

Exploring the Applicability of Socio-cultural Resources in Secondary Level Classroom Instructions in Nepal

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating the applicability of socio-cultural resources in secondary-level classroom instructions and critically examines task-based approaches, methods, and techniques in fostering skill-based education within the selected study areas. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The analysis was conducted applying an interpretative paradigm. The findings indicate a rich presence of local knowledge and demonstrate its potential for integration into classroom instruction to promote task-based, practical learning. The study suggests that such locally grounded socio-cultural resources can be meaningfully incorporated into the secondary-level curriculum in Nepal to support the development of contextually relevant and skills-oriented education. Furthermore, it proposes strategic recommendations for integrating socio-cultural resources into instructional practices to enhance practical learning through functional, task-based pedagogy.

Introduction

Knowledge, experiences, and skills are inherently interconnected and are expected to function simultaneously within the educational process. According to Dewey (1916), education is a continuous process involving the acquisition of knowledge and experiences, which are subsequently revised or reorganized to develop practical skills through adaptation to one's environment. He emphasizes that education serves as a mechanism for nurturing inherent potential by transforming it into applicable competencies (p. 61). Similarly, Agrawal (1992)

asserts that the productive dimension of education enables individuals to address and overcome various challenges through the application of practical skills (p. 33). These perspectives collectively underline the foundations of modern educational philosophy, which prioritizes the practical application of learning by integrating functionality, productivity, and skill development.

Supporting this view, Dewey (1997) reiterates that the primary objective of education is to prepare young individuals for future responsibilities and success in life. This preparation involves the structured acquisition of knowledge and the development of standardized skill sets, which together constitute the core content of instruction (p. 18). In line with this, Crow and Crow (2008) define education as a dynamic force that influences an individual's physical, mental, emotional, social, and ethical development. They argue that this multidimensional development leads to the cultivation of practical values, behaviors, and skills within society (p. 53).

From a different standpoint, Smith (2006) posits that education can function both as a problem and a solution. He highlights the need for critical analysis of educational policies and practices across all levels to ensure they are sensitive to local diversities and capable of promoting comprehensive social development (p. 29). Smith's argument suggests that diversity introduces a wide array of opportunities through varied knowledge, experiences, and skills present in society. Effectively harnessing these resources can accelerate social development, although it may pose challenges for policymakers in creating inclusive and adaptable educational systems. This indicates the significant role diversity plays in shaping education.

To integrate real-world experiences into the classroom and foster the development of practical skills, it is essential to engage students in activities that involve interaction with relevant resources within their socio-cultural environment. The socio-cultural context encompasses individual and group identities, including specific knowledge, skills, experiences, and practices. UNESCO (2011) defines this context as comprising factors such as race, class, ability, diverse learning conditions and styles, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, and other dimensions that influence individual and collective educational practices (p. 2). Similarly, Nwabueze and Isilebo (2022) emphasize that contemporary educational approaches focus on event- and task-oriented learning. This model is grounded in the theory of social learning, which requires students to interact with locally available resources, including indigenous knowledge, experiences, and skills prevalent in the community (p. 545).

Concept of Resources

Nature has often been conceptualized as a nurturer that can be transformed into a resource once it is assigned value for human use or benefit. In this regard,

resources are inherently anthropogenic in nature, reflecting the appropriation of natural elements by humans (Hope, 2002, p. 2). The World Bank defines natural resources as materials that occur in nature and are essential or useful to humans, such as water, air, land, forests, fish, wildlife, topsoil, and minerals (Collier, 2003, p. 38). Expanding this definition, the World Trade Report (2010) describes natural resources as stocks of materials that exist in the natural environment, which are both scarce and economically useful, either in their raw form or with minimal processing (p. 46).

More broadly, Worthington (1964) conceptualizes resources as "everything that is derivable for the use or benefit of humans from any part of the universe" (p. 2). Similarly, Sadhukhan (1986) emphasizes that a resource is not merely a material or substance but is the result of a positive interaction between humans and nature, aimed at fulfilling individual desires and achieving societal objectives (p. 94). Hussen (2000) further elaborates this view by defining resources as anything that directly or indirectly satisfies human wants (p. 3). These definitions underscore the social dimensions of natural resources, emphasizing human needs, usage, and satisfaction. Synthesizing various perspectives, Hussen (2000) concludes that natural resources encompass all the original elements constituting Earth's natural endowments or life-support systems, such as air, water, Earth's crust, and solar radiation (p. xxv).

Perspectives of Resources

The World Trade Report (2010) classifies all goods as either embodying natural resources or requiring natural resources for production. For instance, automobiles contain iron ore, while food crops depend on land and water. Hence, virtually all goods may be seen as derivatives of natural resources (p. 46). Furthermore, natural resources such as oil and gas are transformed into energy essential for producing nearly every good or service, while others like forests, fisheries, and aquifers are considered invaluable natural assets (World Trade Report, 2010, p. 40).

Although the World Bank (2009) underscores the significance of natural resources for human life, it gives limited attention to the deeper relationship between nature and nurture. This raises philosophical questions about whether nature exists solely to serve human beings or whether there exists a cosmological linkage between humanity and nature, possibly grounded in spiritual or metaphysical interpretations. Despite this, the World Trade Report emphasizes the importance of nature as a resource intended for human benefit. Moreover, the World Trade Report (2014) identifies a positive correlation between natural resources and human development, thereby associating natural resources with mechanisms of nurture through indicators such as health, education, and life expectancy.

Supporting this perspective, the Food and Agriculture Organization (2004), as cited in the World Bank (2009), highlights that natural resources provide a diverse range of goods and services, including food, fuel, medicines, freshwater, fisheries, and ecological regulation, which are essential for sustaining life on Earth. The rural poor in developing nations remain particularly dependent on these resources for food security and livelihoods (p. 423).

In examining social resources, it is evident that the concept of a resource holds little significance outside the context of human society. Burch (1971) asserts that the origins of natural resources lie within society rather than the Earth itself, noting that societal frameworks comprising myths, beliefs, and rhetorical traditions shape and assign meaning to nature (p. 9). Donenfeld (1914) adds that the concept of social resources arises from recognizing that institutions, associations, social agencies, and attitudes share common traits (p. 560). Thus, resource utilization and mobilization are fundamentally social phenomena, guided and shaped by the cultural fabric and institutional systems within human society.

Human interaction with natural resources imbues those resources with meaning and value. Donenfeld (1914) explains that social resources encompass all scenarios involving human interaction and behavior within the environment (p. 560). This interaction is influenced by multiple social factors. Tornblom and Kazemi (2012) argue that both material and non-material elements such as knowledge, love, power, and possessions are exchanged, withheld, or distributed through social interactions, all of which constitute social resources (p. 1). Earlier scholars, including Galbraith (1967) and Bell (1973), emphasized the critical role of expert knowledge, communication skills, and managerial expertise as forms of valuable social capital (as cited in Tornblom & Kazemi, 2012, p. 1).

Building on Weber's framework of social stratification, social resources are understood to operate along three dimensions: class, status, and party affiliation. Class impacts access to economic resources, status relates to social respect and recognition, and party membership is linked to power and privilege (as cited in Tornblom & Kazemi, 2012, p. 1). These dimensions are instrumental in shaping individuals' capacities and access to natural resources, reflecting a dynamic interplay between personal agency and structural conditions.

According to Tornblom and Kazemi (2012), the quality of life and overall well-being are influenced by both the production and distribution of material and immaterial social resources. Their work underscores the importance of balancing both types for holistic human development (Introduction section, para. 3). Hugo and Clanahan (2009) affirm that social factors play a decisive role in determining whether resource-rich countries can escape the so-called resource curse. They argue that meaningful development in such contexts necessitates broader social transformations beyond mere economic policy adjustments (pp. 165–166). The

authors recommend a deeper understanding of social conditions conducive to developmental success in resource-abundant nations (p. 178).

Berger (1992) also supports this notion, arguing that development discourse must extend beyond economics to encompass issues of social relations and control (p. 146). Berger and Luckmann (1967) further assert that human groups assign symbolic meanings to natural landscapes, transforming physical realities into culturally constructed environments (p. 69). In line with this, Greider and Garkovich (1994) argue that natural environments are socio-cultural constructs shaped by collective negotiations over meaning (p. 2). Thus, the physical world holds little intrinsic meaning outside the interpretive frameworks provided by culture.

Greider and Garkovich (1994) asserts that landscape interpretations help elucidate the institutional mechanisms managing natural resources (p. 2). Whorf (1956) concurs, suggesting that nature is perceived through a culturally agreed-upon lens that organizes otherwise chaotic sensory input (p. 213). Blumer (1969) extends this idea, emphasizing that humans live in a world of meaningful objects socially constructed through interaction (pp. 238–239).

Socio-cultural Resources

Socio-cultural resources emerge from shared realities and are sustained through cultural practices and collective memory prevalent in a society. Rogers (1981) explains that shared realities are achieved through common-sense knowledge and social interactions that structure everyday life (p. 134). This view is reinforced by Goffman (1974), Denzin (1977), Corsaro (1985), and Fine (1991), all of whom emphasize that cultural groups continually reconstruct their realities through interaction and reinterpretation of symbols and meanings (as cited in Greider & Garkovich, 1994, p. 6). Busch (1989) concludes that natural environments are socially organized to reflect the structure and beliefs of the communities inhabiting them (p. 4).

In this light, cultural landscapes encompassing both natural and human-made elements represent the imprint of human activity on nature, shaped by social, cultural, and economic goals (Pradhan & Pradhan, 2011, p. 51). Functional landscapes arise from economic activities, while other forms reflect cultural preferences and historical interactions. Thus, the mobilization of natural resources is intricately linked to cultural systems.

Fabricius and Koch (2004) highlight that traditional cultural knowledge significantly influences natural resource management through informal institutions, beliefs, and customs that regulate resource use (p. 24). Torrington and Hall (1991) further argue that socio-cultural environments differ across nations and influence regulatory frameworks, values, and demographic behavior (p. 11).

Cultural values shape human engagement with nature and determine how resources are utilized. According to Adhikari (2009), cultural norms profoundly impact work systems, particularly in human resource management, and unaddressed socio-cultural factors can obstruct necessary institutional changes (p. 82). Culture and nature are deeply interdependent. Cultural landscapes reflect human interaction with nature and represent both the technical capabilities and socio-economic aspirations of local populations (Pradhan & Pradhan, 2011, p. 51). Cultural resources encompass both tangible artifacts and natural elements shaped for human use (Ngozi & Chinonso, 2016).

Ultimately, understanding environmental change necessitates cultural interpretation. Greider and Garkovich (1994) argue that cultural definitions of landscapes are essential to analyzing the human consequences of environmental change (p. 2). Bennett (1976) contends that humans consistently reinterpret natural phenomena through cultural frameworks (p. 4), while Greider and Garkovich (1994) note that symbols used by cultural groups frame their relationships with the environment (p. 8). These observations point to the socio-cultural diversity embedded within populations, which contributes to varied knowledge systems, practices, and skills for resource mobilization. Therefore, the role of indigenous knowledge and local cultural groups in managing natural resources warrants further scholarly attention.

Indigenous People and Socio-cultural Resources

Indigenous communities represent distinct socio-cultural groups characterized by shared ancestral connections to the lands and natural resources they inhabit, occupy, or utilize. These connections are not merely geographical or utilitarian; rather, they are deeply interwoven with the cultural identities, languages, traditional livelihoods, and both the physical and spiritual well-being of these communities. The continuous interaction between indigenous peoples and their surrounding ecosystems has historically cultivated a wealth of localized knowledge systems and resource management practices. Local populations, in particular, are widely recognized for their ability to mobilize available natural resources for the collective benefit of their communities through context-specific knowledge, skill sets, and utilization strategies.

Supporting this perspective, Getz et al. (1999) argue that local communities inherently possess the collective capacity to manage natural resources effectively, noting that “it starts from the premise that local people have the collective capacity to manage natural resources through their knowledge and experiences; in community-based conservation and development programs, local communities are responsible for managing their natural resources for the development of practical skills” (pp. 3783–3789). Similarly, Weddell (2002) emphasizes the critical role of indigenous knowledge across diverse ecological zones from polar regions to tropical climates where communities have spearheaded innovative and effective

conservation and development initiatives. These initiatives have not only contributed to sustainable resource management but have also facilitated the development of practical knowledge, technical competencies, and context-sensitive technologies.

A growing body of scientific literature underscores the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems and forging equitable partnerships with local communities in order to enhance resource mobilization and educational development. Timsina and Ojha (2008) further reinforce this notion by observing that, “scientists themselves have admitted that knowledge that comes from the school and university education is all based on the indigenous knowledge system which has existed with the community and farmers for generations” (p. 27). This acknowledgment challenges the conventional hierarchy of knowledge and highlights the foundational role of indigenous epistemologies in formal education and scientific inquiry.

The above analysis underscores the critical importance of valuing and systematically analyzing the socio-cultural knowledge held by local populations for the development of experience-based, practical education systems. This is particularly relevant in the context of Nepal, as in many other developing countries, where formal education can significantly benefit from the integration of indigenous and local perspectives. Timsina and Ojha (2008) further illustrate this point by highlighting participatory variety selection as an effective approach to resource management. This approach harmonizes scientific and indigenous knowledge systems, although they caution that one of the persistent challenges lies in achieving full recognition of the value of socio-cultural knowledge during the development and dissemination of new technologies (p. 27).

Moreover, the discussion advocates for the institutionalization and policy-level support of community networks and local knowledge systems. Strengthening these structures would facilitate the formal incorporation of socio-cultural resources into national education and development frameworks. According to Timsina and Ojha (2008), local communities are well-positioned to identify resource varieties and management strategies that are ecologically appropriate and culturally resonant, while also being compatible with their socio-economic contexts and learning practices. This capacity further affirms the relevance of engaging indigenous knowledge holders as co-creators in educational and technological innovation processes.

In conclusion, the reviewed studies collectively highlight that local communities represent a vital reservoir of socio-cultural knowledge, practical expertise, and experiential insight. These communities are indispensable in shaping sustainable technologies and educational models grounded in the responsible utilization of natural resources. Their unique competencies developed through generations of environmental interaction position them as essential actors

in the co-production of knowledge and in the promotion of socio-culturally informed educational practices.

In context of Nepal where diverse cultural traditions and localized practices remain vibrant the relevance of this research is particularly acute. Many communities possess deeply rooted knowledge systems that offer practical and sustainable insights into resource use, environmental stewardship, and communal learning practices. However, the formal education system has often overlooked these valuable resources in favor of externally derived, standardized curricula.

This study, therefore, aims to address this gap by identifying socio-cultural resources available in local communities, analyzing their potential applicability in classroom instruction, and recommending strategies for their integration into educational practices. In doing so, it aligns with broader academic and policy discourses on educational reform, sustainability, and community empowerment. The research intends not only to contribute to theoretical understandings but also to offer practical pathways for implementing culturally responsive pedagogy that is grounded in the lived realities of learners and their communities.

Objectives of the study

- To identify the locally available socio-cultural resources in the study areas.
- To analyze the applicability of identified socio-cultural resources in classroom instructions in the study areas.
- To recommend the strategies for the application of identified socio-cultural resources in classroom instructions.

Methodology

To address the research objectives, this study adopted a qualitative research design rooted in hermeneutic phenomenology. This methodological approach was selected to explore and interpret individuals' lived experiences, as it enables a deeper understanding of the meanings embedded in those experiences (Langdridge, 2007, p. 4). According to Van Manen (2014, p. 28), hermeneutic phenomenology involves making sense of the world through the interpretation of human experiences as they are lived. The aim of this phenomenological inquiry was to uncover the underlying meanings of individuals' practical knowledge and skills by engaging with their experiences in context.

The research was grounded in the interpretive paradigm, which views knowledge as socially constructed and focuses on understanding the complexities of the social world (Higgs, 2001, pp. 48-49). This paradigm aligns with the objective of the study, which is to explore how individuals construct meaning through interaction, reflection, and lived practice. In this context, interpretive

phenomenology offered an appropriate framework to investigate the nuanced and context-dependent nature of participants' educational and social experiences.

Experiential data were collected using a combination of unstructured and semi-structured interviews. These interviews were guided by phenomenological questions designed to elicit rich, in-depth responses from participants (Beck, 2021). In addition to interviews, field observation was employed to capture naturalistic insights and contextual understanding. To further support the data collection process, field notes, photographs, and voice recordings were utilized as supplementary tools and techniques. These multi-modal methods contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the participants' lived experiences.

The data analysis followed a six-stage phenomenological process: immersion, understanding, abstraction, synthesis, illumination and illustration of phenomena, and integration and critique of findings. This sequential process facilitated the transformation of raw experiential data into meaningful thematic categories. Through phenomenological interpretation, reflection, and writing, the study sought to reveal the structures of meaning that underlie participants' lived realities (Stolz, 2023, p. 825). Each stage of analysis contributed to an iterative engagement with the data, fostering both depth and rigor in interpretation.

The study site was purposively selected based on the diverse socio-cultural and demographic characteristics of the location, consistent with the guidance provided by Rowland and Leu (2011). The research was conducted in a geographically defined suburban area—ward no. 14 of Tilotama Municipality, located in Rupandehi district, Lumbini Province, Nepal. This site was chosen to ensure a range of perspectives from both native and migrant inhabitants, reflecting the social diversity of the region.

Participants were selected to represent a cross-section of stakeholders within the local community. The respondents of this study which were chosen employing purposive sampling technique included ten local dwellers, five teachers, five students, five parents, two social workers, one School Management Committee (SMC) member, and one local representative. Efforts were made to ensure inclusivity and diversity within the participant pool, with careful attention to selecting individuals who could provide meaningful insights related to the research questions. Ethical standards were rigorously upheld throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and pseudonyms were used to protect their privacy and maintain confidentiality.

Result and Discussion

The socio-cultural resources identified through field observations and semi-structured interviews conducted in the selected study area have been analyzed in this section. The research employed a phenomenological approach to capture the lived experiences, cultural practices, and contextual knowledge embedded within

the local community. The data, generated from diverse stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, social workers, and local representatives, provided rich insight into the forms and functions of locally available knowledge systems and cultural assets relevant to education.

The identification of socio-cultural resources was guided by thematic coding and interpretive analysis, ensuring that findings reflect both the practical significance and educational potential of each resource. Emphasis was placed on those elements that could contribute meaningfully to classroom instruction, contextual learning, and the integration of socio-cultural resources into the formal classroom instruction. The table below (see Table 1) provides a synthesized representation of these resources, capturing their nature, and possible pedagogical applications.

Table 1. *The Identified Socio-cultural Resources*

Natural Resource	Fields, conservation areas, grassland, Chautari,
Heritage	well, garden, streams, jungle, river, pond
Organizations/Associations	- Shree Samay Mai Ramleela Yuba Club - Shree Samay Mai Ramleela Yuba Club - Samay Mai Samudayik Sanatha - Samay Mai Samudayik Sanatha - Harit Kranti Krishak Samuha
Industries	- Buffalo farming -Poultry farming - Fish farming -Distillery Pvt. Ltd. -Making statue
Primary Occupation	Agriculture
Secondary Occupation	- Jobs (office/ manual) -Shop keeping - Tailoring -Working for wages -Fishing
Institutions	- Saraswati Basic School - Tikuligarh Sec. School - Durga Sec. School - Pashupati Campus
Cultural Heritages	- Tripureswar Temple - Samay Mai Temple - Kali Mai Temple - Chhiliya Durbar
Events and Festivals: Festivals	Dashain, Tihar, Nag Panchami, Teej, Badhki Aaitabar, Eid (Muslim), Fagu Purnima, Shivaratri, Rakshyabandhan, Tajiya (Muslim)
Seasonal Celebrations	- Kusti (wrestling) - Ramleela (A typical cultural programme based on religious mythology)

Worships	- Samay Mai Pooja - Shivaratri Pooja
Rituals	- Nwaran (naming Ceremony) - Faruhai Dance (Yadav) - Witch Craft
Public Events	- Ramleela (A typical cultural programme based on religious mythology)
Public Tours	- Pilgrimage - Occasional tours organized by financial/occupational cooperative associations
Indigenous People/ Ethno Groups	Yadav, Kewat/Mallah, Brahmin, Chhetri, Gupta, Bania/Kanu, Harijan, Saithawar, Jollah(Muslim), Ansari, Tharu
Indigenous Knowledge: (physical/technical/social) <i>Based on (Mukherjee, 1995, p. 11.)</i>	- Topographic knowledge -Land structure - Soil type -Land condition - Land tenure -Quantifying - Thatching -Weather prediction
Technical Knowledge	- Transplanting -Weeding -Ploughing -Field leveling - Drawing water -Mapping -Diagramming - Listing - Comparing/contrasting -Identifying - Estimating - Ranking -Visual sharing/mental -maps -Cross checking - Correcting -Modifying -Sequencing
Social Knowledge	- Observing -Listening to others -Criticizing - Discussing -Interacting -Seeking problems - Seeking solutions -Answering -Telling local history - Presenting the -information of map -Sharing
Indigenous Technologies	- Planting potato/paddy/wheat - Planting seasonal vegetables - Chakki (for making pulse) - Making walls made of straw and mud - Making boats (Mallah) - Making Khasi (blocking reproduction of male goat) - Processing the skin of dead cattle (Harijan) - Making Khapada(roofing materials) - Making ploughing equipments set(used to)

Local Skills

- Feeding cattle, milking, breeding
 - Planting, irrigating -Dehari (granary)
 - Pigeon house (made of mud) -Swimming
 - Crossing the flooded river -Fishing (Kewat/Mallah)
 - Making straw made seat and mat
 - Messaging orally to villagers (Harizon) - Bamboo ladder
 - Stitching clothes -Broom of a typical local plant
 - Working as watchman (Harijan) -Making puffed rice
 - Paintings on wall (sun, snakes etc.) -First aid of snake bite
 - Treatment of mud infection on feet and hands
 - Playing kusti (wrestling) -Singing religious songs
 - Dancing in a typical music (Yadav)
 - Feeding medicine to cattle by using a bamboo made device
 - Working as Dhami/Jhakri (witch remover)
-

An abundance of socio-cultural resources was identified within the selected study area. These resources were not merely incidental elements of daily life but were deeply embedded in the social structure, behavioral patterns, and cultural practices of the community. They constituted both challenges and solutions for local people, reflecting a dynamic interplay between traditional knowledge and lived experience. Such resources, inherently adaptive and community-centered, form an integral part of how people make sense of their world and navigate daily life.

These resources encompassed a wide spectrum of culturally situated knowledge, including language, naming and classification systems, resource use practices, ritual behavior, spiritual beliefs, and worldviews. As Boven and Morohashi (2002) suggest, such cultural complexes provide the epistemological and practical foundation for local-level decision-making in relation to daily survival, environmental management, and responses to socio-cultural change. The participants' interpretations and lived experiences revealed that these knowledge systems are contextually rich and serve as frameworks for understanding, resilience, and adaptation.

Recognizing the educational value of these resources, this study examined their potential for integration into classroom instruction. These socio-cultural elements offer pedagogical opportunities for promoting experiential learning,

critical thinking, cultural literacy, and context-sensitive problem-solving among students. Their integration into school curricula, when thoughtfully contextualized, can support the development of multiple cognitive and practical skills. Such resources could be integrated in classroom instructions by using various techniques from multiple aspects and purposes to develop various skills in students. I have identified the possible pedagogic use of socio-cultural resources as (see Table 2) follows:

Table 2. *Possible Pedagogic Use of Socio-cultural Resources*

Available Resources	Socio-cultural Techniques in Classroom Instructions
Organizations/associations	Role play, simulation, drama, project work, report writing,
Indigenous/ethno groups	Facilitation, resource person, interaction, group discussion
Industries	Project work, report writing, observation, demonstration
Occupations	Role play, simulation, drama, interaction, project work
Cultural heritages	Project work, report writing, observation, demonstration, field visit
Events and festivals	Role play, simulation, drama, interaction, project work
Seasonal celebrations	Role play, simulation, drama, interaction, project work
Public gatherings	Dramatization, interaction, discussion, group work
Tours	Excursion, project work, questioning, answering
Physical knowledge	Demonstrating, facilitating, group work, discussion, project work, observation, interaction, presentation
Technical knowledge	Field visit, demonstrating, facilitating, group work, discussion, project work, observation, presentation, interaction, problem solving
Social knowledge	Interaction discussion facilitation, group work, project work, observation, interaction, problem solving, question-answer, presentation
Local technologies	Demonstration, presentation, observation, field visit, participation, field work, modeling, realia,
Local skills	Demonstration, presentation, observation, field visit, participation, field work, modeling, realia, role play, dramatization, project work, problem-solving

The integration of locally relevant socio-cultural resources into the secondary-level curriculum holds significant potential for enhancing contextualized and meaningful learning experiences. These resources, as previously discussed, encompass a wide array of community-based knowledge systems, cultural practices, social norms, and indigenous problem-solving strategies that can enrich educational content and pedagogy. In alignment with the guiding principle articulated by the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) of Nepal (2010), which advocates the vision “Think Globally, Act Locally,” there is a clear conceptual framework supporting the utilization of local socio-cultural elements to meet broader educational goals. This approach emphasizes the importance of grounding curriculum development in the lived experiences and needs of local communities, thereby fostering the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills among learners.

Despite the theoretical endorsement of this paradigm, empirical observations and practical experiences reveal a considerable gap between policy ideals and implementation. Specifically, there appears to be a conspicuous absence of systematic inclusion of socio-cultural resources within the formal secondary curriculum. Furthermore, classroom practices seldom reflect an integration of such locally grounded knowledge. Upon further investigation into the root causes of this disconnect, it becomes evident that one of the major contributing factors is the lack of rigorous academic research focused on identifying and documenting socio-cultural resources appropriate for curricular integration. The academic silence in this area has resulted in a dearth of evidence-based strategies to inform curriculum designers and educators.

Additionally, there exists a noticeable lack of motivation among teachers to incorporate these socio-cultural dimensions into their teaching practices. This reluctance can be attributed, in part, to the structural limitations within the current assessment system. Since the use of socio-cultural resources in pedagogy is not formally recognized or evaluated through practical examinations or assessment frameworks, teachers perceive little incentive to adopt such approaches. As a result, the potential for creating a culturally responsive and locally relevant education system remains largely untapped. Bridging this gap necessitates comprehensive research initiatives, policy reforms, and professional development programs that emphasize the pedagogical value of socio-cultural knowledge and provide tangible support for its implementation in everyday teaching and learning contexts.

Conclusion

The identification, acknowledgment, critical perception, and pedagogical mobilization of locally available socio-cultural resources should be integral components of classroom instructions, achieved through the application of contextually appropriate pedagogical approaches, methods, and techniques. These resources, rooted in community practices, knowledge systems, and cultural

traditions, serve as authentic representations of learners' lived environments. The practical knowledge, experiential understanding, and skill development of students are closely tied to their engagement with these resources, as human interaction with local contexts produces unique forms of learning embedded in specific socio-cultural realities.

Integrating a diverse array of socio-cultural resources into classroom instruction effectively bridges the gap between abstract academic content and the real-world experiences of students. It provides learners with opportunities to develop meaningful competencies through exposure to tangible, context-specific knowledge. The utilization of such resources should be strategically adapted based on multiple factors, including the cognitive and developmental levels of students, the disciplinary nature of the subject matter, the pedagogical techniques employed by teachers, and the dynamics of classroom situations. For instance, in grades 8, 9, and 10, socio-cultural resources can be effectively incorporated into subjects such as Agriculture, Education, Occupational and Business Studies, Technical Education, Social Studies, Science, Accountancy, and Economics. These subjects offer broad scopes for contextual engagement, where learning is enriched by linking curriculum content to local realities.

Pedagogical strategies such as project-based learning, field visits, demonstrations, participatory activities, and community-based involvement offer practical avenues for incorporating these resources. One viable approach involves inviting local experts or community members into the classroom as resource persons. Their lived experiences and domain-specific knowledge can significantly enrich instructional processes by providing real-life examples and demonstrating skills in practice. This promotes task-based and activity-oriented learning environments, where students can develop applied knowledge, critical thinking abilities, and problem-solving skills.

Furthermore, experiential learning can be facilitated by organizing observation tours to farms, local industries, or traditional workplaces, enabling students to analyze local phenomena from interdisciplinary perspectives. Individual or group-based project work can also be assigned to investigate indigenous knowledge systems, crafts, or occupational practices. In such cases, key practitioners from local communities can be engaged in interactive classroom sessions to explain their techniques, processes, and cultural significance. These initiatives foster collaborative and interactive learning models, aligning with contemporary pedagogical paradigms that emphasize student-centered, experiential education.

To sum up, the effective application of socio-cultural resources in classroom instruction, particularly through localized curriculum design, offers significant potential for fostering holistic student development. By aligning these resources with curriculum objectives and responding to the specific educational needs of local communities, as emphasized by the Curriculum Development Center (CDC)

Nepal, educators can cultivate socially and technically competent individuals. This not only supports the development of students' social and vocational competencies but also promotes contextually grounded, problem-solving capacities essential for meaningful engagement with the world beyond the classroom.

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