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Editorial

Exploring English Medium Instruction in Nepal: A Survey of Teacher Perspectives

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Nepal from the perspectives of teachers who are directly involved in classroom practice. As EMI is expanding across Nepalese schools, it has become important to understand how teachers perceive its demands, their level of preparedness, and the challenges they experience in multilingual classroom contexts. The study employed a descriptive survey design and used a structured online questionnaire to collect data from 52 EMI teachers from different provinces of Nepal. The participants were selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected over a period of three weeks using Google Forms. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and anonymity was ensured. The study explored teachers' perceptions across six thematic areas: demographic and professional profile of EMI teachers; EMI training and preparedness; classroom practices and challenges; EMI policy, support, and institutional practice; EMI impact on learners and stakeholders' perceptions; and cultural sensitivity and multilingual inclusion. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and mean were used to analyze the responses, and the findings were organized thematically. The findings indicate that although teachers generally support EMI, many report limited training and inadequate institutional support. This situation directly affects classroom delivery and student understanding. The study recommends the development of targeted EMI training programs, improved resource allocation, and clearer policy support to strengthen the quality and sustainability of EMI in Nepalese schools.

Keywords: EMI policy implementation, English medium instruction, linguistic inclusivity, multilingual classrooms, teacher perspectives

Introduction

English Medium Instruction (EMI) has become increasingly important as an educational policy and classroom practice in the international multilingual world, altering the teaching and teaching style of academic content at both lower and higher levels of education. EMI is generally understood to mean 'the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries where the majority of the population does not speak English as their first language' (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37).

Similarly, Costa and Coleman (2013) defined EMI as the delivery of content through English in contexts where it is not the home language of learners. The internationalization of EMI has been enhanced by the perceived benefits of facilitating global competitiveness, academic mobility, and socioeconomic opportunities (Evans & Morrison, 2018; Manan et al., 2017; Sah & Li, 2018).

EMI has predominantly emerged in developing countries where English is seen as linguistic and economic capital (Erling & Seargeant, 2013). Its use in countries like China, Korea, Italy, and Spain illustrates the extent to which national education systems align with international academic and economic needs (Jiang et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2017; Aguilar, 2017). During the development of this global trend, Nepal experienced explosive growth in EMI in public and private institutions. For many parents, EMI translates into higher employability and promotion of educational career advancement by providing instruction in English and a considerable investment in the economic potential for their children (Sah & Li, 2018; Sah, 2015).

However, Nepal's embrace of EMI has been inconsistent and policy lacks guidance. EMI has been observed to spread through the school system despite the lack of a clear national policy, organized planning, or adequately prepared teachers (Giri, 2011; Phyak, 2013). To aid comprehension, teachers often employ translanguaging and local languages, consistent with the multilingual reality of the Nepali classroom and the requirement for flexible pedagogical strategies (Phyak, 2016; García & Wei, 2014). While these practices facilitate content access for learners, they also bring a lack of formal education, as many teachers start work in EMI classes without formal instruction regarding English-mediated teaching (Ghimire, 2020; Pun, 2021).

Institutional backing is still uneven. EMI is also implemented in most Nepali schools by the market, rather than being aligned with pedagogical readiness (Sah & Li, 2020; Poudel & Choi, 2021); and with insufficient budgets, teaching materials, and monitoring systems. Consequently, EMI in Nepal is growing faster than the amount of teacher and academic resources to enable it. Teachers' willingness (in terms of EMI provision) to deliver EMI is the most common, yet they often do not have adequate training, resources, and policy clarity to facilitate effective implementation (Shrestha & Coffin, 2019).

Because of these challenges and the rapid increase in EMI in Nepal, to assess the effectiveness of the EMI as provision by teachers—the agents of EMI delivery—at the national level it is also important to understand teachers' perspectives regarding readiness, supporting structures, and lessons and experiences. Grasping these points of view is vital to formulating policy with support mechanisms, developing teacher training, and advocating evidence-based policies for equitable implementation in Nepal's multilingual education system.

Hence, the current study aims to investigate how teachers in secondary education in Nepal make sense of, perceive, and accept the demands of EMI. It seeks to answer the following research questions in particular: 1. How do EMI teachers in Nepal perceive their level of preparedness, training, and institutional support for delivering teaching in English? 2. What are the challenges and strategies teachers report about managing EMI classrooms in Nepal's multilingual, multicultural, and diverse schooling system?

The study's focus on teachers foregrounding their perspective is therefore a contribution to the emergent dialogue of EMI policy, practice, and pedagogical reform in Nepal which is relevant to contemporary discussions around policy, practice, and pedagogic practice in Nepal, contributing towards more context-sensitive and culturally appropriate planning.

Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey design to examine how secondary-level teachers across Nepal perceive and experience English Medium Instruction (EMI). A total of 52 EMI teachers from various provinces participated in the study, selected through convenience sampling based on their accessibility and willingness to respond. Data were collected over a three-week period using a structured online questionnaire administered through Google Forms. Before completing the survey, all participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality, following standard ethical procedures.

The questionnaire served as the primary research instrument and consisted of 45 close-ended items designed to capture teachers' views across six thematic areas relevant to EMI implementation. These domains included demographic and professional profile of EMI teachers; EMI training and preparedness; classroom practices and challenges; EMI policy, support, and institutional practice; EMI impact on learners and stakeholders' perceptions; and cultural sensitivity and multilingual inclusion. Items were structured using Likert-type scales, multiple-choice formats, and ranking options to allow for systematic analysis of patterns and tendencies in teacher perceptions. These themes were developed with reference to existing EMI literature and contextual needs in Nepal, ensuring that the instrument aligned with both global frameworks and local classroom realities.

Data analysis involved exporting all responses into Microsoft Excel for initial cleaning and organization, followed by descriptive statistical analysis using frequencies, percentages, and mean scores. For consistency in interpretation, selected variables were also coded and examined using SPSS. The findings were then grouped and interpreted according to the six thematic domains to present a clear and coherent picture of how EMI is currently practiced and experienced by teachers in Nepal's multilingual school settings.

Results

This section presents the major findings of the study, derived from responses provided by 52 secondary-level teachers currently involved in English Medium Instruction (EMI) across various regions of Nepal. To ensure clarity and focus, the data have been organized thematically under six key domains, each reflecting critical dimensions of EMI implementation as perceived by practicing teachers. These themes include: demographic and professional profile of EMI teachers; EMI training and preparedness; classroom practices and challenges; EMI policy, support, and institutional practice; EMI impact on learners and stakeholders' perceptions; and cultural sensitivity and multilingual inclusion.

Each subsection includes descriptive statistics—such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation—summarized through narrative interpretation and, where appropriate, accompanying summary tables. This thematic organization not only enhances readability but also aligns with the study's objective to holistically explore teacher perspectives on EMI from multiple angles.

Demographic and Professional Profile of EMI Teachers

The study involved 52 EMI teachers whose demographic and professional characteristics offer important context for interpreting the findings. More than half of the participants (56%) had taught for over 10 years, 27% had 5–10 years of experience, and 17% had fewer than 5 years, indicating that the sample was largely composed of senior educators. A similar distribution was observed in school locations, with 56% of teachers working in rural schools and 44% in urban areas, reflecting a balanced geographical representation.

Academically, the participants were highly qualified: 71% held a Master's degree, 17% had completed an MPhil, and 4% held a PhD, while the remaining 8% reported other qualifications or did not respond. Their EMI-specific experience also demonstrated strong professional engagement, with 60% having taught in EMI settings for more than six years, 12% for four to six years, 17% for one to three years, and only 2% for less than a year. However, only 14% possessed English language certifications such as IELTS, TOEFL, or TEFL, highlighting a notable gap in formal language and pedagogical preparation.

In terms of teaching assignments, 77% of respondents were engaged in teaching English Language and Literature through EMI, whereas 23% taught other subjects such as Mathematics, Science, or Social Studies. This distribution suggests that EMI remains predominantly concentrated in English instruction, though cross-disciplinary expansion is gradually emerging.

EMI Training and Preparedness

The analysis of teacher responses under the theme *EMI Training and Preparedness* revealed several important insights. A *considerable proportion of the respondents*

(approximately 56%) reported that they had not received any formal EMI training prior to teaching in EMI settings. Among those who had received some form of training, the *majority gained exposure through university degree modules and short workshops*, while *only a few reported completing long-term certification programs*.

Teachers were asked to rate the adequacy of the EMI training they had received. The *average rating was 3.1 out of 5 (SD = 1.02)*, indicating *moderate satisfaction*, though with *significant variation among individuals*. Regarding their own schooling experience, teachers reported *limited EMI exposure during their formative years*, with a *mean score of 2.4 (SD = 1.10)*, suggesting they were *not adequately prepared through earlier academic contexts*.

In terms of language use, teachers were also asked how frequently they use English outside their classroom settings. The responses showed a *mean of 2.7 (SD = 1.08)*, indicating that *English is generally used occasionally to often*, but *not consistently in everyday communication*. The table below (Table 1) summarizes the mean and standard deviation for these three key variables.

Table 1: Summary of Core Indicators – EMI Training and Preparedness

Item Analyzed	Mean	SD	Key Finding
Adequacy of EMI Training	3.1	1.02	*Moderately adequate, with variation*
EMI Exposure During Schooling	2.4	1.10	*Most had limited EMI background*
English Use Outside Classroom	2.7	1.08	*English used occasionally or often*

Note: Variables were coded for SPSS analysis as follows —
Q9 (Adequacy of Training): 1 = Very Inadequate to 5 = Very Adequate
Q10 (EMI Exposure During Schooling): 1 = None to 5 = 76–100%
Q14 (English Use Outside Class): 1 = Rarely or Never to 4 = Almost Always

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Further analysis revealed that the *majority of teachers identified a need for more training* in areas such as *EMI teaching methodologies, classroom English, and student engagement strategies*. Among various training delivery modes, *hybrid formats (online + in-person) were most preferred*. Moreover, *over 75% of the respondents believed EMI training should be mandatory for all teachers*, reflecting a *widespread consensus for structured professional development*.

These findings highlight not only the *insufficiency of existing EMI training programs* but also the *urgent need for contextualized, policy-backed, and practically oriented training mechanisms* for EMI educators in Nepal

Classroom Practices and Challenges

The data under this theme reveal a complex set of classroom realities faced by EMI teachers. A large proportion of respondents reported using both Nepali and English during

lessons, showing that translanguaging is a practical necessity to support comprehension. Although many teachers aimed to deliver most of their instruction in English, only about 51–75% of classroom time was actually conducted in English, with a small number reporting even lower proportions. Students frequently requested explanations in Nepali, and teachers responded by simplifying their English "frequently" or "very frequently," illustrating the central role of linguistic scaffolding in EMI classrooms.

Institutional support emerged as a major concern. Most schools did not provide EMI-specific lesson plans or instructional materials, compelling teachers to rely on English textbooks, visual aids, and self-developed resources. Student comfort in English was also limited: less than 25% of students were described as able to respond comfortably in English, and many were somewhat or very uncomfortable speaking in English even when they understood the lesson.

Regarding teacher readiness, many teachers described themselves as confident or moderately confident in EMI teaching, yet emphasized that EMI delivery requires significantly more preparation time compared to Nepali-medium instruction. *Overall, the results highlight committed teachers working within challenging constraints, particularly related to student language proficiency, lack of institutional support, and increased workload.*

Table 2: Summary of Core Indicators – EMI Classroom Practices

Indicator	**Most Frequent Response / Trend**	**Key Finding**
Use of Nepali & English in EMI lessons	Often / Always	Translanguaging is widely practiced.
Proportion of instruction in English	51–75%	EMI delivery is partial, not fully English-medium.
Student requests for Nepali explanations	Frequently / Very frequently	Learners consistently rely on L1 for clarity.
Teachers' simplification of English	Frequently / Very frequently	Simplification is essential for comprehension.
EMI-specific institutional support	Not provided / Partially provided	Schools lack structured EMI resources.
Teaching aids used	Textbooks; visual/audio-visual tools	Teachers depend on general materials.
Student comfort in responding in English	Less than 25% comfortable	Most students cannot respond confidently in English.
Overall student comfort level	Somewhat to very uncomfortable	Spoken English remains a major barrier.
EMI preparation time	Requires significantly more time	EMI increases teacher workload.
Teacher confidence in EMI	Confident / Moderately confident	Teachers feel capable but face persistent challenges.

The pattern presented in Table 2 highlights several consistent trends. *Translanguaging remains a central instructional strategy*, reflecting students' heavy reliance on Nepali for understanding. *EMI delivery is only partially in English*, and teachers frequently simplify language to support learners. *Limited institutional support* constrains effective EMI implementation, as schools rarely provide structured lesson plans or tailored resources. Additionally, *student discomfort with using English* in classroom interactions remains a significant hindrance. While teachers report moderate confidence, the *increased preparation time required for EMI* underscores the additional workload imposed by current EMI practices.

EMI Policy, Support, and Institutional Practice

This theme explores the extent to which schools engage with EMI at the policy and institutional levels. The findings reveal that *formal EMI policy frameworks are largely absent or weakly defined across schools*. A striking 92% of teachers reported that their schools do not have a written EMI policy. Even among the few institutions with such documents, only a very small number enforce them consistently, while most implement them only partially or not at all.

Institutional support was also found to be insufficient, particularly in terms of training resources. About 65% of respondents stated that their schools had not allocated any budget for EMI teacher training, and others described provisions as partial or inadequate. This indicates *a systemic underinvestment in the professional development necessary for effective EMI implementation.*

Teachers also had limited involvement in EMI policy processes. Nearly half (46%) reported not being involved at all, while others were merely informed rather than consulted. Only a small minority experienced occasional or regular consultation, suggesting that *those responsible for executing EMI in the classroom are often excluded from policy decisions that directly affect their work.*

Satisfaction with EMI policy implementation tended toward the lower range. The average satisfaction score was approximately 3.1 on a five-point scale, indicating *overall neutral to dissatisfied perceptions*. Although a few respondents expressed satisfaction, the general sentiment reflected broader concerns about policy clarity and institutional support.

EMI implementation is also rarely monitored. Around 85% of teachers reported that EMI practices in their schools are either never evaluated or evaluated only informally. This highlights *a critical gap in accountability and follow-up mechanisms.*

Regarding preferred levels of policy development, the majority (58%) favored a joint approach between schools and the government. This preference suggests that *teachers view EMI not as a single-authority responsibility but as a collaborative effort requiring multi-level coordination.*

Table 3: Summary of Core Indicators – EMI Policy and Institutional Practice

Indicator	Most Frequent Response	Key Finding
Written EMI policy exists?	No (92%)	*Most schools do not have a formal written EMI policy.*
Policy implementation level	Not enforced / Partially	*Existing policies are rarely enforced consistently across schools.*
Budget allocation for EMI training	No allocation (65%)	*The majority of schools have not allocated any budget for EMI-related teacher training.*
Teacher involvement in policy	Not involved (46%)	*Teachers are largely excluded from EMI policy formulation and consultation processes.*
Satisfaction with policy implementation	Mean ≈ 3.1 (Neutral–Dissatisfied)	*Teachers generally express neutral to dissatisfied views regarding EMI policy implementation.*
Frequency of EMI evaluation	Informally or Never (85%)	*EMI implementation is seldom evaluated formally, resulting in limited monitoring or accountability.*
Preferred policy development level	Jointly (58%)	*Most teachers prefer EMI policy to be formulated collaboratively by both schools and the government.*

The summary in Table 3 reinforces several critical insights. *Most schools lack written EMI policies*, and even where policies exist, *they are rarely enforced systematically*, resulting in inconsistent implementation across institutions. *Budgetary support for EMI training is also minimal*, leaving teachers without sufficient professional development opportunities. The findings further indicate that *teachers are seldom involved in EMI policy discussions*, despite being central to classroom execution. Additionally, *formal evaluation of EMI practices is largely absent*, pointing to a significant gap in monitoring and accountability. Finally, *the preference for joint school–government policy development* reflects teachers' desire for shared responsibility and stronger structural support for EMI.

EMI Impact on Learners and Stakeholder Perceptions

This theme examines how teachers perceive EMI to influence students' creativity, academic performance, homework completion, and parental involvement. Overall, the responses reflect a mix of optimism about EMI's benefits and recognition of persistent challenges.

Teachers held varied views regarding EMI's effect on creativity. With a mean score of 3.42 (SD = 1.39), more than half (56%) reported that EMI enhances creativity, and the modal response was "Strongly enhances." These findings indicate that *EMI is generally perceived as supportive of creativity*, even though *a notable proportion of teachers believe it may hinder creative expression.*

Homework completion under EMI also showed a moderately positive pattern. With a mean score of 2.63 (SD = 0.97) and "Frequently" as the modal response (46%), the data suggest that *students complete EMI-related homework fairly often*, though *consistency remains a challenge.*

Parental pressure for stronger EMI implementation appeared limited. The mean score was 1.94 (SD = 0.85), with "No" as the modal response. These responses indicate that *most parents are not actively pushing for EMI expansion*, although *occasional encouragement exists in some contexts.*

Teachers were more positive about EMI's impact on academic performance. With a mean of 3.58 (SD = 1.36) and 66% reporting some level of improvement, the findings suggest that *teachers widely perceive EMI as enhancing exam outcomes*, despite the linguistic and pedagogical demands it poses.

Table 4: Summary of Core Indicators – EMI Impact on Learners and Stakeholder Perceptions

Variable	Mean	SD	Mode	Key Finding
EMI impact on student creativity	3.42	1.39	5	*EMI is generally viewed as enhancing creativity, though perceptions vary.*
EMI homework completion rate	2.63	0.97	3	*Students frequently complete EMI homework, but not with full consistency.*
Parental pressure to improve EMI	1.94	0.85	1	*Most parents are not actively pressuring schools to intensify EMI.*
EMI impact on student exam performance	3.58	1.36	4	*Teachers largely believe EMI improves students' exam performance.*

The indicators in Table 4 collectively highlight that *EMI is perceived to have generally positive academic effects*, especially regarding creativity and exam performance. However, *homework consistency and parental engagement remain mixed*, indicating areas where learner support structures could be strengthened. The limited parental pressure also suggests that *EMI is not primarily community-driven but school-driven*, underscoring the need for broader stakeholder dialogue. Overall, EMI is seen as beneficial, yet its effectiveness depends heavily on instructional quality, student readiness, and contextual support.

Cultural Sensitivity and Multilingual Inclusion in EMI

This theme examines teacher perspectives on how EMI can meaningfully incorporate local culture, support indigenous languages, and promote multilingual inclusivity. The responses reveal *strong endorsement of a culturally grounded EMI model.*

Teachers expressed near-unanimous agreement that EMI instruction should meaningfully integrate local cultural content into classroom teaching. With a mean score of 4.49 (SD =

0.58) and a modal response of "Strongly agree," more than 95% of teachers supported cultural contextualization. These responses indicate that *teachers overwhelmingly believe EMI should remain connected to learners' cultural environment rather than detach them from local realities.*

Perceptions were more divided concerning EMI's effect on local or indigenous languages. The mean score of 2.60 (SD = 1.00) shows that many teachers selected "Somewhat weakens" (37%) or "Significantly weakens" (13%), while 35% saw no effect. This suggests that *teachers generally view EMI as exerting pressure on local languages*, though *the extent of perceived weakening varies across respondents.*

Support for embedding Nepali cultural examples within the EMI curriculum was almost universal. With a mean of 4.71 (SD = 0.46), 98% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed, reflecting the belief that *EMI should be culturally rooted and enriched through local examples rather than taught as culturally neutral English.*

Teachers were more mixed in their views regarding the introduction of EMI from Grades 1–3. The mean response of 3.06 (SD = 0.89) reflects moderate support overall, with 38% favouring early EMI as "essential," 31% endorsing it "with mother-tongue support," and the remaining 31% preferring primary mother-tongue use or context-dependent decisions. These results show that *teachers support early EMI only when accompanied by bilingual scaffolding*, not through full immersion.

Finally, there was strong consensus that EMI teachers should receive cultural sensitivity training. With a mean score of 4.69 (SD = 0.52), 98% agreed or strongly agreed, indicating *near-universal belief in the need for professional preparation that equips EMI teachers to address cultural and linguistic diversity effectively.*

Table 5: Summary of Key Indicators – Cultural Sensitivity and Multilingual Inclusion in EMI

Variable	Mean	SD	Mode	Most Frequent Responses (%)
EMI should include local culture	4.49	0.58	5	52% Agree, 44% Strongly Agree
EMI's effect on local/indigenous languages	2.60	1.00	2	37% Somewhat Weakens, 35% No Effect
Nepali cultural examples in EMI	4.71	0.46	5	52% Strongly Agree, 46% Agree
EMI introduction in Grades 1–3	3.06	0.89	4	38% Essential, 31% With Support
Cultural sensitivity training for EMI teachers	4.69	0.52	5	60% Strongly Agree, 38% Agree

The summary in Table 5 highlights a consistent pattern: *teachers strongly support culturally responsive EMI that honours local identities while promoting English proficiency.* Although many believe EMI may weaken indigenous languages, the

overwhelming desire is for bilingual and culturally informed instruction, particularly in early grades. Additionally, the near-universal call for cultural sensitivity training underscores a recognition that *effective EMI requires more than linguistic competence; it demands cultural competence and contextual awareness.* Together, these findings emphasize that EMI in Nepal must evolve through culturally sustaining practices that value linguistic diversity and local knowledge systems.

Discussion

Demographic and Professional Profile of EMI Teachers

Demographically, the EMI workforce in Nepal is predominantly experienced and academically qualified. Most (59%) of teachers had over 10 years of teaching experience, and 73% had a Master's degree. This implies that many of the EMI teachers have a strong educational background. Nonetheless, only 14% of teachers had previously been formally trained for EMI. A gap in preparation is evident here, as professionally competent as they may generally be. Phyak (2016) and Ghimire (2020) report similar circumstances, indicating that EMI teachers in Nepal often start EMI classes with insufficient linguistic and methodological preparation.

This study found that EMI teachers were interviewed in rural (55%) and urban (45%) schools, suggesting that EMI is no longer just a phenomenon of cities. Meanwhile, in rural and urban settings, it is assumed that resource exposure and availability of English may be influenced. Shrestha and Coffin (2019) also explain that rural schools are found to have more significant difficulties when sustaining EMI due to a lack of facilities and training opportunities.

In the majority of subjects (77%), teachers of English Language/Literature and teaching of other subjects through EMI (23%) were registered. This trend mirrored an overall national trend. Giri (2011) and Sah and Li (2018) found that the existing EMI in Nepal is primarily confined to English classrooms and that the general practice of EMI at the grade level is still maturing.

Overall, the results indicate that although EMI teachers are highly skilled in their domain, the absence of EMI-specific training and weak subject-wise growth are still major concerns. These concerns have also been observed in broader South Asian EMI research where inadequate teacher preparation is often identified as a primary problem (Hamid et. al., 2013).

EMI Training and Preparedness

The results demonstrate a significant absence of formal EMI training. Over half of the teachers had received no structured preparation before teaching using EMI. Its development reflects a broader trend in Nepal in which EMI has scaled rapidly without commensurate investment in teacher capacity (Phyak, 2016; Giri, 2011). Sah and Li

(2020) refer to this as a matter of "policy enthusiasm without capacity-building," with EMI being used for prestige or interest but failing to adequately support teachers.

The majority of teachers in this study reported their exposure to EMI as short workshops or university lessons rather than longer training. The lack of such exposure, however, frequently leaves teachers to address EMI in the classroom with personal pedagogical strategy rather than instruction or instructional orientation on a direct pedagogical agenda. Other issues were expressed in Shrestha and Coffin (2019) who observed that many Nepali teachers use improvisation in EMI situations. This inconsistency is further reflected in the moderate level of satisfaction with existing training (mean = 3.1). It has also been found by international studies that many EMI programs do not consider practical classroom strategies, such as language simplification and integration of content and language teaching (Macaro, 2018; Hamid et al., 2013).

A number of the teachers themselves had received education in Nepali-medium systems, which compounds their preparedness challenges. This trend is also prevalent in South Asia (Tupas & Renandya, 2020). Instruction of content through English as opposed to previously acquired EMI knowledge can create ambiguity and can have conflicting consequences with school class clarity. Teachers, however, in this study also strongly preferred hybrid learning models with the explicit requirement of EMI training. The recent emphasis on structured and context-aware professional development also mirrors a recent trend advocated by Kirkpatrick (2014).

Classroom Practice and Problems

The results indicate that EMI teachers commonly use both Nepali and English in lessons. Put simply, translanguaging is routine in EMI instruction. This is not merely a defect or failure of EMI. For some teachers, it's a practical way to help children when their English isn't very strong. This aligns with García and Wei's (2014) perspective on translanguaging as a flexible learning aid, and Sah and Li (2020) also highlight how Nepali teachers commonly shift between languages to facilitate comprehension gaps. Phyak (2016) makes a similar case, claiming that language mixing is inherent in the local classroom reality and therefore should be viewed in this light.

Delivery was rarely only in English. Most of the lecturers utilized English only for part of their lessons. That supports Macaro's (2018) argument that strict English-only EMI cannot be maintained in multilingual classrooms. They simplified in English and added Nepali explanations. Pun (2021) found that Nepali EMI teachers modify their language to avoid losing meaning with students. Giri (2011) further contends that EMI in Nepal does better in contexts where local languages help understanding than when they are excluded.

Limited resources of institutions presented teachers with a significant problem. There were no EMI-specific materials, lesson plans, or training included within most of the classes in schools. Teachers thus relied on textbooks and self-made teaching aids.

Dearden (2014) and Sah and Li (2020) also raise this important point, noting that EMI expansion frequently proceeds unheeded and without sufficient investment. Similar to what Shrestha and Coffin (2019) argue, many teachers compensate for institutional gaps, but mostly as individuals, not as part of a system.

Low student participation in English, too. Even when students knew the content, many were hesitant to respond in English. This mirrors wider issues in South Asian EMI contexts, in which learners' language anxiety levels and exposure to English outside of the classroom are low (Hamid et al., 2013). Students in Nepal, who are afraid of making mistakes, are among the most reluctant to speak (Pun, 2021).

Notwithstanding these limitations, teachers indicated medium confidence in delivering EMI. At the same time, they also note that EMI takes more time to prepare when compared to teaching in Nepali. (Kirkpatrick, 2014) There is evidence that confidence is largely developed through repeated teaching experience rather than formal EMI training. Ghimire (2020) noted that Nepali teachers also develop their confidence over time without continuous training, which is very rare.

Overall, results indicated the significant reliance of EMI, or EMI based classroom practice on teachers' bilingualism and personal resources employed in the practice environment of teachers in Nepal. If EMI is to become more consistently conducive to learning, this need for institutional support (especially with regard to resources, training and policy clarity) is clear —especially regarding materials, training, and policies. Otherwise, EMI may result in inconsistent effects depending on teacher and school.

EMI Policy, Support and Institutional Practice

Results from this concept indicate poor compliance with formal EMI policy and institutional support in a number of the schools examined. With 92% of teachers expressing their schools without written EMI policies, EMI often operates without a clear institutional framework. Dearden (2014) similarly points out that for many Global South contexts EMI is "rapidly adopted but poorly planned." Nepal, similarly, Giri (2011) and Phyak (2013) suggest that EMI dissemination is observed without explicit language policy guidelines. The result is inconsistency and confusion for teachers and school leaders alike.

Teachers also complained of weak policy enforcement and insufficient budgets. It seems to suggest a more systemic issue of responsibility on institution's part. Sah and Li (2018, 2020) suggest that as a market-oriented approach, many schools (both private and community schools) implement EMI, but insufficient investment in teacher training, materials and monitoring. Poudel (2020) also notes that for instance, in Nepal, EMI policy decisions could emphasize parental perception and school branding over classroom preparedness. Kirkpatrick (2014) reports that across Asia policy ambition often

transcends operational readiness, and this study's low mean scores were in line with this lack.

Furthermore, teacher participation in decision-making on EMI was also sparse. A substantial number of respondents said they were not consulted when EMI policies were written. This aligns with Garton and Copland's (2019) report that teachers frequently represent implementers rather than policy designers. Sah and Li (2022) outline that in Nepal, EMI reforms are primarily top-down, while Shrestha and Coffin (2019) states that teachers sometimes feel alienated from local language policy choices. This diminishes teacher ownership and may influence quality of implementation.

There was a neutral to dissatisfied level of teacher satisfaction with EMI policy implementation. Teachers described unclear guidelines, little support and inconsistent expectations. Similar concerns are also experienced in Nepal (Pun, 2021), and Bangladesh (Hamid et al., 2013) where again the chasm between EMI policy rhetoric and classroom practice seems to be consistent. When schools offer little support, teachers are forced to grapple with policy demands left to the will of their own students left to interpret demands on their own on the policy and practice can be patchy.

An additional issue is that there is so little formal evaluation (Mean = 2.69). Without monitoring or review of EMI, schools have less opportunity to address problems and refine practice. According to Macaro (2018) sustainable EMI involves continual reflection and evidence based adjustment.

In this study, that process seems limited. Yet, teachers presented a pragmatic and constructive perspective for improvement. Most desired that EMI policy development will be a government-school partnership. This corresponds with Tollefson and Tsui (2018), who suggest multi-tiered policy-making, which encompasses both national agendas and local priorities. Giri (2011) puts forth an alternative by proposing that language planning be collaborative and situationally sensitive with teachers as key stakeholders. That preference seems to indicate that the teachers appreciate the promise of EMI, but they require more explicit guidance and more support.

EMI Effect on Students and Stakeholders' Perceptions

Many teachers perceive EMI to generally have a positive impact on students' creativity and educational achievement, according to the results. More than half reported that EMI influences students to think differently and more creatively. Sah and Li (2020) also suggest that EMI can facilitate learners to be active meaning-makers when teachers offer them the right support. Pun (2021) further notes that EMI can enhance higher-order thinking only when language support is stable and consistent.

But not every teacher, however, was an optimist. A significant number believed EMI could reduce creativity since students are unable to communicate in English in a

proficient manner. Giri (2011) and Phyak (2013) highlight this concern, stating that limited language ability can limit classroom participation and academic engagement. Similar tendencies are observed in Bangladesh as well, when Hamid et al. (2013) show that linguistic difficulty affected student participation and learners autonomy in EMI sessions.

Homework completion under EMI was said to be "frequent but inconsistent." Many teachers described students as having difficulty finishing homework on their own since comprehension largely relied on Nepali explanations carried out during class. Pun (2021) states and reports in the same regard that students tend to use a language-based strategy in learning instead of a more deep process of understanding. These situations frequently necessitate homework problems, particularly where bilingual assistance and materials are limited.

Parental involvement has also been said to be low. Parents rarely demand stronger EMI practices, teachers said. So EMI growth may derive from school policy and market pressure, rather than evidence-informed local public demand, the researchers suggested. In a similar finding, Sah (2015) found that many parents accept EMI as a status symbol but lack the language background to support children's learning at home.

Teachers additionally felt that EMI could help on the exam, which will at least in part assist us in exam performance. Poudel and Choi (2021) found evidence that EMI students tend to perform better when asked problems pertaining to memory of material during written exams. And yet teachers in this study also realized that gains do not come automatically. They rely on students' readiness for instruction, language support, and resources.

Overall, the findings show that EMI is seen as promising, but its outcomes are uneven. The perceived benefits depend strongly on classroom support, bilingual help, and engagement from teachers, students, and parents. Without these supports, EMI can create both opportunities and limitations for learners.

Cultural Sensitivity and Multilingual Inclusion in EMI

Results for this theme indicate that most teachers support the incorporation of Nepali culture, local examples, and multilingual practices in English Medium Instruction (EMI). Over 95% advocated for the integration of cultural content in EMI, indicating the necessity to ground English instruction in local culture. This resonates with Giri (2011) and Phyak (2013), who argue that the language policy of Nepal should promote local values instead of promoting English at the expense of indigenous knowledge. Both of these findings also connect to the greater issue of culturally sustaining pedagogy by Paris and Alim (2017).

Teachers were more evenly divided on EMI's impact on local languages. More than half think EMI undermines home or indigenous languages. Similarly, Sah and Li (2020) caution that uncritical EMI may contribute to subtractive bilingualism, a process of developing English alongside other languages at the expense of linguistic diversity. Poudel and Choi (2021), for their part, warn that without supportive policy, EMI might lead to language shift in rural and small minority communities.

The public virtually agreed that Nepali cultural examples were appropriate. Teachers noted that EMI is more relevant when connected to local narratives, cultural practices, and embedded local knowledge. Pun (2021) also points out that culturally responsive content promotes learner interest and comprehension. Hornberger's (2003) continua of biliteracy also encourage pedagogical practices rooted in local situations.

Teachers differed on the introduction of EMI in early grades (1–3). Some supported early EMI and mother tongue support, and some focused on a strong L1 footing. The concern has been raised as an issue of concern in Nepal: Giri (2011) indicates that early EMI can impede comprehension and Phyak (2016) emphasizes mother tongue–based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) at the lower grades. Such views are not inconsistent with UNESCO (2016)'s warning that early second-language immersion is risky without L1 support.

Lastly, teachers overwhelmingly endorsed cultural sensitivity training, and most respondents felt that it should be compulsory. This implies that English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) educators require more than English proficiency. They also need skills to manage multilingual, culturally diverse classrooms. Similar recommendations are made in Pun (2021) and Sah (2024) and imply that EMI teacher education should consist of cultural competence and multilingual pedagogy. On the whole, our results indicate that EMI in Nepal has to be local and culturally inclusive. For teachers, incorporating culture, multilingual support, and sensitivity training are crucial for EMI to meet the aspirations, to not only be fair but workable across diverse settings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research investigated the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Nepal from the views of 52 secondary teachers. Results reveal that teachers, despite a general endorsement of EMI, enter EMI classrooms generally not formally trained. Consequently, teachers frequently rely on short workshops, personal experience, and translanguaging practices to help the students assimilate in the context of this task. Classroom practice, then, is mostly blended and Nepali and other local languages are sometimes used in conjunction with English as well, particularly in rural environments where English exposure is low.

The support from institutions for EMI was also poor. For the majority of schools, there are no written EMI policies, no clear allocation of budget, no well-defined teaching and learning plans, no regular planning for instruction, and no regular assessment processes. Teachers also described limited participation in the design of policies which implies a discrepancy between government expectations and institutional support for implementation.

Emphasizing the negative impact of EMI, teachers discussed the mixed reactions of students towards EMI. While EMI was considered to support creativity and exam application, students suffered with comprehension, homework, and oral involvement in English. Such difficulties were more evident in content-rich curriculum, in more resource-poor programs. Teachers also overwhelmingly endorsed the integration of regional cultures and multilingual approaches to EMI, however, some elements of such practices are not yet well-recognized nationally in school-level practices.

Together these results indicate the growth of EMI in Nepal, however, an uneven process continues. EMI growth seems to be more driven by public demand and institutional aspiration than by policy coherence, sustained training, and pedagogical preparedness. These basic building blocks of teaching and learning will need to be strengthened if EMI is to become more equitable and effective across different learning environments in Nepal.

The results reveal the high demand for continuous, context-dependent, EMI-informed teacher training and a more coherent institutional policy. Because many EMI teachers arrive in the classroom unready to make use of EMI, we recommend professional development that emphasizes effective techniques such as EMI classroom English, translanguaging, and content–language integration. Schools also need clear EMI frameworks that encompass written policies, budgets, monitoring tools, and teacher involvement in the creation of these policies; if implementation does not harmonize with what happens in schools, EMI policies will fail.

Culturally responsive and multilingual teaching approaches were further reinforced by the results. Local EMI curricula should include contextually responsive cultural material, as well as mother tongue support, in order to promote understanding and minimize language barriers especially for early grades and rural communities. Systematic assessment of EMI interventions is key to rectify inequity and maintain efficacy in all contexts.
Strengthening teacher training, policy clarification, and instruction rooted in culturally relevant contexts can contribute to EMI becoming a more inclusive and effective way in which to learn in Nepal

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