meeting, and so on; less percent of the participants strongly agreed on the same issue.

Learning Opportunities and Students' Performance

The following presents responses obtained regarding the extent of learning opportunities and students' performance.

Table 2: *Learning Opportunities and Students' Performance*

Learning Opportunities and Students' Performance	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
There are limited learning opportunities and students' learning is declining.	23.52	35.2	29.4	-	5.88	5.88
There is a risk of losing an academic year.	17.64	29.4	11.76	23.52	11.76	5.88
There is a big problem with how to evaluate students' learning performance.	29.4	52.94	5.88	5.88	-	5.88
Students are disturbed psychologically and they are not ready to learn.	29.4	29.4	23.52	5.88	11.76	-
Some teachers have no knowledge of, and are not capable of, using educational materials, virtual devices and they do not have access to the internet and all.	29.4	47.05	17.64	-	5.88	-
Students are heavily distracted from their	23.52	35.2	29.4	-	11.76	-

regular studies and learning due to the use of electronic devices.	5.88	-	-	-	-	-
There is a high level of teachers' motivation/initiation towards using ICT tools and learning.	23.52	52.94	5.88	11.76	5.88	-
There are adequate efforts from governmental bodies across all levels: federal, provincial, and local for the teacher training program on how to use ICT in teaching and learning.						

Source: Survey October 2024

While the 30 percent of the study participants strongly agreed that some teachers have no knowledge of, and are not capable of, using educational materials and virtual devices and they do not have access to the internet and all, 48 percent of the study participants just agreed upon that teachers lack knowledge and skills in using educational materials and virtual devices. Similarly, 24 percent of the participants also strongly agreed that there are limited learning opportunities and students' learning is declining during. While some participants (30%) strongly indicated that students are disturbed psychologically and are not ready to learn, and the same percent (24%) of the participants strongly agreed that students are heavily distracted from their regular studies and learning due to the use of electronic devices. Similarly, only 5.88 percent of the participants strongly agreed rated the issue- there is a big problem with how to evaluate students' learning performance- 'strongly agreed' and just 'agreed' (Table 2).

Pedagogical Approach

The following table presents the data collected on the pedagogical approach.

Table 3: *Pedagogical Approach*

Pedagogical Approach	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Somewhat Agree (%)	Somewhat Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Some teachers still prefer the traditional approach of teaching.	23.52	52.94	5.88	11.76	5.88	-
There has been an understanding that there	11.76	58.82	23.52	11.76	5.88	-

can be good learning from the virtual medium (distance learning mode), depending upon the access to new technology and facility.

Learning can occur from community learning centers.	-	70.58	35.2	23.52	5.88	-
---	---	-------	------	-------	------	---

In normal situation, there is a possibility of hybridization (mixing) of various pedagogic approaches to create a conducive environment for student learning.	-	47.05	35.2	11.76	5.88	-
---	---	-------	------	-------	------	---

Source: Survey October 2024

While some of the study participants (24%) strongly agreed and a majority of the participants (53%) agreed that some teachers still prefer the traditional approach of teaching. Similarly, 47 percent of the participants had expressed their opinion that, there will be a possibility of hybridization (mixing) of various pedagogic approaches to create a conducive environment for student learning; however, 6 percent of the participants do not think so. While 71 percent of the participants agreed that learning can occur from community learning centers, 35 percent of the participants appeared to be just positive (Table 3).

Managerial Challenges

Various managerial obstacles pertaining to instructors, students, pedagogy, physical and technical issues, finances, administrative tasks, health and psychological issues, and other matters were identified by the survey respondents. Teachers are the key persons to deal with the new situation. They have crucial roles to shape the entire educational process. Furthermore, the study found that teachers' motivation and sense of responsibility are important factors for the continuation of the teaching-learning process. Currently, teachers are in a critical mode of transition from their regular course of action to new approaches. They have major challenges of maintaining and continuing education through alternative modes with a desirable quality of teaching and learning.

One of the important elements in teaching and learning is the pedagogical approach, which was seriously disrupted. The use of new technologies without prior knowledge has prevented teachers from being able to create a suitable/appropriate teaching-learning environment for their students. There has been a big challenge for the school management to strike a balance between the use of the new pedagogical approach and the conventional pedagogical approach. There are also challenges associated with the teaching-learning approach that provide equal opportunities to students from different communities to learn. Even in the new normal situation, teachers and students

will be afraid of coming to schools because of the psychological impact. Continuity of all students in schools, integration of ICT into the regular class, students' motivation and engagement towards teaching and learning, and parents' readiness to pay tuition fees seem to be other challenges that need to be managed by the schools. Psychological counseling to teachers, parents, and students for continuing teaching and learning; awareness-raising of self-protection as well as self-sensitization; and getting supports from local governments can take a long time, and that will further ruin the schools which are already in distress.

Managerial Opportunities

The managerial opportunities can be mentioned on the basis of the problems given in table 1. The first opportunity is to manage qualified and experienced teacher that the schools are facing problems, as shown in Table 1 shows that nearly 18 percent of the participants (strongly) agree. The another challenge is to manage bank loans and staff salaries that the private schools are facing problems in which 53 percent of the participants mentioned that schools have problems regarding how and in which area the students are to be involved. Schools have to provide affordable fees or income generation programs for parents which is an opportunity and increase the students' enrollment.

Many factors have brought managerial challenges, but also has brought numerous opportunities for teachers' professional development, students' fast learning, development of mix learning approach, the pedagogical shift in teaching-learning. Teachers will have developed teaching materials, technical and ICT skills and knowledge to deliver in the classroom. Students will have increased cooperation and collaboration among themselves, which will help them use the technology and educational materials for blended learning. Due to the pedagogical shift, teaching and learning will take place in flexible times, which will provide extra time to students. Schools will also have adequate time for planning and implementing innovative ideas such as designing and establishing online information systems that will also help them downsize their non-teaching staff. Teachers and students will get free internet, and parents will have the chance to get information about the performance of their kids and the quality of subject teaching.

Strategies for Managing Schools

Education plays pivotal role for development. So it is urgent need to address current issues for educational loss. Leaders have to manage effective strategies for educational process and justify to students what they have learned over the situation. The study participants suggested some short-term and long-term strategies to manage schools effectively. The role of the school management is crucial to communicate problems and their possible solutions effectively to the stakeholders and develop immediate educational plans and programs in consultation with parents and local governments. Similarly, the school management should be proactive to adopt the blended approach in teaching and learning to get benefits of those online and face-to-face teaching practices wherever possible.

Acknowledging the significance of effective curriculum planning, participants recommended designing a streamlined academic plan with realistic learning objectives, appropriate pedagogical approaches, and suitable assessment methods. They emphasized the need to enhance

teacher accountability by granting teachers greater authority to assess students' learning outcomes in inclusive and flexible ways. Participants also highlighted the importance of establishing municipal-level teacher task forces to promote collaboration, idea sharing, and mutual support among schools. In areas with limited resources, they suggested forming local student clusters to support community-based distance learning. Additionally, participants stressed that governments at the federal, provincial, and local levels should provide increased ICT and financial assistance to schools that have been severely impacted and are struggling to continue their operations.

Regarding long-term planning, participants emphasized the importance of schools having well-developed emergency preparedness plans and policies to address future crises. They highlighted the need for coordinated strategies across federal, provincial, and local governments to support open and distance education alongside face-to-face learning. Such approaches were seen as particularly beneficial for disadvantaged students and as an effective means of ensuring continuity of learning during challenging situations. Participants also recommended a fundamental shift in education—from teacher-centered to learner-centered approaches; from knowing to doing; from testing to continuous assessment; from a focus on degrees to disciplinary identity; and from classroom-based learning to community-oriented learning—in order to reduce educational loss. Additionally, they stressed that students' mental health should be a central concern of schools, with inclusive counseling services established on school premises for all children.

More importantly, the school management and the teachers are required to develop learning materials based on the blended teaching model for the regular teaching-learning process. There is also a need for enough physical infrastructure along with the ICT facilities, which would help schools continue teaching-learning activities. Ilagan (2000) notes, "schools have the moral obligation to modify their physical environment as well as their curricula to suit the individual requirements of every disabled child rather than just expecting the child to adjust and adopt to the physical conditions and curricula that the schools impose" (p.126).

Discussion

The analyses of the survey data showed that most of the teachers have little knowledge of, and are less capable of, using educational materials and virtual devices. Moreover, some teachers still prefer the traditional approach of teaching. Therefore, transformation is necessary to the digital pedagogy as an alternative model for teaching and learning is still at the infant stage in the context of Nepal, particularly in remote communities. However, the survey respondents shared their views. There may be possible to mix several teaching strategies in order to establish an atmosphere that is favourable to students' successful learning. The respondents mentioned that transiting from one course of action to another is a challenging job brought about by existing issues. However, policy support from the local government bodies would help school leaders in transition where the schools' leaders have challenges of maintaining and continuing education through alternative approaches with a desirable quality of teaching and learning.

Looking at the participants' views, students have the opportunity to increase cooperation and collaboration among themselves; however, the lack of digital devices and the economic capacity of poor parents do not support the implementation of this finding. The school leadership role is very important in a

situation, where there is no blueprint to follow, to manage the school and the teaching-learning processes effectively. For this, the survey results suggest that school leaders communicate their problems, encourage cooperation, and motivate parents/stakeholders. This also depends on the geographic area the school is located in. Schools established in the urban areas may motivate stakeholders including parents/guardians, but those established in remote areas may face difficulties in doing so.

Conclusion

The study concludes that schools are facing a number of problems in involving students in the teaching-learning process to attain curricular goals. They have also challenges in involving teachers who have no knowledge and skills to use educational materials and devices for teaching and learning, particularly in the remote areas. Retaining qualified and experienced teachers has been another challenge for private schools. As a result, the pupils' learning is deteriorating and they have less learning possibilities. Some teachers in Karnali province still favour the old method of instruction. Despite the fact that the current environment necessitates the employment of a variety of pedagogical approaches for students' learning. There is a chance that pedagogical approaches will eventually hybridize since students are accustomed to the new methods of learning. The study comes to the conclusion that there are a number of managerial difficulties pertaining to educators, learners, pedagogy, and administrative, financial, technical, physical, and psychological concerns. Additionally, there are a lot of opportunities for teachers to development, pedagogical change in teaching and learning, and hybrid learning approaches have surfaced. As the local governments have the constitutional and contextual roles to formulate educational policy to suit the local context. They must be responsible for, and accountable to, managing, supervising, and supporting the schools in their jurisdictions. However, we cannot see in local government that the local policy has not been formulated and taken responsibilities.

There are many challenges in different schools. However, where there are challenges there are opportunities. Leadership has to formulate effective strategies that would help school leaders manage the educational process and justify to students what they have learned over the situation. If the leadership addresses those challenges with sustainable strategies in inclusive concept, that is an opportunity to recognize his/her institution as one of the best institutions among other institution. So leadership plays an important role to tackle with challenges and get an opportunity to manage institution effectively and efficiently.

Author's Biography

Ravi Lal Bhatta is an Associate Professor at Mid-West University, with over 20 years of experience in academia. He holds an MPhil in Educational Leadership, as well as an MA in English, an MA in Political Science, an LLM, and a BEd in English. His diverse academic qualifications and extensive experience reflect his deep commitment to education and his expertise in various fields of study.

References

- CERID. (2006). *Education and development*. Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.
Government of Nepal. (1971). *Education Act 2028 (1971)*. Author.
<https://www.martinchautari.org.np/storage/files/educationact-2028.pdf>

- Government of Nepal. (2017). *The Act Relating to Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2074 (2017)*. Author. <https://lpr.adb.org/resource/act-relating-rights-persons-disabilities-2074-2017-nepal>
- Government of Nepal. (2016). *The Constitution of Nepal 2072 (2015)*. Author.
- Government of Nepal. (1971). *National education policy 2076 (2019)*. Author.
- Government of Nepal. (1998). *Report of High Level National Education Commission*. Author.
- Government of Nepal. (2014). *Equity strategy of Nepal in education*. Author.
- Government of Nepal. (2018). *Compulsory and free education regulation 2077 (2020)*.
- Holst, J. (2000). The challenges of special needs education and inclusive education. In H. R. Bajracharya, B. K. Thapa, G. S. Pradhan, & S. B. Mulmi (Eds.), *Education and development* (pp. 53–64). CERID, Tribhuvan University.
- Ilgan, V. (2000). Inclusive education in the Asia-Pacific region: Are the disabled included? In H. Savolainen, H. Kokkala, & H. Alasuutari (Eds.), *Meeting special and diverse educational needs: Making inclusive education a reality* (pp. 120–126). Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.
- Jangira, N. K. (1997). *Special education in India: Perspectives, practices, and prospects*.
- Kafle, B. D. (2010). Policy intervention for institutionalizing inclusive education in Nepal. *Shaikshik Smarika, Department of Education*.
- Mills, P. E. (1998). Effects of differing levels of inclusion on preschoolers with disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 65(1).
- Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal. (2016). *School sector development plan, Nepal, 2016/17–2022/23*. Author.
- Poudel, L. N. (2007). *Power, knowledge and pedagogy: An analysis of the educational exclusion of Dalits in Nepal* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). University of Kent, Canterbury, England.
- Regmi, N. P. (2017). *Inclusive education in Nepal: From theory to practice* (Doctoral dissertation). Ludwig-Maximilian-University, Germany.
- Riehl, C. J. (2000). The principal's role in creating inclusive schools for diverse students: A review of literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 70, 55–81.
- Sharma Poudyal, C. L. (2016). *Teachers: Having a voice and being heard? Evidence from two private schools in Nepal* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.
- Shrestha, S. (2017). Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with intellectual disability in community schools (MPhil dissertation). Kathmandu University, Nepal.
- Thapa, B. B. S. (2012). *Schooling of girls with disability: A phenomenological study of Nepali girls* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Kathmandu University, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- UNICEF. (2021). *Nepal country profile*. <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/17006/file/Country%20Profile%20-%20Nepal.pdf>
- United Nations. (2000). *Millennium Development Goals*. <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/List%20of%20MDGs%20English.pdf>
- UNESCO. (2007). *Education for all mid-decade assessment: National report, Nepal*. UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000161890>