

Pedagogical Reform at Primary Schools in Nepal: Examining the Child Centred Teaching

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Abstract

In the history of Nepalese education, 1853 AD marked the entry of the English system of education by the establishment of Durbar Elementary School by Jung Bahadur Rana after his return from his visit to Great Britain. The English type followed the British model of India, which was at one time accredited based on the Oxford and Cambridge examinations. Several other types of education, such as Buddhist Bihar, Hindu Ashram, and Gandhian Basic Education, existed side by side. Present-day, Nepalese school education has been facing two major enduring challenges: increasing access to education and improving the quality of education, which has now been put together as quality education for all. Explicitly or implicitly, Nepalese education documents forward learner-centered education (LCT) to improve the quality of education. Indented quality needs to be implemented at the classroom level, which yet seems not been materializing in the Nepalese context. It is, therefore, essential to analyze various facets of the LCT in the Nepalese context to weave different aspects together to achieve LCT in the Nepalese school classrooms. The major objective of the present article is to analyze the pedagogical reform at primary school from LCT perspectives in Nepal. Thus the present study was descriptive. Library documents and online documents were used as tools for the collection of data. The results of the present study indicated that what has been intended LCT practices have not been implemented. Still, there is a need to clarify envisioned LCT pedagogical approaches and its effective implementation. It will be worthwhile to plan a step by step implementation and development plan and execute it incrementally with emphasis on building upon successes and expanding.

Keywords: Child-centered teaching, Pedagogical practices, Teaching, Learning, Policy and programs

Education during Ancient and Medieval Period

The history of education in Nepal can be traced back to the tradition of religious education, led by Hindu priests and the Buddhist monks. During the ancient period, the development of education in Nepal was sporadic and sluggish. Temples and Gombas were the places to educate young scholar for religious roles. Priests and monks provided knowledge, skills, and values in the various subject to a small number of students or disciples in their Gurukul and monasteries. The Gurukul education system was a similar system to the prevailing modern boarding schools except that the students were usually Brahmins or the sons of the ruling elite. Gurus were the spiritual directors in the Gurukul. The rulers donated land and money for the daily worship of deities. Trusts (Guthis) were organized to look after and manage such landed property. The trusts provided food and shelter to hermits, mendicants, and pilgrims. These same trusts supported the Gurukuls. They were organized as early as the 7th century A.D. Trusts and temples also supported education during this time.

The Lichhavi period has been considered a period of renaissance in Nepalese arts, crafts, architecture, education, and culture. Despite this, the Lichhavi Kings did not consider education as the responsibility of the state. During the Licchavi period, existing educational institutions were probably Buddhist ones (Bista, 1994).

The advent of the Sankaracharya in the eleventh century introduced the Sanskrit system into Nepal and gradually pushed the earlier system northwards. The role of Nepal in the development of education has been a catalyst for the fusion of the Aryan Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Baptism of the Tibeto-Burman races (College of Education, 1956). Buddhism and Brahmanism interpenetrated and mingled in Nepal.

Buddhist system of education was connected with monasteries, and the Hindu system of education model was that of Gurukul, where the relationship of the Guru (teacher) and Shishya (pupil) was emphasized. Monasteries were built on a three-level organization of the University Board, the college, and a boarding hostel. Education was provided to the students in a Gurukul or at a Guru's home as well. The Hindu system was interwoven in the Varnashram system, where each Varna (group) had different schools to go to and different subjects for study. As such, Devkula was developed for the study of the cosmos, Gurukul for general education, Rhishikula for meditation, and Rajkula for political education. Over time these schools vanished, but Gurukul among them was still in existence during the founding of the modern system of education in Nepal as well. (CERID, 1997; Sharma, 2005).

During the Malia dynasty, King Jayasthiti Malia believed in education as preparation for life while a later King of Patan, Siddhinarsingh Malia, attempted to implement secular education. The unification of Nepal was initiated by King Prithivi Narayan Shah of the House of Gorkha, the Shah dynasty's first monarch under a unified Nepal. During the unification process, sufficient attention was not paid to education, though Prithivi Narayan Shah's policies regarding state compiled in the Divya Upadesh covered many areas of statecraft. His sons and grandsons were also preoccupied with the unification process, which ultimately came to a halt after the defeat at the hands of the British Empire in 1814. Until 1846 the Court of Nepal was an imbroglio of intrigues and conspiracies. This culminated in a bloody coup led by Jung Bahadur Rana, who put the monarch in prison and placed his son on the throne from whom he wrested all the powers of the State.

Pedagogical practices, during the ancient and

medieval period, were based on rote learning and the teacher-centered teaching (TCT). Religious texts and selected literature were the main materials in the religious system of education. Due to the lack of multiple copies of the text, there was a tradition of oral transmission of knowledge. Only a few manuscripts were available until printed materials used to be supplied. Religious types of education, both Buddhist and Hindu, were mainly rote learning, group delivery, and chorus repetition. This type of pedagogy has been described by Alexander (2000), 'the mode of transmission was oral-through constant recitation and repetition, backward and forwards from teacher and pupils, texts were committed to memory.' The teacher assumed high status as a source of knowledge and a fair measure of autonomy as to the selection of texts and the pacing of pedagogy concerning individual needs and progress. Those who have already memorized a given piece of text and can recite to the teacher would be given the next piece of the task (Altekar, 1956). NNEPC (1956) report states:

The day's routine for a student began with a prayer at the break of day in the prayer hall... The students squatted cross-legged in long criss-cross rows over carpets. The Khembus (the college president) occupied high raised seats and looked upon the congregation. The choir leader squatted on a dais and chanted hymns, with regular intervals for tea. The singing of psalms was done in a deep bass (to imitate the voice of Buddha) by the choir leader, followed by the thousand voices of the students. There were occasional clapping to mark the pause in the stanzas and also to drive out the evil. With the coming of the day, the students attended open-air classes, sitting on the ground, each class forming a group. In the meantime, the Khumbu arrived to take his seat on a platform and gave a lesson. While one class was receiving instructions, the rest formed circles and practiced debating. (p. 15).

The major sources of teaching-learning were religious books during this period (Alexander, 2000). Memorization and repetition of the content matters rather than understanding, and intellectual transformation of them was the practice. Students devote a greater part of their lives to their studies

without understanding the meaning and the context of what they were reading about (College of Education, 1956). In the religious system of education, formal types of examination systems were lacking. In the monastery, a yearly promotion was automatic without any recognized system of examination (College of Education, 1956). In the Sanskrit education system as well, there was no prescribed periodical or annual examination. Student's progression on the lesson depended upon the teacher. The teacher gave new lessons to a pupil only when the teacher was satisfied that the old lesson had been mastered, which usually required rote memorization and repetition of the lesson. The end of the course was not marked by any lengthy or exhaustive examination, but by the pupil reciting and explaining the last lesson. No degree or diploma was given (Altekar, 1956). Lack of formal examination in the religious education system has been pointed out for lack of qualitative improvement in education.

Jung Bahadur Rana, the first Prime Minister, went to England in 1850 to establish a stronger tie with them. After returning from his visit to England, Jung Bahadur started some modernization initiatives. The opening of the first English type of school in 1853 A. D. was one of such initiatives. The school was called 'Durbar (Place) School.' Rana's intentions were also to confine modern school education to the children of their families only. From the beginning, there was fear among the Rana rulers that education could play an instrumental role in the change.

On the other hand, they had the impression that English education was important. Therefore, Ranas tried to keep the school under scrutiny and confine the education to ruling members (Bista, 1994; Sharma, 2005). The development of education during the Rana period was not only slow but also haphazard. During 30 years of rule of Jung Bahadur, there was no attempt to open up educational opportunities to the public, and educational development was restricted around Darbar School. There were some Ranas who were relatively more liberal, but the majority of Ranas were there to thwart these liberal endeavors. Ranodip Singh Rana, the successor of Jung Bahadur, moved Darbar School from palace grounds and opened it to other non-Rana children of high status. No other school was added until Dev

Sumsher became prime minister in 1901. Almost two hundred schools were opened during his four months' rule.

With his being in office for four months, Dev Sumsher was exiled by his brother Chandra Sumsher punishing him for his liberal attitude. These new schools were soon closed down. (Bista, 1994). Bhasha Pathshala, a Nepali language school, was developed during the Rana period to train human resources in clerical skills for administrative works. Higher caste male children attended this school. Basic Schools, on the principles of Mahatma Gandhi, were also opened in Nepal after the independence of India in 1947. The religious schools existed with these new developments during the Rana period. (Bista, 1994; College of Education, 1956). However, educational development was arrested rather than occurring in their natural growth during the Rana period.

With the introduction of the modern type of education, some modern ways of pedagogy were also adopted. Although religious education continued to exist during Rana rule, there was some development of the modern type of education during this period. NNEPC (College of Education, 1956) report viewed curriculum then in vogue to be mostly academic. Such a curriculum was not able to serve many academically qualified children. The methods placed heavy emphasis on the drill, memorizing, and lecturing. In such a method, the child without a photographic mind and unusual memorizing ability could not survive in the system and had to drop out. Lack of instructional materials limited teachers in direct teaching. In the Durbar School, there was the provision of half-yearly and yearly examinations. The medium of the examination was also the English language. There was an oral test up to grade four, and from grade five, the test was in writing. One had to pass all the subjects to get promoted to the next grade. In Ranipokhari Pathshala, where Sanskrit curriculum was in use, there was no provision of test and certification. However, there was a provision of the Salaka test (Sharma, 2005). Students were tested/examined for discourse in the discipline, efficiency, and discipline. Students were supposed to be accurate and fluent in recitation. But there were not formally certified. After 1901 examination was conducted to select clerks in which they had

to appear for Nepali essay and Arithmetic tests. Those candidates passing these two subjects were called Dui Passe (meaning passed in two subjects). In 1910 an office to manage this examination was formed, and this office also provided certificates to the successful candidates. In 1931 two more subjects were added, and the successful candidates were called Char Passe (meaning passed in four subjects). Major characteristics of the pedagogical practices during Rana dynasty are:: repeat after teacher or a lead student several time and later reproduce it by rote; teacher assign next lesson only after one lesson is memorized and reproduced by memory; alphabets, number, multiplication table, words meaning, poem, story, grammar, list were usually rote memorized by repetitive mode; teacher asked to point on the book or copy while reading (sometimes pointed somewhere and reading different as well due to learning by rote); some teachers used to hold hand to guide in writing letters and words; hard sentences given to translate into English or Nepali and English taught by translation method; learning was monotonous and not joyful so that most of students used to dropout; reading, recitation, handwriting practice, word meaning consume most of classroom time; mostly single teacher teach all subjects with all the students in one room/place and what teacher knew was the curriculum; teacher was usually recognized with a stick in hand and there used to be corporal punishment if wrong answer or unable to submit the assignment.

Education during the Modern Period and Pedagogical Practices

True efforts towards making education available to the masses and geared to the need and interest of the people and children, in Nepal, seems to have been started only after the half twentieth century. After the dawn of democracy in 1950, there have been several national efforts towards quality improvement in education. The formulation of various educational commissions and the implementation of various educational plans on education, at different times, amply reflect the concern of the government. A brief outline of such a commission is presented in the following paragraphs. With the dawn of democracy in 1950, the government recognized education as a

cornerstone of democracy and established Education Board in 1952 to supervise and expand the existing educational facility (NNEPC, 1956:1). But the Board saw the need for the creation of a comprehension education commission (NNEPC) was appointed to survey the existing educational facilities and prepare a scheme for national universal education in Nepal. The first educational commission, named Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC), submitted its report in 1956 (College of Education, 1965). It surveyed the extent and nature of education in Nepal, collected opinions of peoples, and analyzed the need for education in Nepal. NNEPC conceived education to be experience in living, and children should not be forced to step into 'another world' as they cross the threshold of the school.

NNEPC report suggested that children could learn more effectively and more permanently when they take an active part in the teaching-learning process. Passive learning rarely leads to active, dynamic, self-directed behavior, or develop responsibility and leadership. Thus, the primary school should follow the activity or project method in which children are taught to identify their problem, plan and direct their solutions, and evaluate the results for themselves. Problem-based activities, cooperative planning, life-related projects make the classroom a workshop where children learn by doing. Teachers should act as a facilitator and not lecture or dictate. According to NNEPC, learning should be individual, not en masse. This commission's report clearly demands respect for the individual differences and intelligent adaptation of the curriculum to various local conditions and the individual differences of children. In effect, this is related to learner-centered principles. NNEPC found the curriculum to be highly selective and academic so that many academically qualified children were not served. Pedagogical practices suggested by NNEPC were 'to teaching children than covering textbooks,' 'use a thematic approach,' 'arrange both teaching periods and practice time,' 'make children take an active part in the learning process,' 'follow the activity or project method,' 'cooperative teacher-pupil planning,' 'method of teaching should be informal and well-adjusted to children,' 'cater individual needs of the children', etc. Shrestha (1973) noted:

Though the relevance of the existing education system, which is more or less the creation of the NNEPC report of 1956, has been questioned today, credit goes to NNEPC, which created the needed infrastructure for national education and which made the spectacular educational expansion possible. It is true that some defects crept in the education plan of NNEPC, but it would be wrong to blame the NNEPC plan for all the education problems of today. Many of the present problems are not caused due to the wrong principles adopted by the NNPEC. They are the results either of the undirected expansion of education or the failure to adopt the suggestions of the plan (p. 6).

Immediately after the political change (the overthrow of a multiparty system of democracy and start of partyless Panchayat System) in 1960, a 12 member All Round National Education Committee (ARNEC), was formed in 1961 by the government with the purpose of organizing and running modern and scientific education system in the country. After due deliberation and in consultation with several top-ranking government officers and educationists, the committee prepared a report named 'Report of the All Round National Education Committee (MOE, 1971). The second national education in Nepal, ARNEC, emphasized that a good education should inculcate good thinking, perceptions, reflection, views. Teaching learner process at the primary education should focus on the development of students' concentration, analytical skills, listening, memorization, etc. The undue textbook load should be discouraged. Accordingly, the committee suggested a grade-wise curriculum with a content outline in general. ARNEC also recognized that there exist differences among individuals physically, mentally, and affectively. Like a doctor diagnoses a disease based on history and tests and then prescribes treatment, teaching should also be based on the diagnosis of a student's history, physique, feeling, and mental development. This statement implies a diagnostic and individualized approach to teaching. But the report could not have any influence on the school education and its curriculum because of the lack of seriousness in planning and implementation of the program (Shrestha, 1973:11). In the late 1960s,

the inability of the education system to meet the diverse needs was felt by educationists and layman in Nepal. Educationists found the existing system of education as a dull and spiritless ritualistic type (Chalise, 1968:50). Reed and Reed noted:

The new national aspirations are being poorly served by the present type of education, which has rapidly spread through Nepal since 1950, a poor imitation of Indian-style education, which in turn was a type developed by the British for the purpose of producing efficient clerks. What was not and still not recognized by many Nepalese leaders is that when educational goals are changed, what is learned and how learning occurs must be adapted to the changing goals. The type of mass education needed for the new aspirations of Nepal requires major adaptations in teaching methods, curriculum, teaching materials, and in the preparation of teachers (1968:9).

Realizing this situation, the government appointed the National Education Advisory Council in 1968 to review the situation and prepare a plan suited to the political system and the developmental need of the country. Consequently, the National Education System Plan 1971-1976 (NESP) emerged, which severely criticized the prevailing education system as biased, unclear, unproductive, and unsatisfactory. NESP (1971) suggested a unifying education system that would be a productive system that serves the country's needs and aspirations. The plan considered education as an end to white-collar jobs, and this concept is replaced by a new concept that regards education as an investment in human resources for the development of the nation' (NESP, 1971:1).

The NESP designed a national level curriculum. Though some of the intentions seemed to be good, implementation was devastating. Both the political system and the educational system arrested the development of Nepal. Panchayat system restricted people's participation in the governance and nationalization of the restricted school opening of the new schools, which in turn restricted access to education to many Nepalese children. NESP focused on the nationalization of schools, the institutionalization of the education system, and the uniformization of curriculum and textbooks. Although the then teaching methods in use then were

termed to be extremely old-fashioned, there has been only cursory suggestions on teaching methods that were suggested to be developed through education improvement, experiment, and extend new teaching methods. NESP was not explicit on classroom pedagogical approaches. It just indented to research to improve teaching methods for each subject. The intention was on the use of scientific methods (MOE, 1971). NESP criticized the prevailing education system as elitist-biased, unclear, unproductive, and unsatisfactory.

From 1971 to 1980, efforts were made from the government side to implement the new system of education in the way it was intended. But from the very beginning of the implementation of the plan, many teachers found the new system, with all its lesson plans, recognized curriculum, new evaluation system somewhat confusing. Hardly any prior orientation was given to the teachers. In primary education, the most challenging problem was operational inefficiency. The Mid-term (NECO-1975) and full-term (NECO)-1979) evaluation of NESP implementation observed a big mismatch between the intended and implemented curriculum. Both the evaluations found no crucial differences in the curriculum: teaching methods and evaluation, curriculum remained theoretical and irrelevant, teaching not practical and interactive, frequency of test increased, without a change in testing tools, methods and use of results, and prevocational subjects in four to seven grades were not being implemented properly. The Mid-Term Evaluation suggested some reforms in overall educational management, consolidation of supervisory system, strengthening of Curriculum, Textbook, and Supervision Development Center (CTSDC), and differentiation of the pre-service and in-service teacher training program. But most of the recommended measures were not implemented at all (BPE Master plan, 1991:142). The full term evaluation team examined the plan thoroughly, and their report suggested some necessary measures on the very plan itself. It cared more for providing access to schooling to all primary school-age children.

The political change of 1990 gave birth to the National Education Commission (NEC) in 1991 for making the education system relevant to the

changing political, social, and world perspective. The commission reviewed the then existing education system, which was in operation since 1971 in general and since 1981 in particular. The review found that the then existing education system in need of immediate improvement and change. NESP indicated disparity, inefficiency, deficiency, and irrelevancy in the then education system (NEC, 1992). The commission pointed out that the prevailing education system has not been able to meet the national, social, and individual requirements. NEC pointed out that the curriculum of primary education has not yet been designed to bestow skills of practical use to a sufficient degree.

The prevailing education system and teaching-learning process was neither interesting to the children nor were suited to the rural environment. In the first place, the teacher did not want to take a class, and even when they took class, its quality and content were theoretical and bookish. The theory was never applied in practice. Thus, there was an absence of realistic activities and. The commission laid more emphasis on learner-centered education at the primary level. But the common classroom pedagogical practices seemed to be not effective as pointed out by the NEC in 1992. This commission's report stated, 'the teaching-learning situation in primary schools is rather depressing... Students are encouraged to learn by rote, and assessments are made on the same basis' (Sing, 2012). The commission observed a grave problem of operational inefficiency. There was a lack of responsibility on the part of teachers, and the atmosphere of the school was not favorable for teaching-learning. The student was encouraged to learn by rote, schools were without education materials, and even if there were any, they were not placed and used properly (NEC, 1992, 26).

At the beginning of 1997, the government of Nepal again saw the need for reform in education. A High-level National Education Commission (HLNEC) was formed in April, 1997 to study and analyze the existing policies, program, and organization of education to make exiting education system more relevant, adequate, and appropriate to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The report of HLNEC has emphasized the development of the basic

competencies in children. The commission further suggested making the primary education curriculum, textbooks, and other instructional materials related to children's immediate environment and life. The Report of HLNEC reviewed the overall education system and provided its recommendation for the educational development in Nepal. This report identified main problems and issues like poor quality of primary education, faulty evaluation system, lack of relevancy of education to the students, low quality of teachers' standard and qualification, and incompatible medium of instruction. HLNEC suggested streamlining objectives of primary education, adopting liberal promotion and continuous assessment system, upgrading qualifications of teachers, improving curriculum and textbooks, teaching in native languages, and use reformative teaching. HLNEC suggested using reformative teaching practices to identify the weakness in teaching methods, improve teaching accordingly, and attract the students to classes.

Review of Literature

Various innovative studies have been tried out in Nepal to improve classroom pedagogical practices. Similarly, several teacher training has been prepared related to classroom pedagogical practices. In this section, selected Ph. D. dissertations are reviewed and narrated. In this context, Bajarcharya (1995) carried out a study on a Narrative Approach to Science Teaching. The major aim of the study was to use a narrative approach to increase the educational interaction between Science and culture. The study focused on the content of study in the actual school and social settings. The study found many social beliefs and other beliefs being constructed to the classroom discussions. By bringing scientific inquiry and interpretations and extrapolation the cultural beliefs, vigorous interactions could be generated in the classroom setting. The use of a narrative approach in the classroom teaching learning resulted in much more interaction with the students than the traditional instructional approach leading to talk about the contents of the texts rather than memorizing the texts.

On the other hand, the study revealed that effortless learning, which evolved through the

approach, made the students feel that they were not taught Science. Rather, they were concerned and anxious if the course would be complete on time. Another study carried out by Joshi (1997) was 'Determinants of Mathematics Achievement Using Structural Equation Modelling.' Among the various factors determining the achievement of the students in Mathematics, the study also pointed out one of the major factors to be the unavailability of qualified and experienced teachers. This was pointed out to be the major problem, particularly in rural areas. Although there would be qualified and experienced teachers in the urban areas, lack of adequate instructional materials would hinder effective classroom teaching-learning. In terms of the variables related to the learning environment among peers, the study found a low level of peer interaction when learning and studying in and out of school, which could be supportive of the achievement in Mathematics. Pant (2006) carried out another study entitled 'A Study of Learning Difficulties in Mathematics among Grade V Students in Kathmandu Valley.' This study attempted to assess classroom dynamics in terms of the beginning of the class, command of subject matter effective planning and teaching techniques focusing on student activity, materials, evaluation, etc. The study found a positive correlation of the factors planning, use of materials, display, use of the question-answer method, monitor's support with the learning achievement in Mathematics.

Review of literature about the classroom pedagogical practices at the Nepalese primary school explicitly shows that more involvement of the students in teaching-learning, child-centered approaches, activity-based, and such improved pedagogical approaches have been emphasized. Some experimental, project-based studies exhibit improvement in the classroom teaching-learning practices as well. But the improvement in classroom teaching-learning practices, in general, has not been observed in the reviewed studies. The general scenario of the classroom teaching-learning practices in the Nepalese schools is analyzed and presented in the coming chapters.

Objectives

The major objective of the present article is to

analyze the pedagogical reform at primary school from LCT perspectives in Nepal.

Methods and Materials

The concept of learner-centered teaching (LCT) is very crucial for the development of educational programs, implementation, and evaluation. Thus, the study was descriptive. Library documents and online documents were used as tools for the collection of data. After reviewing these, literature, a detailed description has been presented below:

Efforts towards Improving Classroom Pedagogy

Since 1971, the government of Nepal, with the help of the international donor agencies, launched different projects and programs at different times to improve in teaching-learning and increase the quality and relevance of primary education along with educational participation. A brief outlines of such projects is recapitulated hereunder:

Equal Access of Girls and Women to Education was launched from 1971 to 1990 as a significant step to ensure gender equality in education. This project was launched by the government of Nepal in co-operation with UNESCO, UNDP, and UNICEF. Though this project did not have a stated objective of quality promotion, its assistance in promoting girls' education had a direct relevance not only to the concepts of equitable access but also the quality of primary education (CERID, 1991). Accordingly, Education for rural Transformation-The Lahachok Project was started as pioneering micro-level action research taking local schools as of the center of all development centers consisted of components of community services, health education services, literacy, functional literacy (Kasaju and Lamichhane, 1979, 63-68). The experience of this project gave the idea of establishing model schools, and incorporating rural development component in primary teacher training programs, adult education classes. In this project, the need was felt for reversing the top-down process of planning to increase local participation in developing activities. Another project named Education for Rural Development (ERD)/The Seti Project was initiated in the Seti Zone of Nepal in 1981. It lasted up to 1991 under the assistance of the government, UNDP, and UNICEF. The major thrusts

of the ERD were to improve educational support service, teacher's performance, and community school relationship. The evaluation of the project revealed that the school cluster system, as initiated by this project, was found to be more conducive to improving the physical and instructional facilities as well as in improving teaching. (CERID, 1986).

The more concerted effort was put on to improve the quality of primary education with the Primary Education Project (PEP), which came into effect in September 1984. This project started formal planning for program implementation at the national level. This project was designed to strengthen the administrative and technical capacity of the sector and achieve a low-cost, qualitative improvement in primary education. The project aimed at improving the competence of teachers to raise the quality of instruction in the primary schools through training of teachers and supervision of classroom teaching. Apart from that, PEP examined the existing primary school textbooks in 1988. Several flaws such as poor content selection, and the presentation, unimpressive or defective illustration, and poor design of textbooks were found. Then the project initiated work to improve some of the lessons from textbooks, and these were tested in the classroom situation, and the result was a marked improvement in students learning (CERID, 1992:10). An evaluation of PEP by CERID (1989b) observed inefficiency in the supervision of schools but found improvement in teacher's competence. But later evaluation study (PEP/EU, 1991) found a better achievement level of PEP students than non-PEP students in all subjects. The study indicated that the PEP short term teacher training program had contributed teachers to increase their level of knowledge and performance in classroom teaching. Interim evaluation study of PEP by CERID (1989c) reported that although the PEP teachers made greater use of role-playing, demonstration, and group work, both the PEP and non-PEP school teachers were observed to have used mainly the direct teaching methods such as lecture, question non-PEP teachers. Still, teachers of both groups were found relying mainly on the textbook for teaching purposes.

Primary Education Project was followed by The Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) 1991-2001. In 1992, this project incorporated all the gains

received from the previous projects (ERD and PEP), the plans and programs about the fulfillment of the Basic needs in the education sector, and other such initiatives. The major objectives of the project are to improve the quality of education, to provide equitable access to education, and strengthen educational management (BPE Master Plan, 1991:145). More specifically, increasing the relevance of basic and primary education through improved curriculum, textbooks, and teaching-learning environment is the corner stone of the BPEP. BPEP Review Mission Report (1996) indicated that there is no clear of increased learning achievement of BPEP inputs. To achieve the objective of quality improvement, several measures were taken: implementation of a new set of the curriculum, provision of teachers' guide books for teachers, construction of a classroom, and so on. Reviewing the quality of BPEP activities, the BPEP Master Plan of 1997 states, 'despite massive inputs, the quality of primary education is seriously jeopardized by mainly three factors such as the almost total absence of educational materials in the schools; weak management, lack of professional support and supervision at the grass roots level, limited coverage of recurrent teacher training (BPEP Master Plan, 1997:99)

An evaluation report of BPEP-I (Shrestha et al., 1999) reported that the major achievements of BPEP, phase II has been on planning, curriculum and textbook development, teacher training, capacity building at the central level. The major shortfalls have been pointed out as weak preparation and implementation at the Resource Centre and school level. There has been 'too much emphasis on the periphery and rituals and little focus on the child and children's learning and achievement of useful knowledge and skills.' In sum, BPEP, phase II, has though made several breakthroughs in the primary level education, a visible and significant impact on classroom learning, and student achievement levels have not been made. Acharya (2002) also pointed out that in the classroom, children are passive listeners; they are overloaded with content and frustrated in the unhealthy competition of 'marks.'

The Basic and Primary Education Master Plan (1997-2002) team found out that the prevailing primary education system was serving neither the

developmental needs of children nor the aspiration of parents nor the development need of the nation. It was serving the interests of a minority at the disadvantage of the majority. The team reviewed the primary education system of Nepal. The Master Plan Team found the primary education defective on several grounds. The BPEP Master Plan states:

Primary education has remained a multiply handicapped undertaking. First, at the level of goal, what is intended is not clear. Secondly, at the level of curriculum, it is extremely narrow, including the learning of discrete subjects. Thirdly, at the level of instruction, what is taught is anchored on the defective textbook; beyond the textbook, there is no teaching-learning in most schools. Copies of curriculum rarely reach the school or teachers, and even if there is a copy in school, teachers rarely take the trouble of discussing, elaborating, and using it. Fourthly, sundry studies on student achievement on academic learning not on other kinds of learning, are conducted simply to come up with poor achievement on the part of students (1991:134-135).

The Basic and Primary Education Master Plan 1997-2002 (MOE, 1997) developed a board plan covering various aspects related to primary education. The plan emphasized on teacher training, improved and continuous student assessment, enhanced physical and learning environment, and physical rehabilitation of schools for the improvement of pedagogical practices. Similarly, it was emphasized that the Curriculum Dissemination Programme would be conducted with the teacher's guide as the main tools of dissemination training. The expected outcomes were: teachers are fully oriented on the use of teacher's guides and develop an inclination to use them, and teachers can use the appropriate methods of teaching-learning to achieve the specific objectives of the lessons. As teachers would normally be expected to follow the teaching techniques used during the training period while they teach in their classes, teachers should be required to practice what they teach about the effective methods of teaching at the time of training. The plan stated that almost fifty percent of the training on pedagogy should be conducted through the apprentice method,

and emphasis was on the use of teaching-learning methods for the LCT.

In 1996 the project was updated based on the recommendations made by the Mid-Term Review Mission. It was designed for the period of 1997-2002, which is termed as Basic and Primary Education Project-II. Basic and Primary Education Project Master Plan 1991-2001 (MOEC, 1991) laid more emphasis on the dissemination of curricular intents and expected outcomes and synchronization of curriculum and textbook development to improve the quality of education. Accordingly, in the context of improvement of examination, it was planned to use continuous assessment of pupil progress in improving instructional standards, promoting liberal promotion in early grades, implementation of a national-level assessment program at primary education, and use of its results. In case of teacher training, the plan emphasized to match training programs with the training needs of the primary school system (e.g., grade teaching and multi-grade teaching); focus initial training of in-service teachers on developing essential pedagogical competencies; adopt modular training approach to provide optimal training to in-service teachers; etc.

BPEP-II Master Plan 1997-2002 (MOE, 1997) assumed two possibilities- either the existing primary education curriculum has not been appropriately delivered, or it has not been delivered to the required amount. It was also emphasized that learning on the part of children becomes meaningful if an integrated approach of delivery is adopted. Rote learning was deemphasized as meaningful child learning does not occur simply as an accumulation of discrete bits and pieces of information or course contents. Learning should be an assimilation of information or knowledge into the prevailing cognitive structure to form an integrated whole of new learning.

Program Implementation Plan for BPEP-II, 1999-2004 (MOE, 1999) viewed curriculum improvement and assessment, and teacher training and professional support as major components for improving the learning achievement of the children. This plan highlighted several policy issues and strategies to create a better teaching-learning environment emphasizing on increasing the daily attendance of teachers and students; enrolling

only appropriate age children at grade I; creating a healthy, safe and pleasant school environment; timely distribution of curricular materials; reducing overall class size; increasing the grade promotion and school retention rates; improving learning especially in grades 1 to 3; and providing teachers with adequate, appropriate training and classroom support. The plan emphasized on whole-school approaches to school quality development, demand-driven annual recurrent in-service training, training content that focuses on the learning needs and interest of students, and professional support of the teachers through school cluster-based activities and supervision in classrooms from Resource Persons and other teachers. Five strategies suggested for curriculum and assessment were- establishing minimal learning levels for each grade to link these to pedagogical techniques and materials that will help teachers integrate a continuous assessment of student progress as part of their daily classroom practice; developing methods and materials to support grade teaching especially in Grade 1 to 3 wherever feasible; developing methods and materials appropriate for the multi-grade organization in small schools; developing additional materials to supplement and support curriculum implementation and textbook use; and e) providing textbook and teacher's guides, supplementary reading materials, and workbooks.

Education for All National Plan of Action Nepal 2001-2015 (MOES, 2003b) outlined its framework based on six major goals set by Dakar Forum for the Year 2015. The action plan emphasized making the curriculum more practical and relevant to day to day life, quality education, meeting learning needs life skills, improving the school environment, teaching in the mother tongue, formative assessment, and so on. Education for All 2004-2009 Core Document (MOES, 2003a) set three main objectives: ensuring access and equity in primary education, enhancing quality, the relevance of primary education, and institutional capacity of schools. The Document envisioned 'A Child,' 'A School,' 'A Classroom,' 'A Teacher' and 'A Community/District' by 2015. All children go to school and learn to become democratic citizens through relevant elements of life skills fulfilling the individual as well as the nation's requirements. The child is inquisitive to learn and

has command over a level of knowledge comparable to children of the same age group in the global context. All schools are efficient and deliver quality education in a safe, conducive, and challenging environment for child learning and development. As for the classroom by 2015, it is envisioned that the classroom would be a stimulating learning environment, designed to meet the learning needs of all students and ensure that each student develops to their full innate power.

Education for All National Plan of Action (MOES, 2003b) outlined six major goals according to the basis of goals set by the Dakar forum. In three of these goals, 'quality of education' has been mentioned with one of the goals concentrating specifically on the quality aspect and improvement in the classroom teaching-learning. A concept paper for further support on Basic and Primary Education in Nepal 2004-2009 indicated need to deemphasize on rote learning and a need to develop further away from treating the students in classes as homogeneous units (MOES, 2002). EFA core document envisioned a classroom by 2015 as:

The classroom is a stimulating learning environment deigned to meet the learning need of all students, thus ensuring that each student develops to their full potential. This recognizes that children learn in different ways at different rates and will achieve different levels of attainment. It is a caring environment, in which there is mutual respect between teacher and students, and from student to student. It is a safe and happy environment, to which students look forward to coming each day (MOES, 2003b).

Thus EFA documents pointed out emphasis on rote learning and teacher-centered teaching (TCT) as dominant pedagogical practices in the Nepalese schools. Learner-centered teaching (LCT), individualized instruction, formative assessments are pointed out to practice for reforming classroom pedagogical practices. It also necessary education takes all children into consideration as emphasized by 'Education for All,' 'Inclusion of cultural, linguistic, and other social values of the local communities in the education system.' (MOES, 2003b). School sector reform program also accords students' learning as the most important aspect and proposes, '... promote

independent learning by students being educated under diverse situations... Local curriculum, content, and materials will be developed... A child's mother tongue will be employed as the medium of instruction up to grade three... Flexible instructional arrangements will be developed and employed...' (MOES, 2008).

While there were sufficient amounts of teacher training, there was an under-estimation of the depth of change required to enable a real transformation in schools' whole approach to children and their learning. (Joint Evaluation of Nepal's Education for All 2004-2009 Sector Programme) This evaluation report pointed out that there was a lack of a system for tracking student learning outcomes. The report further mentioned that there was an absence of a framework of quality standards and indicators for schools. There is a lack of key input standards against which to measure achievement. Changes in students learning and their learning achievement, as well as the factors that affect that achievement, are also unknown. Accordingly, District Education Offices' still lack the tools to reward improving schools or target support to those in most need. Meanwhile, schools and communities have also lacked a framework to help them form a comprehensive vision of an effective school. (p. 79).

For effective classroom teaching-learning practices, this evaluation report suggested: to integrate the concepts of child-friendliness, gender sensitivity, and diversity into Nepal's 'vision' of quality education and all quality development strategies; teachers should show an inclusive attitude and incorporate active learning strategies; develop and use school quality standards and indicators and ensure its implementation including the teaching-learning process, child friendliness, gender equity, inclusion and so on; changes in school and classroom processes are not at present recorded. Visits by the field staff of the District Education Office and others could be used to gather intelligence on what changes are happening to teaching and learning. EFA specifically envisioned a teacher to be academically sound and qualified, adequately trained, capable of creating a stimulating and challenging environment for children's learning. The teacher is expected to explore and use new and innovative methodologies

to enhance students' learning and understanding of the curriculum. Developing critical thinking and understanding different aspects of issues in the students; effective organization of learning, including individualized and group learning; use of structured and open learning techniques are also expected qualities in the teacher.

School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) 2009-2015 (MOE, 2009) emphasized quality improvement and quality assurance regarding quality education. Enabling conditions, curriculum, and textbooks, instructional processes are considered the key elements of quality improvement. SSRP specifically envisioned a teacher to be knowledgeable and skilled to facilitate students learning processes, use flexible instructional arrangements, and use of varieties of teaching-learning methods to cater to diverse educational needs of the children in a higher level of learning achievement. The teacher is expected to use methods and materials to be child friendly, gender-responsive, and inclusive. The teacher is also expected to be a role model for behavioral transformation. The major aim of the plan is to integrate and consolidate basic education (grades 1-8). Accordingly, another goal of the plan is to ensure equitable access to quality education through a right-based approach and promotion of a child-friendly environment in schools. Accordingly, It emphasizes the application of flexible teaching-learning approaches to respond to diverse needs and to address learners' pace to learning as well as implementing continuous assessment and remedial support systems.

On the other hand, to ensure a better teaching-learning environment, availability of qualified teachers, curriculum and textbook materials, teacher's time on task, extra-curricular activities, and so forth was another focus of the plan. It has also emphasized on meeting minimum enabling condition and setting norms and standards. This plan defined national norms and standards for input, process, and learning outcomes, which includes an environment for equitable participation, safe, secure and child-friendly classroom, adequate instructional processes, and an adequate number of qualified teachers.

The framework of Child-Friendly School for Quality Education (CFS) was approved at Minister's

level on 9th November 2010. Child-Friendly School (CFS) framework defines CFS as a school where there is an environment for the children to learn joyfully according to their pace and ability. This document further points out, 'Interest, ability, and level of children are respected, and environment and curriculum for learning are organized accordingly.' (DOE, 2010: 2). According to the framework, Child-Friendly School should provide the children-non-discriminating environment, learning environment, and curriculum according to their interest, ability, and level; physically, mentally, and emotionally safe and healthy environment; care for their health, and punishment free environment. The plan emphasis how to enrich and modify existing educational conditions rather than initiating a new program for a child-friendly school. This plan focuses on the development of a school improvement plan, the working modality of the school management committee, management of financial and physical resources, mobilization of community, teaching-learning process, extra-curricular activities. It considers children as a focal point to bring about immediate and visible changes. To apply just mentioned criteria, the framework has quantified minimum and expected indicators of different aspects of the child-friendly school. CFS framework emphasized discovery, interactive, and innovative teaching-learning activities. For this project work, case studies, observation are suggested.

Teacher Training on Child-Friendly Schooling Concepts (SC/USA and UNICEF, 2005) was developed to provide training to the teachers of the Siraha district. Four days training package covered these areas-significance of training, management, and facilities; self-description of schools; the concept of child rights; meaning, objectives, characteristics, minimum requirements for CFS; visioning CFS; bases of CFS; preparation of annual plan; formation of school improvement committee; and development of code of conduct. The methods suggested in the training manual were picture jigsaw, group work, and presentation, discussion, group work, game, question, and answer. The main intention of this training was to disseminate the concept of CFS to the teachers, and information dissemination was the focus rather than skill development of the teachers,

which teachers could use in their classroom teaching-learning.

The Government of Nepal on April 6, 2012, passed the National Policy on Children (2012) prepared by the Ministry for Women, Children, and Social Welfare. The main objectives of the Policy relate to the issues that directly concern the rights of the child. Protecting children from all forms of physical or mental violence, damage or abuse, desertion, neglect, and exploitation or sexual abuses; providing them with required care, nutrition and help before and after their birth; developing their physical, psychological and educational spheres through education; increasing child participation by allowing those children who are capable enough to formulate views about themselves and eliminating discriminations against children besides consolidating juvenile justice system are the main objectives of the Policy (MWCSW, 2012). It has aimed to prohibit political and armed conflict-related activities in school premises, to prohibit families, teaching institutions and child homes from abusing children physically and psychologically, to make the governmental, non-governmental and international non-governmental organizations prepare their child protection policies and implement them accordingly, to develop child-friendly teaching-learning environment at schools, to revise curricula, training materials, teaching approaches, including guardian society and school management committees from the child rights perspectives. Similarly, it has aimed to incorporate and teach the issues such as child rights, child abuses, and exploitation, to take departmental action against those teachers who inflict physical and psychological torture in students, to declare the other regions where children's participation and presence is frequent as Zones of Peace and to incorporate the issues such as child rights and child participation in the curricula of various teaching and training academies (schools, universities, national judicial academy, administrative Training academies, Police and Army academies, teachers' training centers, etc.).

National Curriculum Framework for School Education/NCF (Pre-primary to 12) in Nepal

was developed in 2005 for the first time. The framework discussed the need for a national curriculum framework; developed overall context and curricular concerns; forwarded visions, goals, and guiding principles for curriculum; suggested school education objectives, curriculum structure and student assessment policy; and outlined strategy for implementing the national curriculum framework (MOES, 2005). It has been emphasized NCF that classroom delivery needs to place greater emphasis on the strategies for seeking and processing knowledge rather than the actual knowledge itself. Thus, there is a need for the active involvement of students in the teaching-learning process. Curriculum transactions should be child-friendly manner, and the students should be regarded as a constructor of knowledge. The framework emphasized on preparing teachers for effective curriculum development and implementation with a focus on these elements: inclusive approaches in teaching and learning process; child-centered and life skills-based approach in teaching; knowledge of and skills in language transition for primary level students in bilingual and multilingual classroom situation; contextualizing the learning experiences based on a curriculum; basic knowledge and skills in Information Communication Technology; Knowledge and skills for curriculum accommodation, adaptation and need-based curriculum development and implementation; preparing instructional materials to address the differing needs of children; developing assessment tools, analyzing test results and reporting to parents, and understanding and conducting action research.

The major documents related to the CFS framework, EFA and SSR/SSRP, which provide a frame for intended pedagogical practices at the Nepalese primary school classroom, have been presented in this section. The major intents regarding pedagogical practices are summarized here in terms of the classroom setting and instructional setting. Various documents have reflected upon the number of students, space, seating material, furniture, instructional material, display, etc. for the improvement quality of teaching-learning. Summary of these aspects are presented in the table 1.

Table 1: Aspects of Classroom Setting Suggested in Educational Document

Classroom aspect	CFS framework	SSR/SSRP	EFA
Students/ classroom	40	40	25 in Grade I and 30 at Grades II to V
Area/student	1 sq. m.	1 sq. m.	At least 0.75 sq. m.
Students/ teacher		40	
Seating material and arrangement	Chair and table for each student	Desk and benches	Flexibly designed furniture to allow for a variety of organizational layouts Classrooms arrangement supportive for effective instruction
Writing board	Whiteboard	Writing board	Chalk board
Display	4 boards		Examples of students' work displayed and updated frequently
Instructional materials	Basic and electric/ electronic materials	Display Textbook, Teacher Guides, curricular materials	Wide range of teaching aids on displayed
Furniture	Subject-wise learning corner and book corner	Book corner	Subject and reading corners

The instructional setting, as envisioned in the CFS framework, EFA and SSR/SSRP documents, is summarized in the table-2.

Table 2: Aspects of the Instructional Setting Suggested in an Educational Document

Aspect	CFS framework	SSR/SSRP	EFA
Emphasis	Discovery, interactive, innovative teaching learning activities	Facilitation of students learning processes, Flexible instructional arrangements, CAS No punishment Mother tongue, Multiple textbooks, Local curriculum	Stimulating and challenging environment for children's learning Active and child centred learning Practical and outside classroom learning environment
Methods	Project work, case studies, observation	Use of varieties of methods to cater students needs Methods and materials to be child friendly, gender responsive and inclusive	New and innovative methodologies, Active and child centred methods Individualized and group technique, Activity-based child centred teaching learning methods Formal and informal techniques, Structured and open techniques
Teacher dimension	Instructional plan, continuous assessment Set learning achievement target and appraisal Use of training skills, head teacher and supervisor monitoring	Deliver lessons in creative and lively ways Role model for behavioural transformation	Academically sound and qualified, adequately trained, capable of creating a stimulating and challenging environment for children's learning Explore and use new and innovative methodologies to enhance students' learning and understanding of the curriculum
Student dimension	No specific statements	Understands and appreciates democracy Respects and appreciates labour and work, and diversity ICT skills, Life skills, Critical understanding	Inquisitive to learn and has command over a level of knowledge comparable to children of the same age group in the global context

Development of Teachers Training Manual for LCT

There have been several attempts to develop teacher training manuals in specific pedagogical areas as well. Several manuals have been prepared to improve classroom teaching-learning practices at the primary school in Nepal, which are presented below:

Curriculum Development Centre developed 'A Manual for Curriculum Developers in 2002 in line with a child-centered approach (Opifer Ltd., 2002). The manual has been intended as a practical working document to be used by the writers when revising the primary curriculum in Nepal. The manual takes the curriculum writers through the stages of the curriculum development process, identifying decision points along the way, usually with suggestions for possible resolutions to the issues on which decisions need to be taken. Throughout the manual, the emphasis is on the question- 'How, can curriculum writers write the curriculum to enable the kind of child-centered teacher, learner and classroom envisaged?' This Manual disused policy issues, narrated curriculum objects, described curriculum delivery in the classroom, forwarded curriculum format, and presented plans for curriculum implementation. Learner-centered teaching (LCT) embraces principles of quality and equity in education. Such a list is provided in the manual-Primary Curriculum Development in Nepal. These are: put children first, respond to their needs and build on their knowledge; children have different needs, interest, and abilities; all children are equal and should be treated with love and respect; children are unique individuals; children come to school already knowing many things; children learn at different rates or children have their own pace; children are curious and inquisitive; children learn best through concrete, hands-on experiences; the learning environment should stimulate children's development, and different children learn in different ways, and varieties of strategies are necessary to cater the needs and interests of individual children.

Child-Friendly Schooling Teachers' Training Manual, 2062 B. S. (DOE, 2005), has been developed by the Department of Education with support from Save the Children. Five days training manual intends: to make teachers aware about child rights so that

they create conditions to ensure child's rights in the school and the classroom; to make school, classroom and teaching-learning child friendly; and to establish cooperation between school and community to safeguard all the rights of children. The contents covered in the five days training are education as a fundamental right of children, child-friendly school; child-centered teaching-learning, and school community cooperation. The training methodologies are activity-based, group work, discussion, story, problem-solving, etc. Though a variety of methodologies are used in the training manual, these are used to deliver content/information rather than the skills the teachers should use in their day to day work as a teacher. For example, five aspects are listed to create a child-friendly environment in the classroom-welcoming and secure; attractive and organized; positive and supportive; encouraging and stimulating; changing and exciting. But how these aspects can be fulfilled is not adequately explained. To take another example, it is pointed out that to create a child-friendly school, it is necessary to 'provide positive experiences for all children and promote their psychosocial well-being, self-esteem, and self-confidence.' There are seven indicators for this, including 'opportunity for the students to work in a group cooperatively and opportunity to learn by their involvement.' But there are no such activities and descriptions of methods that teachers should use in their classroom to involve students in cooperative learning.

National Centre for Educational Development (NCED, 2006) developed the Punishment Free Teaching-Learning Teacher Training Programme: Training of Trainer Manual in 2006. This five days training manual covers child development, stress and stress management, affect of stress in learning, misbehavior in children, options to punishment, behavior change, counseling, etc. Discussion questions, pair work, group discussion, brainstorming, case study, mini-lecture, etc. are the suggested training delivery methods. Life Skill Based Health Education: Trainer's Manual for Primary Level was developed by NCED in 2007 (NCED, 2007). This manual covers an introduction to life skills, types, effective communication, active listening, analytical skills, conflict and

conflict management, cooperation and group work, empathy, decision making, positive and analytical thinking skills, management skills of emotions and stress, HIV, etc. Pair work, group discussion, mini-lecture, questioning, role play, ice-breaking activity, brainstorming, discussion, charts, etc. are the methods used for the delivery of the training. NCED has designed the Teacher Professional Development Training of Trainer Manual in 2010. This 12 days training manual provides an introduction to various aspects of teacher's professional development and also introduces various training and sample modules for teacher's teaching improvement such as quality education materials, life skills, human value, critical thinking, sex education, peace and civic education, and child-friendly education (NCED, 2010). Recently NCED prepared Teacher Development Policy Guideline in 2011. The main purpose of the guideline is to serve as a practical instrument for developing quality teachers by making arrangements of several quality measures (NCED, 2011). This policy guideline expected that teachers would demonstrate productive teaching performance whereby student learning will be enhanced.

Implementation of Innovative Programmes for LCT

There have been several experimental and innovative programs to improve classroom teaching-learning practices at the primary school level in Nepal. Some of the Innovative programs have been reviewed in the following paragraphs.

CERID (Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development) undertook a three years project Instructional Improvement in Primary Schools in 1983-1985. The objectives of this project were-a) to prepare teachers for implementing LCT and activity-oriented techniques of teaching in the primary classroom; b) to orient parents with techniques of encouraging and facilitating students' learning efforts at home; c) to design and develop a set of learning materials for primary school students; d) to train teachers in the development and use of classroom instructional materials, and e) to document the process of instructional transformation in the Nepalese context and its impact on students' achievement levels. Concerning teacher preparation,

manifold activities were designed to help teachers in studying classroom practices and identifying topics and areas for improvement; in preparing materials which would be more appropriate and motivating to students and the teachers alike; and in promoting increased participation of students to bring about an increased achievement level. The major inputs of the project were designed to facilitate a gradual transition from the TCT (teacher-centered teaching) method to LCT (an activity-based instructional system). Evaluation of this project (CERID, 1989a) found that there was some improvement in the internal functioning of the instructional system of the project schools, and the achievement level of the grade I students improved over the project period. This project was continued in the second phase as well.

Rato Bangala School piloted an outreach partnership program in 2004, which was called Rato Bangala Partnership in Outreach Programme. The five-year progress report (Rato Bangala Partnership in Outreach Programme, 2008) outlined project inputs as training, teaching materials, scholarship, mini-grants, supervision and monitoring, and educational exhibitions. Teacher training focused on the development of skills on child-centered methods in the classrooms to enable students to learn practically. During the training, participants teachers also developed required teaching-learning materials and took these materials with them to use in their classrooms at the school. Teachers were also provided with refresher training along with other supports. The teaching-learning environment in the schools was found to have improved, such as seating arrangement, use of teaching-learning materials, drafting and implementation of classroom rules and job charts, and the use of more practical and child-friendly approaches in the classroom.

Innovative Child-Centred Teaching-Learning Process program has been implemented by Innovative Forum for Community Development with support from UNICEF, Nepal (Innovative Forum for Community Development, 2004), and it organizes training for teachers, trainers, managers of different levels on Child Centred Learning Process. Training covers contents related to classroom setting and management; timetable and classroom activities;

teaching skills; provision of child-friendly materials and use; teacher supportive supervision and follow up; interest and involvement of parents in student's learning; and improved student progress recording. There are indicators/criteria provided for each of the content areas covered and examples of how these can be done. In the case of classroom instruction for different subjects, time is divided for various teaching-learning activities. It was strongly felt that child-centered approaches employed in the Child Centred Out-of-School Programme could help in making classroom teaching-learning effective and interesting to the children in formal education. A visit program, again organized by UNICEF/Nepal to Thailand, was also supportive of strengthening the need for a child-centered approach as well as exemplify the possibility of use of this approach in Nepalese schools. Child-friendly teaching-learning supported by UNICEF/Nepal with technical support from Innovative Forum for Community Development can be termed as an adopted innovation. The major components of Innovative Forum for Community Development approach are: concept and skill development of LCT; rescheduling of the class time table for flexible and coherent classroom activities; children empowerment activities; participatory, interactive and joyful teaching-learning activities; materials provision, grade teaching, supervision/backstopping are

Child-friendly Schools program has been launched in Nepalese Primary Schools with the support of Save the Children, Norway, and the USA. This program has been launched in response to the global campaign for EFA and the UN convention on the rights of children for safe, welcoming, and child-centered learning environments. Following a Child-Friendly School conference in Thailand, the CFS initiative was started in Nepal (SC/USA, 2005). Save the Children organizations Norway, USA; Japan collaborate and coordinated the CFS program. CFS program focuses on addressing prevalent school conditions where classroom pedagogy is teacher-centered; punishment practices exist; learning environment and national provision is poor; crowded classrooms, high rate of dropout, repetition, failure, and irregularity is seen; lack of Early Childhood Development opportunity; and

poor infrastructure. The CFS is intended mainly to focus on establishing education as children's rights, making school infrastructure and environment friendly to the children, promoting child-centered active teaching-learning in the classroom, and increasing participation of children and parents in school management (SC/Norway, 2006). Teacher training in active teaching-learning; training school management on self-assessment and school improvement plans; infrastructures such as building toilets and water facilities; and promoting child protection messages are the key activities in the CFS program (SC/USA, 2006).

Conclusion

Deliberation provided above clearly indicated that what has been intended LCT practices have not been implemented. Still, there is a need to clarify envisioned LCT pedagogical approaches and suggest its implementation strategy. It will be worthwhile to plan a step by step implementation and development plan and execute it incrementally with emphasis on building upon successes and expanding. Otherwise, as there is more to be done, and in haste, nothing could be properly. Expectations from the teachers to be effective should not be narrated as speech, slogan, or wishes. It is essential firstly to conceptualize the roles of the teachers in terms of required skills that can be employed at the classroom level and secondly incorporate these in the teacher preparation programs for skills development rather than including these concepts as content matters only. To cater to the needs of children to maximize their learning, several factors play roles. It is important to identify them and prioritize actions from what is possible now and what should be achieved and how they could be achieved in a time-bound strategy manner.

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