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Formative Research Project**

**Study Report 34**

**Gender Issues in School Education**



**Tribhuvan University**  
**Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID)**  
Balkhu, Kathmandu, Nepal  
2009



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The Ministry of Education under EFA program has launched various programs for the educational advancement of girls' education in the country. For the last few years, focus has been made on making schools gender friendly. In order to make schools gender friendly, EFA program has considered the importance of female teachers for the education of girls. So, the policy of female teacher recruitment in primary level has been made and more female teachers are being recruited. Now the Ministry's attention is focused on the female head teacher. With the assumption that the presence of female head teacher contributes in making school gender friendly emphasis has been laid on their recruitment in SSR Plan. The study incorporates gender issues and gender friendliness in school, status of female teachers, their roles and responsibilities, and the school matters related to female head teacher.

We, the research team would like to thank those people who helped us in collecting data for our research in the selected districts - Ilam, Rasuwa, Nawalparasi, Humla and Doti. We are grateful to those schools that were selected. Children, parents, teachers, head teachers, and SMC and PTA members of the selected schools deserve our special thanks. We are grateful to the District Education Office of the selected districts and the local organizations working for girls' education for making our study easier by supplying the required information for the study.

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Renu Thapa  
Researcher

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

B. Ed.	Bachelor of Education
B. S.	Bikram Sambat
CBO	Community-based Organization
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination against Women
CERID	Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
CFSI	Child Friendly School Intervention
CSSP	Community School Support Program
DACAW	Decentralized Action for Children and Women
DDC	District Development Committee
DEO	District Education Office
DEP	District Education Plan
DOE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ERDP	Education for Rural Development Project
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FRP	Formative Research Project
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GPI	Gender Parity Index
INGOs	International Non-governmental Organizations
JSDP	Japanese Social Development Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Municipal Education Committee
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCED	National Centre for Educational Development
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NPA	National Plan of Action
NPC	National Planning Commission
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SESP	Secondary Education Support Program
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee

SSRP	School Sector Reform Plan
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee
VEP	Village Education Plan



## Executive Summary

Researches on issues related to gender in school have been conducted for a long time. There have been improvements made in making schools free from gender-based problems on the basis of suggestions provided by the research. But still the gender issues exist in schools; and it has influenced in children especially girls' education. So there have been efforts in making the school gender friendly. Schools especially the lower secondary and secondary levels lack female teachers. As a result, children especially, girls have not been able to express their problems. Recently, the government's attention has been directed towards the appointment of female head teachers in schools.

The study reviewed the government policies on girl's education, female teacher and female head teacher. Moreover, field study was conducted by visiting the schools located in different districts of the country. The study tried to look at the gender issues at different levels of school education. So, from each district, there were three schools (primary, lower secondary and secondary) selected for the study. The study has tried to look at the gender issues and gender friendliness in school, roles and responsibilities of female teachers; and the status, role and leadership of female head teacher. The policy options for ensuring the participation of female teachers in the position of head teachers are also included by the study.

### Summary of Major Findings

#### *Gender Policy and Gaps*

- There is a policy of recruiting female teachers at primary level. But it has not been implemented in all schools. There was scarcity of female teachers at lower secondary and secondary levels.
- The policy says that girls are given priority in the distribution of scholarships. Girls are advantaged from the scholarship. Secondary school girls of Humla and Nawalparasi were more benefited from the scholarship program. The feeder hostel program in Humla helped the girls from remote areas in receiving education.
- It is stated that efforts have been made for increasing the number of female teachers. But most of the schools visited lacked female teachers especially at lower secondary and secondary levels.

#### *Gender Friendliness in School*

Seat arrangement affected in the interaction between girls and boys in the classroom. If girls and boys were seated mixing together in the classroom, there could be more interaction between them. But the lower secondary and secondary level girls and boys did not have class interaction due to their separate seat arrangement.

- There was no any child out of school in the school service area due to the Welcome to School program, and scholarships and incentive programs.
- Difference has been found regarding the gender-friendliness between primary and higher levels of schooling. Gender friendliness in physical facility, interaction, teacher (female), community participation and student enrolment could be observed more in primary than in higher levels of school.

- Female teachers were playing a significant role in retaining girls in schools. They were counseling girls in their problems.

#### *Gender Issues*

- Gender issues existed more at higher levels (lower secondary and secondary) of schooling than at primary level.
- There were issues also related to boys in school. There was discrimination made in giving corporal punishment and in providing scholarship and incentives to girls and boys.
- Physical facility especially toilet facility lacked in most of the schools. Girls rather than boys were affected due to the lack of such facility. Lack of fencing in school also disturbed girls in receiving education in school.
- Female teachers are lacking at the higher levels of school. So, girls have not been able to tell their problems in school
- The separate seat arrangement in the classroom affected in the interaction between girls and boys.

#### *Status and Issues Related to Female Teachers*

- There was a lack of female teachers at lower secondary and secondary levels. There was hardly one teacher at secondary and two teachers at lower secondary levels.
- Although the teachers, especially female teachers were qualified for higher levels they were appointed for lower levels of school. It was due to the advertisement not being made for many years for the post of higher level teachers in schools.
- Teachers from outside districts were long absent in school once they went home in vacations. This affected in children's study.
- Children especially girls felt the need of female teacher as they used to give counseling to girls in different matters.

#### *Status and Issues Related to Female Head Teachers*

- There was the lack of schools with female head teachers in districts. The number of female head teacher was found little bit high in primary level.
- Although female teachers were qualified, they were not getting chance to be the head teacher. Those who got chance were not interested to be in the position of the head teacher.
- The head teacher had a huge workload. They had to take several classes, see the management aspect of school and attend meetings organized at DEO and outside district.
- There was positive impact of female head teacher on girls. Girls used to feel free to tell their problems to the female head teacher.

## Recommendations

- Feeder hostel has made positive contribution in providing secondary education to girls of remote areas. So there is the need of extending such programs in other districts by increasing its capacity.
- Physical facility is lacking in schools and it has a direct impact on children especially girls' education. So government under its infrastructure development program should pay special attention on building toilets and providing water supply in schools.
- Regarding the recruitment of female teachers, there should be the policy of recruiting them for lower secondary and secondary levels, in addition to the present policy of female teacher appointment at primary level.
- As there is lack of local teachers, the policy of giving priority to local teachers should be strictly implemented.
- Special academic course should be initiated for female teachers to make them eligible for teaching at higher levels of school. Upgrading their qualification also contributes to their appointment as head teachers of higher levels of school.
- Gender components should be included in the training packages.
- There should be provision of management and leadership training to the senior female teachers as well as to the male teachers in order to enable them to work as head teachers.
- Head teachers should not be allowed to retain the position for more than 5 years in order to give chance for others.
- One-third reservation should be made secure for females in the position of head teachers in the district.
- Social mapping of female teachers and female head teachers is needed.

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

### Background

Gender refers to the socio-cultural definition of man and woman, the way societies distinguish men and women and assign the social roles to them (Bhasin, 2000, p. 1). Gender is a matter of culture. It refers to the social classification of men and women into 'masculine' and 'feminine' (Oakley, 1985 as cited in Bhasin, 2000, p. 2). Similarly, the meaning of 'issue' is defined as a problem in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1998). So gender issue means problems related to man/boy or woman/girl. Gender has been an issue in different aspects of development including education. It is due to the lack of gender-friendly environment that gender issues emerged in school. The gender issues in school affect in boys and girls' education.

Nepal Government is committed to the right of every child to quality basic education. In this context the country is seeking to achieve gender equality in education. The gender gap in literacy is as high as 22.6 percent between male and female in the 6+ population (CBS, 2001). There is steady improvement in literacy rates both in terms of overall literacy and in terms of gender parity (Ministry of Health and Population, 2006). The Jomtien conference 1990 and the Dakar Framework of Action 2000 highlighted the commitment to provide basic education of good quality to all children by 2015. Following such commitments, Nepal implemented the Dakar Framework for Action. One of the goals of the action plan of the Dakar Framework is, "Eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015" (MOES, 2003). The UN Millennium Summit 2000 has adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for different development activities including moves against illiteracy and gender discrimination. One of the eight major MDGs is "To promote gender equality and empower women".

In the case of talking about gender development in education girls/women's education is taken (Dahal, 2008). In order to lessen gender disparity and to minimize the gender gap in education, the government has formulated various policies and implemented it with different programs. The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) underlined the need for the development of indicators to assess girls'/women's participation in all sectors including education. Revision of curriculum considering the gender perspective and gender training for teachers are the areas covered by the Plan (National Planning Commission, 2002). The MDG has targeted to eliminate gender disparity from all levels of schooling by increasing gender equality and women empowerment to hundred percent (Tripathi, 2008).

The Interim Constitution of Nepal 2063 BS has made several provisions in education sector to guarantee equal opportunity for all. Efforts have been made to make school gender friendly. Female teacher is one of the attractions for the enrolment and retention of girl students. So the policy of recruitment of female teachers has been made in each school to increase girls' participation in school education. The government has a vision of ensuring 50 percent female teacher ratio by 2009 (DoE, 2007). Scholarship and incentive programs are launched in order to provide educational access to the disadvantaged groups including girls. The School Sector

Reform Plan (SSRP) document states that girls studying in grades 9 and 10 with poor economic background will receive scholarship. A scholarship distribution committee at the community level will be formed to carry out the scholarship distribution and monitoring function (MoE, 2009). The Education for All/National Plan of Action 2001-2015 has a target of increasing NER to 96 percent by 2009 (DoE, 2007). Gender component is included within the training manual for teachers. Moreover, the establishment of Gender Focal Point at the District Education Offices (DEOs) and government's networking with the NGOs, INGOs and the community-based organizations (CBOs) are the other efforts of the government in addressing gender issues in education. The government has implemented School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) since 2008. Under the plan, the basic education (which was grades 1-5) has been made grades 1-8; and it is being implemented in Rasuwa, Dadeldhura and Kapilvastu (Nepal, 2008). As girls are disadvantaged from receiving education of higher levels of schooling, such efforts will be a positive step in providing education for girls. The SSR Plan intends to make sure that all schools are equipped with minimum enabling conditions that cater to the diverse needs of students (MoE, 2009). In case of the gender equity, the Plan focuses on girls and women and children from educationally deprived groups in order to make them participate equally and attain equitable results (MoE, 2008).

Despite the efforts, still about 9% children are out of school and this covers a huge number of girls (Nepal, 2008). Gender issues still exist in school education. Schools are not gender friendly. A huge gap is seen between boys and girls in education. The 2006 data shows boy's net enrolment 90.1% and the girls 83.4 % (MOES, 2006). More gender gap is seen at lower secondary and secondary levels. Survival rate of girls (77.4%) is lower than of boys (83.0) (MOES, 2006). Although scholarships and incentives are provided to girls, there are problems in enrolment and retention of girls in school. The gender-related discriminations are expressed in different ways in schooling and everyday practice. The way girls are treated in the school is quite different from the way they are treated in the community. The discrimination at home and the community could be observed directly; in the school girls are victims to unseen discriminations. Boys are also discriminated in the school. Teachers' principle of gender equality (i.e. treating girls and boys equally) is only limited to theory. Schools are meant for gender equality but the school environment is not gender-friendly (Thapa, 2007).

School and society play different roles on gender in education and development. Patriarchy has played a significant role in bringing gender discrimination in society. Patriarchy is manifested in different ways: preference for son, gender discrimination in matters of food, lack of educational opportunity for girls, and so on (Bhasin, 1993). The role of school is quite different from that of the society. In Nepal schools have tried to maintain gender equality but only partially. They are not completely free from gender inequality. Gender equality is being practiced only nominally. Teachers, who are there to teach good things to children, are practicing gender inequalities. Schools are practicing them too because they are the products of the society - the society that discriminates by gender and ethnicity. The products of the school that are brought up in the gender-biased society will not be doing much for conceptual and attitudinal improvement or reform. It means both the school and the society are not free from gender biasness. Creating a school without gender-biasness is not possible until and unless the society frees itself from gender-biasness (Thapa, 2007).

Studies (CERID, 2004a; CERID, 2006) show that female teacher helps to create gender-friendly environment in schools. The government has implemented the policy of female teacher recruitment since 1992 but it has not been effective due to the lack of educated girls as teachers in remote areas of Nepal (CERID, 2004b). In comparison to males, the number of female teachers is not above 30% (Dahal, 2008). Out of 101,483 primary teachers (in 2061 BS), there are only 30,542 female teachers (DoE, 2007). In the case of female head teacher, they are limited in number. There are only 8 percent female head teachers (DoE, 2007). Female head teacher is a motivation for the female teachers in school. Such motivation helps to retain them in school, which ultimately contributes in girls' enrolment, retention and performance. But the number of female head teacher is hardly 5% (Dahal, 2008). The Ministry's document "Strategic Implementation Plan for Gender Equality in Girls' Education" documents 8 percent of female head teachers (MoE, 2007). Most of the female head teachers are centred in Kathmandu and other urban areas. Studies do not highlight about female head teacher. Even the study "School Effectiveness: Head Teachers' Leadership" (CERID, 2004) has not mentioned about female head teacher. Empowering female teacher to fulfill the role and responsibility of head teacher is lacking (Bista, 2005). The policy of ensuring the participation of female teachers as head teachers is yet to be formulated.

## **Rationale**

One of the goals of EFA is gender equality in education. In order to achieve this goal, various efforts have been made. Gender issues make impact on students' performance (Thapa, 2007). Government has conducted different programs to lessen gender issues in education. But the problem remains the same: less participation of girls in school, lack of female teacher, lack of physical facilities for girls, etc. Policy formulated towards recruiting female teachers is not unclear; most of female teachers are working in temporary post, there is no separate toilet with regular water supply; and there is a lack of local female teachers in remote areas (CERID, 2006). Female teachers and girls are facing sexual harassment in school. Gender issues still exist in school that has affected in girls' schooling and performance (CERID, 2004b; CERID, 2004c). It is not only girls but boys are also the victims of gender issues in school education. It is said that punishment should not be given to children. But teachers (especially males) punish girls and boys differently for the same wrong deed. So, conducting a study on gender issues in school was genuine in order to find out the gender issues in school and to overcome all the problems. The study also helped to know the status of female head teachers, which will ultimately help to introduce programs to empower them in running the school effectively and efficiently. So far, there has not been any study made on female head teachers. Since SSR has prioritized women for head teachers, it was worth conducting this study in order to find out ways of empowering female teachers to the post of head teacher. It is expected that the findings of this study will contribute in formulating policies on female head teachers.

## **Research questions**

- What are the major gender issues in school education?
- What constitutes gender friendliness in school? How can the school be made gender friendly?
- Why are more female teachers required in school?



- What are the major gender issues faced by female teachers and girl students in school?
- How can female teachers be encouraged to hold the position of head teachers?
- What could be the status, role and leadership of female head teachers in schools?
- How could be the female head teachers be empowered to run the schools effectively and efficiently?
- What policy options are to be developed in order to ensure the participation of female teachers in the position of head teachers?
- What is the overall impact of gender issues on school-level activities and performance?

## CHAPTER II

### **Review of Literature on Girls' Education, Female Teachers and Female Head Teachers**

This chapter is a review of the available literature related to the educational policy, girls' education and female teachers. The first part of the review contains the educational policies formulated and implemented so far. In this context, the adoption of the action steps being taken by the government based on the international conferences and commitments are also included under the sub-heading Educational Policy and Analysis. The second part of the review is based on the empirical studies conducted in the area of gender and education. But the review has its limitation. Only the review of the available literature is included in this chapter.

#### **Educational Policy**

It is obvious that Nepal must emphasize girls' education to bring the gender discrimination in education to an end and to reduce gender disparity. This review includes the legal arrangement, policy decisions, issuance of directives and efforts made by the government of Nepal in education sector till date. Nepal is trying to fulfill the commitments made in the international conferences. It is observed that Government of Nepal is committed to the international declarations and treaties – like the World Summit for Children, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The International Women's Year 1975 and United Nations Women Decade 1975-1985 contributed to raising the level of social awareness and bringing women on the forefront of development agenda. However, gender issues started receiving attention in Nepal only after 1990. Development plans, educational commissions, and legal provisions in education after 1990 raised issues of disparities and group-specific provisions to address these issues. The Government is committed to providing free and quality primary education to all children especially girls, children in difficult circumstances, children belonging to the marginalized and vulnerable groups, and children from ethnic and linguistic minorities by ensuring them equal opportunity to education by 2015. These elements have been incorporated in the Tenth Plan. In lower secondary and secondary levels also it is expected that the participation of girls as well as those from the disadvantaged groups will increase from 40 to 50%. In civil service also, 45% seats for open competition are reserved for the disadvantaged group and out of it 33% seats are reserved for the female candidates. It is provisioned that there must be at least one, two and more than three female teacher/s in each primary school with three, four to seven and more than seven teacher positions respectively.

The Dakar framework of Action for Education for All and Nepal EFA National Plan of Action (NPA) have emphasized the following objectives in relation to education of girls and women:

- Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood development, care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensure that by 2015 all children particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

- Ensure that the learning needs of all girls, young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs.
- Achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
- Improve all aspects of quality of education, and ensure excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.
- Ensure the rights of the ethnic and linguistic minorities to receive basic and primary education of good quality through their mother tongue.

Nepal is also working for fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs outline major development priorities including education to be achieved by 2015. The Goal 2 gives emphasis on achieving universal primary education. The Goal 3 is about promoting gender equality and empowering women (NPC & United Nations Country team, 2005).

The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2063 BS) has made several provisions to guarantee equal opportunity for both women and men in all state matters. Such provisions include:

- Education is a fundamental right of every citizen
- Provision of primary education in mother tongue
- Free education up to secondary level
- a policy of encouraging maximum participation of women by making special provisions for their education, health and employment
- special provision of social security for the protection and welfare of single women, orphans, children, helpless, the aged, disabled, incapacitated persons and the disguising tribes
- positive discrimination in favour of the minorities, landless, squatters, bonded labourers, disabled, backward communities and sections, and the victims of conflict including women, Dalits, indigenous tribes, Madhesis and Muslims.

In 3 years Interim Plan the following provisions are mentioned:

- Allocation of separate gender budget
- Inclusive and equitable education for all
- Income generating and life-skill based non-formal education as a campaign focused on the disadvantaged groups such as women, Dalits, Madhesis and so on.

The MOES data (2007) shows a long term growth of primary level enrolment. In the case of gender parity in enrolment at primary level, it is almost close to the goal for

the primary level. The proportion of girls at primary level is 49.5 percent with 0.98 percent of gender parity index (GPI) (DoE, 2008). But most of the districts from Terai and Mid-Western and Far-Western regions are still facing the problem of balanced GPI (MOES, 2007).

We need Equality in terms of:

- Empowerment of girls
- Value of girls in the communities, homes, schools and workplaces
- Elimination of child labor and early marriage
- Girl child-friendly schools and gender-friendly workplaces
- Gender sensitized curriculum and textbooks
- Empowerment of female teachers and managers - recruitment, quotas, promotions, conditions
- No gender biased as well as good practices and equal expectations of performance
- Elimination of violence and corporal or psychological punishment against girls / women
- No sexual abuse of girls/women and trafficking
- Revisiting the rules and regulations related to gender biases
- Outcomes which are fair and just - not necessarily the same for women and men

The following measures and activities through Education Act, Regulations and Guidelines have been adopted with a view to ensure equal opportunity for all children and achieving the goals of gender equality in primary education:

- Needs for primary education facilities have been identified through school mapping exercise with a view to ensuring universal access to education.
- Based on the results of the pilots of various scholarship and incentive programs especially for girls and disadvantaged groups and recommendations of the scholarship assessment study, existing scholarships programs have been modified.
- In line with the recommendations of the Students' Assessment Study efforts have been made to deal with the issues related to access to schooling and scholarships in collaboration and partnership with I/NGOs working in the field of education.
- The Ministry of Education (MOE) has prioritized the social mobilization program to reach the marginalized groups with a view to raising their level of awareness and moving forward by creating demand for education through their empowerment.
- Efforts have been made for a reliable and effective Education Management Information System (EMIS) for identifying and continuously support the children affected by conflict and natural calamities.

- As learning environment differently impacts upon various targeted groups, adequate attention is paid to take care of the needs of the children with all sorts of disabilities while undertaking construction and rehabilitation.
- While the District Education Plan (DEP) has been developed as a powerful means of educational management, planning and monitoring at the district level, the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Village Education Plan (VEP)/Municipal Education Plan (MEP) are being expanded in all schools, VDCs and municipalities.
- Participatory methods are adopted for planning with a view not only to ensure the involvement of all concerned stakeholders but also to develop common understanding and ownership among them. Also, the planning of basic and primary education is based on the rights based approach to education along with health, security, inclusion, and equitable and resourceful learning environment, which are considered as fundamental rights of every child.
- Flexible policy is emphasized to fulfill the needs of working as well as street children.
- Representation of women is mandatory in District/Village or Municipal Education Committees as well as School Management Committees.
- Currently, it is provisioned that there must be at least one, two and more than three female teacher/s in each primary school having three, four to seven and more than seven teacher positions respectively.
- There is the provision of Rs. 500 as monthly residence allowance for female teachers from outside districts.
- In the case of female teachers, there is the provision for them to be candidates in the examinations for teacher license as well as teacher positions for two years.
- There is a provision of scholarship with the amount of Rs. 2500 for women belonging to the disadvantaged castes (Dalit) and ethnic groups (Janjati) to receive pre-service teacher training with a view to improving their participation in teaching profession and preparing the prospective female teachers.
- The facility of feeder hostel along with scholarship, uniform and physical amenities is provided for girls.
- There is a legal arrangement for free primary education.
- Provision is made for free textbooks and easy availability of other educational (teaching learning) materials.
- Recruitment of females is mandatory for being the facilitators of Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs.
- All children from Dalit caste as well as children with all sorts of disabilities receive scholarships.
- Fifty percent girls selected on the basis of poverty are provided scholarships.
- There is a provision for an additional grant for the school that recruits female teachers up to 50%.

- An additional grant is provisioned for the school that enrolls more than 45% girls and also retains them until the end of the school year.
- Both enrolment and retention rates are associated with the school accreditation.
- Girls are given priority in the distribution of scholarships under the Secondary Education Support Program (SESP) and the Community School Support Project (CSSP).
- Additional facilities are provided to the schools that enroll out-of-school children and are successful in retaining them.
- Women literacy programs are implemented for the girls exceeding the official school age.
- Special provisions for remedial support have been made for the girls with low level of performance in school.
- Advocacy program through various means is being launched for girls' and women's education and gender aspects with a view to raising the level of awareness of all concerned stakeholders.
- The following activities based on the Ten Recommendations of the Gender Audit Report, 2002 have already come into effect:
  - Formulation of gender strategies by the Ministry of Education and their dissemination
  - Change in the name and functions of the Women Education Section under the Department of Education as a Focal Point with the responsibility/authority to look into all aspects of gender development.
  - Establishment of a gender focal point in every district.
  - Integration of gender theme at the central and implementation level agencies including the divisions and sections of the MOE
  - Prioritization of gender-related goals and objectives and development of gender specific monitoring and performance indicators
  - Collection of gender disaggregated data
  - Implementation of female teacher policy
  - Development of educational materials, free from gender biasness
  - Inclusion of gender issues in all training materials
  - In the case of remaining two activities (i. e. to increase women managers to 30% at all levels and to reform the civil service regulation so as to make it family friendly with a view to benefiting the parents, husband and wife), efforts are being coordinated with the concerned agencies.

### *Gender Mainstreaming in Education*

The government has introduced various programs for the gender mainstreaming in education. In this context, the following activities are being undertaken:

- Gender mainstreaming in the structure of education
- Awareness program for stakeholders

- Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in connection with the formulation and modification of curriculum
- Curriculum and school system promoting the cultural coexistence
- Partnership with community-based organizations
- Community mobilization through child clubs
- Community mobilization through language clubs
- Community mobilization through Nepal Scouts and Junior Red Cross
- Meritocracy
- Presentation of role models through radio and television
- Special social program for girls
- Mobilization of politicians
- Partnership with local body
- Community mobilization through school and early childhood development centre
- Positive use of established traditions
- Women volunteers and girls' education watch
- Adoption of various means of advocacy
- Research on community-based girls' education

Efforts made for increasing female teachers:

- Record of schools with and without female teachers
- Competition among female candidates only in the female teacher positions
- Provision of the woman volunteer teacher
- Coordination with volunteer organizations for managing teachers at the secondary level
- The data of local women who are qualified and eligible will be updated. Discussions and interactions will be held to encourage them to join the teaching profession.
- Strengthening capacity and career development
- Providing counseling services
- Participation of girls

In order to increase the participation of girls in education, girls will be involved in every activity pertaining to the policy formulation and implementation. For this, provisions will be made to undertake the following activities:

- (a) Child club
- (b) Participation of women in various committees formed in the school

- (c) Children's festival, Children's gathering and various competitions
- (d) Child interaction
- (e) Participatory approach
- (f) Various extra and co-curricular activities in the school

Advocacy:

All the advocacy programs being undertaken by the MOE and other service providing organizations in the past will be continued. Moreover, additional resources, means and ways will be utilized for producing the messages of equality, sensitivity and coexistence contributing to promote the determination of mothers and girls. Different excerpts will be prepared with a view to counterbalancing the negative effects of the patriarchal mentality, class and caste prejudices.

- (a) Maximum mobilization of the means of communication
- (b) Dissemination of information and knowledge
- (c) Partnerships with social organizations
- (d) Resource mobilization: Publicities for identifying and mobilizing resources for the expansion of girls' education.

Monitoring:

- Monitoring groups from the centre to the school will be formed.
- A list of specific monitoring indicators will be made available from the Gender Equity and Development Section.
- Based on the list and indicators, monitoring will be undertaken and a report will be prepared and submitted to the concerned office. The office, department and section will initiate the implementation of the recommendations included in the report.
- Monitoring will be undertaken on the trimester basis in order to maintain the up-to-date record of progress on the strategies of girls' education. In order to increase the effectiveness of the program, monitoring will be undertaken at the levels of the Honorable Minister of Education, the Monitoring Division of the MOE and the DOE. Efforts will be made to include this in the agenda of the National Level Monitoring Committee headed by the Right Honorable Prime Minister.
- The National Committee to be formed under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Education will constantly assess the policy of gender mainstreaming of girls in education and present to the concerned authority for appropriate policy formulation and its review. Similarly, provisions will be made to assess and modify the strategies formulated in this regard.
- Gender audit: At the end of every academic year internal auditing by the DOE and independent agency or individuals will be undertaken to assess the progress regarding gender equity and equality. Provisions to include the constant assessment of the activities in the social audit will be made for the promotion of girls' education in the school.



- **Gender Networking:** Mentioned in the Girls'/Women's Strategic Plan, at the central level DOE is networking with the organizations involved in improving the standard of children to work collaboratively. At the district level such collaboration will be made with the Gender Focal Point and Resource Centres.
- **Development of monitoring indicators:** Appropriate indicators will be developed in order to measure and assess the activities of girls' education. Based on this, different specific forms and indicators will be developed for the measurement and assessment of girls and women mainstreaming with regard to special programs pertaining to education.
- **Record of monitoring and assessment and its dissemination:** Provisions will be made to disseminate the findings of the assessment undertaken in with regard to the girls' and women education. Similarly, the report of the gender audit by the independent agency or individuals will be made public.
- **Specific indicators to clearly demonstrate the progress of girls' education** will be included in the Flash Report to be published every six month by the DOE.
- **Formative research:** The contents of girls' and women education will be included in the agenda of the formative research being undertaken. Including the main issues, provision of undertaking policy and implementation based research by the independent agency and individuals will be made.

#### Financial Management/Arrangement:

- (a) Girls' education fund
- (a) Source of Education for All Programs
- (b) School grants

#### Source of parents and schools including the NGO and the private sector:

Source of local bodies: Local bodies such as DDCs, Municipalities and VDCs have long been involved in and contributing to the construction of school building and physical facilities including furniture, teacher salary and educational materials in schools. In collaboration with local bodies, necessary arrangement will be made for prioritizing these activities and allocating more resources to girls' education in the future.

#### *Gender Component in SSR*

One of the major thrusts of the SSR Plan is to make schools gender friendly. The government will take a lead role in creating conducive environment and will encourage girls and other children facing multiple exclusions to attend school. Special attention will be paid to providing protection to girls by making sanitary facilities, personal safety, and taking measures to curb harassment and bullying practices. A Code of Conduct will be introduced both at policy and practice levels to make all institutions, organizations and individuals responsive to gender and inclusion.

The SSR Plan intends to achieve 98% adult literacy and the gender parity of 0.96 in adult literacy by 2015. The SSR Plan builds on the existing knowledge and institutional base, and introduces new program interventions with a shift in focus, blending of continuity and new initiatives. The purpose of the SSR Plan is to improve efficiency in education, aiming at EFA and MDG goals to reach parity in

gender and inclusion, and ensure equitable access to quality education through a holistic school sector approach.

### *Challenges*

It is mentioned above that the government is implementing different programs for the expansion of girl's education in the country. However, the government has to face many challenges on the way to provide educational access to children. The following are the challenges in fulfilling government's target of providing education for all:

- Lack of awareness among parents for educating their daughters
- Poor economic condition (31% population still remains below the poverty line).
- Lack of effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism
- Inadequate mobilization of appropriate, effective and useful resources to reach the targeted groups
- Tradition of early child marriage
- Unclear of ambiguous and unimplementable Acts, Regulations and Policies
- Diverse economic, social, religious, cultural and linguistic contexts
- Majority of the 13% out-of-school children are Dalits, conflict affected, children with disabilities and below poverty line.
- Lack of child-friendly environment in the school with inadequate capacity to retain them
- Unequal behavior of teachers towards boys and girls and negligence towards the need of education for girls
- Although there is the policy of at least one female teacher in each primary school, 11,000 schools are still deprived of this. Out of 116,846 primary teachers as per 2064 statistics, there are only 41,475 female teachers.
- Lack of political and legal commitment, and complexity in the birth registration and citizenship
- Only 8% are female head teachers.
- If Nepal is to achieve the MDGs by 2015, Nepal will experience a huge financial gap (US\$7.6 billion) for the period between 2005 and 2015 (NPC, 2005).
- Improved gender messages imparted through education are required which will play a critical role not only in enhancing girls' educational achievement but also in the overall empowerment of women and girls. Actions required immediate attention including the revision of school textbooks so that they (girls) do not carry stereotypical images of women (NPC, 2005).
- Although textbooks are free of cost, they do not reach the students on time. In case of scholarship, not all who are supposed to obtain the scholarship are receiving it. Moreover, the scholarship amount is inadequate even to meet the direct cost of schooling. A National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for grades 1 to 12 has been developed and they were reviewed from gender, caste and

ethnicity perspectives. But the review and revision of curricular materials is not a regular process, as the process has not yet been institutionalized. Policy provision to increase female teachers from a minimum of one to a maximum of three is a progressive move. However, this has not been met due to several reasons. The school's physical environment is still not gender friendly. Basic facilities such as separate toilets with running water, drinking water and classroom management are still lacking (MOES, 2007).

- The provision of female teachers has not been implemented in the schools. No schools have got any additional budget release that has already 50% of female teachers (CERID, 2006).

## **Review of Empirical Studies**

### *Government Policy*

The government has formulated policies regarding the recruitment of as many female teachers as possible in primary school to promote girls' education. But there are some shortfalls in the implementation of gender policy such as recruitment of female teachers and distribution of scholarships (CERID, 2006b). Although the policy of recruitment of female teachers at primary level has been mandatory, they are not appointed due to many reasons. The policy of recruiting many female teachers if possible has not been applicable due to the lack of female teachers. Even though female teachers are available they do not want to be transferred to the inconvenient places due to their family responsibility and security reasons. It was also due to the job insecurity (temporary appointment) that the female teachers quit job and male teachers are replaced in female teacher's quota (CERID, 2004b).

Policies on girls' education need to be implemented strictly all over the country in order to provide educational access to them. Such policy will also contribute in fulfilling the target of providing education for all by 2015. Policy of providing education should not be limited to primary level. Girls should be encouraged for higher education (at least SLC) and scholarship, hostel facilities and transportation allowance for the female teachers coming from far distance should be provided (CERID, 2004b).

### *Socio-Economic Barriers in Girls' Education*

Nepal's socio-cultural environment for girls is far from genial to her holistic development. Education for daughter does not count much and labour is counted as primary and education as secondary in traditional society. Parents hesitate to send their children to school, as a daughter's education becomes problem to her family in backward community (CERID, 1999). Religion has also made girls deprived of education. In Buddhism there is a practice to send the second girl and boy to the monastery to become the priest, so they are deprived of receiving formal education (CERID, 2007).

Economic barrier is considered as a vital factor in gender issue. Those who can afford financially give priority to boys for education. Due to the need of labour in farming and taking care of youngsters, parents keep their daughters away from school (CERID, 1999).

### *Geographical Barrier in Girls' Education*

The way to and from school also has been a barrier for girls in receiving education. In rural and remote areas, secondary schools are limited in number. So children have to walk a long way to reach secondary school for education. Girls are more deprived than boys in receiving higher education. The schools are located in a far distance, and it is difficult to reach the school passing through geographical barriers such as the forest where wild animals live. In the same way, crossing the rivers during monsoon have affected in girls' schooling. There may be danger of sexual attack while passing through such places alone (CERID, 1999). So girls' access to higher education is limited in rural and remote areas of the country.

### *Incentive Programs*

The government has conducted various types of incentive programs to provide education for children. In this context, there have been various types of scholarship and incentive programs. The government has made a provision of incentive money of Rs. 250. per year for a girl. This includes 32000 girls studying at the primary level of ten western districts (Achham, Jumla, Doti, Bajura, Bajhang, Humla, Kalikot, Jajarkot, Dolpa and Mugu) in order to enhance girls' participation in primary education (CERID, 2007). But the scholarship amount is minimal. Girls' scholarship of Rs. 250 annually is not sufficient for purchasing stationery (CERID, 2006a). The Welcome to School Program provides Rs. 500 annually for each child coming from the family whose child has been sent to school. Such a program has helped to increase girls' enrolment (CERID, 2006a). Some other incentive programs for the promotion of girls' education include oil distribution, school nutrition program, and distribution of educational materials, school bags and uniforms to girls in Kavre, Kapilvastu and Lalitpur districts by INGOs and NGOs (Ibid, 2006a). Recently there has been an agreement between the government and the World Bank in order to increase the SLC pass percentage of girls. Following agreement, the Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) will provide Rs. 3000 as scholarship to 50% girls from three districts (one each from mountain, hill and Terai) of each development region.

### *Female Teacher*

Female teachers help to retain girls in school. If there are female teachers, parents will feel secure to send their daughters to school. This has helped in increasing enrolment and reducing dropout of girls (CERID, 2004a). Female teachers' teaching methods were also found participatory and children enjoyed being with them. Female teacher in the school was far better than the male teacher particularly at primary level because they were serious in fulfilling their duty and did not get involved in politics (CERID, 2004b). But female teachers were found very few in number due to the lack of residential facility, security and day care centre/ECD centre for taking care of their young children, lack of proper transportation and physical facilities in schools (CERID, 2006a; CERID, 2004b). More household burden on female teacher is also responsible for them to quit the job. It was found that female teachers had been more deviated from teaching and more concentrated on household activities. So they were not punctual in school and took leave frequently (CERID, 2004b).

### *Head Teacher*

The characteristics of a head teacher are determination and self-initiation in executing innovative programs and activities in order to increase enrolment and retention and improve quality in education (CERID, 2004c). The basic qualities that the head teacher should have are management skill and leadership skill (Ghimire, 2009). The study showed that head teachers (males) are found maintaining good atmosphere to develop coordination among teachers and administrative staff in school (CERID, 2004c). The government has paid special attention to increasing the number of female teachers at primary level. But there has not been such concept and programs developed so far for the appointment of female head teachers (Ghimire, 2009). In comparison to male head teacher, the number of female head teachers is limited. There are only 8 percent female head teachers (MoE, 2007) in schools. Female head teachers are limited to primary level only. Very few female teachers are serving as head teachers at lower secondary and secondary levels. One of the reasons for the low number of female head teachers at these levels is female teachers' reluctance to be the head teacher.

### *Physical Facility*

School's physical facility also affects in children's (especially girls') study. The SSR Plan intends to make sure that schools are equipped with minimum enabling conditions that cater to the diverse needs of students. These conditions also include the physical environment. School physical environment includes the condition of school buildings, provision of adequate classroom, separate toilets for girls and boys, drinking water facilities and playground (MoE, 2009). But a majority of schools lack sufficient physical facility. Girls are facing crucial problem in lack of proper toilet facility in school (CERID, 2006a; CERID, 2007). The girls of higher grades have to face severe problem at the time of menstruation due to the lack of toilet in school. Girls feel insecure while being in the playground of school without fencing. The uniform for girls (frocks) has also been a barrier for participating in outdoor games (CERID, 2004a).

### *Investment on Girls' Education*

Educating girls is the best way of investment because it helps in increasing productivity raises outputs and reduces female poverty. Girls' education is also future output. It increases higher chance of children's survival due to proper care of children by educated mothers. Educated mothers also educate their children (CERID, 2006b).

### *Madrasa for Girls' Education*

Madrasas have contributed to providing education for Muslim girls. The number of girls (42.60%) is higher to that of boys (39.84%) in such schools (CERID, 2004d). But the dropout and repetition rates of girls are higher, and promotion rate is lower than that of boys. There was much improvement in 2006 in girls' enrolment. CERID's another study (2006c) showed that girls' and boys' enrolment in primary level were 51.26% and 48.74% respectively. It was found that a large number of girls were enrolled in these registered Madrasas. The ratio of girls and boys was much higher in Grade I and II. In these grades, 33.75% were boys and 66.24% were girls (CERID, 2008).

Government provided scholarship only to 3.31% of children studying in Madrasa and all the scholarship recipients were boys. More than 50% of Muslim girls were studying in Madrasas but they were disadvantaged from receiving scholarship (CERID, 2006c).

### **Reflection on Previous Formative Research Project (FRP) Studies in the Area and Linkages**

The FRP study “Female Teachers in Primary Schools: Distribution Patterns, Training and Transfer” (2004) talks about the government policy on female teachers of primary level. SMCs are authorized to recruit the teachers on permissions of DEOs. In implementation level there is still a lack of SLC-pass girls or female contestants for teaching job especially in the remote and needy areas. So, secondary schools should be established in those areas where girls’ educational participation is low or where there is a lack of female teachers. Moreover, all the female teacher quotas must be filled only by females.

Regarding the transfer of teachers, the study says that female teachers are given priority for transfer to their home place. But the policy of transferring female teachers to their home places or to the place of their convenience has created the problem of female teachers in the remote and needy areas. Female teachers seek transfer soon after their appointment in remote areas or culturally, geographically and politically difficult areas. In order to solve this problem, the government should produce female teachers locally by providing scholarships to the intelligent girls, especially those from disadvantaged groups and ethnic minorities. Preference should be given to local married women to reduce the problem of transfer. The study also suggests for the appointment of female head teacher.

The study “Gender Equality and Gender-Friendly Environment in School” (2006), includes the findings on policy of the recruitment of female teacher at primary level. The recently made policy is that the primary schools having 4-5 teachers should have at least 2 female teachers and primary schools having more than 7 teachers should have at least 3 female teachers. Regarding the impact of female teachers, the study showed that the school administrators, parents, students and communities have a deep sense of realization that the presence of female teachers in the schools is beneficial in many ways. Girls feel secure and confident when female teachers are around. Parents and communities see female teachers as role model and they also feel secure to send their daughters to schools. Moreover, the teaching-learning activities conducted by the female teachers are more participatory and pleasant as compared to the male teachers. Female teachers were also found to have been involved in various programs like “Door-to-Door” campaign for developing awareness in communities about the importance of children’s education and health education. But female teachers are having difficulties within the family due to many responsibilities to be handled. One of the reasons for girls’ retention in school is availability of upper grades in the school.

The study made some suggestions for the improvement in the policy and provisions for girls’ education. The study suggested that the policy formulated towards recruiting female teachers should be clear. Female teachers should be exposed to a self-assertion training to build up her confidence in her profession. More women are to be provided with position of head teacher in school so that they can have a major role in decision making. In order to make the school girl friendly, there should be

the provision of more female teachers, drinking water facility, enough games/sports materials of girls' choice, separate toilets with water supply, and security in schools.

CERID conducted a study on "School Effectiveness: Head Teachers' Leadership" in 2004. The study focused on the male head teachers of primary, lower secondary and secondary levels. But the study did not include any female head teacher. One of the findings of the study was about head teachers' position. The study shows that head teacher's position is at the critical point at which all the mechanisms of education system (planning, delivery and management) rests. Head teacher's strong leadership has provided an effective coordination between and among the school teachers, SMC members, students and the parents. The study does not provide any suggestion for the improvement in the head teachers' leadership in order to make the school effective.

### **Critical Reflection**

There have been national and international efforts made towards the upliftment of girls' education. Among them provisions of scholarships and female teachers are the major ones. Policies for the recruitment of female teachers, scholarship and incentive programs for girls and feeder hostel program are already implemented. Recently the government has made education up to grade 10 free for all girls of Karnali Zone. Moreover, there are various programs of the government on the pipeline.

One of the burning issues that the review has incorporated to some extent is the appointment of female head teacher. Apart from this, all the issues that the review has covered existed long before and still the problems have not totally been solved. The appointment of female teacher has been related to providing leadership opportunity to female teacher as well as making the school environment more gender friendly. Female head teachers are limited to the primary level. The number of female head teacher serving in lower secondary and secondary levels is very limited. Since the number of female head teacher is limited to 8 percent, it has been a challenge for the government to appoint more female teachers especially in higher levels of school. The number of research done on female head teacher is also limited. The two studies conducted under FRP on gender do not include female head teacher. But SSR has proposed to give priority to women and marginalized groups for the position of head teacher.

## CHAPTER III

### Study Design

This chapter is about the study design followed in the present research. The study design includes sampling, study tools, procedures, and scope and delimitation of the study.

#### Sampling

The study used the purposive sampling technique in the selection of districts, schools and respondents. The purposive sampling technique was followed considering the program implemented in the districts. There were different techniques used in the selection of districts, schools and respondents.

##### *District selection*

There were altogether five districts selected for the study. The districts were selected based on geographical division and developmental region of the country. Moreover, districts were selected on the basis of program implementation. Following these two criteria Ilam, Rasuwa, Nawalparasi, Humla and Doti were selected for the field work of the study.

##### *School selection*

Schools were selected using the purposive sampling technique again. In each district one primary, lower secondary and secondary schools were selected for data collection. In some cases higher secondary schools were also selected considering the presence of female teacher and head teacher at secondary level. Priority was given to the schools with female head teacher. But such sampling technique did not work in some districts as most of the districts lacked female head teacher at lower secondary and secondary levels. In this case, schools with more female teachers at in lower secondary and secondary levels were selected. In case of primary school with female head teacher, there was no such problem in selection as the number of female head teacher in primary level was high. In some cases, schools without female teacher and with all female teachers (including the head teacher) were also selected. There was a meeting of the advisory committee held after visiting the first district. In the meeting it was decided to include the school with management handed over to the community. It was done so in order to see the gender differences between the schools with and without the management handed over to the community. Schools were selected from both urban and rural settings. In remote district secondary schools did not exist in far distance. So secondary schools were selected from headquarter. The following is the school selection criteria being followed by the study (Please see table 1 at the Appendix for the list of schools selected):

#### **Districts and schools selected for the study**

S. No.	District	Development Region	Geographical Region	Program Implemented	Selection of school
1.	Ilam	Eastern	Hill	Programs successful district	Primary, Lower Secondary and Secondary (one each)
2.	Rasuwa	Central	Mountain	School Sector	Primary, Lower



				Reform	Secondary and Secondary (one each)
3.	Nawalparasi	Western	Terai	DACAW district	Primary, Lower Secondary and Higher Secondary (one each)
4.	Humla	Mid-western	Mountain	Karnali Package	Primary, Lower Secondary and Higher Secondary (one each)
5.	Doti	Far Western	Hill	ERDP (Seti Project) district	Primary, Lower Secondary and Secondary (one each)

### *Selection of Respondents*

Respondents were selected from three levels: grassroot, district and central. At the grassroot level the respondents were students (girls and boys), teachers (female and male), head teacher, and School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members.

In each district there was a one-day experience sharing workshop organized at the DEO office. In this session, the information collected from the schools was shared and further educational information related to the selected schools and the district were collected. Discussions with the DEO staff (District Education Officer, Resource Persons, Supervisors and Focal Person) were made at the workshop. The workshop was participated in by DEO, Focal Person, Resource Persons, Supervisors, Section Officers, head teachers and SMC chairpersons of the selected schools. But such interaction session could not be organized at DEO in Humla district as the personnel were absent in the office during the field work in the district. In some districts district development committee and NGOs working in the field of education were also interviewed.

Moreover, information on girls' education activities conducted in the district was also collected. SMC and PTA members, teachers, students and parents' ideas and perception on girls' education and female teacher were collected.

One of the focuses of the study was the policy options to ensure the participation of female teachers in the position of head teachers. So the study also included the respondents from the policy level. In this context interviews were also taken with the policy makers from Department of Education (DoE).

### **Study Tools**

The study used different tools to collect the qualitative and quantitative data required for the study. The tools focused on the gender issues, gender-friendly environment, female teacher and female head teacher. The following tools were used for collecting information from the field:

*Interview Guidelines:* Interview guidelines were used to collect information from the girls and boys, female teachers, head teacher and the policy makers. The interview guidelines for girls and boys included the gender issues that they are facing in school as well as at home, the gender-friendly environment of the school, and the importance of female teacher and female head teacher. The interview guidelines for the female teacher focused on children's (girls and boys) activities in the classroom,

the problems faced by girls and female teachers in school, and the importance of female teacher and head teacher. In the interview schedule for the head teacher the enrolment situation of girls and boys, efforts made by the school in bringing children to school, roles and responsibility of male and female teachers as well as that of head teacher, gender-friendly environment in school, and problems and challenges faced by the head teacher especially the female head teacher were included. The interview schedule for the policy makers concentrated on the policies that are formulated for reducing gender issues in school, and appointment of female teacher and female head teacher.

*Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guidelines:* FGD guidelines were used in acquiring information from girls, boys, teachers (male and female), SMC, PTA and parents. The FGD guidelines for girls and boys focused on the learning environment in school as well as at home, importance of female/male teacher and importance of female head teacher. The FGD guidelines for teachers included the girls' and boys' participation in classroom activities, gender-friendly environment in school, facilities provided for female/male teacher and importance of female head teacher. Likewise, the FGD guidelines for SMC, PTA and parents concentrated on the education provided to girls and boys in the community, their (SMC, PTA and parents) efforts in making the school gender friendly, and importance of female head teacher.

*In-depth Interview Guideline:* This tool was used to get in-depth information from the girls selected for FGD. This tool included the educational history of the girl including the difficulties at school and home in her learning. Besides these, the difference between the male and female teacher, and need of female head teacher were also included in the guidelines.

*Classroom Observation Form:* Class observation form was used to acquire information on the classroom activities of girls, boys and teachers. The interaction between teacher and girls/boys, and between the girls and boys were observed through this form. Moreover, seat arrangement for girls and boys, teachers' response (punishment) to girls and boys, and the physical facility of the classroom were also observed using this form.

*School Observation Form:* This form was used to get information on the physical setting and physical facilities of the school, school distance from the household setting, people living around the school and impact of community in teaching and learning.

*School Survey Form.* The school survey form was used to get school record. School data on children's enrolment, their attendance in final examination, their achievement and their ranking were included in the form.

### *Finalization of Tools*

The tools developed by the research team were finalized in a meeting of experts and the people from the Ministry of Education and Department. Moreover, there were certain changes brought in the tools after the first field visit. The first field visit also helped to improve some items in the tools used for data collection. This helped to make the tools valid for data collection. In case of reliability, the tools were administered twice to the same respondent.

## **Procedures**

The study followed the following procedures:

### *Data Collection*

The data collection for the study was done in two levels. In the first level the secondary data required for the study were collected through literature review. The study reviewed the educational policy related to girls' education and female teacher. The study also reviewed the national plans, Education Act and Regulations and empirical study reports related to girls' education, female teacher and head teacher. The primary information for the study was collected using various tools such as FGD guidelines, interview schedules, observation forms and school survey forms.

Altogether five districts were selected for data collection. Districts were selected after a discussion with DoE and Gender Equity Section. From each district there were 3 schools selected for field study. The schools were identified after making discussion with District Education Office of the selected districts. Priority had been given to the schools with female head teacher while selecting the schools. Out of the three schools in each district, at least one school handed over to the community was selected.

After school identification the research team visited the schools. In each school the head teacher was contacted and request was made to make arrangement for data collection. It was due to her/his cooperation that the respondents required for the study were made available. Apart from that the recorded data were also gathered from the school.

### *Data Analysis and Interpretation*

The qualitative data collected from different sources were analysed based on the research questions of the study. The collected data were transcribed and categorized thematically and respondentwise. The responses were described under each theme. So under each theme responses of different people were included. Moreover, the information drawn from the literature review was also included to support the theme. The data were interpreted linking it with the policies and literature. The quantitative data collected from school and DEO were analysed with a view of supporting the qualitative data. Quantitative data such as the number of male/female teachers, number of girls/boys, student ranking, academic qualification of teachers, types of training received by the teachers and their teaching experience were used while writing the report.

In the report of FRP usually the districtwise cases are presented. But this report did the school levelwise interpretation instead of doing the districtwise interpretation. It was done so considering the nature of the study. Since the gender issues differ by levels of schooling rather than by district such method was followed in the interpretation of data. But focus has been made on the particular school of the district. The common findings were generalized and presented accordingly whereas the special findings and cases were highlighted.

## **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

This is a study focused on gender issues in school. The gender issues included in this study are the learning environment for girls and boys, condition of female and male

teachers and situation of female head teachers. There have been many studies conducted on children's education and teachers. But so far, there has not been such study conducted on female head teacher. The importance of this study lies here. Gender refers to both girls and boys. But issues related to girls are more than those of boys. So the study focused on girls rather than on boys.

This study's delimitation is that it is a case study of 15 schools of five districts representing 5 development regions. Since the sampling does not cover more than 35 percent of the total schools and districts of the country, the findings cannot be generalized. But the study gives pictures of the gender situation in school in different parts of the country.

The study also has some limitations. One of the sources of information in this study was class observation. But classes in two districts (Rasuwa and Ilam) where the field work was done initially could not be observed. The reason was that normally classes of the new academic year in community schools start from the end of April whereas the field work was started from the first week of March. It was due to the time limitation that the field work had to be started earlier than the school opening. But class observations were successful in the remaining three districts (Doti, Humla and Nawalparasi). Another limitation was that due to the lack of female teachers at lower secondary and secondary levels class observation of female teacher was limited in these levels.

## CHAPTER IV

### Gender Friendliness and Gender Issues in School

It is already mentioned in chapter I that gender is a social classification of man and woman. The problem that has not been solved is known as the issue. So gender issue means unsolved problems related to gender. Likewise, the meaning of 'friendliness' as given in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1998) is 'not difficult for particular people to use'. UNICEF in its report "Child-friendly School Intervention in Nepal" has defined 'child friendly school' in terms of making schools more socially inclusive, gender sensitive, child-centred, healthy, safe and protective (CERID, 2008). The Vision School Sector Reform Plan 2015 states that in child-friendly school, student enjoys learning and engages in creative work in school and community, utilizing full potentials with high self-esteem. A student understands and appreciates bio-diversity, cultural diversity and linguistic diversity at local as well as wider levels and contributes to the culture and art of living together. The student also understands and appreciates the importance of democracy and sustainable development (MoE, 2009). This chapter is related to the analysis based on field data gathered in the course of study. The topics that follow will shed light on the situation related to gender friendliness in schools and the major gender issues related to children observed in the course of field study. It is due to the lack of gender-friendly environment in school that the gender issues are emerging. Moreover, some good practices of gender friendliness formed in the field study are also included in this chapter. The chapter also highlights the impact of gender issues on children's enrolment and achievement.

#### Status of Gender Friendliness

The study focused on the gender friendliness created in schools. In this context, the gender-friendly environment was studied in terms of enrolment, presence of female teacher, school uniform, classroom interaction, seat arrangement, school physical facilities, participation in extra-curricular activities, and formation of School Management Committee and Parent-Teacher Association.

#### *Enrolment*

The government has made efforts for the enrolment of children especially girls in primary level. It is due to the welcome to school program and the scholarship and incentive programs that there is less difference in the gender parity index. In this context, one of the achievements of schools in making the school gender friendly as shown by this study was the enrolment of children. Schools were very much conscious of bringing children to school by organizing several programs such as door-to-door campaign and distributing scholarships and uniforms. The door-to-door campaign was very much practiced in enrolling children in grade one, whereas the uniform distribution campaign was successful in the enrolment of children in higher grades. It was due to the teachers' active participation especially that of female teachers in student enrolment that almost all the children in the service areas of the case study schools were enrolled in school.

The distribution of school uniforms free of cost also attracted children towards school. Schools (e.g. Pawan Higher Secondary School and Janakalyan Lower Secondary School of Nawalparasi) were distributing uniforms free of cost to children. Pawan Higher Secondary School distributed uniforms to the students

enrolled in grade 11 and Janakalyan Lower Secondary School provided uniforms to all its students this year. Pawan Higher Secondary School limited its distribution in grade 11 as the number of students was very low in this grade. Janakalyan Lower Secondary School, which handed over its management to the community last year distributed the uniforms in order to attract children towards the school. Girls were more benefited from such provision made by the schools than boys, as parents did not take that much of initiative in sending girls to school previously.

### *Female Teacher*

Female teachers played an active role in bringing girls of the community to school. As a result of such efforts of the female teachers, all the children of the community of the schools selected for the study were enrolled in school. This situation was found even in the most remote district (Humla) of the country. The teachers of Bhimsen Primary School of Simikot (Humla), where all of the teachers (except one) were female, were playing active role in bringing children to school. In Doti, even the disadvantaged and deprived groups who were moving their shelter from one place to another were sending their children to school. In the schools of Doti, female teachers were found counseling the girls to be more regular in the class for better studies. Mostly, in the schools implementing gender-friendly environment, girls were found easily allowed to go home in the cases of menstruation when they suffer from severe pain and bleeding. The schools headed by woman teacher seemed to have developed this system, while those having male head teachers seemed to have rather ignored this problem.

### *Classroom Interaction*

The researchers observed classes of different subjects with a view to if there was gender disparity in learning different subjects. For this purpose, the classes of English, Mathematics, Health and Population, and Social Studies were observed. The study shows that there was no such problem of interaction between boys with girls at the primary level. So, good practices of interaction were found among the primary level children - with no hesitation to talk between girls and boys. They felt free to interact with teachers and ask and respond to the questions raised by teachers. Teachers were also found making children engaged in group work in the classroom. In Humla, the female teacher of grade V engaged girls and boys in singing and acting a book song in the classroom.

The observation of different subject classes shows that there is no such gender difference in pace of learning. Girls were found equally intelligent in the so-called difficult subjects (Mathematics). Both the girls and boys were doing the class work on same pace without mistakes. In the case of English both the girls and boys had difficulty in learning the subject. The teachers of secondary level were teaching English mixing both English and Nepali languages while making the students understand. Even the students were responding in Nepali. Such a teaching method was making the students feel free to ask questions to the teacher. In comparison to girls, boys felt free to respond to the teacher although the response was in Nepali. In totality, it was found that the teacher concentrated her/his interaction with the students (whether girls or boys) who were intelligent or responding to her/him promptly.

### *Seat Arrangement*

The seat arrangement, in primary, and lower secondary and secondary schools were different in the classroom. The classroom observation in primary level showed that girls and boys were seated together. They did not feel any hesitation in this matter so that their learning was easy. Such mixed seat arrangement helped girls and boys to be cooperative in learning from each other. So seat arrangement was contributing in creating gender-friendly environment at primary level. In case of lower secondary and secondary levels, there were separate seat arrangement for girls and boys. Such separate seat arrangement also affected in the interaction between them.

### *Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities*

The study shows that children's involvement in extra-curricular activities differs by age and level of schooling. At primary level both girls and boys were found more engaged in games and sports compared to the children of higher levels. Both girls and boys of primary level were playing games together. Girls and boys of primary level played joining hand in hand together without hesitation – so no discrimination of gender was noticed. In Durga Primary School of Doti, some girls did want to participate in playing games joining hands with boys. The female head teacher of the school arranged a demonstration, whereby male and female teachers played together joining hand in hand; and then inspired the children to play in the same way. Then, from the next day, children were also convinced that there would be no problem at all in playing together in this way. So, girls were also habituated accordingly.

### **Good Practices of Gender Friendliness**

It is mentioned above that different types of gender-friendly environment existed in schools. Along with the gender-friendly environment created in school the study also identified the good practices of gender-related matters in school. Such practices were found in the management of physical facilities, school uniform and classroom environment of school. Teachers were also counseling girls in women's matters.

### *Physical Facility*

In some schools, toilets were managed separately for the male and female teachers; and for boys and girls also in the same way. In Ilam and Doti districts, boys' and girls' toilets were seen in separate places. In Janakalyan Lower Secondary School But in Nawalparasi, a unique practice of using the same toilet by teachers and students was found: male teachers and boys using one and female teachers and girls using another – with the assumption that students become more conscious towards the cleanliness of toilets if done so. Such a practice stopped the children especially boys from writing vulgar and uncivilized words on the walls of the toilets as they were afraid of teachers who visit the same toilet used by students. The school had tried to involve boys and girls equally in sanitation activities in the school.

Sports materials and other educational materials given to the students from school were found equally distributed among girls and boys without discrimination. In that school, there is a woman head teacher, which is a community-managed school, and male and female teachers' number is more or less equal. The practice of mixing girls with boys was also noticed in this lower secondary school.

In that school, unlike in others, when the students were playing games the practice of mixing boys and girls together was observed during the researchers' visit. This practice was found not only in the primary grades but also in the upper grades (grades 7 and 8).

### *Female Teacher*

The female teachers' role and responsibility was most counted in counseling girls regarding menstruation matters. In Doti and Humla, where the practice of *Chhaupadi* (staying separately from house, usually in a cowshed during menstruation) is a widespread practice in society, the female teachers have given orientation for the girls before as well as during their menarche - whereby the basic things needed for keeping neat and clean have been instructed.

#### **Muslim Girl's Preference for Female Teacher**

Hasina Khatum is a 12 years old girl studying in grade IV of Shree Rastriya Primary school, Triveni, Nawalparasi. Her house is in Baskatiya which is in a 15 minutes walk from school. She has father, mother, younger sisters who go to Madrasa. Hasina was enrolled in this school as there was no Madrasa in the community when she joined the school. She joined the school late as her father did not want to send daughter to school. So her younger sister was sent to Madrasa. It was because of her mother that she could join this school. Parents have told her that they will provide her education up to grade 10 then they will send her off to her husband's house. She does not have such household burden as there are many members in her family. There is no such discrimination made by caste and gender in the school. She tells about her problem to the female teacher when she had to leave the school earlier. She does not want to go to school when there is work at home.

Hasina prefers female teacher as they teach well. They make the students understand the lesson clearly. Boys and girls play separately in school. The teachers also make boys and girls separate while playing games, they do so perhaps because the boys may tease if girls and boys play together.

It is good to have male head teacher as the present male head teacher is doing well. But the male teachers are frequently absent in school, as they are engaged in other activities as well. So it is better to have female head teacher.

### *Uniform*

In some schools, girls were allowed freedom of choice for their school dress regarding skirt and pants - they could wear whichever uniform they find comfortable to wear. From this school year, the school has decided to instruct the girls to wear pants for their uniform instead of skirt.

### *Efforts of School and Community in Making School Gender Friendly*

Most schools have tried to bring girls as well as boys into the school through the Welcome to School Program. No discrimination is felt on this issue in any school. In almost all the communities, no girls of school-going age are found left at home without having the opportunity of going to school. The community cooperated with the schools in this matter. It was found that, among the schools, more special initiatives were found in those schools where the management has been transferred



to the community. In such schools, the school teachers and SMCs have organized door-to-door campaigns for getting the children (boys and girls) admitted to school. They have got success in bringing those children who are domestic servants to school. In order to make the children regular in the school, the teachers of Janakalyan Lower Secondary School, Nawalparasi (headed by a female Headmaster) had even donated money to buy the uniform for the very poor children who have been the domestic servants and cannot afford for purchasing the uniform themselves.

## **Gender Issues**

It is mentioned above that schools with primary levels were creating gender-friendly environment. But there were also problems related to gender that were unsolved, which are here described as issues. The gender issues mainly existed in lower secondary and secondary levels.

### *Female Teacher*

Female teachers are considered as one of the attractions for girls and parents for schooling. Girls feel comfortable with female teacher and parents feel secure to send their daughters if there is the presence of female teacher. Considering this the government has also made special provisions for the recruitment of female teacher in primary schools. This study shows that female teachers provide special orientation to girls regarding matters related to them such as menstruation. Such orientation needs to be done for the girls of puberty – before as well as after their menarche. But the study shows that the government provision of female teacher is limited to policy only. There were also schools (primary and secondary) without female teacher, which have been included in the study. The Kakara Primary School of Rasuwa was without female teacher. Students (even boys) of these schools were willing to have female teachers. In most of the secondary schools, female teachers were lacking. In those schools the number of female teachers at lower secondary and secondary levels was limited. There were hardly one or two female teachers in this level. In the lack of female teachers, the problems of girls were not solved.

### *Seat Arrangement in Higher Levels of Schooling*

The seat arrangement for the children of lower secondary and secondary levels differed from the seat arrangement made for primary level. The seat arrangement for primary level is already mentioned above. In the case of seat arrangement for lower secondary and secondary levels, the seats were arranged separately for girls and boys. In some schools such arrangement was made by the school itself whereas in other schools the children themselves made such arrangement. The version of the school and children regarding the seat arrangement differ. According to the teachers, separate seating for girls and boys is necessary for the children of higher grades as they are matured and it is better to sit girls and boys separately. Girls' version is that since boys tease them and dominate them in different activities such as sports it is better to sit separately. But higher grade girls of the schools of Ilam has different version. They preferred the mixed seat arrangement. According to them if girls and boys sit together there will not be side talks and the class will not be disturbed.

### *Physical Facilities*

Physical facility in school is directly related to children's education. In lack of physical facility children cannot receive proper education. The school and classroom observations showed that physical facilities were lacking in school which was directly and indirectly affecting the children's education. There was no use of any teaching-learning materials (except for textbooks) in the classroom. The class-size also affected children's learning. In some cases girls and in other cases boys were affected by such large class-size. In grade X of Padma Public School of Ilam and in grade IX of Pawan Higher Secondary School of Nawalparasi, the teacher-student ratio was very high. There were more than 70 students in the class observed class. The teacher was not able to pay equal attention to the students. So only the intelligent students whether girls or boys were the centre of attraction for the teachers. The teachers were concentrating only on such students while teaching in the classroom.

Most of the schools lacked separate toilets for girls and boys, and male and female teachers. The FRP study of 2006 "Gender equality and gender-friendly environment in school" had also shown that toilets are lacking in schools of the country. Due to the lack of toilet the boys used to go to the forest. In case of girls they used to go to their friend's house near the school. It is due to using their friend's house for toilet that they missed their classes. Although the lower secondary and secondary schools had big buildings and enough school area compared to the primary schools toilet facility lacked in such schools. Some of the schools had toilets but were not in use due to water scarcity. Girls were having difficult time during menstruation period as the toilets lacked water facility. They had to leave for home early while having menstruation. In some cases although toilet with water facility existed in school, they were not used by girls because the girls' and boys' toilets were attached. The head teacher of Padma Public Secondary School of Doti said that girls did not use the toilet when the girls' and boys' toilets were attached. In the toilets separated by walls, although the separate rooms were managed for boys and girls, girls hesitated to use it. Now their toilets are in separate locations so they use it. But the selected primary schools of Ilam, Nawalparasi and Humla, and secondary school of Doti had separate toilet for girls and boys with water facility.

#### **Problem faced by a Girl**

Anjita Neupane (14), is a girl studying in grade 9 in Kalika Himalaya Higher Secondary School, Rasuwa. It takes her 1 hour from home to reach school. She misses classes during menstruation. The reason is that there is no water in the school toilet; and it is dirty. She has to go to her nearby friend's house or return home to change pad when she has excessive bleeding. So she misses the classes. According to her, to overcome this problem there should be awareness program for parents, community and society. At the mean time orientation must be given to students, teachers and school administration about the gender problems.

Drinking water problem existed in most of the schools. According to the students they have to face more problems during summer due to the lack of drinking water. The school boys of Nawalparasi had to suffer more than girls in summer because of the lack of drinking water. Girls used to bring water from home whereas boys did not do so. Some of the boys of secondary level used to ask girls for drinking water though they did not interact with girls in any other matters.

The lack of fencing in school also affected in children's study. In Padma Public Secondary School of Doti, people from outside used to come to the school compound during school hours and tease the girls. Likewise, due to the lack of fencing, the school toilets and water tank of Bhagwati Secondary School of Ilam district were destroyed by outsiders. The lower secondary and secondary schools in Rasuwa district were in slope landscape and there was no fence around the schools. So there was a fear of slipping down below the hill while playing and walking. In lack of proper fencing the tube well of Nepal Rastriya Primary School of Nawalparasi was being used by the outsiders for bathing and washing, so children had to wait long for water to drink.

Gender issues also existed in sports and games being played in school. The schools lacked sports and games materials. The available materials were usually occupied by boys; and girls were discarded from using the playing materials. According to the girls of Mansarobar Higher Secondary School and Bal Mandir Lower Secondary School of Humla, and Shree Rastriya Lower Secondary School of Rasuwa and Jankalyan Lower Secondary School of Nawalparasi they used to play football together with boys. Usually they used to lose the game while playing together with boys and they were teased saying, "haruwa" (losers) and "Girls cannot compete with boys". So girls stopped to play together with boys, and the football was occupied by boys. The researchers observed that the elderly girls were not playing any game or sport at the tiffin time whereas the girls of primary level were found playing skipping. The students stressed the need for making the sports and games materials available in sufficient quantities; and it should be available for girls as well, so that they will be motivated to come to the school regularly.

#### *Issues Related to Boys*

The study shows that most of the gender issues are related to girls. The issues related to boys were minimal. The gender issues related to the boys were about scholarship and punishment. The school scholarships were concentrated on girls. According to boys, they are also economically poor and scholarship needs to be provided to them as well. They raised objection regarding the system of not giving scholarship to 'boy' category of students with priority. According to them, it would be the injustice to ignore the boys by giving much priority only to the girls - disregarding the factor of socio-economic condition. Another gender discrimination made to boys was in giving punishment by the teachers. In some schools, boys raised objection regarding the system of discriminating boys and girls in reward and punishment - particularly the teachers' habit of scolding and beating the boys a lot but favouring impunity in the case of girls even if they commit a blunder! The boys were complaining that they are given corporal punishment for not doing the homework whereas girls were simply told to do the homework. Regarding classroom teaching it was found that the teachers concentrated on girls in the classroom although boys were smart enough in responding to the teacher. The class observation in Doti shows that the teachers were expecting answers from girls and they were looking at them but the girls were putting their heads down and the boys were giving response.

#### *Classroom Situation and Interaction*

The government in its rules and regulations has fixed the class size in terms of the number of students. According to the rules and regulations, the class size should be

1:30 in mountain, 1:35 in hills and 1:40 in Terai regions. But classes were found over crowded especially in higher levels of schooling whether it was Terai, Hill or Mountain region. Although the classrooms existed, they seemed small compared to the number of students. Students' seating arrangements were found similar in all the schools visited, where students were sitting in benches with desk in the front arranged in columns. A pair of desk-bench shared by 4-5 (or even more) students was found in all cases - having no chance for flexible sitting, having almost no opportunity for organizing the activities of group works. However, in the lower secondary and secondary levels, girls were not mixed with boys in almost all classrooms - mostly girls sitting in one column from the front to back of the classroom, and boys' sitting also arranged in the same way. When the head teachers were asked, "Why are boys separated from girls?", the reply, in all cases, was that it is because the students themselves are unwilling to sit together even if they were instructed to do so. On this issue, teachers said that they also tried to mix the boys and girls but even after mixing, the students began to sit separately from the next day: a girl going to sit with girls only and boys forming the group of homogeneous sex in the same way! Since girls were isolated from boys in sitting, so there would be less chance of interaction between girls and boys. Particularly girls are shy to sit and talk with boys along with the increase in their age, resulting into this sort of hesitation to interact. Such a hesitation occurred in boys as well.

It was even found that despite the efforts of mixing boys and girls in the seating arrangements, they did not want to sit together, and mostly the girls wanted to sit with girls only - perhaps due to the problem of psychological feeling of being ashamed. But students of upper grades in Padma Public Secondary School, Doti said that it would be a better option to mix girls with boys instead of having the seat arrangement by separating the two sexes. In their opinion, if there is mixed seating, there will be less possibility of gossiping between students. Since girls do not want to interact with boys that much, mixing them could be a proper alternative to make the class more peaceful. In addition, the feeling of hesitation to speak would also reduce after the pairing of boys with girls. But the version of the PTA members was found different. They said that they do not want their daughters sit together with boys; so separate seating arrangement for girls would be the right way. This is because an unmarried girl sitting with boys is always considered a social taboo in the rural society in particular.

At lower secondary and secondary levels, however, mostly girls hesitated to ask questions to the male teachers. According to the teachers, this is due to excessive modesty or being ashamed as they grow older. Not only this, girls also hesitated to speak with female teachers - thinking that they would be dominated by the boys in particular for mistakes if they make any. So, girls did not want to initiate interaction, though they respond to the questions asked by teachers.

Even if teachers arrange the seating of girls and boys together, they do not want to sit in this way and immediately change their position the next day. Parents have indicated that the girls' hesitation to speak with boys might have been resulted due to the social influence as well- where girls are specially made over-conscious regarding their presence in front of males. Teachers have said that this might have also resulted as a consequence of the girls remaining backward in their study compared to boys, in general. According to girls, boys often laugh after the girls in the case of even minor mistakes while answering questions asked by teachers in the class; so they do not want to talk with the boys having such habits. In most schools,

the researchers noticed girls sitting only with girls during the leisure period, so was the case of boys. Since the seat arrangement was made separately for boys and girls, the consequence was like this – having little interaction between a boy and girl/s.

### *Gender Issues in Extra-Curricular Activities*

At the lower secondary and secondary levels, however, boys prefer playing much more than girls. Girls, if interested at all, are more interested in the indoor games rather than the outdoor varieties of games. Asked why they were less interested in the outdoor games, girls in Kalika Himalayan Secondary School of Rasuwa said that although they wanted to play the outdoor games, their dress (skirt) could not be comfortable for playing those games. The girls of Janakalyan Lower Secondary School of Nawalparasi were also facing such problem. But from this academic year the school changed girls' dress from skirt to pants. The head teacher in the school being female, it seems the change has taken place in that way. In Ilam, girls have been deprived of the opportunity to play outdoor games due to the scarcity of playground in the school. While boys can go far away from the school premise to play games, girls feel insecure to go away. So, this is not a matter of choice but compulsion to pass time through the indoor rather than outdoor games for girls. But girls of Pawan Higher Secondary School, Nawalparasi said that their teachers do not encourage them in outdoor games even if they want.

### *School Distance*

School distance affects children's education, especially that of girls. Children studying in higher grades were much suffered by such school distance. Since secondary schools exist only in the district headquarter, children were compelled to walk a long way for education. Moreover, the practice of running schools in the morning time much affected in receiving education. In such cases, when the distance between the school and students' house is long, particularly girls suffer more because they have to come to

#### **The Case Study of a Student of Kalika Himalaya Higher Secondary School**

Anjita Neupane, 14 years old, is studying in Kalika Himalaya Higher Secondary School in grade 9. She lives in Chaurkharkha. It is far away from school, she has to travel 1 hour from home to school. She had been admitted by her uncle in grade 6 in Kalika Himalaya Higher Secodnary School. There is no high school near her house so she has to travel through a long way to come to school. She has to come to school with her sister and brother. She has to come to school through jungle so there is fear of wild animals such as bear and leopard and also people. Some time she was alone to come to school. At that time she was afraid of people and wild animals. According to her, parents do not permit her to come to school with boys of her school. In her parent's views, if she walks with boy classmates, community people will think of unnecessary things and start backbiting on the matter. She said that sometimes she was alone to get back home. So she went home with boy classmates but she did not tell her parents anything. If they knew about that then they would not allow her to go to school forever.

When she used to walk with boy classmates, others teased her. She has to do household works in the morning and evening time. She also felt difficult during menstruation period. She got abdomen pain so she could not attend the class and felt very difficult to stay in the classroom. In that situation neither she could tell her problem to male teachers nor female teacher due to shyness nor could attend the classes. And she went back home. She had to pretend having headache and other reason to go back home with the teachers in the school due to uncomfortable saying When she "menstruation".

school very early in the morning – and there will be the feeling of insecurity – social as well as natural (like the danger of attacks from wild animals). The natural calamity such as heavy rain and flood can also affect in reaching the school from a far distance on time. In Ilam, children studying in Bhagwait Secondary School had to walk 3 hours to reach school. The school was conducted in the morning from 6:30 and the children (including girls) had to start from their home at 3:30 in the morning. In Humla, children from 3-4 day's walking distance were staying in a rented room at the district headquarter.

### *Impact of Household Environment on Children's Education*

In almost all schools, particularly in the lower secondary and secondary schools, children did not get opportunity to attend school during the period of cultivation and harvest – particularly the girls even if boys are sent to school. In the incidences of the family members being sick, mostly girls are not permitted to go to school. If the parents or guardians are going away from home for 1 day or more, the girls in particular have to stay at home and look after the house instead of going to school. Mostly girls did not get time to study at home in the morning before going to school, as well as after returning back home from school. Moreover, while boys could go to their friends' places for studying together (combined study) to share the matters related to what they have learned from books, this opportunity was rare for girls – because they were rarely allowed to go out of the house. Educational materials (pen/pencil/papers) were not provided to the children by their parents in time, due to two reasons: poverty and ignorance.

Among the Dalits, the practice of early marriage is prevalent in most of the places visited for data collection – so the chance of stopping their education had been its result. Due to the influence of *Chhaupadi* (staying in cowshed during menstruation) in the far-western part of the country, parents did not send the girls to school during their menstruation period. More particularly, if schools are named after God and Goddess they never send the girls to school during menstruation – with the fear of sin! Such case was found in the Barahi Lower Secondary School, Baglekh of Doti. The school was named after the name of the Goddess; so some girls were not sent to school during menstruation. Those who came to school during menstruation were not allowed to touch the school tap. The school provided water separately for them during menstruation.

### *Community Participation*

Female teachers have the opinion that the surrounding community around the school also needs to be positive towards school. The school needs to play a significant role in making the attitude of the community positive towards girls. In many circumstances, the community still has the belief that women teachers cannot teach children very well. Such thinking is a biased attitude, and the school should play role in changing such attitude.

### **Impact of Gender Issues on School Activities**

The impacts of issues related to gender observed in the field study are presented here. The write up is based on the quantitative data collected from the school. Mainly the impacts of gender issues were observed in the children's enrolment and achievement.

### *Children's Enrolment*

Children's enrolment at primary level is high compared to higher levels of schooling. The total Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is 142.8%, out of which girl's enrolment is 145.6%. Likewise, the total Net Enrolment Rate (NER) is 91.9% with the girls' rate of 90.4% (MOE, 2008) at primary level. The study showed children's especially girl's enrolment differing in the selected districts. In Ilam, schools running the classes of primary and lower secondary levels had relatively lower rate of girls' enrolment than the enrolment of girls in the school that has run the classes up to secondary level. Right from the beginning of schooling, people's tendency of sending their children to the school having upper grades (up to high school level) must have been associated with this kind of scenario, particularly where there are many schools within a shorter geographical distance – so that instead of sending children to a school that ends at class 5, parents are inspired to send them to the school where children can study up to SLC.

The case of Doti showed lower rate of enrolment of girls than boys at all the levels, in all the schools selected for the study. Although the teachers and parents have said that the existing figure of girls' enrolment is in progress compared to the situation in the past, the figure is still lower. When the respondents were asked about the reason behind it, they said that the girls' population remaining lower in the school is just the reflection of the population scenario of service areas of those schools. Another reason for this is that these schools are far from the catchment area; and particularly parents are not willing to send their children to schools because they have to walk through jungle in between. Although parents do not hesitate to send boys to school, they have the feeling of insecurity to send their daughters far away. In the upper grades, there is the trend of early marriage of girls and getting them engaged in household works after the marriage. So, schools have fewer girls' population.

Girls' enrolment in Humla was found greater than that of boys at primary and lower secondary levels, while it was just the reverse in the case of secondary level. A special focus for girls including free education up to the SLC level must have encouraged their enrolment at the lower levels in this way. The reason associated with the lower enrolment of girls at the secondary level is that the secondary school is found only in the district headquarter – so, though parents from the other parts of the district were able to send the children to the primary schools nearby, all parents could not send children to the secondary school far away. Some girls and boys from far away distance had come to study in the secondary schools in district headquarter and they were staying in rented houses. Feeder hostel was a support for such children although seats were limited. Some girls were staying in the feeder hostel. But still the cases of girls studying in this way were very rare.

The situation of Nawalparasi has shown a relatively balanced enrolment of girls and boys at the lower levels, though a slightly lower rate of enrolment is noticed for girls than for boys. Compared to the case of other districts, the balanced enrolment of Nawalparasi is, as the school authorities say, the consequence of the geographical situation where students can come to school in bicycle even from a long distance. The comparatively lower population of girls at the secondary level seems to be, according to the respondents, the consequence of the practice of early marriage particularly in Musahar and Muslim community (See table 2 in Appendix).

### *Children's Achievement*

Overall, the trend of decrease in the students' achievement/promotion rate in the upper grades in general and girls' promotion remaining lower than that of boys in particular is noticed almost everywhere – in all the sample districts. In Ilam, girls' promotion rate is found cent percent at primary level. Similar is the case of boys. As the girls go towards the secondary level from lower secondary, their promotion rate is found decreased gradually. Although this decrease is also applicable in the case of boys, girls' promotion is found less than that of boys in most of the situations. One of the reasons, especially for the lower rate of progress at the upper grades, is that they have to be busy in the household chores more at the secondary level than at lower levels; and girls have to give more time for household affairs than boys. Particularly girls' regularity is lower in attending the classes. Moreover, the problem of early marriage is still prevailing in the service areas of the district, particularly among girls – affecting the educational attainment in this way. The decrease in boys' promotion rate, as teachers say, has occurred due to their habit of roaming out or wasting time in talking and playing rather than in study. Moreover, particularly in the poor class families, parents engage the boys in works for income generation (petty earnings); and the consequence of this is that they get less time for study (See table 3 in Appendix).

Regarding the ranking of girls and boys in the top 10 position from the point of view of their achievement in exam, more or less boys and girls seem to have equally occupied the positions at the primary level – applicable in most of the cases in the sample districts and schools. But from lower secondary level onwards, fewer girls have occupied the top 10 positions compared to boys in all cases. This scenario is the reflection of the same situation discussed in connection with the general trend observed in the promotion rate as described above (See table 4 in Appendix).

### **Conclusion**

Gender issues varied in lower and higher levels of school. There was also gender friendly environment created in school.



## CHAPTER V

### Current Status and Issues Related to Female Teachers

In Nepalese education, the number of female teachers is found far less than that of male teachers. Though there is a small population of female teachers at the primary school level, their number is too marginal at the upper levels in particular, compared to their male counterparts. But, gradually, the need for female teachers is being realized in the country considering the need for attracting and retaining girls in school and from the view of gender balance in teaching profession. In this context the government has made provisions from time to time for the recruitment of female teachers in primary schools. Apart from primary education, much emphasis is directed to recruit female teachers. In this connection, it would be highly relevant to discuss the current status and issues on female teachers. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to the discussion on these matters as observed in the field study.

#### Status

The study focused on the status of female teachers. In this context, information on the number of teacher (male and female) at different levels of schools was collected through a survey form. The form included information on teachers' qualification and the training that they had received so far. The information collected from the survey form as such helped to know the status of the teachers. Apart from that, the FGD and interview with the teachers helped to know whether they were the local residents or outsiders. Teachers living locally and outside district also affect in teaching and learning in schools.

#### *Teachers' Qualification*

The survey form also contained the academic qualification that the teachers had. This helped to compare the academic qualification of the teacher with their appointment in different levels of schooling. The analysis of the survey form on teachers shows that teachers had their appointment at lower levels of schooling although their academic degree is eligible for teaching in the higher levels. It was so because there has not been advertisement made by the Teacher Service Commission for long. Although they were qualified for the higher levels the advertisement was made only for the lower level and they applied for that level. Getting a job and becoming permanent is more important than teaching in higher grades based on the qualification of teachers. So the overqualified teachers were serving at lower levels of schooling. The data shows that although only SLC degree is sufficient to be a primary teacher there were teachers, with qualification up to Bachelor's level having appointment at primary level. The over qualified teachers were found more in primary than in other school levels. But there was districtwise variation in the number of over qualified male and female teachers. The over qualified teachers were found in all the levels of schooling (See table 5 in Appendix). The community-managed schools were having the 'rahat' (relief quotas), where again the teachers were academically over qualified.

#### *Teachers Residing in and Outside District*

The teachers teaching in most of the schools were from the outside district. It was not only males but female teachers were also from outside. Even the head teachers were not the local resident. It seems that the government has not been able to

appoint the local qualified teachers. Although there were locally qualified teachers they were working on temporary basis. In Kakara Primary School of Rasuwa, all the teachers were males including the head teacher. But two females who were the local residents were working as facilitators at the pre-primary level. In Shree Rastriya Lower Secondary School of the same district most of the teachers including the female head teacher were from outside district. Same was the case of Humla where almost all the teachers were from outside district. Being a remote district, the teachers used to be long absent once they went home in vacations. One of the main disadvantages of teachers from outside district is that they are long absent in school once they go home in vacation. It was not only due to transportation difficulty (in remote districts) but teachers serving in the districts with road access also used to come back to their regular duty late. So the students were complaining about the course not finished on time.

### *Teacher Training*

The teachers of the selected schools had received different types of training. They had received the basic training (10 months) and partial training. Most of the teachers had their academic degree in education (B. Ed.); so they had practice teacher training. In the case of male and female, the number of males having training was higher (68) compared to that of females (28). The number of male teachers having the basic training was higher than that of females. Within females the number of basic training recipient was higher compared to females who have received the other training. In females there was no one who had received partial training. Some of the females had done B. Ed. But there were also teachers who were untrained. Compared to the trained teachers (whatever the kind of teacher training), the number of not receiving training (who have not received any kind of training) was high. The proportion of male and female untrained teacher was almost the same (See table 6 in Appendix).

Almost all the teachers and head teachers had not got such training. Only a female teacher of Pokhari Primary School of Ilam had got this kind of training in initiative of one of the local NGOs. Majority of teachers had got the 10-month training. But they were not in a position to tell the gender component included in this training.

### **Female Teacher and Children's Education**

Female teacher is directly related to the education of children especially that of girls. One of the objectives of the government in making policy on the recruitment of female teachers is relevant to girls' education. Female teachers not only fulfill their responsibility of teaching, but they also take care of children. Children especially girls feel free to ask any question to a female teacher. Considering this reality, the study tried to include the schools with a female head teacher and schools with a high number of female teachers.

The study shows the importance of female teacher in school. Their importance is felt at all the levels of schooling but the reasons differ. In Rasuwa, the head teachers and members of SMC pointed out the need for increasing the number of female teachers particularly at the primary level. These things can be the benefits of employing females for teaching in the lower grades. There is the need of female teachers not only at primary but at the higher levels (lower secondary and secondary levels) as well. Along with children being matured more gender issues are emerged at higher levels of schooling and the gender issues are mostly related to girls. Comparatively

speaking, the qualities of treating children in good manner are found less among the male teachers. In this situation, the importance of female teachers is the most valuable. The teachers added that children are generally found hesitating with the male teachers to speak and ask questions in the class; but such a hesitation is rare in the case of female teachers. The classroom observation at secondary level showed girls were feeling odd in front of male teacher in the classroom. Although the male teachers were focusing on girls in the classroom they (girls) were not responding to the teachers. Children especially girls do not come close to the male teachers. They do not tell their problems to the male teacher whereas they feel free to tell the problems to the female teacher. In the lack of female teacher girls' problems are unsolved.

#### **Problems Unsolved due to the Lack of Female Teacher**

Some girls of one of the secondary schools in Ilam were having gender problem in school. They were being harassed by the head teacher of the school. The head teacher used to talk the unnecessary things for long with the girls. He also used to touch the bodies of girls while talking to them. This was also noticed while the researchers were doing FGD with the girls in the school. The head teacher passed through the spot where the FGD was going on and the whole FGD team looked at him. On his way, the head teacher stopped at a group of girls talking at the corner of the stair of the school and talked to them. While talking he touched on the shoulders of the girls and massaged it. The girls were very much embarrassed with such a deed of the head teacher.

The girls had complained about such an act of harassment to their parents. But in response the parents said that the girls themselves might be like that so the head teacher behaved them in this manner. The girls had also requested the research team to inform the DEO about this matter and help them in transferring the head teacher elsewhere.

In comparison to boys, girls felt the need of female teachers to teach them. According to them, male teachers do not understand their problems of being misbehaved by the boys - e.g. when boys throw small balls of paper at them from the backside and girls report the incident to the male teachers, the teachers do not take it seriously. They (male teachers) ignore the problem. Regarding the teaching-learning of some topics related to fertilization, family planning, menstruation and reproduction, girls preferred female teachers rather than males so that even if they cannot ask questions on any matter of confusion in the class, they can manage to learn more from teachers by asking the matters of confusion in the leisure time. They say they will not have any hesitation to ask the female teachers but they feel problem to ask the male teachers on such matters. But boys had a different view on this matter. They said that there would be no difference between the male and female teachers - no matter whatever the subject of teaching-learning. Girls felt no such difference between a male and a female teacher in the question of quality of teaching. Girls as well as boys expressed a common opinion that generally female teachers are lovelier than males and can motivate the students. In a secondary school of Doti, boys pointed out that female teachers generally do not discriminate between boys and girls in their behaviour, while the male teachers discriminate by giving punishment to boys while talking with each other in the class and doing nothing to the girls for similar incidence.

In Ilam, particularly at the primary level, the SMC and PTA members reported that wherever there are female teachers, children's regularity in school is found more since, unlike the males, females give less punishment to the children. This shows children's motivation towards female teachers. In the opinion of DEO female teachers are more dedicated to their profession, and they avoid the wrong habits like drinking, while male teachers (though not all) waste time in drinking - leaving the classes many times. This problem is widespread among the teachers of rural areas.

But along with the plus points of female teachers there were also negative experiences in the schools having only the female teachers. The staff of Pokhari Primary School of Ilam, which had only female teachers including the head teacher were feeling the need of male teacher. Since the students especially boys did not listen to the female teachers, male teacher was required in order to keep them in discipline. In the case of higher grades, along with female teachers presence of male teacher was much more felt. According to the PTA members high school students do not obey the commands of female teachers; and they even dominate female teachers-which affects teaching learning in a wrong way. Pointing out the negative aspects of female teacher, the male head teacher of one of the schools of Doti said that people in the surrounding community do not prefer to send their children to school if female teachers have been teaching at the high school level in particular - thinking that they lack the required knowledge and skill for teaching.

Female teachers, on the other hand, have the feeling that they are dominated by the male counterparts in school. Even if female teachers are competent in their subjects of specialization, the head teacher is unwilling to give them the responsibility of teaching in their subjects at the upper level, thinking that female teachers are incapable compared to male teachers. This may be one of the reasons that many academically over qualified female teachers were teaching at lower levels in the schools selected for the study. But the school authority had observed more sincerity in females than in male teachers. The male teachers had the potentiality of going away from school - sometimes for official purposes such as trainings and sometimes for political affairs, while such kinds of misuse of time would be comparatively less in the case of females. This kind of situation was observed in one of the schools of Ilam.

The need of both female and males was also pointed in an FGD organized at the DEO office. The participants viewed that only having the females would not be sufficient to make good schools. If a school has no male teacher, particularly at the upper levels, students can have the feeling of negligence in rules-regulations - leading to the degradation of teaching learning. Simply being a woman does not mean, according to them, that she will be automatically dedicated, skillful, and intelligent and having knowledge of everything. They also pointed out the case of a school having all female teachers and degrading the education quality. In Humla, girls pointed out that there should be the balance of male and female teachers in the school - otherwise there would be the danger of monopoly or dominance of one gender over the other. Schools with only male teachers or a limited number of female teachers (one or two) also felt the importance of female teachers. The qualities that the female teachers deserve such as dealing nicely with children and not giving punishment were highlighted by the male teachers. Here the conclusion is that schools-whether primary or above-were in favour of having both female and male teachers.

## Main Issues

There are many issues related to the female teacher. One of them is the lack of female teacher. Although the government has formulated different policies in different times for the recruitment of female teacher, they are lacking in schools especially at lower secondary and secondary levels. The dual responsibility of female teachers (in school and at home) was affecting them in fulfilling their responsibility in school to some extent. Gender issue was also found in the professional development of female teachers.

### *Lack of Female Teacher*

There is lack of female teacher in school. The number of female teacher lowers with the rise of grades – the higher the grade, the less the number of female teachers. The Flash Report 2008 shows the number of female teachers at primary, lower secondary and secondary levels as 38.6%, 24.7% and 15.9% respectively (DoE, 2008). The study shows that female teacher is lacking at all the levels of education especially at secondary and lower secondary levels. The study tried to select schools with more female teachers but it was not possible in all the districts as there was scarcity of female teachers at higher levels of schooling. In community-managed school, the number of female teachers was even less (27.8%). In the case of levelwise distribution of female teachers at primary, lower secondary and secondary levels in community-managed school they are 33.2% at primary, 16.8% at lower secondary and 10.4% at secondary respectively (DoE, 2008). Female teachers were lacking due to many reasons. One of the reasons was that they were willing to serve in the school nearby their homes so that they will be with their family together. It was due to this reason that the Kakara Primary School in Rasuwa was without a female teacher. Although female teachers were appointed, they got transferred just after getting appointment in that school. The school was located on a long distance from the main road (at the bottom of a steep hill) and the way to that school was tough. Their transfer was made easily as it is mentioned in the government policy that provision will be made for the female teachers to get appointment in their accessible school. One of the reasons for the lack of female teachers in school is due to the unavailability of local female teacher. It is mentioned above that female teachers get transferred to their convenient schools. In this situation if qualified female could be appointed locally then the problem could be solved. But in lack of qualified local teacher the schools are facing the problem of having no female teacher. The situation of female teacher is more severe in remote areas. Teachers from outside districts are appointed in such schools. In Humla, the unavailability of local teacher (both male and female) had created another problem. Since the teachers were from outside district, they used to return to fulfill their responsibility late once they go back home in vacations. The main reason was the difficulty in getting the air-ticket for Humla and this affected in completing the course on time. The students of the selected schools were complaining to the researchers. They were saying that although the course is incomplete, the question papers in the examination also include the questions from the untaught lessons.

#### **Female Teachers' Problem**

The female teachers residing far from school had difficulty especially during menstruation. The female teachers of Barahi Lower Secondary School at Baglekh, Doti used to stay in a rented house in Baglekh. The distance to and from Silgadhi

(headquarter of Doti) is 3 hours walk. They were not allowed to stay in Baglekh by the community at the time of menstruation. So during menstruation they had to go up and down from Silgadhi to Baglekh daily, which is 6 hours walk to and from Silgadhi. Since local female teacher was lacking, so most of the teachers teaching in that school were from Silgadhi.

### *Female Teachers' Responsibilities*

The study shows that there is no such difference between the responsibilities of the male and female teacher. The work load (classes) for male and female teacher was equal and they were fulfilling their responsibilities in school. The stakeholders' view was that female teachers were also competent like the males and they can perform their duties fairly well, given proper environment. However, they have a dual responsibility of taking care of the family and household on one hand and teaching in the school on the other. But they were managing their responsibility in school and at home.

In school, while talking about the female teachers' responsibilities, they perform the duty of taking care of small children including their cleanliness. In the upper grades of school, female teachers were performing better in counseling the girls on the problem of menstruation and cleanliness during the period. As a result, in the schools where female teachers have been working at the upper grades, the situation of fear and nervousness was not found among girls.

#### **Experience of being a Female Teacher**

The female teacher of Shree Padma Public School, Doti, shared her experience of being the head examiner of SLC in the schools of Doti. She was assigned that responsibility due to being the teacher in a secondary school. She was monitoring the SLC examination in a room and just at that moment somebody threw a cheat to a boy from the window and she saw it. The boy put that cheat inside his underwear and said she could take it out from there. Then the teacher asked the boy to take out that cheat from the underwear otherwise she would take herself out that from his underwear. She also said that since the boy is to the age of her son she will not hesitate to take it out from there. Then the boy took out the cheat and gave it to her.

The female teacher told this story while telling about the roles and responsibilities of female teachers and how they are looked by people.

Similarly, regarding the work of getting the girls admitted to school, female teachers' home visits and their works of convincing the parents have been more effective. They have played the role very positively in mediating the boys and girls in cases of conflict or misunderstanding.

#### **Female Teacher's Role in Continuing Schooling**

In Padma Public School, Doti, there was a case of writing love letter. A boy from upper class wrote a note to a girl of grade 8; and the girl felt nervous upon seeing the letter so she stopped coming to school for some days. The boy also stopped coming to school being afraid of teachers. In this situation, the female teacher convinced both of them and they continued coming to school. The boy realized his mistake and said "sorry" for his deed. The female teacher said that she was able to resolve the problem; but male teachers could not do so.

Regarding the household duties associated with female teachers, the cases of being absent in schools particularly in the cases of illness of the family members have been reported in many places. While male teachers are rarely absent in the schools in the time of household problems like illness, females are mostly not getting time to attend school in such cases. But the female teachers were saying that they did not take more leave than they get annually from school. Particularly women teachers used to stay home instead of going to school more than males, especially in the time of social or religious events at home. In many cases, female teachers were found leaving the school before ending the school hours, or attending the school late - due to the household works.

But the version of the male head teachers was different regarding the activities of female teachers in school. The male head teachers had no doubt in female teachers' capability of taking care of children as well as the elderly girls. The male teachers had nothing to say about female teachers' teaching. But one thing that the head teachers disliked about the female teachers was their habit of gossiping in school. According to them whenever female teachers got time they used to gather at the common room and start gossiping. One of the male head teacher said, "Female teachers can talk about their profession and education of children. But they always talk about other people and dresses. They even bring knitting things and do knitting work in their leisure time, which is not good in school." The researchers also observed such thing while visiting one of the schools in Humla. The female teachers had worn the hand-knitted caps and when asked who did this the teachers said that they knitted it in school in leisure time.

#### *Female Teachers and their Career Upliftment*

The study shows that both the male and female teachers had less opportunity for teaching at the higher levels even after having the academic qualification. The districtwise comparison shows that Rasuwa is the district where the teachers, despite having higher academic degree, were teaching in lower levels of school. Such case was found at the primary level where the teachers having Intermediate and Bachelor's degree were serving. In comparison to females (3) the number of males having higher degree and serving at primary level was 5. In Ilam, there were only females and in Doti only males with higher degree serving at primary level. In Doti, there was a female teacher with Master's degree teaching at the secondary level. She was the only female teaching at the secondary level in the school. It was heard that there could be an offer for her to be the head teacher once the present head teacher (male) resigns. The present head teacher is going to resign from his post soon. In case of Humla, there was scarcity of female teachers for secondary level. So the number of female teachers in the selected secondary level under the study was nil. There were one male and four female teachers serving at primary level with higher academic qualification. Such a case was found in Pawan Higher Secondary School, Nawalparasi, where 2 female teachers were teaching at lower secondary level even after having the qualification of Bachelor's Degree. But in Nawalparasi, in comparison to females the number of males with higher academic qualification was high at primary level.

The above scenario shows that teachers were not getting chance for their career upliftment. The over qualified teachers were compelled to get appointment in the lower levels. As a result, they were discarded from receiving more salary. Although they were teaching in higher grades their appointment was made for the lower level.

Many female teachers were working on temporary basis. The examination for teaching license has not been advertised for a long time; nor have the vacancies for permanent teaching post have been opened by the Teachers' Service Commission. In these circumstances, the career development of female teachers (including that of males) has been affected. In the case of community-managed schools teachers were serving in Rahat quotas (teacher quota provided in special situation) provided by DEO.

The study shows that female teachers are disadvantaged from receiving training. When such opportunities come to the school, generally male teachers were given more preference by the school authority - with more training for a male teacher even if females do not have a single opportunity. The female teachers have the opinion that males are much involved in politics, so they have linkage with the people of political background. This helps them in getting several opportunities including training. Since female teachers do not get such chances they have not been able to bring qualitative improvement in their teaching profession. When the head teachers were asked why such trainings were not offered to female teachers, they replied that schools were informed about the trainings in two ways: 1) In the subject specific training on English, Mathematics and Science the school is instructed to send only the concerned subject teacher, while there have been rare opportunities for social study trainings. Since most female teachers are not teaching these subjects, the head teacher cannot send them to participate in the trainings. 2) Sometimes the male teachers are called for training by the government authority (DEO or training centres) mentioning their names, to which the head teacher cannot make any sort of objection. When male teachers have the intimacy with the government authority, they can get their names nominated by the authority to which the head teacher cannot make any objection. But females cannot have this sort of personal approach. Ultimately, this has resulted in the lack of opportunity for female teachers in the access to training. This shows a lack of gender balance in providing career opportunities - including the training opportunities for male and female teachers.

### **Impact of Female Teachers on Children's Performance**

In general, it has been reported from all the schools visited during the field study that girls' enrolment has increased in schools after the recruitment of female teachers at the primary level. In the case of Ilam, it has been reported that girls' achievement results have been improved after being taught by the female teachers - as a result of more comfortable teaching-learning environment created by these teachers. In the upper grades, girls have developed the feeling that they can also occupy a prestigious position in society (like teacher) through their own efforts and study. According to the girls, female teachers have been able to inspire them a lot towards doing new and exemplary things - so this has been a good source of inspiration for their future life. In Doti, the head teacher said that girls are encouraged to do something challenging a bit more by the presence of female teachers, while they remain one step back to present their problems in front of male teachers. The SMC and PTA members pointed out that, wherever the head teachers are female, the parents feel more secured to send their girls to school. Consequently, the chances of students' dropout will be reduced in the schools. Girls find it more comfortable to learn from female teachers since they think it would be more comfortable to ask questions with them. Girls are attracted towards female teachers more than towards the male teachers.



## **Conclusion**

Female teachers are lacking in higher levels of school. The need of female teachers was felt more by girls than by boys in school. Female teachers were concentrated in primary level.

## CHAPTER VI

### Female Head Teachers: Roles and Responsibilities

The Education Act 2059 BS, Article 93 has made provision for the appointment of the head teacher. According to the Act, a permanent teacher teaching in the particular level of the school that s/he is working is nominated as the head teacher by the SMC on the basis of the criteria made could be appointed as head teacher by the DEO. The School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) document, 2009 states that there will be a separate position for head teacher in full-fledged schools. It is also stated that preference will be given to female candidates and candidates from marginalized groups for the post of head teacher. This chapter contains the status of female head teacher, their responsibilities, and problems and challenges that they have to face.

#### Status of Female Head Teachers

Female head teachers are lacking in Nepal. The DoE data shows that there are only 8 percent of female head teachers in the country (DoE, 2007). A majority of female head teachers limited to a primary level. The number of female head teachers is minimal at lower secondary and secondary levels. Since one of the research questions of this study was related to the female head teacher, the study tried to select all the schools with female head teacher. But it was not possible because in many districts it was difficult to get a lower secondary and secondary school with female head teacher. Same was the case with the female teachers. The number of female teachers at higher levels (especially secondary level) was very limited. So the study could select only 6 schools with female head teacher. Out of the 6 schools with female head teacher 2 were primary, 3 lower secondary and 1 higher secondary. Rest of the schools (9) selected were with male head teacher (See Table VII in Appendix for further details). Considering the low number of female teacher in schools, the SSR Plan has proposed to give priority to women and marginalized groups for the position of head teacher.

One of the reasons for the low number of female head teachers as shown by the study is related to the low number of female teachers in school. The number of female teachers is relatively higher at primary level, as the government provision of female teacher at primary level has contributed positively to create this situation in this factor. In the case of lower secondary and secondary levels there is no such provision for female teachers. But in recruiting *rahat* teachers in schools, DoE has clearly given direction to give priority to females at lower secondary and secondary levels (DoE Circulation, 2009). Since there is no female teacher, there is no question of female head teacher. But there were also some schools that were without female teachers at primary level. It is mentioned earlier that it is due to the inconvenience for the female teacher that they were transferred to the school convenient for them. The district's educational statistics of Rasuwa shows a low number of female head teachers in the district. In secondary level for particular, the number of head teachers is very low. This is, in a way, the reflection of the lower number of female teachers in the district. Even primary schools were without female teachers. One of the reasons as found in the Kakara Primary School was the marginal population of educated women in the district. In the case of Ilam, Humla and Doti, the situation just described was found applicable; where the absence of head teachers at secondary level existed.

Contrary to the situation of other districts, number of female teachers was found remarkably higher in Nawalparasi district. In this district there are altogether 344 female teachers at the primary level, 21 at lower secondary and 6 at secondary level. Out of the total primary schools, 33 schools have female head teachers. Female head teacher was found even in higher secondary school. Nawalparasi, being one of the districts of Terai having a better access of education, the number of educated females is also higher in the district compared to the other hilly districts. Consequently, more female teachers were found in the district; and this situation has also been reflected in the increased capacity of females in running educational administration and raising the number of female head teachers ultimately. Even the community-managed schools had female head teacher. The school (Jankalyan Lower Secondary School) selected under the study was a community-managed school having a female head teacher for 2 years and the management of the school was good. It is heard that schools do not want to be handed over to the community as there are disadvantages of it. But the management handed over to the community schools was functioning well (See Appendix for the list of schools handed over to the community). The head teachers (male and female) were proud to say that the management of the school is under the community. According to them, the school is functioning well in cooperation of the community. Rahat quota for teachers were made available by the DEO and the budget received for the school's handover to the community was utilized well (See table 7 in Appendix).

### **Provisions Made for Appointment of Female Head Teacher**

The SSR document includes some policy reforms regarding the appointment of head teacher. According to the new policy there are separate quotas of head teacher for the basic (1-8) and secondary (9-12) levels. Teaching experience is more counted for the appointment of head teacher. Generally, the existing rules and regulations applicable for the appointment of head teachers in the school have been followed in the sample districts. The criteria like academic qualification, performance evaluation done by the SMC, and seniority have been considered for the selection of head teachers among the working permanent teachers in schools. Apart from these things, no special provision for the appointment of female head teachers was found in practice.

There is a provision of appointing head teacher for the period of 5 years. But it was not found so in practice. The SSR document also mentions that the tenure of head teacher should be fixed. Normally, in practice a head teacher was found occupying the position longer than ten years. In some cases there were head teachers serving the school for more than 20 years. Such a case was found in male rather than in female head teacher. Consequently, several cases were noticed in the schools where the male head teachers have been occupying the position for longer period, even if there are female teachers equally qualified for the position. This situation is found more or less in all districts.

One of the criteria for the selection of head teacher followed by SMC is teaching experience. In most of the schools this criteria was being followed. But some schools had appointed head teachers who were junior to other teachers. One of the primary schools had appointed a junior female teacher in the post of head teacher although there was a much senior female teacher for the post. Such situation was also found between male and female teachers. In the discussion held at DEO office Rasuwa, the officials raised the issue that, although the same standard of performance evaluation

has been followed for the male and female teachers, there is the trend of over-rating the males compared to females in the evaluation done by SMC. They said that this is one of the reasons associated with the fewer number of female head teachers. DEO does not have any role in the selection of head teacher. It just supports the nomination of the SMC (for head teacher).

But the DEO of Rasuwa said that despite the existing scenario in the district, the office is willing to encourage female teachers to assume the role of head teachers so far available in the school. The DEO personnel also mentioned that, when female head teachers came to them for official works, they would get priority as far as possible. But the female head teacher of one of the schools of Nawalparasi said that the DEO does not listen to female head teacher. According to , the male head teachers get their work done early whereas the female head teachers have to wait for long to complete their work.

One of the reasons for the lack of female head teachers at higher levels of schooling identified from the study is that female teachers either do not want to grab the opportunity of head of the school due to their household duties and the feeling of extra burden to assume the roles of head teacher; or the community hesitates to be convinced with their capability - so the position is mostly offered to the males. One of the female teachers of Ilam was qualified enough to be the head teacher. The present male head teacher was also encouraging her for the post of head teacher as he was retiring soon. But the female teacher was reluctant to take the post. She was saying that there were many burdens of being the head teacher. But the version of the school teachers of Rasuwa was different. They said that even if there are qualified and eligible female teachers for the position of head teacher, there is a deeply-rooted culture of not giving the position to the females. So, in the case of having no male teacher in the school being eligible for the position, the SMC is inclined to search for a head teacher from other schools but they are not willing to offer the position to a woman in the same school who is eligible for the position. For these reasons, they have suggested that for some years female head teacher quota need to be reserved in a fixed number in the district and females should be appointed for the position based on their competence.

The SSR document mentions about management and leadership capacity to be the head teachers. One of the findings of the study is associated with the capability of female head teacher. Most of the female head teachers lacked this ability. The study pointed out the need for encouraging female teachers in administrative works and duties/responsibilities right from the beginning of their teaching profession - so that they will not have any kind of hesitation to assume the role of head teacher in the future on one hand; and they can also perform their responsibilities successfully, on the other.

However, the head teachers of Ilam have also told that the mere increase in the number of female head teachers is not the solution of many problems related to school education. According to them, the more important thing is to build the capacity of female teachers. Therefore, special provisions should be made for their capacity development; and then head teachers should be selected through a fair competition.

In Doti, the female head teacher in a selected primary school was consulted. She has assumed the role of head teacher having all the major requirements. According to her, head teacher's position is challenging particularly for women due to having no

any special incentives for her. In a school where there is a single female teacher and the head teacher is male, the head teacher suggests that the female teacher must be given the role of head teacher after his retirement, since she has already got the competence.

The SMC, head teacher and female teachers of Doti and Rasuwa said that, if ladies were to be especially encouraged for the role of educational administration, provisions should be introduced in the policy for reservation of some ladies' quotas for the post of head teachers in the district and these head teachers need to be selected through competition among ladies. They have also demanded to increase the financial contribution from the government in the schools headed by females so that they can run the school more comfortably.

Teachers of Humla have pointed out that the existing provision of 5 years' term given for a head teacher has never been strictly implemented in practice. So, the situation of a head teacher working for innumerable years has created a problem. If a teacher does not hold the position of head teacher longer than 5 years, the possibility of cooperation will increase with the feeling that everybody will have the opportunity sooner or later.

There were female head teachers in the lower secondary as well as secondary schools visited for the field study in Nawalparasi district. They were appointed as per the existing rules-regulations and after the consent of the local community – so their leadership was found effective. These head teachers expressed the need for having the post of an assistant head teacher in the schools where there are female head teachers in order to support them in the management of the school.

### **Responsibilities of Head Teachers**

The head teacher, usually, has a dual responsibility: that of teaching as well as performing the managerial and administrative duties. The study shows that the head teachers are having a difficult time in fulfilling their duties as their responsibility is unlimited. It is not only that they have to take classes, they also have to deal with the problems associated with management. They also have to attend meetings and seminars organized at the district and visit the DEO frequently. Most of the female head teachers are afraid to stay night outside their house. It will be a problem to stay outside. Due to the lack of security and delaying DEO office is reducing budget of the school-based activities. Sometimes they even have to fulfil the responsibility of the peon such as ringing the bell and cleaning the classrooms. Since there is no government provision for the appointment of peon such responsibilities are being taken by the head teacher. But there is no remarkable incentive for the work they do. The only incentive they get is Rs. 500 monthly for being the head teacher. Therefore, the head teachers particularly women were found discouraged.

In Ilam, female head teachers said that they had too much of burden and responsibility at home and school. They had to take classes and do administrative works. They had to go outside frequently in various works such as to the DEO, training, and so on. Sometimes they also had the responsibility of construction of school building. The female teachers were also saying that they did not want to take such responsibility by becoming the head teacher. It is mentioned above that two female teachers rejected the offer of the position of head teacher. In Rasuwa, the head teachers had to render so many responsibilities additional to teaching in the

school. It would be very difficult for female head teacher to visit district headquarters many times from remote schools. Female teachers also said that they did not get any remarkable incentive, nor they would get any dashing power to control teachers. For female teachers, it would be a burden to take the whole responsibility as head teachers.

In Nawalparasi, the female head teachers said that head teachers' post was very responsible, challenging and interesting. As she said female head teacher must be capable to face with so many administrative and technical challenges in the school. She also must be initiative, willful and positive in thinking as well as creative and innovative. One of the female head teachers in the community-managed school of Nawalparasi said that she was overloaded with her responsibility: she has to take 5 classes everyday and also has to go to official work such as meetings outside the school, DEO officials and so on. When she goes outside, the classes that she takes are hampered. Nobody (teachers) was willing to take her class in her absence. But she had to take the classes of the teachers who were absent. This had made her discouraged to fulfill the responsibility of head teacher. Considering the work load (teaching and management) of head teacher, SSR Plan has emphasized on reducing the teaching workload of the head teacher. But she was found fulfilling her responsibility as a head teacher. She made the provision of providing scholarship for all girls (100%) and boys from Dalit community. Moreover, she was engaged in door-to-door campaign of children's enrolment in the community and motivated the parents to send their children to school. She also had a great contribution in bringing children to school who were working at other's home for earning. According to her in the absence of teachers she has to take more classes.

Male teachers were found realizing the role of female head teachers. They were saying that female head teachers are very much dynamic, active and cooperative with the teachers and students. They added that the female teachers are fulfilling their responsibility successfully; the reason behind was that the female teachers are being supported by community, teachers and students. The female head teachers were found taking initiative in solving the problems related to girls in school. The girls were also found feeling free to tell their problems to the female head teacher. The male head teachers were also saying female teachers are capable of dealing with the problems related to girls. The girls of the higher levels were asking the female head teacher to go home at the time of menstruation. In Humla, the lower secondary female head teacher said that she was able to improve the studies of girls; succeeded in continuing girls' education even after their marriage by arranging their re-enrolment in the school; worked in the proper management as well as regular supply of toilet and water; etc. She has paid special attention to making fence in school compound. She thought to provide gender training for all the stakeholders. She also said that male and female teachers, and boys and girls, have got equal opportunities in activities and facilities. She also said that some boys who were out of track were brought on the right track.

### **Issues Related to Female Head Teacher**

The study while looking at the status and the roles and responsibilities of female head teacher, came across with the issues related to them. The issues were related to the appointment of female head teacher and the problems faced by the female teachers in fulfilling the responsibilities.

### *Appointment of Female Head Teacher*

It has already been mentioned that the number of female head teacher is very less (8%) in the country. The number is even less at higher levels of schooling. Until the introduction of SSRP document there was no such provision made in the appointment of female head teacher. The SSR document has mentioned a little about the female head teacher. SSR has proposed to give priority to women in the post of head teacher.

The study shows that the teachers and SMC members were of the view that female teachers must be appointed as head teachers as they are qualified, competent and experienced. There should be fair competition among competent female teachers in the schools so that every female teacher would get a chance to be the head teacher. The discussion held at DEO in Ilam also shows that SMC has right for appointment, transfer, promotion of teachers and DEO only gives approval for SMC's recommendation (for head teacher).

The study shows that there are more male than female head teachers in schools. One of the reasons was that SMC used to give priority to male teachers in the nomination of head teacher. Since there is representation of more males than females in SMC, males used to support the male teachers for the nomination. The government has made provision of at least one female member in SMC and most of the schools had appointed only one woman as women representative. The teachers also used to support the male teacher for the head teacher. Female head teachers were seen as incapable in fulfilling their responsibilities. So the teachers of Humla and Rasuwa were of the view that there should be competition made only among female head teachers of the district so that female teachers would be appointed as head teachers. Some of the female teachers also talked about the need for reservation to secure the post of head teacher for the female teachers.

Another issue regarding the appointment was the recruitment of female head teacher in their inconvenient place. The study shows that female head teachers were found difficulty in fulfilling their responsibility, as they were appointed in an inconvenient school. Some of the female head teachers were frustrated with their job as they had to be away from their family in fulfilling their responsibility. Although the government has made provision to give appointment to the female teacher in their convenient place, there was no such practice in the appointment of female head teacher.

### *Female Teachers Fulfilling the Responsibility of Head Teacher*

The study shows that head teachers were fulfilling many responsibilities: teaching, managerial and administrative works. They were also fulfilling the responsibility of the peon (in ringing the bell and taking care of the classrooms). The female teachers were also doing the same. Since the head teachers did not get the leadership and management training prior to their appointment as head teacher they, especially the female head teachers, were having difficulty in management. The head teachers of Rasuwa were of the view that female teacher should be given financial and managerial training so that they would be capable and competent to hold head teacher's responsibility. They also must be encouraged by SMC, teachers and community. In Ilam, head teachers said that female teachers got very few management trainings and other training so they had to face so many technical and practical problems while working as the head teacher. The head teachers said that

in order to promote female teacher to the post of head teacher interest must be aroused among the female teachers through incentive program, moral support, and cooperation of SMC.

The respondents of Doti said that female teachers should be empowered from the very beginning in leadership and quality education. Training must be conducted on regular basis as required. SMC and head teachers said that head teachers must have an idea of accounting, management and gender-related issues. Such training would make them fully capable in fulfilling the responsibility of head teacher. At the same time, residential facilities and traveling expenses for head teachers of remote areas should be provided. Moreover, family and community support are necessary. According to DEO's personnel at Doti, female head teacher has to spend more time for household work as well as in official work. Moreover, she has to go up and down from school to headquarter for official work. Fulfilling these responsibilities for female teacher is difficult.

In Humla, According to female teachers and SMC, the most important matter is will power of female teachers. First of all, they must be motivated through leadership training and other personality development trainings so that a female teacher would feel of pride in holding the position of head teacher. Female head teacher said that the society's eyes would be important. Society sees male head teachers than female ones. She said that if male head teacher made mistakes, the community would give him excuse but for female, they highlight and underline the mistakes.

Female head teachers were having problem in fulfilling their responsibility as the male teachers were not found supportive to them. The male teachers used to feel inferior in front of the female head teacher. They did not want to work under the leadership of a female head teacher. So the female head teachers were discouraged to show their competence.

#### *Lack of Adequate Female Representation in SMC and PTA*

The analysis of SMC and PTA minutes shows that female representation was lacking in such committees. The schools were not concerned about women's participation in different committees. The female head teachers were conscious about this matter. One of the reasons for female teachers not getting the appointment as head teacher was that they did not get support of the committee members. It was only for the sake of the formality of at least one woman's representation in SMC and PTA that a female participant was included in those committees. So the number of female participants was limited. Having low representation of females in the committees, there was no agenda related to gender in the committees' meetings. One of the main reasons for not including the gender-related agendas was that the number of female participant was low in the committees formed and men did not pay interest on such agendas. This low representation of females in the committees also affected in the decisions on female head teacher. This situation was found common in all the schools of the sample districts. In most cases, the agendas for discussion in these meetings included: financial matters (budget release and expenditure), building construction, enrolment and Welcome to School Program, scholarship distribution, and teachers' appointment and deputation.



## **Importance of Recruiting Female Teacher to the Post of Head Teacher**

The study points out the importance of female head teacher in school. It is not only from the perspective of the recruitment to the post of head teacher but they need to be recruited for the expansion of girls' education. A female head teacher can understand the problem of grown up girls especially at the time of menstruation. She can convince the mothers of those who are not sending their daughters to school. She can solve the problems of teasing girls including passing love letters from the boys. She can make the school girls friendly with their male counterparts. Sometimes girls may be harassed by boys on the way to school and if male teacher touch the body of girls then she can solve such problems. Moreover, it is seen that the school with female head teacher is good in sanitation. They have been successful in school feeding program for children.

### *Gender Perspective on Female Head Teacher*

Female teachers should be given opportunity of becoming head teacher in order to provide equal opportunities for male and female. The respondents said that as male and female teachers are equally competent for holding the post of head teacher, female teachers should also get the opportunity to take the responsibility of head teacher. For this purpose female teachers need to be empowered to take the leadership. There is the importance of female head teachers as they help to enroll girls in school by making the parents educationally aware. They could be an example in leading the school. The study also showed that SMC trusts female than male head teachers in financial matters as female head teachers do not have the habit of doing mischief. They are transparent in every matter so society also respects them. In SMC's view female teachers are sincere in fulfilling their responsibilities. Since they are not involved in political matters, school environment becomes free from political conflicts. According to them, female head teachers support girls and female teachers in their personal as well as professional development.

According to DEO's personnel of Nawalparasi, most schools having female head teachers are running the schools very well. Parents, children and teachers also feel good to see female head teacher in schools. The male head teacher of Shree Rastriya Primary School of Nawalparasi said that female head teachers take special care of children especially in their cleanliness. Such service cannot be expected from male teachers. Female head teacher also makes the proper arrangement and cleanliness of school. They are also good in keeping hospitality with parents, community and others.

In the case of boys there was no such case of telling any problem to the female head teacher. They were not even consulting the male head teacher or male teacher regarding their problems. The boys were telling (to the researchers) that they were discriminated by gender in getting corporal punishment and receiving scholarship.

### *Female Head Teacher and Girls' Education*

Female head teacher has positive impact on girls in school and the community. The overall quantitative data shows that promotion rate of girls and their ranking (1-10 position in class) are better compared to boys in the school having female head teacher (See tables II and III).

Girls feel comfortable to tell their problems to the female head teacher. In most of the schools with female head teacher selected for the study girls were telling their

problems to the female head teacher. In Nepal Rastriya Lower Secondary School of Rasuwa, Jankalyan Lower Secondary School of Nawalparasi and Bal Mandir Lower Secondary School of Humla, girls were telling their problems in school to the head teachers. Girls were telling problems related to menstruation. They were asking to leave school early due to abdomen pain caused by menstruation. As girls of primary schools did not have such problem, they were not telling anything to the female head teacher.

Female teachers were the inspiration for girls. Girls were motivated towards study in order to be the head teacher in the future. They were willing to hold the respective and responsible job like that of female head teacher. Teachers in Nawalparasi said that female head teacher gives a sense of not only inclusion but it is a good example for girls in their study and other female teachers for their career upliftment.

The separate discussion with girls and boys shows that both of them favour female head teacher. According to them female head teacher will be far better than the male head teacher if she is qualified, dedicated and capable to handle the school. They felt that they feel much friendlier and comfortable in front of female head teacher. Boys said that in front of male teacher, they get a feeling of fear that he might scold them. However, both girls' and boys' opinion was that it is good to have both male and female head teacher in the district in order to maintain gender equality.

SMC and teachers took female teacher taking concern about girls' problems such as toilet, uniform, participation in classroom interaction and exploitation by males. According to the teachers of Humla, boys used to tease girls and send them love letters, and sometimes dedicated love songs for girls. Such activities of boys harassed girls. The girls kept such problem unexplored as they felt shy and became afraid of male head teacher. So they were disturbed psychologically and this affected in their study. The teachers were saying that if there was a female head teacher in that school, girls could tell their problem to the head teacher without hesitation.

The study shows female head teacher's contribution in making girls participate in extra-curricular activities. One of the changes that the female head teacher (of Nawalparasi) has brought in school is the introduction of different uniform for girls. Girls' school uniform of skirt was changed into pants from this session. This helps them feel easy in playing games and sports with boys.

## **Conclusion**

Female head teachers are lacking in lower secondary and secondary schools. There is the need for management and leadership training for them in order to make them capable for the post of head teacher.

## CHAPTER VII

### Synthesis and Discussions

This chapter is a synthesis of the gender issues in school education derived from literature review and field studies. The literature review showed that along with the international efforts for the development of girls' education, the government of Nepal has also launched various plans and programs for focusing the expansion of girls' education in the country. In this context, programs not only for girls' education but other programs related to their education have also been conducted. In fact, it is a cross cutting issue for our country. The policy of recruitment of female teachers was introduced and changes in that policy has been made from time to time in order to provide educational access to girls. Moreover, the appointment of female head teacher has been a new phenomenon in the development of girls' education. Nepal is following the EFA Plan of Action and working for fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Similarly, the national plans and the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2063 BS have made provisions for the education of women and men. The recently introduced SSR Plan has also highlighted the provision of female teachers as well as priority to women and marginalized groups for the position of head teacher.

The above picture shows that, considering the need for girls' education in the country, the government has launched different policies and plans for the development of girls' education. There is no doubt that such government efforts have helped to increase the number of educated girls in the country. Female literacy rate which was 25 percent in 1990 reached 42 percent by 2000. Similarly, there is increase in male's literacy rate as well (42% in 1991 and 65% in 2001). One of the reasons of such an improvement in female literacy rate is, no doubt, the result of recruitment of female teachers at primary level made mandatory by the government. Moreover, the efforts in creating gender-friendly environment in school and the presence of female teachers are also the other reasons for increase in girls' literacy rate. The outcome of government's new policy of recruiting female head teacher in schools is yet to be seen.

Although attempts have been made for the expansion of girls' education there is still a huge gap between the literacy rate of girls and boys. Studies show gender issues still existing in schools. The present study shows that gender issues are more striking at higher levels of schooling. It was due to the lack of female teachers and physical facilities, classroom environment, school distance and impact of household environment that gender issues are emerging. There are gender issues also related to boys. Boys have been found more discriminated in providing scholarship and giving punishment in school. Likewise, schools are not gender-friendly. There is little bit improvement in girls' enrolment, increase in the number of female teachers, increased classroom interaction, seat arrangement and girls' participation in extra-curricular activities in school. But such improvement cannot be called gender-friendly. The study shows that the improvement in gender-friendly environment in school was made not with a motto of creating such environment but while making the infrastructure development in school.

The government has introduced a variety of programs for the educational development of girls. These programs are concentrated in school. It may be because school is the place for learning and the learning environment needs to be created

there. In the lack of learning environment for school children especially girls are educationally disadvantaged. They have not been able to attend school regularly. Apart from school-focused programs there are also programs for parents in order to make them educationally aware of girls' education. But the government's attention has not been directed towards school distance. In remote areas, secondary schools are centred in the district headquarter. Children have to walk a long distance to reach, and they especially girls feel insecure walking a long way to school. The school timing has also affected the children coming from long distance. In summer schools run in the morning. Such timing does not make any difference in Terai areas. But it makes a difference in hilly regions where children usually have to walk to school on foot. Children of one of the schools in Ilam had to walk for 3 hours to reach the school and they had to start walking for school at 3:30 AM. It seemed that Ministry of Education's attention has not been directed towards this situation.

Female teachers are lacking in schools. The study showed that female teachers are more limited in lower secondary and secondary levels. There are also schools without female teacher. Even primary schools lack female teacher. In this context, there could be a question raised about government's policy of recruiting female teachers mandatorily at primary level. The system of priority to be given to the local teacher is also not that successful. This study showed that most of the teachers including the female teachers were from outside districts. As they used to disappear for long once they go home in vacation, the courses were not completed on time. One of the reasons for children's failure in examination was done to the questions asked from lessons not taught in the classroom. One of the all-time blames on female teachers that they spend their time in gossiping and knitting in school was again revived by this study. Although the female teachers were fulfilling their duty they were also engaged in such activities, which were disliked especially by the male head teachers. The female teachers' teaching technique was liked by the children of primary level. The children of higher levels preferred the teaching technique of males rather than that of female teachers. The reason may be that in comparison to males, female teachers were disadvantaged from receiving training. Priority was not given to the female teacher in providing the training as well as participating in different activities such as seminars and workshops. Those who had good approach with the DEO people and district level authorities were the beneficiaries. Since female teachers were less involved in politics, there was less chance to get such opportunity. This situation raises a question in making the female teachers efficient. But some positive things were also found in female teachers. They were liked by children especially girls. Girls were sharing their problems with them. Female teachers were known as cooperative, kind, friendly and understanding children's problems.

The number of female head teachers is limited to 8% in the country. Considering this situation the government, in SSRP, has proposed to give priority to females in the post of head teacher. The study showed that female head teachers are more concentrated at the primary level. It was difficult to get the upper level schools with female head teachers. One of the reasons was that female teachers were lacking in lower secondary and secondary levels. Since their academic qualification was low, they were appointed at the lower level of school. Another reason was that although they were qualified for the higher levels of school, due to the advertisement not made for those levels they were compelled to apply for the lower level in order to be permanent in the teaching post. So there is a need of regular advertisement for the teaching post at all levels of schooling. Moreover, there should be provision for the

in-service teachers for further study so that they will be eligible to apply for the higher levels. Although there is such provision, it is not functioning. The government needs to provide facilities to the teachers who are engaged in study. At present, the National Centre for Education Development (NCED) has arranged 30 working days management and leadership training for head teachers. Apart from this, management and leadership trainings are also required for senior teachers (including females) in order to make them capable after holding the post of head teacher. This needs to be made more practical and useful in enhancing quality. On the other side, community support is also required in the appointment and retention of female head teachers.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Findings of the Study

This chapter presents the outcomes of the review of government policies, plans and programs regarding girls' education, female teacher and female head teacher. Moreover, the present situation of girls' education, female teacher and female head teacher are also included in the findings. The major findings of the study are given below:

#### Gender Policy and Gaps

- There is a policy of recruiting at least one, two and more than three female teacher/s in each primary school with three, four to seven and more than seven teacher positions respectively. But the policy was found not being implemented in all schools. Some of the schools had either all female teachers or no female teachers.
- The policy says that girls are given priority in the distribution of scholarships. The field data showed that the number of girls receiving scholarship was found greater than boys. Girl's enrolment in secondary school was found high in Nawalparasi and Humla due to the of scholarship and the existence of feeder hostel.
- It is included in the policy that representation of women is mandatory in District/Village or Municipality Education Committees as well as in School Management Committees. The study showed that women were involved in SMC and PTA. But their number was limited to only one in most of the schools. As a result of this, gender-related agendas were found not included in the SMC and PTA meetings. SMCs were involving them just for formality. Since their representation was low, agendas related to gender were not included in the meetings.
- Although the needs of primary education facilities have been identified through school mapping exercise with a view to ensuring universal access to education, the schools are lacking basic physical facilities such as toilet and drinking water. The lack of physical facility has adversely affected girls in the regular attendance in school.
- It is stated that efforts have been made for increasing the number of female teachers and there will be competition among female candidates in the female teacher positions. However, this policy has not been instrumental in increasing the number of female teacher, especially at lower secondary and secondary levels.

#### Gender Friendliness in School

- Seat arrangement for the primary level and above were made differently. At primary level, girls and boys were seated mixing up together whereas there were separate columns in the classroom for girls and boys at higher levels. In some cases such arrangement was made by the school; and in other situations the children especially girls made such arrangement themselves. Classroom interaction between boys and girls was also good at primary level. But in higher grades interactions between girls and boys was found poor.

- Gender friendliness was observed in the enrolment of students. There was not that much of difference between the number of boys and girls in schools. Schools in Nawalparasi distributed uniforms free of cost for higher levels, which contributed in increasing girls' enrolment.
- The Welcome to School Program and the active participation of female teachers in this program, scholarship and incentive programs have played a major role in bridging the gap between girls' and boys' enrolment in schools.
- Children of primary level were found participating in sports and games without gender discrimination. However, in the case of secondary level, girls and boys hardly played together. Whenever they played together, the girls reported that boys always dominated them. So girls were not interested to play together with boys.
- Uniform did not create a problem for the girls of primary level. In the lower secondary and secondary schools where the girls' uniform was pant and shirt were taking part in sports.
- Female teachers were playing a significant role in school. Girls were found contacting female teachers at the time of menstruation for necessary support. Girls were found also contacting female teachers for necessary help when they were harassed by boys.

### **Gender Issues**

The following gender issues were identified in schools:

- There was discrepancy in the distribution of scholarship. The scholarship was concentrated on girls and boys were disadvantaged from receiving scholarship.
- There was difference between the teachers' behave with the children. There was discrimination made in giving corporal punishment to girls and boys. Boys got more corporal punishment than girls.
- Interaction between girls and boys lacked in schools. It was due to the lack of interaction between girls and boys that girls of higher levels rarely took part in games and sports. Uniforms of girls also kept them away from taking part in sports. In case of boys they were quite active in sports like football and volleyball.
- Physical facility especially toilet facility was lacking in most of the schools. Although toilet existed it was not in use due to lack of sanitation. Girls were affected more than boys due to lack of such facility. Girls were having problem especially during the menstruation time. Sometime they had to bunk classes while going for toilet at the community. This affected in their performance in school. Lack of proper fencing affected in girls' education in schools. Girls of higher levels were harassed and disturbed in their study by the outsiders in school.
- There is lack of female teachers at higher levels of school. So girls have not been able to tell their problems to the school authority.
- The separate seat arrangement in the classroom affected in the interaction between girls and boys. There was no such interaction between girls and boys

at the higher levels whereas in the case of primary level girls and boys discussed together in the classroom. It was also due to the seat arrangement (girls and boys together) that interaction could be arranged easily.

### **Status and Issues Related to Female Teachers**

- There was no such gender balance in the appointment of female teachers at higher levels of school. Female teachers were lacking at lower secondary and secondary levels. There was hardly one teacher in secondary and two teachers in lower secondary levels.
- Although the teachers especially females were qualified for higher levels, they were appointed for lower levels of school. It was due to the advertisement not being made for many years for the higher levels of school. In some cases their low academic qualification also did not allow them to get appointment in school's higher level.
- The provision of recruitment of female teachers has not been implemented in schools.
- The number of trained female teachers (10-month training, partial training and B. Ed.) was found lower to that of males. The number of male teachers having the basic training was higher to that of females. Within females the number of basic training recipient, was higher compared to females who have received the other training. Compared to the trained teachers (any kind of teacher training) the number of teachers who have not received any kind of training was high. The proportion of male and female untrained teacher was almost the same.
- Children especially girls felt the need of female teacher. Female teachers' need was felt as they used to deal nicely with children. They also used to give counseling to girls on different matters.

### **Status and Issues Related to Female Head Teachers**

- The number of female head teachers in primary schools was found relatively higher compared to the lower secondary and secondary schools. Due to the lack of female teachers teaching at higher levels, the number of head teachers was less in this level.
- Although female teachers were qualified they were not getting chance to be the head teacher. Those who got chance were not interested to be the head teacher. They thought that it is difficult to fulfill the responsibility of head teacher.
- Since the representation of women in SMC and PTA was low the female head teacher did not get support from the members especially on gender matters.
- Head teachers had a huge workload. They had to take several classes, see the management of school and attend meetings organized at DEO and outside district. For the female head teachers, fulfilling all the responsibilities was a tough job.
- There was positive impact of female head teachers on girls. Girl students and female teachers felt free to tell their problems to the female head teacher.



## CHAPTER IX

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### Conclusion

The government's policy on girls' education and female teacher is not implemented fully in schools. The inclusion of giving priority to women for head teacher in SSR Plan is a new step in the expansion of girls' education. The gender issues in school differ by school level. Gender issues exist more at higher levels (lower secondary and secondary) than at primary level. Children especially girls are affected by such gender issues in their learning. It is not only gender issues exist in school but gender-friendly environment are also found in school.

#### Recommendations

- The feeder hostel program so far being implemented in different districts need to be focused in remote areas of the country. In remote areas such as Humla where secondary school does not exist in villages and girls have to come to the headquarter for education they could be benefited from such program.
- The government under its infrastructure development program has identified girls' toilet, fencing in schools and sitting arrangements as gender issues and has tried to address those issues through different programs. However, there are schools where still special attention needs to be paid in improving the physical facilities of school. Under physical facilities special need to be paid on building toilets and providing water supply in schools so that girls could be retained in school during school hour especially during their menstruation period.
- The provision of scholarship should also include boys. Such a provision should be based on their intelligence and economic condition. Economic condition should be measured by using Proxy Mean Text (PMT). PMT is an instrument that possesses components such as house (brick, mud, stone, wood, etc.), toilet (cemented, temporary), house distance from road (black topped, muddy, etc.), number of girl children in school, parents (literate or any academic degree holder), etc. The economic condition could be measured based on Human Development Indicator (HDI) or Below Poverty-level Card (BPC). Opportunity cost or income generating program should be provided to the poor family students.
- For the increment of girls' participation in education awareness should be created at local and community levels especially in rural and remote areas of the country. Political people and workers should be mobilized for advocacy.
- Local government (VDC and DDC) should take responsibility for 100 percent girl's schooling.
- A policy of recruitment of female teachers as mandatory (as in primary level) in lower secondary and secondary levels should be formulated in order to ensure gender-friendly environment in school and support girls as and when necessary. Fifty percent seats for female teachers should be reserved.

- Priority should be given to local teachers in teacher appointment process in order to increase their regularity in school for quality improvement of teaching learning process.
- There should be provision of providing academic courses (Intermediate, Diploma) to the female teachers so that they would be eligible to be the teacher of higher levels in schools. This helps the primary school teachers to be promoted to the higher levels. Opportunity should be provided to the female teachers to upgrade their qualification at local level through open learning system.
- The training packages such as modular training package or teacher preparation course or 12 grade or B. Ed. Course should include gender components in it so that teachers will be aware of gender perspective. Moreover, training on how to make school gender friendly should also be provided to the teachers.
- The female head teachers should be made capable in fulfilling their responsibilities. The senior teachers especially females should have access to NCED's management and leadership training course. This will help in fulfilling the responsibility of head teacher once they take the responsibility of head teacher.
- There should be a social mapping of female teachers and female head teachers. This will help to find out the schools and areas with female teachers and head teachers and appointment could be made accordingly.
- The existing provision of the tenure of head teacher (that of 5 years) should be strictly followed in order to give opportunity of leadership to the other teachers as well. Moreover, a separate post for the head teacher could be created in order to make head teachers more responsible and powerful, and to provide more authority. In such case special priority should be given to the female teacher.
- Since the head teacher is over loaded with responsibilities there should be a provision of assistant head teacher in order to reduce the load of the head teacher. Female head teachers will be more benefited from such a provision.
- Reservation should be made for female head teacher. Out of the total schools in the district 33% seats should be allocated for female head teacher.
- The number of female representation in SMC and PTA should be increased so that the agendas related to girls/women could be put forward.

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## Appendices (1)

**Table: 1**

### Lists of schools selected for the study

S.N	Geographic Region	Development Region	Name District	Name of Schools and Address
1.	Mountain	Central	Rasuwa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shree Kakara Primary School, Dhaibunga VDC-2 Dharapani</li> <li>2. Shree Rastriya Lower Secondary School, Saphro-3</li> <li>3. Kalika Himalaya H. Secondary School, Dhaibunga VDC, Kalikasthan</li> </ol>
2	Hilly	Eastern	Ilam	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shree Pokhari Primary School, Golakharka</li> <li>2. Shree Siddheswori Lower Secondary School, Bakhote</li> <li>3. Bhagabati Secondary, Golakharka</li> </ol>
3	Hilly	Far Western	Doti	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Durga Primary School, Dipayal Silgadhi Municipality, Khairitola</li> <li>2. Shree Barahi Devi Lower Secondary, Baglekha</li> <li>3. Shree Padma Public Secondary, Dipayal silgadhi</li> </ol>
4	Mountain	Mid-Western	Humla	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bhimsen Primary School, Simikot, VDC</li> <li>2. Shree Balmandir Lower Secondary, Simikot</li> <li>3. Manasorobar Namuna H. Secondary School, Simikot</li> </ol>
5	Terai	Western	Nawalparasi	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shree Rastriya Primary School, Tribeni Susta</li> <li>2. Shree Janakalyan Lower Secondary, Kawasoti</li> <li>3. Shree Pawan H. Secondary School, Ramagram Municipality, Parasi-2</li> </ol>

**Table: 2**

**Student Enrolment**

District	School	Year	Enrolment by levels					
			5		8		10	
			B	G	B	G	B	G
Ilam	A*	2065						
		2064	11	9				
		2063	12	5				
	B	2065						
		2064	12	8	20	18		
		2063	10	9				
	C	2065						
		2064	11	16	33	49	34	46
		2063	21	25	51	60	39	35
Doti	A*	2065						
		2064	16	14				
		2063	15	18				
	B	2065						
		2064	11	2	8	3		
		2063	10	1	7	2		
	C	2065						
		2064	12	12	80	62	59	38
		2063	9	8	91	59	78	79
Humla	A*	2065	7	8				
		2064	5	11				
		2063	16	8				
	B*	2065	17	32				
		2064	10	15	12	11		
		2063	17	18				
	C	2065						
		2064			61	41	65	27
		2063			52	28	39	19
Nawalparasi	A	2065	39	39				
		2064	37	34				
		2063	45	45				
	B*	2059	19	17				

		2065	16	16	18	15		
		2064	13	14	18	15		
	C*	2063	14	16				
		2065	87	69	101	91	104	88
		2063	54	59	92	120	81	126

\* School led by female head teacher

**Table: III**

**Promotion in Examination**

District	School	Year	Grade	Pass Percent	
				Boys	Girls
Ilam	A	2064	5	70	100
		2063		50	100
	B	2064	5	100	100
		2063		100	100
		2064	8*		
		2063			
	C	2064	5	100	100
		2063		100	100
		2064	8	97	86
		2063		100	75
		2064	10	88	52
		2063		66	81
Doti	A	2064	5	69	64
		2063		69	100
	B	2064	5	100	100
		2063		80	100
		2064	8	100	100
		2063		100	100
	C	2064	5	100	100
		2063		100	100
		2064	8	93	89
		2063		71	94
		2064	10	91	89
		2063		51	44
Humla	A	2065	5	100	100
		2064	5	100	82
		2063		100	100
	B	2064	5	89	93
		2063		100	100
		2064	8	100	100
		2063	*		
		2062		100	100



	C	2064	8	100	100
		2063		100	100
		2064	10	95	100
		2063		87	79

### Promotion in Examination

District	School	Year	Grade	Pass Percent	
				Boys	Girls
Nawalparasi	A	2065	5	86	90
		2064		97	81
		2063	5	83	85
	B	2065		100	93
		2064		100	100
		2063		100	100
		2059**		100	100
		2065***	8	100	93
	C	2065	5	98	98
		2064		84	82
		2063		93	88
		2065	8	86	86
		2064		76	74
		2063		96	78
		2065	10	100	100
		2064		100	100
		2063		100	100

\* Class had not been running.

\*\* Record of one year before being female head teacher in Janakalyan Lower secondary School Kawasoti

\*\*\* Grade 8 has been only started from 2065 so there was found only data of 2065 of grade 8

**Table: IV**

**Rank of Students**

District	School	Year	Grade	Rank 1-10		Remarks	
				Boys	Girls		
Ilam	A*	2064	5	5	5		
		2063	5	5	5		
	B	2064	5	7	3		
		2063	5	7	3		
		2064	8*				
		2063	8*				
	C	2064	5	3	7		
		2063	5	3	7		
		2064	8	4	6		
		2063	8	2	8		
		2064	10	7	3		
		2063	10	3	7		
	Doti	A*	2064	5	5	5	
			2063	5	5	5	
		B	2064	5	8	2	
2063			5	8	2		
2064			8	8	2		
2063			8	3	3	Ranking only 1-6 in the year	
C		2064	5	6	4		
		2063	5	8	2		
		2064	8	7	3		
		2063	8	6	4		
		2064	10	5	5		
		2063	10	5	5		
Humla	A*	2064	5	5	5		
		2063	5	10			
	B*	2064	5	1	9		
		2063	5	3	7		
		2064	8	6	4		
		2063	8			No Ranking	
	C	2064	5				

		2063	5			
		2064	8	5	5	
		2063	8	9	1	
		2064	10	9	1	
		2063	10		8	2

### Rank of Students

District	School	Year	Grade	Rank 1-10	
				Boys	Girls
Nawalparasi	A	2065	5	4	6
		2064	5	8	2
		2063	5	5	5
	B*	2065	5	4	6
		2064	5	6	4
		2063	5	4	6
		2065	8	6	4
		2064	8*		
		2063	8*		
	C*	2065	5	5	5
		2064	5	7	3
		2063	5	4	6
		2065	8	4	6
		2064	8	7	3
		2063	8	5	5
		2065	10	6	4
		2064	10	6	4
		2063	10	7	3

\* School led by female head teacher

**Table: V**

**Qualification of Teachers (2)**

District	Schools	Qualification	Primary		L. Secondary		Secondary	
			M	F	M	F	M	F
Rasuwa	C	SLC	1	1				
		I.A.	4	2	1			
		B.A.	1	1		1	2	1
		M.A.				1	3	
		Total		6	4	1	2	5
Ilam	A	SLC		2				
		I.A.		2				
		B.A.		1				
	B	SLC			1			
		I.A.			4	1		
		B.A.			2			
	C	B.A./B.Ed						
		M.A./M. Ed	4	1				
		Total		4	6	7	1	-
	Doti	A	SLC		3			
I.A.			2					
B		SLC	2					
		I.A.			2	3		
C		B.A.					4	-
		M.A.						1
Total		4	3	2	3	4	1	
Humla	A	SLC		2				
		I.A.	1	4				
	B	I.A.			2	2		
		B.A.			1			
	C	B.A.					3	
		M.A.					3	-
Total		1	6	3	2	6		
Nawalparasi	A	SLC	1	1				
		I.A.	3	1				
		B.A.				2		

	B	SLC			3			
		I.A.			3	2		
		B.A.			1	2		
	C	B.A.					3	1
		M.A.						1
	Total		4	1	7	6	3	2

### Teachers and Training

District	Name of School	Total no. of Teachers	Trained		Untrained	
			Male	Female	Male	Female
Rasuwa	Kakaradevi Primary School	5	2+1*			2
	Nepal Rastriya Lower S.S.	8	2+1*	1	2	2
	Himalaya Higher Secondary School, Kalikasthan	5	2+2*	1		
Ilam	Pokhari Primary School, Golakharka	5		4+1**		
	Shidheswori Lower Secondary School, Barbote	8	7	1		
	Bhagawati Secondary School, Ilam Municipality	5	5**			
Doti	Durga Primary School, Dipayal-Silgadhi Municipality	5	2	1	1	1
	Barahidevi Lower Secondary School, Bagalekh	8	2	3	3	
	Padma Public Secondary School, Dipayal-Silgadhi Municipality	5	4	1		
Humla	Bhimsen Primary School, Simkot	7	2	3		2
	Balmandir Lower Secondary School, Simkot	5	2	1	1	1
	Mansarobar Secondary School, Simkot	6	4**		2	
Nawalpa-rasi	Rastriya Primary School, Tribeni, Susta	8	3+1*	2**	1	1
	Janakalyan Proposed Secondary School, Kawasoti	11	1	1	3	6
	Pawan Higher Secondary School, Ramgram Municipality, Parasi	5	3	2		
	Total	96	46	22	13	15
			68		28	

\*= Partial training

\*\*= B.Ed.

**Table: VII**

**Head Teachers' Description**

District	Name of School	Head teacher (M/F)	Qualification	Subject Taught	Training	No. of Teachers		Teaching Experience in years.
						Male	Female	
Rasuwa	1. Kakara Primary school	Male	S.L.C	Nepali+ Maths	10 month in-service	P:4	P:No	22
	2. Nepal Rastriya Lower Secondary School	Female	B.Ed	Nepali	10 month in-service	N.A	N.A	3
	3. Kalika Himalaya Higher Secondary School	Male	M.A/B.Ed	English		P-LS: 7	P-S:4	N.A
Illam	1.Pokhari Primary School	Female	B.Ed	Maths	B. Ed	No	P-5	15
	2. Siddheshwori Lower Secondary School	Male	I.A	Social Studies	10 month in-service	P-LS:7	P-LS:1	25
	3. Bhagabati Secondary School	Male	M.A/B. Ed	Nepali History	B. Ed	S: 4	S:1	28
Doti	1. Durga Primary School	Female	S.L.C	Environment	Head teacher's training	P:2	P:3	17
	2. Barahi Lower Secondary School	Male	I.A	Social Studies	10 month in-service	P: 2 L.S: 2	P: No L.S:3	15
	3. Shree Padma	Male	B.Ed	English	10 month	S: 4	S: 1	35

	Public Secondary School				in-service			
Humla	1 Bhimsen Primary School	Male	I.Ed	All subjects	10 month in-service Managem nt training organized by REED and 9- days gender train g	P: 1	P: 6	16
	2. Bal Mandir Lower Secondary	Female	I.A	Social Studies	No	L.S: 3	L.S: 2	18
	3. Manasarobar Higher Secondary School	Male	M.A/B.Ed	Social Studies.	B.Ed	S: 6	S: No	10
Nawalparasi	1. Shree Rastriya Primary School	Male	I.A	Maths	10 month in-service	P:4	P:2	26
	2. Shree Jana Kalyan Lower Secondary School	Female	B.Ed	Social Studies	10 month in-service	L.S: 7	L.S: 4	10
	3. Pawan Higher Secondary School	Female	M.A/B.Ed	Nepali	10 month in-service	S: 3	S:2	23

P = Primary

L. S. = Lower Secondary

S = Secondar

