

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON LOCAL CURRICULUM OF NEPAL:  
A NARRATIVE INQUIRY

Shiva Prasad Aryal

A Dissertation

Submitted to  
School of Education

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of  
Master of Philosophy in Education Leadership

Kathmandu University  
Dhulikhel, Nepal

January 2026

## AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Shiva Prasad Aryal* for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in Educational Leadership*, presented on *26 January 2026*, entitled *Teachers' Perception on Local Curriculum of Nepal: A Narrative Inquiry*.

## APPROVED BY

.....  
Prof. Dhanapati Subedi, PhD

Dissertation Supervisor

This qualitative study explored the teachers' perceptions and classroom practices of the local curriculum in Tarakeshwar Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal. It was conducted by using narrative inquiry, in which in-depth interviews and classroom observations of four teachers from community and private schools, incorporating both local and non-local teachers, were conducted. This study was done with the aim of understanding how the local curriculum is interpreted and enacted in real classroom contexts and how teachers' background and local knowledge affect the understanding and practice of the local curriculum.

The findings of the study revealed that teachers perceived local curriculum as a powerful means for cultural awakening, preserving culture and local heritages, traditions, and expanding community knowledge. The study demonstrated that local curriculum strongly aligns with place-based education and constructivist learning theories, as teachers frequently employed experiential learning strategies such as storytelling, field visits, exhibitions, mapping activities, and community engagement practices. These activities enabled students to connect their classroom learning with lived experiences and supported them in fostering meaningful and authentic learning.

This study further revealed that teachers are not only implementors of curriculum, but they are active interpreters and a major part of curriculum construction. Local teachers can contribute historical depth and cultural authenticity, while non-local teachers utilize the curriculum as a bridge for adapting to a new

environment and being familiar with various aspects of the society. Despite the strong pedagogical potential of the local curriculum, the study identified some challenges like lack of participatory curriculum development, insufficient teachers' orientation and training, unclear assessment frameworks, etc.

The study concluded that local curriculum related policy in Nepal has the aim of democratizing education and honoring local knowledge, but its effectiveness depends fully on stakeholders' participation, institutional support, professional training, and accurate as well as inclusive content. The findings suggested some important implications for teachers, local education authorities, and future researchers, emphasizing the need to strengthen decentralized curriculum practices to ensure culturally responsive and sustainable education.

.....

26 January 2026

Shiva Prasad Aryal

Degree Candidate

## शोध सार

शैक्षिक नेतृत्वमा दर्शनशास्त्रको स्नातकोत्तर उपाधिका लागि शिव प्रसाद अर्यालको शोधप्रबन्धको शीर्षक “नेपालको स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रमप्रति शिक्षकहरूको धारणा: एक संकथन” १२ माघ २०८२ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो ।

.....  
प्रा. धनपती सुबेदी, पीएचडी  
शोध निर्देशक

यो अध्ययन नेपालको स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रम प्रति शिक्षकहरूको धारणा पत्ता लगाउन सञ्चालन गरिएको एक गुणात्मक अध्ययन हो । यस अध्ययनले काठमाडौं जिल्ला अन्तर्गत तारकेश्वर नगरपालिका क्षेत्रमा लागु गरिएको स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रम सम्बन्धमा शिक्षकहरूको दृष्टिकोण र कक्षाकोठा भित्र यस पाठ्यक्रम लागु गर्न गरिएका अभ्यासहरू समेट्ने प्रयास गरेको छ । यस अध्ययन अगाडि बढाउँदा संकथन (Narrative Inquiry) को प्रयोग गरिएको छ । यस अध्ययन सामुदायिक र निजि विद्यालयका साथै स्थानीय भुगोल र गैरस्थानीय भुगोलका जम्मा चार जना शिक्षकहरूसँग गहिरो अन्तर्वाता र कक्षाकोठा अवलोकन गरी सम्पन्न गरिएको हो । यस अध्ययनको मुख्य उद्देश्य स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रमलाई विषय शिक्षकहरूले कसरी बुझेका छन् तथा यस पाठ्यक्रमको कार्यान्वयन कसरी भइरहेको छ बुझ्नु र शिक्षकहरूको पृष्ठभूमि र स्थानीय ज्ञानले यस पाठ्यक्रमको बुझाई र अभ्यासमा कसरी प्रभाव पार्छ भन्ने कुरा पहिचान गर्नु हो ।

यस अध्ययनको क्रममा शिक्षकहरूले स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रमलाई सांस्कृतिक चेतना अभिवृद्धि गर्ने, स्थानीय साँस्कृतिक सम्पदा र परम्पराको संरक्षण गर्ने र समुदायको ज्ञान विस्तार गर्ने महत्वपूर्ण माध्यमका रूपमा बुझेको तथा ग्रहण गरेको पाइयो । अध्ययनले स्थान-आधारित शिक्षा सिद्धान्त (Place-based Education Theory) र निर्माणवादी सिद्धान्त (Constructivist Theory) सँग स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रम मेल खाने कुरा स्पष्ट पारेको छ र स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रम अध्यापन गर्दा शिक्षकहरूले कथा सुनाउने, क्षेत्र भ्रमण गराउने, प्रदर्शनी गर्ने, नक्सा देखाउने गतिविधि तथा समुदायमा संलग्नता गराउने जस्ता अनुभव मुलक सिकाई क्रियाकलापहरू बारम्बार प्रयोग गरेको पाइयो । यस्ता गतिविधिहरूले विद्यार्थीहरूलाई कक्षाकोठामा सिकेका ज्ञानलाई उनिहरूको जीवन अनुभवसँग जोड्न सहयोग पुऱ्याएको र अर्थपूर्ण सिकाईलाई प्रवर्द्धन गरेको पाइयो ।

यस अध्ययनले शिक्षकहरू पाठ्यक्रमका केवल कार्यान्वयनकर्ता मात्र नभई सक्रिय व्याख्याता र पाठ्यक्रम निर्माणका महत्वपूर्ण अंग समेत हुन् भन्ने कुरा उजागर गरेको छ । अध्ययनले स्थानीय शिक्षकहरूले पाठ्यक्रममा ऐतिहासिक सच्चाई र साँस्कृतिक यथार्थता प्रदान गर्न सक्छन् भन्ने गैरस्थानीय

शिक्षकहरुले नयाँ वातावरणमा घुलमिल हुन र समाजका विभिन्न पक्षहरूसँग परिचित हुन स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रमलाई प्रभावकारी माध्यमका रूपमा प्रयोग गर्न सक्ने देखाएको छ । स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रमको ठूलो शैक्षिक सम्भावना रहँदा रहँदै पनि यस अध्ययनले सहभागितामुलक पाठ्यक्रम विकासको अभाव, शिक्षक अभिमुखिकरण तथा तालिमको कमि, मुल्याङ्कन ढाँचाको अस्पष्टता जस्ता केही चुनौति पहिचान गरेको छ ।

यस अध्ययनले नेपालमा स्थानीय पाठ्यक्रम सम्बन्धि नितिको उद्देश्य शिक्षामा पहुँच विस्तार गर्ने, स्थानीय ज्ञानलाई सम्मान गर्ने भएता पनि यसको प्रभावकारीता सरोकारवालाहरुको सक्रिय सहभागिता, संस्थागत सहयोग, व्यावसायिक तालिम तथा प्रभावकारी र समावेशी सामग्रीमा पूर्ण रूपमा निर्भर रहने निष्कर्ष निकालेको छ । अध्ययनले शिक्षकहरु, स्थानीय स्तरको शिक्षा निकाय तथा भावी अनुसन्धानकर्ताहरुको लागि महत्वपूर्ण ढङ्गले दिशाबोध गराएको छ भने विद्यार्थीहरुलाई सांस्कृतिक रूपमा उत्तरदायी बनाउन र दिगो शिक्षा सुनिश्चित गर्न विकेन्द्रित पाठ्यक्रम अभ्यासलाई सुदृढ गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकतामा जोड दिएको छ ।

.....

शिव प्रसाद अर्याल  
उपाधि उम्मेदवार

१२ माघ २०८२

This dissertation, entitled *Teachers' Perception on Local Curriculum of Nepal: A Narrative Inquiry*, was presented by *Shiva Prasad Aryal* on 26 January 2026.

APPROVED BY

..... 26 January 2026  
Prof. Dhanapati Subedi, PhD  
Dissertation Supervisor

  
..... 26 January 2026  
Anshu Mathur, PhD  
External Examiner

..... 26 January 2026  
Asst. Prof. Rebat Kumar Dhakal, PhD  
Head of Department, Educational Leadership

..... 26 January 2026  
Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD  
Dean/Chair of Research Committee

I understand that my dissertation will become a part of the permanent collection of the library of Kathmandu University. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

..... 26 January 2026  
Shiva Prasad Aryal  
Degree Candidate

© Copyright by Shiva Prasad Aryal

2026

All rights reserved.

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for the candidature of any other degree.

.....

Shiva Prasad Aryal

Degree Candidate

26 January 2026

## DEDICATION

This work is profoundly dedicated to my facilitators of Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED), my family (spouse, father, mother, brother, and daughters), my School, Kaushal English Boarding School, Tarakeshwor-08, Manamaiju, Kathmandu, friends, my research participants, and their schools, who have been part of my life, to whom I am always indebted. It is because of their effort and support that I was able to complete my MPhil Degree.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who have given their input in bringing this research to life. I sincerely acknowledge the generous contribution of every individual who supported me, front and back of the scene. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dhanapati Subedi, PhD, Education Leadership, Kathmandu University. I am grateful for the extraordinary experiences he arranged for me and for the opportunity to grow academically and professionally. His encouraging words and thoughtful feedback have been very important to me.

I would like to recognize my respected course facilitators, Assoc. Prof. Shesha Kanta Pangeni, PhD, Assoc. Dean; Asst. Prof. Rebat Kumar Dhakal, PhD, Head of Department; Asst. Prof. Basu Prasad Subedi, PhD; Rajkumar Dhungana, PhD, and Hari Lamsal, PhD, for their insightful sharing and meaningful feedback.

Similarly, I express my deep gratitude to senior pioneer facilitator Prof. Mana Prasad Wagle, PhD, for his thoughtful guidance throughout my research journey. My sincere gratitude goes out to Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD, Dean, School of Education, and all other School of Education's cooperative administrative staff for their supportive hands. I express my gratitude to Narayan Shrestha and Noor Jung Shah for the language editing and APA formatting of this dissertation.

I will never forget my research participants for their honest help and for taking the time to participate in my research and make this dissertation possible. I am thankful to my beloved wife, Prativa Kattel, my respected father, Govinda Prasad Aryal, mother, Dhana Maya Aryal, brother, Saroj Aryal, sister-in-Law, Iswari Sharma Gautam Aryal, daughter, Shreenika Aryal, niece, Saanvi Aryal, and niece, Shivansi Aryal for their cooperation and support wherever and whatever was required during the research journey.

Lastly, I sincerely thank my friends and my school family for their direct/indirect support and never-ending inspiration. On my own, I would not have ended up here. I owe a lot to all of you for the person I am now.

Shiva Prasad Aryal  
Degree Candidate

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	ii
ABBREVIATIONS .....	v
LIST OF FIGURES .....	vi
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Background .....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	4
Research Question.....	4
Rationale of the Study .....	4
Delimitation of the Study .....	5
CHAPTER II.....	6
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	6
Conceptualizing Local Curriculum .....	6
Localization of Curriculum vs Local Curriculum .....	7
Empirical Review .....	8
Policy Related Review .....	9
Review of Theoretical Referents.....	11
Place-Based Education Theory .....	11
Constructivism .....	12
Research Gap .....	13
Thematic Gap .....	13
Empirical Gap .....	13
Policy Gap .....	13
Theoretical Gap .....	13
CHAPTER III .....	15
METHODOLOGY .....	15
Philosophical Foundations of the Study.....	15
My Research Approach.....	17
Selection of Study Sites and Participants.....	17

Profile of the Study Participants .....	18
Sunita.....	18
Prativa.....	18
Baburam .....	18
Krishna .....	19
Process and Means of Information Collection .....	19
Data Organization, Analysis, and Meaning Making.....	20
Quality Standards .....	21
Temporality .....	21
Sociality.....	22
Spatiality.....	22
Reflexivity.....	22
Ethical Considerations .....	23
CHAPTER IV .....	25
TEACHERS' INTERPRETATION OF LOCAL CURRICULUM .....	25
Understanding Local Curriculum: The Perspective of Sunita .....	25
Sunita's Classroom Practice, Observation Insights .....	29
Prativa's Interpretation of Local Curriculum.....	31
Observation of Prativa's Classroom Approach.....	34
Baburam's Understanding of Local Curriculum: A Local Teacher's Voice .....	36
Baburam's Classroom Practice of the Local Curriculum .....	41
Exploring the Interpretation of Krishna about the Local Curriculum.....	42
Classroom Teaching Observation of Krishna .....	45
My Impressions.....	47
CHAPTER V .....	49
THEMATIC INTERPRETATION OF PARTICIPANTS' NARRATIVES AND	
DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS .....	49
Local Curriculum as a Cultural Awakening for the New Generation.....	49
Local Curriculum Practices to Increase Children's Cultural Consciousness.....	50
Local Curriculum as Experiential Learning Rooted in Community.....	51
Local Curriculum Practice as Community-Based Learning .....	51
Local Curriculum as a Protector of History and Culture .....	52
Local Curriculum Practices as the Means to Fill Gaps Using Local Knowledge...53	
Local Curriculum as a Bridge for Belonging and Adaptation .....	54

Local Curriculum Practice as an Inclusive Approach for Cultural Understanding	54
Discussion .....	56
Local Curriculum as Place-Based Education and Cultural Education.....	56
Teachers as Interpreters of Curriculum.....	57
Experiential Learning in Local Curriculum .....	58
Lacking a Participatory Approach, Gap in Policy and Practice .....	59
Local and Non-Local Teachers' Perspective of Local Curriculum .....	60
CHAPTER VI.....	62
KEY INSIGHTS, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATION.....	62
Key Insights of the Study .....	62
Local Curriculum as a Tool for Preservation of Culture and Identity Formation	
.....	62
Teachers as Active Curriculum Designers and Mediators .....	62
Experiential and Place-Based Pedagogical Practices .....	63
Conclusion .....	63
Implications of the Study .....	64
Implications for the Teachers .....	64
Implication for the Local Authority or Education Section.....	65
Implications for Future Researchers.....	65
Reflection .....	65
REFERENCES .....	67
APPENDICES .....	72
Interview Guideline for Teachers.....	72
Observation Performa .....	74
Interview Transcription.....	76

## ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Anno Domini
BS	Bikram Sambat
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
CEHRD	Centre for Education and Human Resource Development
KU	Kathmandu University
KUSOED	Kathmandu University School of Education
LC	Local Curriculum

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Classroom Observation .....	31
Figure 2 Flashcards Displaying .....	36
Figure 3 Teacher Using Flashcards.....	42
Figure 4 Classroom Observation of Krishna .....	45

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The concept of local curriculum was materialized after the implementation of the primary education curriculum in 1992. So, the idea of educating children about local needs is not new in Nepal. But it was not dense in the past, and the local curriculum was densely implemented only after the execution of the constitution of Nepal 2015. It has become new for students and teachers as well. Due to this reason, I am interested in exploring the teachers' perception and practice of the prevailing local curriculum. This chapter basically highlights and connects the relationship of the researcher with the research topic. It discloses the problem existing in the related field and mentions the specific problem to be addressed. It covers the importance and delimitation of the study, too.

### **Background**

The curriculum in education system is the major guideline to run the learning process in the right way. It is academic content to be taught in schools or educational institutions. Curriculum is an important component or backbone of the formal education system, which consists of a proper set of plans for achieving the overall objectives of the education system of a nation (Gurung & Parajuli, 2021). It does not remain the same and keeps on changing with the change in time, situation, political system, technology, etc. in the country.

As a person involved in the education sector for eighteen years, I have closely noticed curriculum amendments from time to time and implemented the governmental decision of introducing the integrated curriculum and local curriculum in the school. It was the month of March 2018, the education section of Tarakeshwar Municipality, Kathmandu, informed us about the development and implementation of the local curriculum from the academic session 2019 at the basic level of the schools. So, we have implemented the local curriculum at our school from the same year, and now in the public and private schools of Tarakeshwar Municipality, Kathmandu, the local curriculum has been implemented in all the classes of basic level. It was initially constructed and implemented in the year 2019 in grades one and six. It was developed and implemented in grade two, four, and seven in the year 2020, and it was made for grade three, five, and eight in the year 2021 and implemented. I have observed the

local curriculum while teaching inside the classroom and noticed the difficulties faced by teachers while implementing it. I have heard various discussions among the teachers and concerned authorities about the weaknesses and the necessity of its amendment. So, in such a situation, this study focuses on seeking the understanding of teachers on the local curriculum and finding the teachers' experiences regarding its implementation and support for making it more effective.

Though there is a long history of local curriculum implementation, related plan and policy, it has been effectively practiced after the declaration of the Constitution of Nepal in 2015. Since the constitution has provisioned to have federalism and allocated various education related role to be played by local level educational authorities, on this basis, local authorities have worked on the local curriculum and implemented it in the schools of different local bodies. After introducing the local curriculum, it has become very helpful to provide information on local culture, language, technology, knowledge, etc. At the same time, it is very essential to assess the teachers' experience regarding the local curriculum and situation of incorporating the view of every stakeholder in curriculum construction. In Nepal, the provision of local curriculum was limited in policy only, which was not implemented, and English language arts were replacing the local curriculum at the beginning (Subedi, 2018). After making the implementation of local curriculum mandatory in policy too, the priority of schools and local authorities was to focus on English. So, there is a huge gap between policy intention and the practice of local curriculum. Various policy documents with the provision of local curriculum have been formulated, but there is a lack of implementation in some areas, and the implementation is done in some areas without a clear vision, proper planning, and understanding of the concerned stakeholders. In principle, local curriculum uses available local resources around the community as the major source in designing and executing the local curriculum, and there needs to be a curriculum supervisory system, and initiation of curriculum construction has to be taken by teachers and head teachers (Subedi, 2020). In our context, it has not been done.

As per my understanding, involvement of every stakeholder and incorporation of basic aspects like local language, skill, culture, etc. in local curriculum is the most lacking in Nepalese practices. So, this study is significant to explore the stakeholders' understanding and experience of its practice, particularly of teachers, regarding the local curriculum implementation in Nepal.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The provision of the local curriculum in policy has been done with the aim of forwarding the teaching and learning process in an effective way. Local curriculum generally includes either local language, skill, or other matters that need to be sustained in a certain locality, but in the Nepalese context, local curriculum neither includes local language, skill, nor locality-based knowledge nor the mother tongue (Adhikari, 2020). A study by Sharma et al. (2019) concludes that the local curriculum in Nepal has focused on text or theoretical stance rather than on coordination with local level curriculum agencies. They further clarify that local agencies are given authority to formulate the local course with guidance, which is a more traditional way of learning. The development of the local curriculum has not been done and implemented as per the intention of the national curriculum framework, and discussion among stakeholders, experts, and local level authority has not been organized for its construction (Gurung & Parajuli, 2021).

There is a gap in the understanding of the local curriculum among the teachers; for example, some take it as another national level curriculum, and some who have been involved in its development take it differently. Local curriculum offers equal opportunities and rights to all groups of people to voice their needs, opinions, and local people have the right to take part in decision making regarding curriculum development (Sahasewiyon, 2004). Moreover, the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) has developed some supportive documents and policies, like the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2019, Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines, 2019, etc. So as to facilitate the development of the local curriculum.

However, in the Nepalese context, the local curriculum has not been developed covering all those steps, and it has not met the needs of the present situation. Subedi (2020) states that the focus of local curriculum in empowering teachers and providing autonomy through decentralization of curriculum has failed in Nepal due to the lack of policy implementation and neglecting the teacher's role in its construction. So, the implementation has several challenges. Being the head teacher in a school located in the local body where the local curriculum has been implemented, I have closely noticed the problems faced by the teachers, such as a lack of proper teacher guides to make classes effective, a lack of teacher training regarding the implementation of the local curriculum, a lack of alternatives for outsiders, etc. At this

juncture, several questions arise: Are teachers (who are the actual implementers) involved or consulted in the local curriculum construction process? Are they familiar with the ethos of the local curriculum? How are teachers implementing the local curriculum? These questions need careful scrutiny.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of teachers on the local curriculum. More specifically, this study seeks to assess teachers' understanding and experience with the implementation of the local curriculum.

### **Research Question**

This study focused on answering the following question.

1. How do basic-level teachers of Tarakeshwar Municipality narrate their understanding and practice of the local curriculum?

### **Rationale of the Study**

Providing information on local language, culture, and local knowledge to the people of any location in the present context is the most important. Putting the very fact into consideration, the CDC has developed the provision of constructing a local curriculum incorporating local matters like language, art, culture, skills, and so on through the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2019. Local level authority of education, i.e., the education section of the local government, has developed the local curriculum and asked for its implementation in the schools in different locations. The activities, such as collecting the views of teachers regarding the local curriculum, incorporating the ideas of teachers in curriculum construction, and periodic assessment of it after the implementation, are hardly done. So, there is great importance in studying the teachers' perception of the local curriculum for supporting its amendment.

Being the one engaged in the education sector, I felt the necessity of conducting this study by myself because, on the one hand, it helps me gather the information on the issues raised by subject teachers, and on the other hand, I get the opportunity to have a deeper understanding of the local curriculum. This study enables me to take part in discussions regarding the local curriculum development and implementation, and assist in making it more effective through the amendment process. I strongly believe that forwarding this study gives benefits to a large number of students, teachers, and other concerned individuals.

This study first collects the views and experiences from teachers and tries to provide some constructive suggestions to the concerned authority in making the local curriculum even better through the amendment process. This study is important for those local authorities which are in the process of making a local curriculum. It provides information on teachers' expectations regarding the local curriculum and guides to make a more effective curriculum.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

My study is delimited to draw the understanding of the local curriculum and the experiences of teachers who are teaching the local curriculum after its implementation in their respective schools. It draws the information from the basic level teachers of selected schools only and excludes other facets of local curriculum implementation, and solely focuses on teachers' perception, understanding, and classroom level experiences after the implementation of the local curriculum.

The theoretical base of the study is limited to place-based education theory, which explains the relevance of local context, culture, and community in the local curriculum, and constructivist theory, which helps to understand how teachers perceive learning as an active process in classroom practice. The application of these theories is limited to interpreting teachers' perception and classroom level experiences and does not cover policy analysis and students' learning outcomes.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes some literature reviews related to my study. I articulate the major themes, such as teachers' perception and local curriculum, in the first part. The chapter further covers empirical review, policy review, and review of theoretical referent. My literature review section is also followed by the research gap.

#### **Conceptualizing Local Curriculum**

During the process of reviewing the literature, the phrase teachers' perception is taken as the thought or understanding of the teacher toward a particular matter. It's difficult to find a widely accepted definition of teachers' perception. In common, teachers' perception is the process of getting awareness or understanding of sensorial information by a person who imparts education and provides learning experiences to the students (Singhal, 2012). Singhal further takes teachers' perception as the outcome of their experiences, expectations, competencies, and the real problems that they have faced. According to Konokman et al. (2018), teachers' perceptions differ according to their gender, experience, level, and faculty of their graduation. Putting the aforementioned views into consideration, teachers' perception is taken as the images formed in the mind of teachers according to their background knowledge, life experiences, family history, education, culture, and so on.

Local Curriculum is the set of planned contents which includes local language, art and craft, locality-based knowledge, day-to-day life running skills, etc. Local curriculum is the curriculum that is designed according to the needs of local people, and that covers local science-based knowledge, local heritages, local autonomy, and decentralization of curriculum (Gurung & Parajuli, 2021). In my understanding, the local curriculum is related to the local context. It is pertinent to the daily lives of the people, based on the local knowledge, and it deals with people's problems and needs of local communities (Sahasewiyon, 2004). Local curriculum includes locally practiced language, skills of local people, and the matters that exist in local areas (Adhikari, 2020). A local curriculum is a decentralized form of education. It is mostly developed for providing information on the local scenario and promoting knowledge of people living in a particular location on matters of local importance and practices. Local curriculum can also be called school-based curriculum, decentralized

curriculum, and localized curriculum, etc., which incorporates local need-based education (Subedi, 2018). Local curriculum is generally constructed by the schools and local governments as a means of developing the regional characteristics filled with learning activities that provide insight to the students about the local culture and regional characteristics (Andrian et al., 2018). So, local curriculum is the detailed plan of instruction set by local authorities like schools, School Management Committees (SMCs), teachers, students, etc., incorporating the local content, knowledge, skills, language, art, etc., in order to ease the study for pupils of different types of society.

Based on all the above facts, I understood clearly that teachers' perception means their views regarding the local curriculum. It includes their perception of objectives, course contents, evaluation criteria, and so on. The teachers' views on curriculum are important from the learning perspectives of students. In Nepal, the local curriculum is introduced at the basic level to make the students know about local culture, arts, language, local technology, climate, geographical features, and overall socio-economic activities of the locality.

### **Localization of Curriculum vs Local Curriculum**

Localization of the curriculum is the adaptation of the nationally prescribed curriculum. Curriculum Development Center (CDC) makes and prescribes schools to use it by contextualizing its content, examples, teaching strategies, and learning activities to suit local contexts without altering its real objectives and structures. According to Nataño (2023), this approach allows for the integration of local knowledge and specific-context learning examples during the implementation of the curriculum, which can improve student engagement and the relevance of learning. Whereas, local curriculum is a decentralized and autonomous practice to develop curriculum by local authorities such as municipalities, rural municipalities, schools, and teachers with the purpose of providing the space to local needs, knowledge systems, culture, language, skills, and experiences of the community people in the curriculum. The localization of curriculum emphasizes contextual adjustment within a centralized curriculum, but the local curriculum represents a distinct curricular space that aims to promote local ownership and participation of stakeholders. Local curriculum promotes cultural preservation and empowers teachers and communities to create learning experiences that reflect local realities (Subedi, 2020).

However, in the Nepalese context, local curriculum practices often try to be guided more by the localization of the national curriculum rather than the effective

construction of curriculum autonomously, which has created confusion among teachers regarding its purpose and scope, making its implementation difficult. This distinct practice has limited the effective realization of local curriculum as intended in policy and literature, particularly in terms of decentralization of curriculum, empowerment of teachers, and proper incorporation of local knowledge. Such problems highlight the need for such policies that can enable meaningful local curriculum development by maintaining the balance with national standards, by promoting decentralization and teacher empowerment (Zhao, 2024).

### **Empirical Review**

Gibson and Brooks (2012) conducted an interpretive case study on teachers' perspectives on a locally planned professional development program for implementing a new curriculum to uncover challenges and successes of implementing the new curriculum. In their study, they found that a more intentional focus from teachers is needed for the construction and effective execution of a new curriculum. Teachers' professional development is a very important factor for the effective practice of a new curriculum at the classroom level (Gibson & Brooks, 2012). Similarly, Skinnari and Nikula (2017) also conducted a study on teachers' perceptions of the changing role of language in the curriculum, where they found that multilingualism is beneficial for the study of students. In their study, they found that introducing multilingualism means supporting the local curriculum. Though there is diversity in students' languages, its impact on teaching practices has been given less attention (Skinnari & Nikula, 2017). In a study of an ethnographic approach conducted by Tronsmo and Nerland (2018), they found that teachers are the crucial elements of curriculum construction, and curriculum construction is a regular ongoing process that provides essential space and resources to the teachers for collective responsibility of making a local plan and activity in regard to curriculum development. There is a target of implementing local curriculum in basic level of schools to make the curriculum richer in local matters and strengthen the capacity of local communities by fostering and promoting context-based information on social diversity.

An exploratory study on local curriculum in primary schools in Nepal was conducted by collecting the information through interviews and focus group discussions by Subedi (2018), where he found that the mandatory provision of local curriculum has been limited to policy only so far, as the different schools are not

using it, and implementation has not been effective due to the lack of supervision and monitoring mechanisms. So, there is a significant gap between plan intention and implementation. Local curriculum implementation supports having context-based knowledge, and all localities are well aware of global happenings. So, it includes overall information on the global context too (Sharma et al., 2019). Local curriculum supports promoting and globalizing local resources and content.

A research study was done by Raut (2025) to identify the problems and challenges of local curriculum design and implementation in Nepal, where he found that the lack of institutional mechanism, unavailability of competent and skilled human resources in local bodies, lack of information among parents and stakeholders, lack of trained teachers etc. are the existing challenges for designing local curriculum which has created dilemma in practicing local curriculum.

From the above discussion about the literature review done in my interest area of study, I understood that there are no clear findings drawn regarding the perception of teachers on local curriculum development and its implementation. It has been implemented quite densely only after declaring a federal system and providing the right to local government. In my understanding, narratives from the teachers after implementing the local curriculum a bit densely in Nepal have not been collected. So, this study addresses the gap and provides information on the effectiveness of local curriculum in the eyes of subject teachers.

### **Policy Related Review**

As Nepal has been restructured and the authority of education has been given to the local level to some extent by the Constitution of Nepal 2015. It has incorporated the provision of the right to get basic education in the mother tongue. On its ground, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2019 has been published with the provision of forming and implementing the local curriculum from grade one to grade eight, i.e., basic level, by local authorities (Curriculum Development Center [CDC], 2019). There is a clear idea about content to be covered, such as local language, local knowledge, skill, art, culture, and local technology. There is a mandatory provision for its implementation. However, the concerned are not provided with sufficient awareness about curriculum policies and arrangement of training during curriculum framing, and to the teachers, implementation has not been done. So, the problem has been raised in implementation.

National Education Policy 2019 has also included the provision of educating children of every community through any of the means (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology [MoEST], 2019). It has opened the way to develop study material in the local language, incorporating local literature, culture, etc. But there is a chance of creating problems for children of other languages and sources to develop local material (MoEST, 2019).

The Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD) has published the Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines-2019 in order to help in developing local curriculum. There needs to be coverage of local necessities, local content, and local participation and expertise in the curriculum for being the local curriculum (Center for Education and Human Resource Development [CEHRD], 2019). Local curriculum has to address the local needs through academic means.

The School Education Sector Plan (SESP) 2022/23-2031/32 also includes some of the strategies related to the local curriculum. It has incorporated the strategy of streamlining the monitoring and feedback activity at the local levels by developing structures necessary for the development and implementation of local curriculum, and has advocated for strengthening the local level for the development and use of reading materials in mother tongues (MoEST, 2022). In such a way, our education-related policies have supported and granted the right to develop local curriculum and implement it in school education.

From the discussion above, it is clear that Nepal has formally made a strong legal and institutional foundation for local curriculum development. However, the effectiveness of these policies hugely depends on how the local government, schools, and teachers are prepared to interpret and apply them in practice. Lack of essential training, supervision, and clarity in implementation procedures creates challenges in translating policy intentions into practices. Therefore, the gap between what the policies intend and what actually occurs in school indicates the need for further exploration into how these policy provisions are taken and practiced by teachers. This understanding reinforces the importance of exploring teachers' perceptions to determine how policy directives on local curriculum are being understood at the school level.

### **Review of Theoretical Referents**

As an alternative and meaningful teaching and learning activity against the traditional system and to fulfill the purpose of joining education to the realities imposed by the fast-changing world, different educational theories have been developed (Radu, 2011). I have made use of place-based education theory and constructivism in my study. These theoretical perspectives have provided a good foundation to understand how students interact with their environment and collect knowledge from their experiences. They also help in clarifying the importance of locality-based curriculum, especially in contexts where learning must connect with students' culture and social realities.

As mentioned above, my study is guided by the place-based education theory and constructivism. Place-based education has the natural world, languages, environment, culture, etc. as the major components, and local curriculum practices in Nepal also aim to include community-based matters into the curriculum and prioritize local language, arts, skills, culture, etc. So, my research is guided by Place-Based Education Theory.

The essence of developing the local curriculum is also creating an environment for constructing knowledge at the local level through the local sources. It supports addressing the matters raised by students and teachers by incorporating their views into the curriculum. The local curriculum implementation practice in Nepal is forward with the aim of making teaching and learning activities easier for the students by constructing knowledge at the local level. So, Constructivist Learning Theory supports the study related to local curriculum construction and implementation. These theories together provide a clear framework for examining how local curriculum is developed and implemented in ways that respect local culture and also help in meaningful learning. They also guide my research toward understanding how the teachers interact with students and apply these theoretical principles in real classroom situations.

#### **Place-Based Education Theory**

This theory was initially developed by 'The Orion Society, a Massachusetts based nonprofit organization, as well as Professor David Sobel, project director at Antioch University, New England. This theory centers learning on the local community, environment, and culture by using real places as the foundation for all subjects to build understanding, critical thinking, and active citizenship, moving

beyond textbooks to engage with their surroundings (Sobel, 2004). Place-based education is the process that takes use of local community related matters and environment as a beginning point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects from the curriculum and focuses on hands-on, real-world learning experiences (Sobel, 2004). A place-based approach in education is believed to increase academic achievement of students and tie them with their community, enhance their appreciation towards the natural world, create commitment to serve as active citizens to utilize environmental resources. It focuses on the incorporation of local knowledge, skills, and issues into the curriculum (Getting Smart, 2017). It focuses on helping the community through the mobilization of students and school staff in solving community problems.

From the above explanation, I understood that this theory clearly supports the idea that learning becomes more effective when it is grounded in the learner's own environment and community life. Therefore, it offers a strong theoretical basis for understanding local curriculum initiatives that can play an essential role in enriching students' learning experiences in our context.

### **Constructivism**

Constructivism is the theory that advocates people learn by actively constructing their own knowledge and understanding through experiences, reflection, and social interaction rather than passively receiving information. Cognitive constructivism is the theory originated by Jean Piaget, which says that learners construct knowledge and do not just passively take in information, whereas social constructivism is the theory originated by Lev Vygotsky, which takes learning as a social process where meaning is built through interaction, language, and culture, emphasizing collaboration. It is the theory that takes the classroom as the community. Knowledge creation and curriculum development take place between teacher and student inside the classroom (Terwel, 1999). Learners are considered active agents in the process of knowledge acquisition, and they construct knowledge and meaning from their own experience.

From a brief discussion above, I came to understand that this theory focuses on the importance of engaging learners actively in the learning process and values their prior knowledge. Hence, constructivism aligns closely with the objectives of the local curriculum, which tries to make students' immediate context and experiences central to learning.

## **Research Gap**

I tried to go through national and international journals, studies, and publications in doing a literature review on the area of my study. Here, I have presented the research gap as per my literature review under different headings.

### **Thematic Gap**

In the literature review section, the teachers' perception and local curriculum are discussed separately, but there is limited understanding of how teachers perceive and engage with local curriculum in practice. Thematic exploration of teachers' views regarding objectives, content, evaluation criteria, and classroom implementation of local curriculum is largely missing. Thus, there is a gap in understanding the conceptual and thematic connections between teachers' perceptions and local curriculum practices in Nepal.

### **Empirical Gap**

However, local curriculum has been implemented in some areas of Nepal for a few years, and just a few studies have been done to collect teachers' narratives on its creation, implementation, strengths, and weaknesses. Most literature focuses on policy provisions rather than classroom level experiences. Therefore, there is an empirical gap in understanding the real experiences of teachers who are directly involved in practicing the local curriculum in the classrooms.

### **Policy Gap**

National Curriculum Framework mandates the development of a local curriculum based on the mother language, local arts, culture, and federal restructuring has given responsibility for making the curriculum at the local level. Despite this, the practical implementation of these policies remains weak because of limited training, insufficient awareness programs, a lack of supervision, and unclear implementation procedures, which hinder effective translation of policy into practice. This revealed a policy gap between the formal provisions and their execution at the school level, highlighting the need to study how teachers interpret and apply these policies in real classroom contexts.

### **Theoretical Gap**

Theories like place-based education and constructivism provide a strong foundation for contextual and student-centered learning. But the existing literature has not adequately applied these theories to examine teachers' perceptions and local practices regarding the local curriculum in Nepal. There is a lack of research

connecting theoretical perspectives with classroom realities, which creates a theoretical gap in understanding how teachers construct knowledge inside the classroom and facilitate learning within the framework of the local curriculum.

In summary, such theoretical gaps collectively highlight the need for research that explores teachers' perceptions, experiences, and practical engagement with local curriculum, guided by relevant educational theories and contextualized within Nepal's policy and cultural situation.

## CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

I have presented the overall methodological process of my study on teachers' perception of the local curriculum of Nepal in this chapter. Research methodology is a set of systematic techniques that support conducting research. It covers the philosophical foundation of research, research approach, and ways to collect information, analysis, and the meaning making process of information gathered, quality standards, and ethical considerations. The general component of research methodology has been explained below.

### **Philosophical Foundations of the Study**

This research explores the perception of teachers regarding the newly implemented local curriculum in their school by the local level authority. The perception of teachers on the local curriculum differs from teacher to teacher. It is very difficult to find a single view from the participant teachers. As Aliyu et al. (2015) mentioned, the reality in my study is subjective, which might be influenced by social, political, cultural, gender, level, and experiences of the teachers. In such a subjective study process, we find people think, feel, see, and perceive differently. Hence, my ontological belief is based on multiple realities. I accept the view of Cohen et al. (2018) that ontology is the study of the nature of reality. In this context, my ontological standpoint is to explore the multiple realities of my research participants, which help to reveal teachers' thoughts, feelings, and perceptions towards the local curriculum based on their personal, family, and communal backgrounds. I believe that people experience and perceive reality in different ways. Thus, in my research, I interact with multiple participants and try to draw their perception from multiple aspects. As a result, I get multiple realities.

Knowledge is based not only on any specific process but also on subjective beliefs, values, and understanding. As Neuman and Wiegand (2000) mentioned, knowledge is constructed and co-constructed. In this process, deep interaction between the researcher and participants is essential. Hence, closeness with the participants can grasp the multiple and subjective reality, which is my epistemological belief. Truth is generated by interplaying with the various layers of power practiced in society. Thus, I believe that dialogical interaction with teachers helps to produce

knowledge incorporating their experiences and perceptions in subjective ways by sharing their thoughts in a conclusive way. I agree with Blaikie (2007) that epistemology considers what we can know and how we can know, and what is assumed to be present can be understood. In my research, I explore and interpret teachers' perceptions through interviews in their school setting. I assume that knowledge can be constructed by critiquing oneself and others. During the interaction with the teachers, I use dialectic interaction at their site and collect their views, which are often reflective or restorative. Thus, the combination of ontology and knowledge of epistemology helps me to conduct my research in the right way.

In my experience, all people's views are guided by their grounded values. The role of value is very crucial in the meaning making process in the research. Regarding interpreting the teacher's perception, there is the possibility of the influence of the value of participants as well as the researcher. As mentioned by Creswell et al. (2011), there is a role of value in my study, and it is value-laden. I align with Cohen et al. (2018) that axiology is the human nature and the relationship between human beings and the environment. However, as a narrative inquirer, I have maintained the value bond between the participants and me. I have taken each of my participants as the source of new insight and knowledge. I truly respect their ideas. Thus, the axiology of my research is to explore the emotions, feelings, and opinions of my research participants on the local curriculum.

As per the ontological, epistemological, and axiological beliefs which I mentioned above, my research paradigm is interpretivism. My research paradigm focuses on the subjective realities of teachers' perceptions of the local curriculum. So, there should be a personal lens to analyze world reality, which may vary between participants. The interpretive paradigm helps me to know the different stories of their perceptions of the local curriculum. In this regard, as an interpretive researcher, I begin with the individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them. I explore the knowledge through in-depth interviews with participants' experiences, and they narrate it in the form of stories. As the stories may vary from teacher to teacher, this study is concerned with understanding the worldview of teachers from their subjective experiences. Hence, meaning has been constructed from teachers' own stories linking with the experiences of the researcher as well. Therefore, I have collected the experiences and stories from participants and interpreted them to make it meaningful.

### **My Research Approach**

For this study, my research paradigm is interpretivism, and its key concern is understanding the subjective world of the human experience. On the basis of my research paradigm, the qualitative method is my research approach. The qualitative method of study is designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live (Palmer & Bolderson, 2006). My major intention is to narrate the teachers' perceptions of the local curriculum. So, I have employed the narrative inquiry as my research approach for this study. Polkinghorne (1995) has suggested that the term narrative has been used by qualitative researchers to provide a variety of meanings. I do claim that narrative study is the solution for me to conduct my research study to explore the teacher's perception. It is said that humans are alive and able to tell stories about their livelihood. Such stories help us to make meaning, support in meaningful life, and what we feel new in stories are the origin of narratives of social science research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004).

Green and Glasgow (2006) stated that there exists a mutual construction of a research relationship where researchers and participants feel cared for and have a voice in telling stories. In my research, narrative inquiry has supported me in representing a sequence of stories that is generated during the information collection process by using an in-depth interview. I believe that narrative inquiry has provided a clear framework for my investigation of how people interact with the world as depicted in their narratives (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Thus, taking narrative inquiry as a method in my research design, I have explored and then narrated the stories of my participants and reflected on their experiences.

### **Selection of Study Sites and Participants**

The site of my research study is the four schools of Tarakeshwar, Municipality, Kathmandu District. I did my study in the schools of Tarakeshwar Municipality, Kathmandu District, because on the one hand, a local curriculum was implemented in all the classes of basic level, and on the other hand, it also became easy for me to give adequate time in the field as I permanently reside in the same location, which obviously helped to increase the quality standard of my research.

Since the main objective of my study was to explore teachers' perceptions, it was essential to pick participants who could provide rich and experience-based stories. So, I have chosen teachers who have experience of teaching the local curriculum for at least three years or more and from the schools where the local

curriculum practice was done from the beginning of its construction in Tarakeshwar Municipality purposively. Two of my participants were from private schools, and the other two were from community schools, whereas two of the participants were local teachers, and two were non-local teachers. I believed that the inclusion of private and community schools ensured variation in institutional practices, while the selection of local and non-local teachers allowed me to capture various perspectives shaped by different cultural backgrounds.

### **Profile of the Study Participants**

A total of four teachers were selected from the four different schools of Tarakeshwar Municipality. I took two teachers from public schools and two others from private schools. Among them, two were local residents, and the next two were non-local teachers, to achieve an in-depth qualitative analysis in my study. To maintain ethical standards, my research participants were pseudonamed as Sunita, Prativa, Baburam, and Krishna.

#### **Sunita**

Sunita is a basic-level teacher in a private school of Tarakeshwar Municipality. She has passed her bachelor's level and has nine years of teaching experience, and has been working in her present school for six years. She is originally from Sindhupalchowk and loves to teach social sciences.

#### **Prativa**

Prativa is a local curriculum teacher at a private school in Kathmandu. She is a permanent resident of Tarakeshwar Municipality as she was born in the same locality. She has a master's degree in a language subject and has seven years of teaching experience in the same school. She is well informed about the information of this locality.

#### **Baburam**

Baburam is also a local resident of Tarakeshwar Municipality. He is a permanent teacher of basic level in a community school located in the same municipality. He has completed his master's degree in social science. He has the experience of teaching for twenty-one years in the same school, and now he is the class head of grade seven. He loves to gather information on historical and cultural facts.

## **Krishna**

Krishna is a non-local teacher as he was born in Parvat district. He worked as a primary level teacher in Parvat for three years and was promoted to the lower secondary level through the exam of the teachers' service commission, and was posted in Kathmandu four years ago. He has completed his master's degree in social science and loves to teach social sciences at the school level. He was happy to teach the local curriculum.

### **Process and Means of Information Collection**

On the basis of my ontology, epistemology, and my research paradigm, I tried to capture the personal, social, and professional experiences and stories of the teacher related to the local curriculum. For this, I collected the views of the participants on their practices of teaching the local curriculum. In-depth interviews and observations were the key methods to generate data in my study. As indicated by Ryan et al. (2009), an interview is a qualitative research method that incorporates asking guiding questions to conduct a conversation with participants and collect appropriate information about a subject. As per Ryan et al. (2009), in qualitative research, it is better to use the unstandardized interviews, which are not based on a specific framework for questioning. Considering this notion, I have had a conversation with the participants about their views on local curriculum, asking broad, open-ended questions. Additionally, to capture participants' ongoing behavior in a natural situation, I also observed the classes taken by the participants with prior consent and made notes on the behavior and practice regarding the local curriculum of the teacher. The purpose of observation is to gather more reliable and genuine insights. In other words, researchers can gain information on what participants do as opposed to what they say, and they do (Ciesielska et al., 2018). In such a way, I have used my technique and collected the information.

As mentioned earlier, I have collected the information through the in-depth interviews of the teachers regarding their sense of the local curriculum and experiences related to it. I prepared a few guiding questions or broad/open-ended questions to conduct in-depth interviews. As suggested by Ryan et al. (2009), the open-ended questions for the interview are prepared on the basis of the research purpose and research questions. I tried to prepare easy and simple questions with proper demographic information of the participants. The questions have been made in sequential order. To notice and put a record of the participants' ongoing behavior in a

natural situation, an observation proforma was prepared, which was a very flexible form to support the observation as suggested by Ciesielska et al. (2018). I was well equipped before approaching the field.

After finalizing the information collection process, I planned to go for my field work. I tried to collect the authentic information from the field. Before approaching the participants in the field, I informed all the needy organizational bodies, such as the school head and responsible persons, particularly teachers, about my research purpose and process. In my understanding, head teachers are the gatekeepers. As indicated by Andoh-Arthur (2020), gatekeepers are necessary mediators for the researcher to access study settings and participants within social research. They are the people within organizations who have the power to grant or withhold access to people or situations during research into organizations. After getting the permission, I approached the participant teachers and developed rapport with them in order to forward my research work.

As mentioned by Ciesielska et al. (2018), I managed the degree of comfort in the interactions with research participants. In my study, rapport refers to the quality of the relationships that I made at the field site with my key informants. Then I conducted my interview and observation of the participant's job. I maintained a good relationship with gatekeepers and my research participants during the process of field work, after coming from the field work, and even before visiting the field, as suggested by Andoh-Arthur (2020). I tried to gain deeper information by revisiting and conducting interviews in a comfortable manner.

### **Data Organization, Analysis, and Meaning Making**

As mentioned in the fieldwork procedure, I conducted the interview with my participants. As suggested by De Souza et al. (2016), I prepared the guiding questions to collect the experiences of the teachers related to the local curriculum. While preparing the guiding material, I remain based on my research questions. I conducted a series of interviews with my participants, capturing their experiences related to the local curriculum practices. While doing this, I tried my best to make the interview more simple but meaningful using probing and emerging questions. I recorded all the interviews, getting permission from my participants. After conducting the interview, I transcribed it. While doing this, as suggested by Azevedo et al. (2017), I used the naturalized transcription method. In these specific kinds of transcription, I tried to transcribe what is said and how it is said, and also protect the various elements other

than the verbal content, such as the language of the gesture, contextual matters, and the interaction between the participants and me. After transcribing the data, I began to analyze the data, searching for various codes embedded in the transcribed data as suggested by Cope and Elwood (2009), and forwarded my study.

After thoroughly reading the transcription and identifying the codes, similar codes were organized into categories, and from the similar categories, meaningful themes were generated, linking with the research questions. Narratives of the research participants were organized under different themes, and further information was analyzed on the basis of my experiences, with ample support of literature and theoretical backing. As I know, qualitative research is always interpretive in every stage, and I tried to present meaning through an analysis of thematic structures, socio-cultural referents, which are the essential features of narrative research.

### **Quality Standards**

Quality standards are very crucial in qualitative research, particularly in narrative inquiry, where the richness, depth, and authenticity of participants' stories shape the credibility of the study. During the entire study process, I remained careful in making my findings genuine, comprehensive, and based on the lived experiences of teachers. My attention remained on the quality rather than quantity of the information, seeking deep, meaningful narratives that reflect teachers' perceptions and experiences with the local curriculum of Nepal.

As suggested by Vaismoradi et al. (2016), I consulted with a peer to obtain constructive inputs or feedback that strengthened the interpretations and overall quality of the research. I also followed Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and maintained the experiential continuity of past, present, and future as an essential element of narrative inquiry. To ensure this, I remained attentive to how participants' stories move across time, place, and social relationships.

### **Temporality**

In narrative inquiry, temporality recognizes that people's present experiences are shaped by their past and influence their future expectations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). During my research, I visited the teachers who were my participants and collected narratives regarding their past experiences with curriculum designing and implementation. I tried to collect information on challenges they are facing in practicing the local curriculum and their future expectations or concerns. During the time of taking in-depth interviews and doing classroom observations, I asked

questions that encouraged teachers to present the flow of their experiences from the past to the present. This temporal lens has supported me in constructing narratives that have reflected how their understanding of the local curriculum develops across different times and situations.

### **Sociality**

Sociality relates to both the personal and social conditions surrounding participants' experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I have explored teachers' inner feelings, values, emotions, and personal backgrounds while attending to the broader social, cultural, and institutional contexts of their workplace that support shaping their perceptions. While meeting and talking with participants at their school setting, I remained careful about their position and that of administrators, the structures of the organization, and their social connections or bonds that influence their narratives. I built rapport with teachers by talking casually at the beginning and sharing the importance of conversation, which ensured they felt safe and respected while sharing their stories. This act of mine supported the collection of authentic and socially grounded information, which enhanced the quality of my study.

### **Spatiality**

Spatiality highlights the role of place in shaping people's experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In this research, the schools of Tarakeshwar Municipality serve as the primary context where teachers' perceptions are formed and enacted. I met participants in their natural workplace, which is in the classroom and in the school environment, to collect meaningful, contextually rich stories. I paid attention to how specific places within the school influence teachers' experiences with the local curriculum, recognizing that narratives are always embedded in physical, social, and institutional spaces.

### **Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is very important to maintain the trustworthiness of qualitative research like mine. As a head teacher of a school located within the same municipality, I acknowledge that my positionality, past experiences, and values may affect the data interpretation. By putting this fact into mind, I tried to reflect critically on my assumptions and continuously paid attention to how my role might be affected during the time of making the questions that I asked, the connection with the participants that I built, and the meanings I made throughout the entire research process. I took clear field notes, revisited the transcription of the interpretations, and

checked the meanings that emerged from the narratives of participants using their own words to avoid imposing my personal beliefs on their stories.

According to Webster and Mertova (2007), gathering authentic stories enhances the quality of narrative research. I respected the values and perspectives of my participants by carefully recording their voices and taking consent during interpretation. I revisited every participant during fieldwork, conducted in-depth interviews, took detailed field notes, and engaged in member checking to ensure the consistency and the truthfulness of their stories. I avoided bias related to participants' backgrounds, gender, level of experience, or personal relationships, and maintained communication through phone calls or emails to increase trust and belongingness. By attending to temporality, sociality, spatiality, and reflexivity, I aimed to ensure that my study remained credible, contextually grounded, and faithful to the lived experiences of teachers implementing the local curriculum.

### **Ethical Considerations**

I have followed the ethical principles strictly while doing the research. As per the suggestions provided by Soltis (1989), I took prior consent from the participants through phone calls. I maintained the confidentiality of information provided and also maintained anonymity, committing to a guarantee of no harm to participants, and used pseudonyms, such as some other common names were used instead of the real names of teachers. Before engaging the teachers as research participants, they were told clearly about the reasons for conducting the research, and what I, as the researcher, expected from them was shared, making them ready for voluntary participation. They were not forced to take part in the study process, and they were also promised that the privacy of the data obtained from them would be respected. I promised not to misuse the data and not to cause possible harm to the participants. In addition, participants were not forced to answer if they felt that the answer could have negative consequences, and they were clearly told that their participation was entirely voluntary and informed consent was taken.

Similarly, as suggested by Brann (2017), I maintained the correctness of research design, participants selection, data collection, analysis, and reporting. While designing the research, the essence of the research problem was taken into consideration. More attention was paid to collecting accurate data from the teachers. I equally became serious about the nature of the data and their appropriate analysis using an appropriate procedure. Additionally, I equally remained conscious about the

originality of the writing and became grateful to various writers, researchers, and organizations for using their references. I abided by Kathmandu University's ethical guidelines and fully followed the roadmap given by the KU research committee.

Moreover, I ensured that all the interviews were taken in a respectful manner, respecting their culture, profession, and personalities. Their perceptions, feelings, and experiences were taken with respect, and narratives were maintained without adding the researcher's value. Information collected through interviews and observations was kept securely and used for the real purpose. I tried to maintain transparency throughout the process, clearly by explaining the research purpose, methods, and use of information. I also practiced ethical reflexivity, remaining aware of my positionality as a head teacher of a school in the same municipality, and tried not to affect data collection and interpretation by my relationships, experiences, and perspectives. I acknowledged the contributions of previous researchers and sources to maintain academic integrity throughout the process. All these steps have ensured the highest level of ethical standards and increased the credibility and trustworthiness of my study.

## CHAPTER IV

### TEACHERS' INTERPRETATION OF LOCAL CURRICULUM

This chapter includes the stories shared by the participants on the local curriculum. There are four teachers from different schools as the participants, and they have shared their opinions regarding their understanding of the local curriculum and experience during the implementation of the local curriculum in their schools. They have different personal stories which they have linked with local curriculum practices and have expressed about understanding, strengths and weaknesses of local curriculum, challenges faced by them while implementing, and overall experiences. This chapter further presents the understanding of two private schools' teachers and two public school teachers.

Sharing of the first participant is presented as the understanding of Sunita, the second participant as Prativa, the third participant as Baburam, and the fourth participant as Krishna. I have made two of the border themes and some sub-themes under each theme for the meaning making process and analysis.

Local curriculum practice has not been widely done as its implementation has been dense only after the declaration of the Constitution of Nepal 2015. So, it is obvious that many of the concerned do not have adequate information about it. Those teachers who are assigned to teach the local curriculum also have insufficient information on the local curriculum. During my study, I visited two of the teachers from the same locality and two of the teachers who were non-local to collect information and their stories.

#### **Understanding Local Curriculum: The Perspective of Sunita**

It was a winter day, 11 January 2025, the day was quite cold, and people with free time were sunbathing. I had scheduled to visit one of my participants on that day, as the time was taken a day ahead by requesting through the principal. I reached school ten minutes earlier and waited till her arrival. After the ten minutes of waiting, she arrived and asked me to visit the school's auditorium for further conversation. We talked casually at the beginning about her health, educational journey, and teaching journey as well. She said that she started her teaching journey by teaching pre-primary classes. It is the third school during her nine-years of teaching career, and she has been teaching here for six years. She explained:

*I was young when I started the teaching journey, starting from the pre-primary level, and now I am gradually moving up and taking classes up to grade eight. I have the experience of teaching social sciences like social studies, moral science, health, etc., for nine years at the basic level. Now, I have been teaching the local curriculum.*

It added interest to me to know how she was approached to teach the local curriculum and about her reaction at first. According to her, at the basic level, they do not have any choice of subject to teach. Wherever the administration assigns, they have to do it. She narrated:

*I was called by the principal at his office and spoke about my performance, students' satisfaction with my teaching style, and proposed that I go through the local curriculum, mentioning that there is no other candidate to deal with the newly made curriculum like me. I felt quite uncomfortable and told him that I have no idea regarding the course contents, and I may have difficulty. He just gave me the curriculum and committed to support wherever I need it. Once, when I looked at the curriculum, I found it interesting and started teaching it.*

When I asked her about understanding the local curriculum, she told me that it's just like any other social science curriculum. It is made at the local level and has tried to provide information on society, culture, way of living, and so on. She further clarifies that this curriculum helps in awakening the local youngsters to contribute to the conservation of local culture and cultural heritage. She revealed:

*It's a school-based curriculum prepared for the particular area by the team of experts and the stakeholders. I can further say with example that Today's kids are growing within the boundaries of the family, so they don't know about the community, society, culture, way of living, and so on. They just lost inside the home, hanging on to various things, being unaware of our culture and customs. As the children are unaware of culture and customs, the local curriculum has to be able to make them aware of the periphery of society. Then only the children learn locality, local Jatra, cultural events, customs, our agricultural tools, and so on.*

She shared that information on national issues can be found from newspapers, TV, etc., but for children to know about their locality, the local curriculum is the best means.

*It is very crucial for our children to know about the things happening in our society and social activities, and that can be possible only through the local curriculum. We are unified in our variation as there is variation in our language, culture, religion, and way of living. Similarly, people from the Newari, Tamang, Brahmin, and Kshetri communities also live here in harmony. It is very fruitful to know each other's religion, culture, and art in a single place, being unified.*

She reported that there is great significance to the local curriculum as it covers every matter of a locality. I asked her about her view on the subject matter, whether she is satisfied with the content covered by the local curriculum, or if she feels something is missing. In this regard, she reacted:

*I have gone through every chapter of the local curriculum and found that it includes most of the things I mentioned. There are more topics from the Newar community and culture because there was a dense and wide range of habitation of the Newar community in Tarakeshwar in the past, but now the number of immigrants has increased. So, inclusion of others' culture also in the curriculum is in demand, and matters like women education, sexual abuse, domestic violence, and safety measures are not included. I feel these topics should be there.*

After listening to her story, I asked her why she did not raise this issue while making the curriculum. She said that it was not made by inviting teachers like her in the curriculum making process. It was made by a few subject experts without proper discussion and gathering information from everyone concerned. She replied:

*First of all, I was not called, and as I belong to the next locality and came from another place, I am not aware of so many things about this particular location. I am dealing with my classes with the support of a local teacher about Newari culture and the language. Secondly, from the municipality, I have not received any training and interactive sessions yet. We believe that the subject teachers are the main part of curriculum development. Local politicians, subject experts, students, and parents can also contribute during the time of curriculum preparation, only after we can cover the necessary aspects of the curriculum. But I don't think these practices have been practiced.*

She was found quite unhappy with the curriculum making process. It increased my interest to know how she is taking the classes and practicing the local curriculum. She got training or orientation and went to teach, or how she is dealing. She replied that it was the school principal or colleague who guided her and had received no assistance from the authorized body at the beginning. She explained:

*I think there was only a curriculum at the beginning, and we were told to teach the provided topics. I was confused about how to assess children through the examination, as there were only topics mentioned in the curriculum, no textbook arrived and no arrangement of any orientation or training was done. I used to frequently visit the local teacher and principal to be clear about various matters before teaching. After a few months, they provided us with a textbook, and it became quite easier. If the municipal education office had given some professional training to the teachers, our teaching and learning process would have been more effective at the beginning. They did it only after the completion of one year.*

From her story, I came to know that there is a great role of orientation programs or training programs to introduce a new curriculum into the classroom. Although she was not given any training at the beginning, now she has got it, but it is still insufficient. Now, as per her opinion, she is familiar with most of the topics and is in a state of sharing positive as well as negative aspects. I tried to listen to her about it. She explained:

*It is good to see children being familiar with the local areas at least through the geographical map. They are also familiar with art, culture, and Jatras. At least they learn about when Jatras in Manamaiju, Dharmasthali, and Jamacho are celebrated. What rituals are performed there? Sometimes I feel perplexed when the thought dominates the social structures in the name of modernity, as like the mature and college level children migrate abroad and do not stay in Nepal, and I suspect what will happen if our culture, custom, art, and identity disappear together with the migration of youths to foreign countries. So, we need to include and teach these arts and cultures, Jatras, and cultural costumes during the time of cultural performance, which ultimately supports the cultural transformation to the next generation and won't disappear ever. Our cultural identity can be preserved too, which is ultimately its positive aspect.*

I found her quite serious while sharing about the positive aspects of the local curriculum, incorporating the current situation of young people migrating abroad. She believed that the local curriculum could help in the conservation of old traditions, culture, art, and so on. She further explained that all the curricula are designed for students' overall growth. It aims to provide support in the holistic development of the children. Though the curriculum development has pure and positive goals, they possess some negative aspects too, which need amendment. She expressed:

*In this curriculum, there is no alternative unit for non-local students. Evaluation system, model questions, teaching approaches, etc., have not been clearly mentioned. Above all, it is hard to find solutions to some confusing matters, as there is no clear idea about who is responsible for answering such questions.*

When I asked her about students' reaction regarding this curriculum, she revealed that local students are interested and positive about it, whereas non-local students are not fully satisfied, as they feel that it's not their permanent place of residence, and some of the chapters are not essential for them. (Field Note, January 11, 2025)

### **Sunita's Classroom Practice, Observation Insights**

After completion of interaction with Sunita on 11 January 2025, and gaining a detailed understanding of her experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the local curriculum. I wanted to observe how she transmitted the curriculum concept into real classroom practice. This motivated me to conduct a classroom observation to see whether the teacher's theoretical understanding of the local curriculum aligned with their pedagogical approach in the actual teaching situation. It was Sunday when I was invited to observe the local curriculum classroom practice of one of my participants. Having already developed an interest in how she perceives the curriculum, I was equally eager to witness how those perceptions are reflected during practice. With her prior consent over a phone call, I reached school exactly at half past two in the afternoon. She welcomed me at the school ground and guided me to her classroom.

The room accommodated thirty-five students and appeared attractive with colorful paintings and classroom rules pasted neatly on the wall. It was grade eight where she had to deal with the topic 'Major Business Center of Tarakeshwar Municipality'. The environment felt engaging and conducive to learning. After briefly introducing me to the students and making me feel comfortable, she began her class.

She started the class by asking students about the business centers or markets

#### Class Observation of Sunita

Date: 17 January, 2025

Grade: Eight

Classroom Arrangements and Managements:

Beautiful classroom setting, well-furnished room, decorated wall with paintings

Classroom Entry:

Teacher entered class with some materials, exchanged greetings, introduced me.

Topic Dealt: Major Business Centre of Tarakeshwar Municipality

Presentation and Methodology:

Started class by asking some random questions about the business centres

Encouraged the students to name the market places closer to their resident

Presented the pictures that she had brought and introduced

Explained about the types of service firms like, hospital, hardware shops, banks, hotels etc.

Explained about various markets locations and the route by showing map

Evaluation:

Asked a few questions verbally to assess the students and assigned homework.

they visited for shopping.

She encouraged them to name the marketplaces that are the closest to their residence, and as they responded, she wrote each name on the whiteboard.

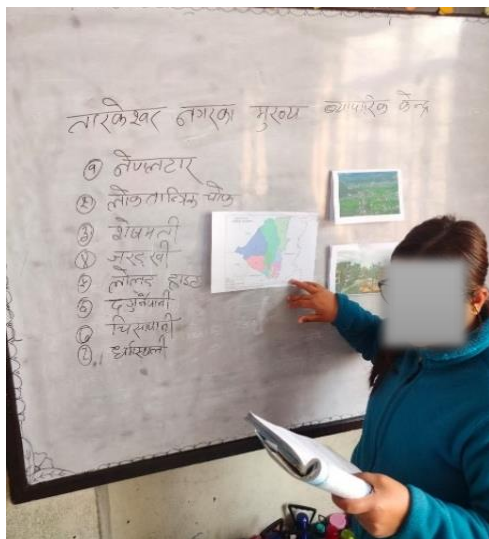
Students mentioned places such as Nepaltar, Loktantrik Chowk, Jitpurphedi Bazar, Jarankhu, Dharmasthali Bazar, Dagurnepani, etc.

After collecting their ideas, she presented pictures she had taken herself and asked the students to identify the locations. The students observed the photo with curiosity and attempted to recognize the places. She provided the guidance whenever they hesitated and further helped them understand the routes by showing related locations on the map.

She also discussed each area by ward number and highlighted the types of services or facilities available in different markets, for instance, hardware shops,

### Figure 1

#### Classroom Observation



banks, hotels in Jarankhu, a law firm, medical shops, and jewelry stores in Loktantrik Chowk, stationery shops in Nepaltar. She made discussions even more engaging by explaining the historical importance of Phedi Bazar, noting that it was once a route leading to Kerung of Tibet.

At the end, she concluded the class by assigning students the task of writing the names of five different bazar centers along with two points describing their importance. After the completion of her class, I left the

school appreciating her thoughtful, interactive approach to teaching. (Classroom Observation, January 17, 2025)

### Prativa's Interpretation of Local Curriculum

It was the early hour of the day time in the month of January, 2025, I had taken time with the teacher of a School with a prior phone call. She had called me at quarter past eleven. The school was within walking distance. So, I went on foot and reached in time. I entered the school, which was so beautiful with aesthetic surroundings decorated with a beautiful garden by the side of the entrance. I made a phone call to my participant as per the guidelines she had provided. She received me and took me to the library room of the school, where warm sunlight was coming through the window, and lots of books were kept in the bookshelves. She rearranged a chair and made me sit, and she sat in the next. We started our conversation sharing about our health, teaching career, and gradually shifted our conversation into local curriculum related issues, as she had the responsibility of teaching local curriculum. When I asked about her understanding of the local curriculum, she described it as:

*A detailed educational framework was developed at the local level to provide pupils with local information, skills, and experiences. Children can learn through various activities about their community, like field visits, learning by doing, and so on. The topic included in the local curriculum covers the maximum content of the locality.*

It is a local subject as its scope includes local information. She believed that the local curriculum is important for familiarizing students with religiously and historically important sites like Tarakeshwar Mahadev, Panch Mane, Manamaiju Temple, etc., and to raise awareness among students to assist in the conservation process.

According to her, many students were unaware of the culture, the way of living, and the heritage of Tarakeshwar municipality. Therefore, the local curriculum served the essential function of reconnecting them with their local community. She explained that the learning becomes more authentic due to the availability of physical features near the school, such as temples, ponds, and statues, which allow students to do a cross-check through the field visit.

The learning process becomes easier as information can be cross-checked by visiting the spot or municipal office. As per her understanding, the local curriculum aims to nationalize and internationalize the local technology, skills, and local products as well. No one has tried to do so while making the local curriculum of Tarakeshwar municipality. When I asked her about providing such input during curriculum making process, she replied that there was no such gathering for sharing inputs. She further explained:

*I don't think there was enough participation of teachers in the curriculum making process. We, different teachers from the same school, teach the local curriculum in different classes. We discuss, share ideas, which has made it easier to teach every topic with collective ideas. During its construction, we, like teachers from the school, did not get opportunities to give our inputs”.*

As she said, she was not involved in the curriculum making process. Then I asked her how she is implementing the local curriculum, whether she has received orientation or not regarding its practice. She shared that she was not even given any training for the effective implementation of the local curriculum. She narrated:

*I have no information regarding the training and orientation program during construction, the introduction of the curriculum, or after its implementation. They have not called us, like teachers, for discussion and facilitation about the local curriculum. The municipality has not called us; that's why we are facing some sort of problem.*

It is obvious that teachers want to be more informed about the matters to be taught. Curriculum implementation becomes effective when teachers understand its

essence. As per the respondent of my research, she was not given any information about the content, approaches to be followed while teaching through training, and had no textbook at the beginning. She talked about difficulties in teaching local curriculum due to the lack of training. Though the training was not given, she started teaching the local curriculum and teaching up to class eight. I tried to know from her about the practices she is doing. She shared a significant example of her local curriculum practice that is about an exhibition project at her school. She, along with grade eight students, had to demonstrate overall Tarakeshwar. It was quite challenging, but they did it. In this regard, she explained:

*Recently, there was an exhibition program at school where our team had to represent Tarakeshwar Municipality. It was challenging for us as we were trying it for the first time. We sat and planned to make different idols of various religious places like Dharmasthali, Manamaiju, Purano Guheshwari, and so on. Mainly, the Newar community resides in Tarakeshwar Municipality, so we displayed their typical costume and dishes. Besides the Newar community, we also tried to show the mixed communities like Brahmin, Chhetri, Gurung, and Tamang. Due to the effective support of students and parents, we were able to depict the whole Tarakeshwar Municipality. We were successful in our project, and the parents' happiness was overwhelmed. On the one hand, it added attraction to the overall exhibition program, and on the other hand, it helped in enhancing the understanding of students in the local curriculum.*

I found her sharing quite interesting and felt that the local curriculum, in such a way, can conserve our culture. She further mentioned that students' interest in doing the activities was very high, and it added to their interest in focusing on the content. When I asked her about the strengths of the local curriculum, she replied that exploring the knowledge of birthplace, gathering hidden information on the hometown, is always crucial for students. She narrated:

*Students are happy to study this subject. They are happy not only in the classroom, but also in field visits and performing project tasks. They get information on so many hidden facts about their birthplace and hometown. It has made them happy by providing knowledge about their culture, customs, and traditional rituals. They get benefits from learning about local tourism sectors, farming, and local tools.*

Students are getting information on the future prospects of business, industry, and agriculture, and have enough time to make a plan to get involved in a productive field. During our conversation, I also asked her to mention the weaknesses that she has seen in the curriculum. She replied:

*I have encountered various problems, such as a confusing reason is mentioned regarding the cause of putting the name of this place, Tarakeshwar. There is given data of elected leaders to rule the municipality, but they change over time. It has also been difficult to teach the content to the students from another locality. Some guardians even came to ask me to teach their alternative subject. These things I have experienced as the weaknesses of it.*

As per her understanding, there is no clear guideline on the evaluation system, which may create problems in the question pattern of basic education examination, and information on locally elected leaders' changes time to time, which may create problems in teaching some units. (Field Note, January 23, 2025).

#### **Observation of Prativa's Classroom Approach**

To observe how her perception is reflected in practice, I visited her class with prior consent. She managed to show me her teaching in grade six, where she had to teach the 'Disaster Management' chapter of the local curriculum. Although this observation took place in a different class context, the instructional behaviors aligned closely with the perception shared earlier.

Before beginning the class, I was offered tea, and I took a brief walk around the grounds. The peaceful environment, surrounded by greenery, flowering gardens,

<p>Prativa's Class Observation</p> <p>Date: 26 January, 2025</p> <p>Grade: Six</p> <p>Classroom Arrangements and Managements:</p> <p>Beautiful class setting, decorated walls with code of conduct and students' artwork</p> <p>Classroom Entry:</p> <p>Entered the class with some pictures, exchanged greeting and opened the sessions.</p> <p>Shared the personal experience of earthquake and dragged the attention</p> <p>Topic Dealt: Disaster Management</p> <p>Presentation and Methodology:</p> <p>Recalled the event of the earthquake, 25th April, 2015, narrated, what she felt</p> <p>Displayed the picture of disasters on the board, asked a few basic questions to the students about the disaster</p> <p>Listened response of students to the questions actively which made the classroom lively</p> <p>Dealt with the question of student related to issue of electronic gadgets causing fire hazards</p> <p>Explained about the phases like pre, while and the post disastrous situations</p> <p>Evaluation:</p>	<p>and a clean playground, sounds from the birds reflected the close relationship between the local curriculum and learning environment.</p> <p>After the bell, she went to her class, and I followed her. Once when I entered the classroom, I noticed that the classroom walls were decorated with codes of conduct, students' artwork, and informational posters indicating the active learning environment.</p> <p>The teacher started the class by recounting her personal experience of the earthquake of 25 April, 2015. She narrated where she was on that day, how she felt, how the rescue was done, and how her family and other people lived in temporary shelters. Her storytelling was emotional, which captured the full attention of the students. This directly reflected her earlier perception that the local curriculum becomes meaningful when connected to real-life and community experiences.</p>
---	---

Students were attentively listening and demonstrating high involvement by putting their queries.

The teacher displayed pictures of different disasters, hanging them on the display board on the front wall. She asked a few questions to the students prepared by her, like, "Have you heard about a disaster? What is a disaster? What are the types of disasters? What is the way to remain safe from disaster?" and so on.

Students responded actively, making the interaction lively. One student even contributed a new insight about electronic gadgets causing fire hazards, which enriched the discussion. This reflected the teachers' belief in encouraging students' lived experience and critical thinking.

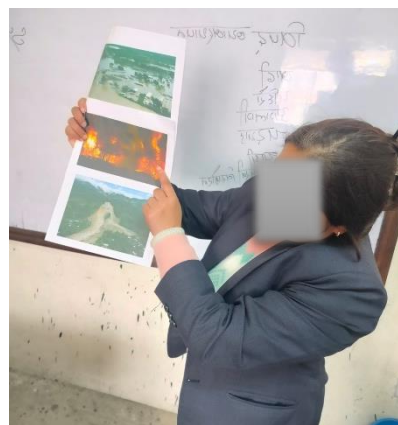
The teacher explained about disasters and patiently answered the questions raised by the students. She assessed students with a few questions later and assigned a home task: What is a disaster? Why are disasters increasing, and what are the measures that can be taken to reduce the loss of property and life from disasters?

This activity mirrored the teachers' earlier emphasis on practical and reflective learning as part of the local curriculum. After the class, I discussed the lesson with her. She shared that she always prepares her material a day before teaching. I, from the bottom of my heart, appreciated her for making the class quite impressive, effective, lively, and engaging. I also advised her to use visual media and electronic resources to enhance learning and make the class even more interactive, which she took positively. (Class Observation, January 26, 2025)

### **Baburam's Understanding of Local Curriculum: A Local Teacher's Voice**

It was in the evening that I made a phone call to one of the participants of my research. He received my phone call, and we casually talked about each other's health as we have known each other for a long time. He has his residence nearby mine and was a permanent teacher at a community school in Tarakeshwar. I proposed to him to give me time for his interview about the local curriculum. He agreed and asked me to visit his school in the evening on the following day. I went to his school at the appointed time and found him waiting for me. He took me into his workplace, which was very well managed. Though it was a community school, it was well managed, and every class head was provided a cabin. After reaching his cabin, I knew that he

**Figure 2**  
*Flashcards Displaying*



was the class head of Grade Seven. We spoke about each other's teaching careers first, through which I knew that he had been teaching for twenty-one years in the same school. He was the teacher of social studies in the past and the local curriculum at present. During our conversation, he said that he was assigned to teach the local curriculum because he was a permanent resident of the same locality. When I asked him to speak about his view on the local curriculum, he explained:

*The local curriculum should give more importance to the locality, its history, culture, geographical situation, the local natural resources, natural diversity, agriculture, and everything else. Somehow, our local curriculum has covered that, but literally what should be emphasized and what kind of benefit that gives to the students hasn't been included, as the syllabus was prepared in a bit of haste, so that overall aspect has not been covered.*

He appeared quite unhappy with the curriculum and added my interest to explore his further story. I believed that he was local and had a different story regarding the local curriculum. I then asked him about the approach followed while making the local curriculum. He immediately replied to me that it was not participatory. He narrated:

*There were seven village development committees earlier, and now there are only eleven wards in our Tarakeshwar Municipality. It would be better if people with knowledge about the history, geography, and culture of each ward were gathered while preparing the local curriculum. In each ward of the earlier VDC, there are still some people known as living history, and they are holding true and evidence of various aspects of life. Now, the book has been prepared as if they used to prepare the National census sitting on top of the hill. As a result, many errors occur that need frequent improvisation and modification. But even after that improvisation, the book may not hold enough correct information.*

He seemed different and shared that not only the teachers but also many people who had a deeper understanding of this locality had not been visited before constructing the curriculum. He continued sharing about the process and presented his view with an example.

*Let's take the example of our oldest school, Gram Sewa. We have our teachers teaching here, and maybe their teachers, too. What if all of them had been gathered, made them sit and share their vision about the preparation of a*

*local curriculum, and requested them to write about that? Which has not happened then. Here, the local curriculum has been prepared based on visits to some people from neighboring areas and asking a few questions about the places. Whatever the reason, we are compelled to teach it.*

When I asked him a question regarding training or orientation before its implementation, he told me the following:

*It is unfortunate for us that orientation or training has never happened for the teachers to provide an adequate amount of instruction about the newly made local curriculum. However, it is running in reverse. First, they implemented the curriculum; after finding problems with the teacher, they discussed the solutions. It would have been better if teachers were informed earlier about the possible problems and weaknesses of the curriculum and were oriented about the improvements.*

According to his understanding, there are issues with the content and instruction of practice that cannot be effective without its correction. I tried to know the positive and negative aspects of the curriculum on the basis of his experience. He replied that something is better than nothing. At least the curriculum is there, and students have the opportunity to learn about their locality. He further clarified:

*As the strong point in our curriculum is that local children, whether they are educated in private or government school in Tarakeshwar Municipality, have to learn the cultural aspect, agriculture, the state of business, and the business going through local urbanization, the state of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. It is very important that they get information about this place. Another thing is that the culture of the tribes living here, the festivals celebrated here, the religious places of pilgrimage, the historical things, the recent setup, etc., the local children came to know.*

While sharing about its negative aspect, he shared that this curriculum has been boring for non-local students. There needs to be an alternative for non-local, and he also mentioned to input factual information. In this regard, he explained:

*In comparison to community schools, there are more local students in private schools. Generally, in a community school, students are enrolled from the entire nation, and it is a bit difficult to teach them local subject matters. I think it is not necessary for them to teach the history of Tarakeshwar. They have no meaning in reading about local culture. There may be something given in the*

*local curriculum that the non-local students should learn, although the topic may not be as useful as for locals. What about teaching the local curriculum only for local students and a particular subject for non-local students, which may have a lasting impact on the whole life of the students? Secondly, as a local, I think most of the data and content given in the curriculum is not factual and proven. As an example, it has been mentioned that Tarakeshwar Mahadev has been named because of the falling of the right thigh of Sati Devi, but it is not found anywhere in Shree Swasthani. There are such things where confusion persists. This thing can be taken as its negative aspects.*

My participants were local residents and had information on the whole history of the locality. So, I asked him to share the hidden facts regarding the locality that could have been in the local curriculum. He explained:

*Of course, I recall various events. Among them, I remember Ghode Jatra, Dashain Jatra, and Buddha Jatra most. In those days, it was not customary to pave the way with clothes for the procession of Jatra. Once, one of our neighboring brothers, together with his son, passed away. As a modification in the culture, his wife and daughter bought the clothes to pave the way for the procession during the Jatra. During the preparation of this topic, the event was mentioned in the curriculum, but not the name of the person who modified that culture. They felt very bad as nobody mentioned their name in the text, and they even visited the local education section to raise the issue.*

As per his understanding, if they were visited earlier and authentic information were gathered, it would be more effective. People having information about Sangla, Phutung, Jitpur, Dharmasthali, Goldhunga, Kavresthali, and Manamaiju, if they were consulted while making the curriculum, it would have become stronger. When I asked him about the practice of the local curriculum in the classes, he took an example of a topic related to the Dharmasthali Jatra and shared that he has a plan to involve students in it and some other cultural activities. He explained:

*If you talk about the students, they are not aware of our culture, as most of them are from outside the valley. When they seem confused about the local culture, which is Dharmasthali Jatra, and frequently ask for confirmation whether that happens in the Jatra or not, in answer, we just let them enjoy the Jatra physically, as it is very close to the school. On the other hand, we have realized that our culture and Jatra are disappearing gradually. I have already*

*consulted with the ward president that during the Gaijatra, students should be asked to bring traditional dress from home and participate in the Jatra. Because we have a culture to celebrate Ropai Jatra in our locality, and there were very few participants in last year's Ropai Jatra. According to the culture, males should wear female costumes and vice versa. But there were more audience than participants. Due to these reasons, I have decided to request the students whom I teach about Ropai Jatra for their participation to celebrate with real costumes for sustained learning.*

During our conversation, he shared with me that the recently built viral places like Bhubaneshwori Temple, Shanti Dham, and Jhanda Park have been included in the curriculum, but ancient history has not been explored. Tarakeshwar is a place that holds history, with a main road to visit the west in the past. The inscription of 517 B.S. proves that a Buddhist chaitya was founded by Manjushri, the temple of Manamaiju, its glory, the pond of Sangla, and the serpent ponds of Futung are all behind promotion.

He was heard to be quite unsatisfied and told that the history is being hidden due to the glorification of these new structures. The concerned body and stakeholders should pay attention to these aspects. (Field Visit, January 28, 2025)

### Baburam's Classroom Practice of the Local Curriculum

A few days later, I observed his classroom practice to see how these concerns

<p><b>Baburam's Class Observation</b></p> <p>Date: 2 February , 2025</p> <p>Grade: Six</p> <p>Classroom Arrangements and Managements: Well managed classroom with desks in two columns, clear visibility and interactive participation.</p> <p>Prior Knowledge: Opened the session with a review of previous chapter i.e. heritage sites of Tarakeshwar Municipality and asking about tourist spot</p> <p>Topic Dealt: Cultural Heritage and Tourist Spot</p> <p>Presentation and Methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Wrote the content on the white board, displayed map of the Tarakeshwar municipality</li> <li>➤ Showed the verities of flashcards with information's of heritage sites</li> <li>➤ Interacted with the students, passed the verities of information</li> <li>➤ Invited students to imagine their grandparents' visiting temples and sharing their experiences in a storytelling form</li> </ul> <p>Evaluation: Evaluated with oral questions in the group and assigned to define cultural heritage and explain the importance of two heritage sites.</p>	<p>and values surfaced in the classroom. With prior consent, I was there to observe his class in sixth grade. Along with him, I entered the classroom, which was well managed with desks in two columns, allowing clear visibility and interactive participation. The wall was adorned by students' work, subtly reinforcing expectations and conceptual understanding.</p> <p>The day's topic was "Cultural Heritage and Tourist Spots", a theme closely tied to the teacher's expressed passion for conserving the local identity. He opened the session with a review of the related previous chapter, which was the heritage site of</p>
--	--

Tarakeshwar Municipality by engaging students through quick recall questions.

Students answered enthusiastically, indicating that his approach effectively activated prior knowledge of the students.

He then used flashcards and displayed local landmarks, the stonework of Tarakeshwar Mahadev Temple, the green canopy of Pani Muhan, and the area covered by Shivpuri Nagarjun National Park. Using a wall map, He guided students

**Figure 3***Teacher Using Flashcards*

through the routes of these sites. His narrations were not only informative but also emotionally engaging. At one moment, he invited students to imagine their grandparents visiting temples and sharing their experience in a storytelling form that brought their heritage to life.

Throughout the lesson, he embedded both formal and informal assessments. He asked students to interpret the significance of each site shown through a flashcard, locate heritage sites on the map, and reflect on why we should conserve cultural heritage. At the end, he administered a short written assessment

asking students to define cultural heritages and explain the importance of two heritage sites.

The technique he used, such as local contextualizing, visual aids, and storytelling, reflected the strengths he wished the local curriculum had emphasized during its development. Although he had expressed dissatisfaction with the curriculum accuracy and limited consultative preparation, in practice, he worked to fill those gaps through creative and contextual teaching.

In his both interviews, which I had taken and the classroom observations, his deep connection to his locality was found. He was concerned for accuracy, cultural preservation, and meaningful engagement with local history that shaped not only his opinions but also his pedagogical choices. His teaching revealed a commitment to ensuring that, despite the curriculum's shortcomings, students developed an authentic understanding of the heritages and identity of Tarakeshwar. (Classroom Observation, February 2, 2025)

### **Exploring the Interpretation of Krishna about the Local Curriculum**

It was a sunny winter day, mild air was blowing, and people were relaxed, staying in the sunlight. I had to visit the fourth participant of my study. I had a conversation with the teacher of a government school, taking the phone number from the head teacher. I had already told him about my study, and he was ready to be a part

of it. He had called me exactly at quarter past eleven in the morning as he had a leisure hour during that time. I went into his school and asked about him to the gatekeeper. He took me into the staff's room and returned to his job. Once, when I met the participant, I found him very humble, and he expressed his happiness to be a part of my academic journey. When I asked him about his teaching journey, he said to me that he first started teaching at the community school of Parvat district as a primary level teacher, where he taught for 3 years, and came to Kathmandu only after getting promoted to lower secondary level through the exam of the Teachers' Service Commission after four years. He was assigned to teach the local curriculum from the beginning of his teaching career in Kathmandu. He shared that the local curriculum is quite interesting to teach as it has helped him become familiar with a new environment. He revealed:

*As I am originally from Parvat, I am not that familiar with this locality. But as a teacher of the local curriculum, it would be beneficial if I were more familiar with it. No one is perfect in all aspects, but I must say not fully, but I am gaining more and more new and interesting facts about the local area, and gaining fruitful experience from the subject matter taught as a learner, too.*

When I asked him to share his perspective on the local curriculum, he replied:

*Local curriculum is the subject matter that connects the local area or community and depicts its factual pictures related to values, culture, traditions, languages, and other socio- economic, cultural, and political aspects.*

Local curriculum is developed on the basis of local context using local content. In our conversation, he said that it had covered many matters, but still missed some. While asking about the contents, he replied:

*As far as I noticed, it has missed much information, but inclusion of Jatra, melas, physical, climatic, and vegetation features of local regions, socio-economic features, physical and mental health-related information, historical facts of heritages and local places, as well as the situation of the locality at past and present, etc., have been covered in it.*

He further narrated that it has missed some important factors, which is because it was made by a limited number of people. Though I was not here in this municipality in the past, I knew it while asking the teacher teaching in the next school from the beginning of implementing local curriculum. He further revealed:

*I was not in Tarakeshwar when the local curriculum was made, but from the teacher teaching at the next school, I heard that they were not connected while making the curriculum at the beginning. That's why we encounter various problems while teaching. But I went through sharing the problem with senior staff. I think it was not a good practice and would be beneficial if we, like teachers, were gathered and made. Not only us, but many other living historians who could have been a crucial source of information for designing the curriculum were also not consulted. Input from everyone concerned would have made it perfect and rich in knowledge and information.*

If it were made in a participatory approach, everyone would have taken ownership, and implementation would be easier. As he is non-local, I asked him how he has gone through the implementation. And if he has taken training or not? He replied:

*There was no such orientation about the local curriculum, as far as I know. Teachers were not informed at the time of making the curriculum, and during its implementation as well. As we are the major stakeholders in implementing the curriculum, we would have consulted while making it. If not, at the time of bringing them into our school or classes, training regarding their content, evaluation criteria, and teaching approach would have been given. I have been teaching the local curriculum for four years and have received no orientation from the authority. I deal with the support of our head teacher and local teacher, who are more familiar with the contents.*

After hearing from my participants, I realized that local teachers could be more effective in teaching the local curriculum as they know most about the things of the locality. From the experience of teaching the local curriculum, I tried to learn from him about the positive and negative aspects of the local curriculum. He explained:

*It has provided the knowledge of the past history of the local area. It has helped students to get insights into heritages, culture, traditions, and rituals. It also teaches students about the geographical features, climatic conditions, socio-economic conditions, etc., of the locality, which is crucial for students to know. Information on them may help students make a plan for their future and follow the footsteps that may lead them towards a bright future.*

As per the sharing of my participant, there are multiple benefits of studying the local curriculum. It has made it easy for permanently migrated students to adjust

to this locality by providing essential information. It also has some negative aspects that need to be amended in the next phase. He further narrated:

*The data for some definite areas are not correct. Based on the theoretical points of view, the curriculum was designed with a limited time period, due to which a very limited explanation of locally valued tourist areas has been provided. evaluation system, exercises presented are not up to mark from the exam's viewpoint.*

Implementing local curriculum effectively requires clear criteria for its development in a participatory approach, inclusion of most of the locality-based information, and proper guidance for its assessment. (Field Visit, February 4, 2025)

### **Classroom Teaching Observation of Krishna**

After a few days of interviews, I had been to the school of Krishna to observe his classroom teaching with prior communication. He was there to discuss the topic 'Local Traditions and Customs' with class seven students on that day. The classroom environment was very beautiful as the room was spacious with seating in two rows, and inspirational quotations were pasted on the walls. The teacher began his class with warm-up activities and reviewed the previous lesson, which was taught the day before, before introducing the day's topic.

He created an environment of engaging the students actively by calling three of the students in front from different communities to share about the festivals they celebrate. This pedagogical approach not only allowed students to learn from each other but also helped to reflect the diverse cultural context or background of the locality. The teacher then displayed the flashcards and explained rituals associated with birth, death, and marriage in different communities, like the Newar, Brahmin, and Tamang communities.

**Figure 4**

*Classroom Observation of Krishna*



For evaluation purposes, he asked both group questions and individual questions and assigned homework to collect information on festivals celebrated by the

#### Krishna's Class Observation

Date: 7 February, 2025

Grade: Seven

Classroom Arrangements and Managements:

Beautiful classroom setting, spacious and well managed furniture, decorated walls with inspirational quotations

Previous Knowledge:

Entered the class with flash cards, exchanged the greeting, opened the sessions with warm-up activities, reviewed the previous lesson

Topic Dealt: 'Local Traditions and Customs'

Presentation and Methodology:

- Reviewed the previous class as a part of warm-up, called three students in front with different ethnic backgrounds
- Requested the students to share about their festivals and the way they celebrate them
- Asked to share them about the ritual performances after someone's birth and death and also the marriage ceremony as per their understanding
- Displayed the flash cards, explained the rituals associated with birth, death and marriage in different communities like Newar, Brahmin and Tamang communities

Evaluation:

Asked both group questions and individual questions and assigned home task related to festivals of Newar Community

Newar communities, including their significance in the community. This classroom observation helped me to take the interactive and participatory nature of teaching as an effective method to teach local curriculum, where students were encouraged to connect classroom learning with their local knowledge, arts, skills, and experiences. (Based on Classroom Observation of 7 February, 2025)

Krishna's experience of teaching has shown that despite having challenges like limited orientation and curriculum gaps, local curriculum supports to enhance students' understanding of their cultural heritage, religious sites, and local environment. However, there is a need for participatory design, proper teacher training, and timely information about ongoing updates to ensure accuracy and relevance of the content. The classroom practices like discussions with the students, sharing experiences,

and taking students to be involved in cultural activities further make the learning process easier by fostering both the academic and cultural growth among learners.

### **My Impressions**

After taking the interviews and observing the classroom practices of all four teachers, it became a reflective journey for me by deeply resonating with my professional experiences as a teacher and a head teacher working within the same local area. During the process of interviews and classroom observations, I found myself relating to teachers as I have been moving through similar realities of change in curriculum and implementation practices.

One of the major impressions I gained was teachers' genuine commitment to the idea and spirit of the local curriculum, though they were dissatisfied with the process through which the local curriculum was developed and introduced. All the teachers, whether they were local or non-local, community or private school teachers, clearly valued the purpose of local curriculum by connecting students with local traditions, cultures, history, geography, and overall community life. This closely aligns with my own belief and experience that learning gets meaningful when it is rooted in students' own social and cultural realities. Like the teachers I interviewed, I also have seen students become more engaged when the course is connected to places, festivals, markets, and practices that they do in their daily lives.

At the same time, I strongly noticed the sense of frustration among the teachers due to the lack of participation in the curriculum making process, orientation, and professional support before implementation. As a head teacher, I have personally experienced policies and curriculum implemented by a top-down approach, with insufficient preparation at the classroom level. When Sunita and Prativa spoke about asking head teachers to teach the local curriculum without training, textbooks, or assessment guidelines, it reflected my own early experience of implementing the local curriculum in my school. I clearly remembered teachers depending on peer discussions, personal effort, like the methods used by my participants. Their narratives made me understand that teachers often implement curriculum first and learn later, which places unnecessary pressure on them.

The differences between local and non-local teachers also came to mind and mirrored my own practices in schools. Local teachers like Baburam and Prativa showed a deep attachment to the content of the curriculum and they remained more sensitive about historical accuracy, cultural recognition and community ownership.

Krishna's narrative as a non-local teacher connected with my experience of working with teachers from various districts. His story highlighted that local curriculum can function as a learning tool to students and teachers as well by helping them gradually integrate into the community. This made me understand that the properly designed local curriculum has the potential to build belonging among all the learners and educators.

The observation of classroom practices was especially fruitful for me because it revealed a gap between curriculum construction and classroom reality, and filling the gap can be done by the creativity of the teachers. I found teachers engaging students in learning through storytelling, discussions, visual aids, field-based examples, and cultural activities. These observations strengthened my belief that teachers play a crucial role in bringing effectiveness to the curriculum. Even a weak or incomplete curriculum can become meaningful when it is handled by committed teachers.

Overall, this research process made me feel that I am not only a researcher studying teachers' perceptions, but I am a co-learner and experiencer of the same educational reality. Their story for me became quite familiar, lively, and deeply connected to my own educational journey. This study helped me to take local curriculum implementation more holistically by acknowledging its strong intention and recognizing its practical limitations.

These impressions have not only enriched my understanding of research but also influenced my professional understanding. I now feel more confident and responsible for contributing to discussions on curriculum amendment, the necessity of teachers' training, and participatory approaches for designing local curriculum at the local level. In this sense, the participants' stories did not end with them; they became part of my own story as an educator, researcher, and stakeholder.

## CHAPTER V

### THEMATIC INTERPRETATION OF PARTICIPANTS' NARRATIVES AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the theme of the narratives that were shared by four of my participants during this study, and also analyzes and discusses the findings. There are two main aspects: the perception-related theme that emerges from participants' stories and the theme related to classroom practices through which the teachers made their perception visible in their pedagogical actions. Under these two themes, the following sub-themes have been constructed from the narratives and close observation of the classrooms of my participants and are presented below, followed by a discussion section.

#### **Local Curriculum as a Cultural Awakening for the New Generation**

Local curriculum disseminates the idea about the importance of local culture, languages, skills, and arts. Local curriculum incorporates locality-based information and raises awareness about the importance of heritage sites, culture, tradition, skill, knowledge, and so on. One of my participants, Sunita, in her narratives, revealed a strong perception of the local curriculum as a means for cultural awakening, particularly to those children who are increasingly confined to modern lifestyles that detach them from real community life. She has repeatedly emphasized that present children remain inside the boundary of home, engaging themselves in various things like video games, mobile phones, social networks, and missing exposure to community activities, values, rituals, cultural performances, etc. She viewed that in such a situation, the local curriculum plays a positive role to connect young children with their surroundings, teaches them about the art, customs, jatras, traditions, and cultivates a sense of belonging, and also encourages them to participate in them. Her perceptions align with Gurung and Parajuli (2021), who stated that the local curriculum is designed based on local needs and covering local scientific knowledge, local heritages, and local autonomy. In the long run, it helps to promote locality-based skills and arts at the national and international level.

Sunita has clearly interpreted that the local curriculum not only deals with academic content but also acts as a means to save cultural activities from modernity and Western traditions. This finding strongly connects with the principle of place-

based education, which focuses on grounding the learning process in culture, history, language, and traditions (Sobel, 2004). She is deeply concerned that today's youth no longer participate in cultural events and they do not become serious towards conservation of them. Hence, she shares the importance of local curriculum as an instrument for cultural preservation and generational transfer of cultural practices. She has also viewed local curriculum as the means to connect non-local or newly migrated families with the local practices, history, and culture. At the same time, she perceived a lack of alternatives for non-local students, insufficient inclusion of information on multiple cultural groups, and gaps in the curriculum.

### **Local Curriculum Practices to Increase Children's Cultural Consciousness**

When I observed the class of one of my participant teachers, Sunita, she began the lesson by asking students about local markets where they frequently visit to buy things. This conversational approach reinforced her belief that the local curriculum must emerge from students' lived experiences. She used photographs that she had taken herself as visual material and asked students to identify the places by observing the displayed pictures. Such practice of hers in the classroom illustrated contextual learning where students actively construct knowledge through interaction with real places, which aligns with constructivist pedagogy (Piaget, 1972). This activity of hers mirrored her perception that children have to see to recognize and understand their community, rather than learning through the lecture.

She also guided her students through maps, linking each market, mentioning the historical importance, its significance in daily life, and the services available in the markets. Such ground-level information, which is demonstrated through materials, has helped students by providing knowledge of locality to shape cultural identity. She assigned students to describe the importance of market centers, which encouraged students to explore, observe, and reflect on their culture and cultural practices, consistent with her belief that local curriculum has to raise awareness.

As Sunita is a non-local teacher, she narrated that she sought support from local teachers at the beginning to ensure that every matter she had to share with the students, particularly about cultural accuracies. This practice showed that for teaching the local curriculum, there is a need for teachers to have a similar kind of cultural grounding to that locality. Overall, the classroom practices of Sunita reflected that the local curriculum supports cultural restoration and its promotion too. Her belief is that

active learning of the local curriculum helps in preserving the heritage and culture of the locality.

### **Local Curriculum as Experiential Learning Rooted in Community**

Prativa, the second participant of my study, revealed that the local curriculum represents an experiential learning process in which knowledge is constructed by taking the students on field visits, observation, participation in community work, and experiential exploration. The story of Prativa strongly framed the local curriculum as a practical-based subject in which practical activities can be done by taking students into the real field. She presented local curriculum as a subject into which authentic learning is possible where students verify information and knowledge by visiting and observing field, consulting municipal offices, education section of municipality, ward offices or viewing local features like forest, rivers, ponds, farmland, climate etc.

She emphasized experiential learning from her belief and presented that learning of local curriculum becomes meaningful only when students encounter real spaces, cultural heritages, artifacts, and languages. Constructivist theory supports this approach by guiding students to develop understanding by actively engaging with real-world context and validating knowledge through observation and participation (Terwel,1999). She took the curriculum very seriously to enable and empower students to explore hidden facts of their own locality, fostering pride and a deeper understanding. It also adds interest and makes them focused on their real job.

Though there are a lot of strong points regarding the local curriculum, she also perceived a few of the weaknesses of the local curriculum, such as the teacher's absence during the curriculum making process, non- participation of local historians, lack of training for its implementation, etc. This aligns with Alumia Jr and Sullivan (2025), who emphasize teacher training as essential for curriculum efficacy, particularly for locally contextualized education. As per her understanding, there needs to be the full involvement of teachers during the designing process and collaborative efforts of every stakeholder for its implementation too, which increases the feeling of ownership, and the practice becomes more effective.

### **Local Curriculum Practice as Community-Based Learning**

While taking an in-depth interview of Prativa, she talked about the exhibition task in which she, along with students, exhibited the entire Tarakeshwar Municipality in front of parents and students. This proves that she practices local curriculum by connecting its content with real-life activities that make the learning alive. According

to her, students under her guidance created models of temples, statues, costumes, and cultural sites. Such a large level of collaborative activity allowed learners to experience culture through enactment and creative expression. She also highlighted that students authenticate information through field visits, which she frequently organizes and explores every place in the community.

During her classroom observation, she was found starting her lesson by informing them about her personal experience of the earthquake of 2015. Such storytelling practice that she demonstrated in her class was rooted in her belief that the connection of curriculum content to lived experience helps to increase the understanding of the students. Storytelling in personal experiences reflects narrative constructivism, where meaning is constructed by stories that connect past experiences with present understanding (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). She displayed photographs of various natural disasters and facilitated discussion in an interactive manner, emphasizing her emphasis on experiential learning. She also encouraged students to share personal experiences of accidents or disastrous situations faced by them, demonstrating her constructivist approach in her classroom.

The questioning strategies that she used, like " Why are disasters increasing?" aligned with her belief that learning becomes more effective if the information is gathered through inquiry rather than memorizing it, taking a long time. The classroom practices of Prativa validated her perception that the local curriculum is not understood only by looking at textbooks; it needs lived experiences, observation, and real-life connections to understand.

### **Local Curriculum as a Protector of History and Culture**

As the one who has been settled in Tarakeshwar for a long time and deeply grounded in its culture, tradition, art, and skill, Baburam's perception mostly relates to the authenticity, accuracy, and truthfulness of the local history of Tarakeshwar. In his understanding, local curriculum becomes meaningful when it covers genuine and real information, verified cultural background, historical facts, local practices, and community traditions that are passed through past generations to the present generation. According to him, in the curriculum that he is dealing with, there are shortcomings like factual inconsistencies and unverified narratives, more emphasis on newly built cultural sites like Bhubaneshwari Temple, Shanti Dham, Jhanda Park at the expense of very important ancient heritages, exclusion of living histories and elderly people, teachers, etc., during the curriculum making process. As mentioned by

Stephenson Reaves et al. (2022), the participatory curriculum design improves relevance, teacher ownership, and student engagement.

He valued local curriculum for its strength to preserve and promote heritages, culture, and arts to inherit the future generation. According to him, inaccuracies in information have undermined its credibility and cultural importance. In his perception, the local curriculum is a tool for providing historical justice and for correcting misrepresentation of cultural activities, and recognizing and disclosing the real cultural contributors and historians. It is one of the authentic documents to protect and put a record of the reality regarding the development, practices, importances, and values of local culture, arts, skills, heritages, etc.

### **Local Curriculum Practices as the Means to Fill Gaps Using Local Knowledge**

The classroom practices of Baburam demonstrated that the local teacher can fill the gaps of the local curriculum by introducing the real local knowledge. Local teachers know most about their own locality and can correct the curriculum content and provide authentic information to the students. During his classroom observation, he mentions Pani Muhan, Tarakeshwar Mahadev Temple, and Shiva Puri Nagarjun National Park, which reflects that he is more consistent in teaching about historically and culturally important sites than the present viral locations.

He presented generational narratives, asking the students to imagine their grandparents' experiences regarding the curriculum issues. This practice of his aligned with his belief that the real history of the community remains in memorizing the community-related matters. He guided students through routes, pathways, and symbolic locations to reach various locations, which has illustrated his commitment to providing accurate cultural and geographical information. He also shared about his plan of taking the students to Gai Jatra, Ropai Jatra, and some other rituals, which shows that he is serious about disseminating real-life knowledge to his students and wants to make the learning more authentic. Place-based education takes such practices as essential for sustaining cultural identity and fostering intergenerational learning within communities (Sobel, 2004).

He perceived the local curriculum as the curriculum that is missing some factual accuracy and is incomplete due to an inappropriate design process. He tried making it fine with the expansion of information during the teaching process, including authentic historical details, and ensured that students received a richer and deeper cultural and historical education. His practice of local curriculum tried to fill

curriculum gaps by shaping the pedagogy with the authentic information that he had due to being a local citizen.

### **Local Curriculum as a Bridge for Belonging and Adaptation**

Krishna is one of my participant teachers and is a non-local teacher who has recently posted in Kathmandu. Parvat interprets the local curriculum as a bridge for orientation, adaptation, and belonging, both for newly arrived teachers and non-local students. Unlike other teachers, he takes the curriculum from the perspective of a newcomer and views it as a tool that helps outsiders understand the new community and integrate into it. It is informative regarding the local community, practices, languages, arts, and geography. Local curriculum prepared by including local subjects, arts, skills, cultural, religious, historical, and archeological importance areas helps the children to learn about the local community (Adhikari, 2024). In his view, the local curriculum has very high value as it offers clear insights into the geography, traditions, customs, climatic conditions, rituals, and socio-economic aspects. Local curriculum gives a clear vision regarding the overall territory, guides non-local teachers to adjust very easily, and places great value on it in the perception of non-local teachers. The perception of him centered on the developing cultural literacy for newcomers by local curriculum, and it enables them to become part of local society in a short period of time, which, in fact, is the role of local curriculum.

At the same time, he identified significant gaps in the curriculum, particularly the absence of major stakeholders during the curriculum design process, and also the lack of teachers' orientation for its implementation. However, he maintained the positive space and viewed the local curriculum as a learning opportunity rather than a burden, and perceived the local curriculum as a bridging content to newly arrived teachers, students, and even visitors.

### **Local Curriculum Practice as an Inclusive Approach for Cultural Understanding**

While observing the classroom practice of Krishna, one of my participant teachers, I found him making his class lively from the beginning by engaging the students to share their understanding of festivals. When he began the class, he invited the students from different cultural backgrounds or communities, such as students from the Newar, Tamang, and Brahmin communities, and asked them to share about the festivals that they celebrate. The beginning of his reflection is that he believes cultural understanding begins with acknowledging diversity. His classroom strategies

reflect social constructivism, where learning emerges through dialogue, peer interaction, and recognition of diverse cultural voices (Terwel, 1999). He also used flashcards to put information on rituals of birth, marriage, and death in different communities, which demonstrates his effort to internalize local content and make it accessible to students, though he is non-local himself.

He had a discussion before visiting the curriculum content regarding the topic, conducted group questioning, tried to judge students on their prior understanding, and forwarded the chapter, which reflects the experience of the teacher. In our conversation, he did not hesitate to share that he was relying on other local colleagues for the additional information, mostly due to his limited familiarity with the locality. This act, which he has done for even his learning journey, definitely helps local as well as non-local students to learn about locality.

He further discussed various festivals of different communities, shared the importance of them, talked about the ways of celebration, and made the classroom lively. He even assigned students to collect information about the festivals of the Newar community and tried to connect students with the local culture, festivals, and reinforce the feeling of belongingness. Krishna viewed local curriculum as a medium to integrate non-local students and teachers with local students regarding the celebration of festivals, performing the cultural rituals, and so on. His local curriculum practices consistently support students in collecting cultural information and making meaningful connections to the locality.

From the narratives of four of my participants, I found that their perceptions have been shaped differently due to differences in background, identity, locality, and experience. Their classroom practices also widely reflected variation in their perception. Sunita perceived local curriculum as course content that helps in cultural awakening by disseminating education on the importance of cultural heritages, religious sites, local arts, skills, languages, etc. Prativa perceived it as the subject that can be taught by involving students in the real field, and knowledge can be constructed there. Students can have experiential learning, which remains well-rooted in the minds of students throughout their lives.

In the same way, Baburam perceived local curriculum as the curriculum that supports conserving the real heritage sites. First of all, local curriculum teaches about the importance of heritage sites, religious sites, and cultivates the feeling of necessity of it for future generations, as a result, they contribute to the preservation of such

sites. A non-local teacher, Krishna, perceived local curriculum as the medium to foster belongingness. Local curriculum helps to cope with new scenarios for teachers and students, also by providing information on the locality.

### **Discussion**

This is a crucial part of the study in which I have tried to make a discussion on the basis of findings drawn from the study. I have tried to align my findings with the theories and literature. The discussion that I have presented here regarding the findings of my study tries to make clear how the findings align with place-based education theory and constructivist learning theory.

#### **Local Curriculum as Place-Based Education and Cultural Education**

I have drawn various findings from the interpretation of narratives presented by participants. The teacher perceived local curriculum as a strong means for cultural awakening, forming the identity and preserving the local heritages and religious sites, which is one of the major findings. This perception of teachers rightly aligns with the place-based education theory, which emphasizes learning based on local culture, history, geography, and whole community life. The stories of Sunita and Baburam particularly reflect the essence of place-based education, in which learning is done from the nearby surroundings, such as local markets, religious places, heritage sites, and rituals. Their narratives indicate that the students' understanding becomes deeper when their learning is rooted in their known places or surroundings, which makes an emotional and social connection to them.

Sobel (2004) expressed that place-based education connects every learner to their own local community, environment, and culture, which helps make learning relevant and meaningful. According to the place-based education theory, education becomes meaningful when learners develop a sense of connection with their place and understand their role in the community they live in. The participant teachers gave emphasis on cultural rituals, festivals, and historical sites, which demonstrate how the local curriculum carries out the functions as a medium for bringing awareness regarding the place among the students. Therefore, the finding reinforces that the local curriculum practice aligns clearly with place-based education by transforming local places into learning resources and joining students with the living culture, like heritage sites and cultural activities.

Local curriculum is very crucial as it enables cultural preservation and formation of identity by integrating local knowledge into a formal education setting

(Adhikari, 2024). This study has supported the view that the local curriculum serves as a tool to transmit culture from generation to generation. Teachers also shared that present modernization practices, migration trends, and lifestyle with the use of digital technology are creating a distance between children and cultural and traditional practices. In such a situation, the local curriculum plays a positive role and gives the right response by formally providing local knowledge to the school children. The integration of local knowledge in schools helps to fill the gap between traditional social practices and today's modern education, which helps to sustain community heritage (Gurung & Parajuli, 2021). By making classroom engagement with the students through storytelling, field visits, and discussions about culture, teachers intentionally use the local curriculum to reconnect students with local traditions, which are gradually disappearing due to less practice in daily life by people from the society.

### **Teachers as Interpreters of Curriculum**

The next important finding of my study is that teachers not only implement the local curriculum that is prescribed by the authority, but also actively interpret, adjust, and correct the curriculum on the basis of their knowledge, understanding, experience, and role. This finding connects with the concept of curriculum in use, which makes a difference between the written curriculum and the enacted curriculum. Teachers not only transmit curriculum into the classroom, but they also interpret, adapt, and construct knowledge that is suitable in the classroom context (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). My participant teacher, Baburam, has a deep understanding of local knowledge and information, and often corrects the factual inaccuracies and delivers the curriculum content with authentic historical narratives. Sunita and Krishna, on the other hand, are non-local teachers, and they are found relying on collaboration with local colleagues and community people to fill their knowledge gap and provide authentic knowledge. These practices of the teachers have shown constructivist principles, where knowledge is actively constructed through interaction, reflection, and interpretation rather than only explaining textbook content.

Constructivism focuses on the idea that students construct knowledge actively by experiencing in the classroom and interacting in society rather than passively receiving the information from the teachers (Terwel, 1999). This act of theirs demonstrated that teachers are the real curriculum practitioners and the mediators to fill the curriculum gap and provide real and proven facts among the students. If we

look from a constructivist perspective, real knowledge or authentication of content is developed from the teacher's mediation, interacting with other teachers, students, and the context. The findings of my study suggest that the teachers play significant roles in transforming a potentially weak curriculum among the students into a meaningful learning experience. However, the absence of a major practitioner of local curriculum during the curriculum development process and the lack of orientation regarding its practice have created limitations on taking ownership and have created challenges during implementation. It has highlighted the problem between policy intention and classroom situation.

### **Experiential Learning in Local Curriculum**

The observation of the classroom practices of local curriculum during the study process strongly indicated that local curriculum naturally takes itself to experiential and constructivist learning approaches as its content is grounded in locality. While teaching, the teacher frequently used strategies like storytelling, field visits, exhibitions, visual materials, and discussions with various inquiries. Experiential learning is such learning that allows students to engage directly with real-world situations by making their learning both active and meaningful (Getting Smart, 2017).

These strategies reflected the constructivist learning where students actively build understanding by linking new knowledge with past experiences and real-world situations. This practice of teachers aligns with constructivist learning theory, which focuses on learners themselves actively constructing knowledge through experience rather than passively listening by sitting in the class and receiving the information. Prativa's exhibition task in collaboration with students and her lesson related to disaster management has shown experiential learning where learners learn by doing, reflecting, and connecting the theories into real practice. Live experiences and participation in community-based activities foster the deeper understanding and authentic learning of the students (Sobel, 2004). Such activities of teachers allow learners to internalize knowledge through the involvement rather than memorization of content, which reflects the alignment of both place-based and constructivist principles in local curriculum teaching.

The market mapping activity of Sunita to show nearby market regions and storytelling based on cultural heritages has shown how an abstract concept gets transformed into a concrete understanding through the involvement of students.

Contextualized and place-based learning activities support students to connect their academic knowledge that they get in the classroom to their own immediate environment (Alumia Jr & Sullivan, 2025). This activity demonstrates that local curriculum helps to foster authentic learning experiences, where students not only acquire knowledge but also develop a sense of responsibility towards their culture and locality and contribute to preserving them. These findings reinforce the statement that local curriculum provides an effective ground for contextualizing the pedagogy in which learning is authentic, relevant, and lived. But the effectiveness of such pedagogy heavily depends on teachers' creativity, preparedness, and support system in the school, which is hard to find even in every school.

### **Lacking a Participatory Approach, Gap in Policy and Practice**

Every participant presented that there is a high value of local curriculum; at the same time, they highlighted that a lack of a participatory approach while making and implementing curriculum is its shortcoming. According to the participants, teachers, local historians, community elders, and social leaders were not invited in the right way during the curriculum designation process. The Participatory curriculum development ensures that more stakeholders contribute to authentic and locally relevant educational information (Adhikari, 2024). According to the participants, the professional training for the teachers before implementing the curriculum was also not conducted. This finding from the study reveals that there is a clear gap between policy and practice in the process of decentralization of the education system in Nepal.

A gap appears between the policy of curriculum and classroom practice, which highlights the need for teachers' support in its designation and training for implementation (Gurung & Parajuli, 2021). Policy document clarifies that there is a provision of autonomy for preparing local curriculum with the participation of every stakeholder. But the actual process followed during its design remained centralized, and consultation was confined to a few experts. As a result, teachers had to construct knowledge and meaning in the classroom rather than using structured professional guidance, which has demonstrated that teachers compensate for the policy limitations. This contradiction weakened the democratic intent of the local curriculum and diminished its value among the teachers and other stakeholders. If we talk from the perspective of making it strong, meaningful decentralization of authority and empowering local education sections with resources, guidelines, and capacity is required. The delayed preparation and delivery of textbooks, an unmanaged

assessment system, and a lack of orientation for its implementation led to complications in its effective practices. At the beginning, teachers were compelled to depend on other colleagues and informal sources rather than institutional support. These situations of local curriculum practices reflect the systematic weaknesses of translating curriculum policy into classroom practice. Despite such challenges, teachers showed constructivist practices, and they enabled meaningful learning inside the classrooms.

### **Local and Non-Local Teachers' Perspective of Local Curriculum**

Another important finding of my study is that there are significant differences in perceiving and practicing the local curriculum by local and non-local teachers. Local teachers like Baburam and Prativa took the curriculum through the lens of cultural and historical authenticity and responsibility. Whereas non-local teachers such as Krishna perceived the curriculum as a bridge of learning for adopting the new environment and increasing belongingness. Teachers' personal experience, cultural background, and local knowledge significantly affect the interpretation and implementation of curriculum (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004). The perspectives of both local and non-local teachers contribute to place-based learning by providing deep local knowledge or by enabling integration into the community.

One aspect that has emerged from my study is that the role of teachers in the local curriculum enactment is crucial. The curriculum was designed as a formal document by the local level authority of education, but its real value and effectiveness were perfectly shaped by the teachers inside the classroom. Teachers did not present themselves as passive mediator to transmit curriculum content only; they actively constructed the supplement of curriculum through their lived experiences, prior knowledge on culture, pedagogical approach, and interactions with the students and community members. This finding revealed that curriculum exists not only as a written document but as a lived experience, which is well shaped by teachers through interpretations and contextual delivery. In my study, local teachers made their presence to correct factual inaccuracies, added missing narratives of history, and designed activities to make the content meaningful, whereas non-local teachers did it through collaboration with the local colleagues, head teachers, to make understanding deeper for the learners of different backgrounds.

From the above discussion of findings, I came to understand that there are multiple thoughts and perceptions of teachers regarding the local curriculum. It has

been proven that my study carries the complete essence of a qualitative study. Multiple realities are found because of the variation in teachers' backgrounds, prior knowledge, and differences in support systems among the teachers.

This variation also highlights the role of teachers' background, identity, and experience in curriculum practice. Local teachers have possessed cultural and historical information that enabled them to raise the issue of inaccuracies and insufficient content, whereas non-local teachers took the curriculum from a learner's perspective. However, both the local and non-local teachers have shown their commitment to facilitate students learning in any way, which suggests that effective local curriculum practices depend on the collaborative effort of sharing knowledge rather than teachers background alone.

Finally, the study found that the local curriculum serves as a tool for cultural preservation, experiential learning, and supports social integration. It has also highlighted that the local curriculum has multidimensional roles in school and even in the community.

## CHAPTER VI

### KEY INSIGHTS, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATION

This is the final chapter of my research journey. After interpreting and discussing the data provided by my participants, I came to a conclusion about the whole research work by claiming some key insights. In this last chapter, I have included key insights as findings of my research and drawn conclusions of my study. I have also presented the implications of this study to stakeholders, including the teacher, local-level authorities, and future researchers, and concluded with my final reflection.

#### **Key Insights of the Study**

In this part of the chapter, I have presented the key insights that are derived from a careful review and analysis of the information in the above chapter. From the overall study on teachers' perception and practices of the local curriculum involving four teacher participants, various findings have been drawn. Among them, I have extracted the following major information from my study.

#### **Local Curriculum as a Tool for Preservation of Culture and Identity Formation**

This study has provided key insights into teachers' perceptions and practices regarding the local curriculum in Nepal. Local curriculum is primarily understood by teachers as a powerful means for cultural awakening, identity forming, and transmission of local knowledge from one generation to another. Teachers viewed it not merely as a subject to be taught in the class, but they took it as a mechanism to connect students with their community, cultural heritages, rituals, arts, languages, and lived environment. They even used it as a medium to bring students' concentration back into their locality from modernization and industrialization. The findings highlighted the significant role of local curricula in preserving culture, fostering belonging, and connecting students with their own community and tradition.

#### **Teachers as Active Curriculum Designers and Mediators**

The study has also highlighted that teachers are not only the implementers of structured curricula but also active curriculum designers and practitioners. By interpreting, supplementing, and showing pedagogical creativity, teachers transform the written curriculum into lived practices. These insights clarified that the effectiveness of local curriculum practice depends less on the curriculum document

and more on teachers' background, knowledge, commitment, and accountability. Teachers actively interpret, correct, and make curriculum content rich and meaningful by reflecting their role as cultural mediators and knowledge creators in the local context.

### **Experiential and Place-Based Pedagogical Practices**

The finding also revealed that experiential, constructivist, and place-based pedagogies naturally align with local curriculum content. Classroom activities like storytelling, exhibitions, field visits, presentation of maps, and engagement in the community not only have supplemented the curriculum but also have made the curriculum practical. This suggests that local curriculum offers a foundation for pedagogical innovation when teachers are adequately supported. Such practices foster authentic learning, promote deeper understanding, and active student engagement by connecting learners to their local culture, environment, and society.

Finally, the study has also provided insights into how local and non-local teachers differ, but meaningfully contributed to local curriculum practices. Local teachers brought authenticity and historical depth, whereas non-local teachers took the local curriculum as a bridge of learning for adapting to a new environment for non-local students and teachers, and easy belonging to the community. This variation of perspectives has enriched curriculum practice and encouraged collaboration.

### **Conclusion**

This study has explored the teachers' perceptions and practices of local curriculum in Tarakeshwar Municipality, Kathmandu, and revealed that local curriculum is fully contextual, socially embedded, and mediated by teachers during practice. The finding demonstrated that local curriculum functions not only as an academic document but as a cultural, historical, and social record that is shaped by teachers' experiences, background, identities, and their interactions with the community.

The study concludes that the local curriculum holds strong potential for the preservation of culture, experiential learning, and engagement with the community. At the same time, its effectiveness is limited by structural limitations during curriculum designation and implementation. Teachers' narratives and practices have shown that meaningful preparation and execution of local curriculum depend on participatory development, accuracy in content, orientation or training before implementation, and institutional support. Despite such challenges, teachers actively

compensated for the gaps in the curriculum through their creativity, collaboration, and contextual pedagogy, realizing their role as curriculum practitioners.

Overall, the study reveals that the local curriculum in Nepal represents both an opportunity and a challenge. As an opportunity, it democratizes education and honors local knowledge, and as a challenge, it is to ensure that decentralization is supported by genuine participation, capacity building, and sustained support.

### **Implications of the Study**

I have made a genuine effort to explore the existing realities among teachers regarding the local curriculum. The curriculum is new, and the local bodies have not gained full maturity. So, I have pointed out the need and remedial measures to some extent to make it more effective. Actually, if all stakeholders take their responsibility and move forward with its implementation, it can assist in various aspects like conservation of tradition, language, arts, skills, etc. I believe that my study helps various concerned parties with its amendment and enrichment because I have worked hard to get the perceptions of curriculum implementers. My study can be beneficial for stakeholders like teachers and the local level authority of education. I have mentioned the implications of this study under the following headings.

#### **Implications for the Teachers**

Teachers are the ground-level implementers of the local curriculum. Until and unless they take ownership of the curriculum, its effective implementation does not become possible. Their positive perceptions, further inputs for making a richer curriculum and an appropriate pedagogical approach, can only make their practice meaningful. The findings of the study suggest that teachers should recognize and take responsibilities of their role which is not only curriculum implementors but is cultural mediators and knowledge constructors in local context. They have to frequently interact with students of diverse backgrounds and increase their value among the local and non-local students as well.

As the major stakeholder of local curriculum, the teachers need to develop good relationships and communicate with community members, local historians, colleagues and social workers to enrich local curriculum content and ensure authenticity and accuracy. The practice to evaluate its reflection in the community, experiential and engaging pedagogy, and collaborative learning among teachers can further strengthen local curriculum practice, especially in the contexts where formal information regarding the content for learning is limited. They should not hesitate to

talk frequently with head teachers, other local teachers, for disseminating the correct content and not to affect classroom teaching by the limitation of curriculum, and equally, school administration, local level authority should supervise and monitor their practice in the classroom.

### **Implication for the Local Authority or Education Section**

The local level education section holds the major responsibility of making and implementing the local curriculum, as the authority of managing up to the secondary education is given to the local bodies in the present context. So, they have to be ready to face the criticism and take the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. Local authorities should adopt genuinely participatory approaches in curriculum design by involving teachers, local historians, community elders, and cultural practitioners so that the ownership of the curriculum will be taken by every stakeholder.

Management of regular orientation programs and professional training is essential to support teachers in the content of the curriculum, the pedagogy to follow, and the assessment system to be adopted during evaluation. Perfect guidelines on the evaluation system, a guarantee of timely textbook delivery, and updating content with changes in context are necessary to fill the gap between policy and practice. Strengthening the capacity of the municipal education office using local education experts is crucial for preparing and implementing a local curriculum in an effective manner, which also makes the meaningful decentralization of the education system in Nepal.

### **Implications for Future Researchers**

There are many issues under the local curriculum about which studies can be done. Future researchers may conduct a study to explore students' perspectives on the local curriculum, which may answer how students perceive the local curriculum. The comparative studies across various municipalities can also be done to explore local curriculum practices of local bodies. Future researchers may also examine assessment practices followed in local curriculum, policy implementation of municipalities, and the role of local curriculum in multicultural and migrant contexts. Such studies would further enrich the discourse of local curriculum and help to localize education and curriculum reform in Nepal.

### **Reflection**

Local curriculum-related perceptions and practices of teachers are connected deeply with their identity, culture, and experiences. From the narratives and

observation of classroom practices of my participants, I came to know that there are both challenges and opportunities in developing and implementing local curriculum in real school contexts. I noticed the teacher's creativity, commitment, and dedication filled the gaps in the curriculum and made the curriculum very meaningful for the students.

This research has also made me completely aware of the differences in the perspectives of local and non-local teachers regarding the local curriculum. Local teachers brought historical and cultural depth to the discussion and talked about accuracy and authenticity, whereas non-local teachers brought different perspectives, and they took it as a bridge for both teachers and students entering a new environment. This variation in perception demonstrated that the curriculum is not static, but it is constructed continuously by incorporating the views of every stakeholder.

As a researcher, I understood that there is high significance of participatory curriculum development, teacher orientation, and training for the implementation and community engagement for developing ownership. This study has reinforced my belief in the effectiveness of place-based, constructivist, and experiential pedagogies in which students are connected to their culture, environment, and community. Local curriculum plays a positive role in preserving the heritage and also in fostering the sense of belonging, responsibility, and preparing active citizens.

## REFERENCES

- Adhikari, R. (2020). Local curriculum and mother tongue education in Nepal. *Inventive: A Peer Reviewed Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2, 1-8. [https://digitalglobenepal.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/1\\_Dr.%20Rishiram%20Adhikari.pdf](https://digitalglobenepal.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/1_Dr.%20Rishiram%20Adhikari.pdf)
- Adhikari, S. (2024). Local curriculum in Nepal: Problems and challenges in development and implementation. *Dibyajyoti Journal*, 6(1), 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.3126/dj.v6i1.72048>
- Aliyu, A. A., Singhry, I. M., Adamu, H., & Abubakar, M. M. (2015). Ontology, epistemology and axiology in quantitative and qualitative research: Elucidation of the research philosophical misconception. In *Proceedings of the academic conference: Mediterranean publications & research international on new direction and uncommon*, 2(1), 1054-1068. University of Agric.
- Alumia Jr, D. L., & Sullivan, M. B. (2025). Integration, efficiency and effectiveness of the contextualized approach. *International Journal of Science and Management Studies (IJSMS)*, 8(3), 186-204. <https://doi.org/10.51386/25815946/ijms-v8i3p115>
- Andoh-Arthur, J. (2020). *Gatekeepers in qualitative research*. SAGE Publications.
- Andrian, D., Kartowagiran, B., & Hadi, S. (2018). The instrument development to evaluate local curriculum in Indonesia. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(4), 921-934. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11458a>
- Azevedo, V., Carvalho, M., Fernandes-Costa, F., Mesquita, S., Soares, J., Teixeira, F., & Maia, Â. (2017). Interview transcription: conceptual issues, practical guidelines, and challenges. *Revista de Enfermagem Referência*, 4(14), 159-168. <https://doi.org/10.12707/RIV17018>
- Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to social enquiry: Advancing knowledge*. Polity.
- Brann, M. (2017). Research ethics and social values. In M. Allen (Ed.), *The sage encyclopedia of communication research methods* (Vol. 4, pp. 1441-1443). SAGE Publications, Inc, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411.n502>
- Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD). (2019). *Local curriculum development and implementation guidelines 2019*.

- Ciesielska, M., Boström, K. W., & Öhlander, M. (2018). Observation methods. In M. Ciesielska & D. Jemielniak (Eds.), *Qualitative methodologies in organization studies* (pp. 33-52). Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65442-3\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65442-3_2)
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2004). Knowledge, narrative, and self-study. In J. J. Loughran, M. L. Hamilton, V. K. LaBoskey, & T. Russell (Eds.), *International handbook of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices* (pp. 575-600). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-6545-3\\_15](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-6545-3_15)
- Clandinin, D.J., & Connelly, F.M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. Jossey-Bass.
- Cohen, J. D., Jones, W. M., & Smith, S. (2018). Preservice and early career teachers' preconceptions and misconceptions about making in education. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, 34(1), 31-42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2017.1387832>
- Cope, M., & Elwood, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Qualitative GIS: A mixed methods approach*. Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., Klassen, A. C., Plano Clark, V. L., & Smith, K. C. (2011). *Best practices for mixed methods research in the health sciences*. National Institutes of Health. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e566732013-001>
- Curriculum Development Center (CDC). (2019). *National curriculum framework 2019*. [https://media.edusanjal.com/u/national-curriculum-format-of-school-education-2076\\_pNBcvUi.pdf](https://media.edusanjal.com/u/national-curriculum-format-of-school-education-2076_pNBcvUi.pdf)
- De Souza, F., Neri, D. C., & Costa, A. P. (2016). Asking questions in the qualitative research context. *The Qualitative Report*, 21(13), 6-18. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2016.2607>
- Getting Smart. (2017). *What is place-based education and why does it matter. getting smart in partnership with edulnnovation and teton science schools*. <https://www.gettingsmart.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/What-is-Place-Based-Education-and-Why-Does-it-Matter-3.pdf>
- Gibson, S. E., & Brooks, C. (2012). Teachers' perspectives on the effectiveness of a locally planned professional development program for implementing new curriculum. *Teacher Development*, 16(1), 1-23.

- Green, L. W., & Glasgow, R. E. (2006). Evaluating the relevance, generalization, and applicability of research: issues in external validation and translation methodology. *Evaluation & the Health Professions*, 29(1), 126-153.
- Gurung, G. P., & Parajuli, D. R. (2021). Study of local curriculum implementation imparting local scientific knowledge in Nepal. *International Journal of Innovation and Education Research*, 1(1), 9-18.  
<https://doi.org/10.33369/ijer.v1i1.14046>
- Konokman, G. Y., Yelken, T. Y., Karasolak, K., & Cesur, E. (2018). Teachers' perception: Competent or not in curriculum development. *Mojes: Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 5(4), 56-73.  
<https://mjs.um.edu.my/index.php/MOJES/article/view/12519/8088>
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). (2019). *National education policy 2019*. <https://moest.gov.np/content/10155/10155>
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). (2022). *School education sector plan (SESP)*.  
[https://old.cehrd.gov.np/file\\_data/mediacenter\\_files/media\\_file-19-1556257932.pdf](https://old.cehrd.gov.np/file_data/mediacenter_files/media_file-19-1556257932.pdf)
- Nataño, N. M. (2023). Perspectives on curriculum contextualization and localization as integral to promoting indigenous knowledge. *International Journal of Academic and Practical Research*, 2(1), 67-76.  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8031639>
- Neuman, W. L., & Wiegand, B. (2000). *Criminal justice research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Palmer, C., & Bolderston, A. (2006). A brief introduction to qualitative research. *Canadian Journal of Medical Radiation Technology*, 37(1), 16-19.
- Piaget, J. (1972). Development and learning [Reprinted]. In M. Guavain & M. Cole (Eds.), *Reading on the development of children* (2nd ed., pp. 19-28). W. H. Freeman and Company. <https://reflexus.org/wp-content/uploads/35piaget-child-development.pdf>
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8(1), 5-23.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839950080103>

- Radu, L. (2011). John Dewey and progressivism in American education. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov, Series VII: Social Sciences and Law*, 4(2), 85-90.  
[https://webbut.unitbv.ro/index.php/Series\\_VII/article/view/6419/4941](https://webbut.unitbv.ro/index.php/Series_VII/article/view/6419/4941)
- Raut, I. R. (2025). Problems and challenges of local curriculum development and implementation in Nepal. *BARUN Journal*, 2, 67-84.  
<https://doi.org/10.3126/barunj.v2i01.78331>
- Ryan, F., Coughlan, M., & Cronin, P. (2009). Interviewing in qualitative research: The one-to-one interview. *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*, 16(6), 309-314. <https://doi.org/10.12968/ijtr.2009.16.6.42433>
- Sahasewiyon, K. (2004). Working locally as a true professional: Case studies in the development of local curriculum. *Educational Action Research*, 12(4), 493-514. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650790400200265>
- Sharma, G. R., Ahmad, M. S., Batala, L. K., & Ace, B. N. (2019). Policy paradox between local and national agencies of education: A lived experience from local curriculum development practices in Nepal. *International Journal of Education Research*, 7(3), 159-170.  
<https://www.ijern.com/journal/2019/March-2019/11.pdf>
- Singhal, P. (2012). Continuous and comprehensive evaluation: A study of teachers' perception. *Delhi Business Review*, 13(1), 81-99.
- Skinnari, K., & Nikula, T. (2017). Teachers' perceptions on the changing role of language in the curriculum. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 5(2), 223-244. <https://doi.org/10.1515/eujal-2017-0005>
- Sobel, D. (2004). *Place-based education: Connecting classroom and community*. The Orion Society. [https://coga.uccs.edu/sites/g/files/kjihxj1851/files/2020-10/Place-Based\\_Education.pdf](https://coga.uccs.edu/sites/g/files/kjihxj1851/files/2020-10/Place-Based_Education.pdf)
- Soltis, J. F. (1989). The ethics of qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 2(2), 123-130.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839890020203>
- Stephenson Reaves, J. R., Likely, R., & Arias, A. M. (2022). Design principles for considering the participatory relationship of students, teachers, curriculum, and place in project-based STEM units. *Education Sciences*, 12(11).  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12110760>

- Subedi, K. R. (2018). Local curriculum in schools in Nepal: A gap between policies and practices. *Crossing the Border: International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 6(1), 57-67. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED588861.pdf>
- Subedi, K. R. (2020). Fostering the local curriculum conceptualizations: Empowerment and decentralization. *Pragya Manch*, 32(16), 52-63.
- Terwel, J. (1999). Constructivism and its implications for curriculum theory and practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 31(2), 195-199.
- Tronsmo, E., & Nerland, M. (2018). Local curriculum development as object construction: A sociomaterial analysis. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 72, 33-43. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.02.008>
- Vaismoradi, M., Jones, J., Turunen, H., & Snelgrove, S. (2016). Theme development in qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*, 6(5), 100-110. <https://doi.org/10.5430/jnep.v6n5p100>
- Webster, L., & Mertova, P. (2007). *Using narrative inquiry as a research method: An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching*. Routledge.
- Zhao, J. (2024). Striking a balance between education globalization and localization: constructing an internationally applicable curriculum framework. *Journal of Higher Education Teaching*, 1(3), 291-296. <https://doi.org/10.62517/jhet.202415347>

## APPENDICES

### Interview Guideline for Teachers

Title of the Study: Teachers' Perception on Local Curriculum of Nepal: A Narrative Inquiry

Purpose of the study: The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of teachers on local curriculum and to assess understanding and the experience of teachers regarding the implementation of local curriculum.

Research question: How do basic level teachers of Tarakeshwar Municipality narrate their understanding and practice of local curriculum?

Before I go to the field, consent from the head teacher of the school where my participant is working will be taken. I will make informal talk to my respondent through phone call with the consent of head teacher before going to the field.

Participant's Details (Teacher)

Name:

Address:

Name of the involved institution:

Age:

Interest:

Social background:

- Where do you live and how many members are there in your family?
- How long have you been involved in the teaching profession?
- How long have you taught in this school?
- How cooperative are your mates as well as your administration to you?
- How familiar are you with the parents/guardians?

Academic background:

- What is your academic qualification and which is your major subject?
- Is there any connection with the subject that you studied and the local curriculum?
- Can you please, share about your teaching carrier?

Understanding regarding local curriculum:

- What is local curriculum? Please share your understanding?

- Local curriculum was started to prepare as the responsibility of education was given to the local level government. At the moment how was the participation of the concerned bodies? Does it seem that it was made in the participation of the whole concerned stakeholder, or not? Sir, if you have something worthy to remember at that moment, please, share it with me.
- Generally, the formation of a curriculum can be prepared on research-based results, but has it happened in our case or not?
- While implementing a local curriculum, what ease discomfort, or negative aspects did you encounter in terms of teachers?
- Was it easy to apply or not how is it currently moving forward?
- It certainly has some strengths. In your eyes, what are the strengths of the local curriculum?
- Generally, it is said that the local curriculum should have the ability to expose the skills and arts of the local area to the local level and to internationalize it from the national level. In this context, such hidden skills and classes that will be marketed tomorrow at the national level or at the international level are unlikely to exist within us. Are those things searched and included in the curriculum or not?
- You have been teaching since the Municipality has implemented the local curriculum. Is there anything that you have worthwhile sharing here the experiences that you encounter both with parents and students respectively in parents meet and the classroom teaching?
- While implementing the local curriculum was there enough orientation for the teachers about the information of teaching pedagogy on behalf of the local Education Department and Municipality?
- When was the training conducted? Was it meaningful?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about the local curriculum you can share?

### Observation Performa

Interview Questions	Probing Questions	Reflective Note
Where do you live and how many members are there in your family?		
In what sort of family do you belong to?		
How long have you been in this profession?		
For how many years have you been teaching in this school?		
How familiar you are with the locality you are teaching?		
How is your qualification and which subject you studied?		
How close is your study subject and the local curriculum you are teaching?		
When did you know that you are allocated the duty to teach local curriculum?		
Was the orientation given to the concerned about local curriculum at the beginning?		
How did you understand about local curriculum?		
Do you discuss with the teachers of other schools about their understanding on local curriculum?		
Have you ever been in training regarding the teaching of local curriculum?		

How is your feeling while teaching  
'Hamro Tarakeshwar' a local  
curriculum

What have you found as the strengths  
of local curriculum 'Hamro  
Tarakeshwar'?

Are there any weaknesses of the  
curriculum?

In what aspect you think can be  
brought change in order to make it  
further strong? Mention.

Are you satisfied with the content  
covered by local curriculum?

Local curriculum covers local  
language, art, culture, religion, skill,  
tradition etc.' In what extent has it  
covered all these aspects?

Do you find the content supportive to  
other subjects too?

Since how long have you been  
teaching local curriculum?

Are the things incorporated in the  
curriculum essential to be taught to  
all the students?

How do you conduct the internal  
assessment of this curriculum?

How important is it to implement  
such local curriculum in every local  
body?

Any suggestions for its  
improvement?

---

### **Interview Transcription**

This is the model of the interview that I had taken with the participants of my study from the community school located in Tarakeshwar Municipality, Kathmandu. This is the original version of transcription of the communication in between me and one of the local teachers.

#### **Please share your understanding of local curriculum?**

The local curriculum should give more importance to the locality, its history, culture, geographical situation, the local natural resources, natural diversity, agriculture, and everything else. Somehow, our local curriculum has covered that. But literally what should be emphasized and what kind of benefit that gives to the students hasn't been included as the syllabus was prepared in a bit of haste, so that overall aspect has not covered.

#### **How was the curriculum developed? Were all the stakeholders participated?**

There were 7 village development committees earlier and now there are only 11 wards in our Tarakeshwar Municipality. It would be better if people having knowledge about the history, geography, and culture of each ward were gathered while preparing the local curriculum. In each ward of the earlier VDC, there are still some people known as a living history and they are holding truth and evidence of various aspects of life. Now, the book has been prepared as if they used to prepare the National census sitting in a place top of the hill. As a result, many errors occur which need frequent improvisation and modification. But even after that improvisation, the book may not hold enough correct information. Let's take the example of our oldest school Gram Sewa, we have our teachers teaching here and maybe their teachers too. What if all of them had been gathered, made them sit and share their vision about the preparation of a local curriculum, and requested them to write about that? Which has not happened then. Here, the local curriculum has been prepared based on visits to some people from neighboring areas and asking a few questions about the places. Whatever the reason we are compelled to teach it.

#### **Please share about the curriculum contents and its value among the local and non-local students.**

Now local curriculum has been implemented. I am not aware of how is it in private schools. In comparison to community schools, there are more local students in private schools. Generally, in community school students are enrolled from entire the nation and it is a bit difficult to teach them local subject matters. And I think it is not

necessary for them to teach the history of Tarakeshwar. What is the use of our local culture to them? There may be something given in the local curriculum that non-local students should learn although the topic may not be as useful as for locals. What about teaching Local Curriculum only for local students and a particular subject for non-local which may have a lasting impact on the whole life of the student? Not about Tarakeshwar as they are not living here. Secondly, as a local while comparing most of the data and knowledge given in the textbook are not factual and proven. As an example, it has mentioned that Tarakeshwar Mahadev has been named, because the right thigh of Sati Devi is apart from the body and kept falling here and due to that it named as Tarakeshwar, but I also read at Swosthani, I even took a photo and kept that page myself safely, and it is not mentioned anywhere in one of the most religious books, Swosthani. Instead of Tarakeshwar, it should be named Tigreshwor after falling thigh because there hasn't mentioned anywhere about the falling palate from the body. It might be falling off the palate so it was called Tarakeshwar. These are various things, now they just write in a book as a writer. If any confusion or mistake is found in the book there wouldn't be anyone in particular responsible for the question as none of the writers' names is mentioned in the text. Simply they just skip the confusion about finding the actual information. If someone raises a question about the text, they just reply it wasn't me who wrote that instead, they reply it was written with the help of someone else. Can they turn aside saying that I am the author of the book but it wasn't me who wrote the topic, ask someone else. After taking a responsibility, one should be accountable for it. It has to be verified before publishing. No matter what the situation is, we have applied it and moved forward.

### **Share about its strengths**

The strong point is that local children, whether they are educated in private or in the community school, the children have known the cultural aspect, agriculture, the state of business, and the businesses going through local urbanization, the state of yesterday, today and the tomorrow. It is very important that they get information about this place. Another thing is that the culture of the tribes living here, the festivals celebrated here, the religious places of pilgrimage, and the historical things recently set up and historical things, and the local children will also come to know about it.

**Generally, it is said that the local curriculum should have the ability to expose the skills and arts of the local area to the local level and to internationalize it from the national level. In this context, such hidden skills and classes that will be**

**marketed tomorrow at the national level or at the international level are unlikely to exist within us. Are those things searched and included in the curriculum or not?**

There are no such practices. What used to be found commonly in different areas like Dhamsthali, Kavresthali, Futung Sangla, and all the 7 V.D.Cs., What was the regular agricultural production in areas like Goldhunga, Jitpur, and Manamaiju V.D.C, and which crop have been highly harvesting here from ancient times? Which fruits or vegetable can produce here? Nothing has mentioned, instead the recently established factories are being published more in the local curriculum. In fact, Tarakeshwar should be introduced through the local production not the materials which we have been recently manufacturing in a factory. However, the local curriculum hasn't covered the local items to introduce the Tarakeshwar properly.

**You have been teaching since the Municipality has implemented the local curriculum. Is there anything that you have worthwhile sharing here the experiences that you encounter both with parents and students respectively in parents meet and the classroom teaching.**

Yes of course there are various events that I recall. Among them I remember Ghode Jatra, Dashain Jatra and Buddha Jatra most. In those days it was not customary to pave the way with clothes for the procession of Jatra. Once one of our neighboring brothers together with his son passed away. As a modification in the culture, his wife and daughter bought the clothes to pave the way for the procession during the Jatra. During the preparation of the topic about this incident only the event has been mentioned in the local curriculum not the name of the person who modified that culture. They felt very bad as nobody mentioned their name in the text. Once they visited the local education department and asked why did the writer only mentioned the new practice of Jatra but not the person who introduced those practices. They also added that they have introduced the modification of the Jatra. Meanwhile they asked who was the writer of the text and the people of the department pointed at me. So, like that some others should write about Jitpur, and Sangla as I wrote about the Dharmasthali. The local People should prepare that and take responsibility of writing by themselves.

If you talk about the students, they are not aware of our culture as they are from outside. When they seem confused about the local culture and frequently ask for confirmation whether that happen in the Jatra or not; In answer, we just let them enjoy

the Jatra physically as it is very close from the school. On the other hand, we have been realized that our culture and Jatra are disappearing gradually. I have already consulted with the ward president that during the Gaijatra, students should be asked to bring cultural dress from home and participate in the Jatra. Because we have a culture to celebrate Ropai Jatra in our locality and there were not any participants in last year in Ropai Jatra. According to the Culture, the male should be in female costume and vice versa so there were more audience than participants. Due to the reasons, I decided to request the students whom I teach about Ropai Jatra for their participation to celebrate with real costumes for sustained learning.

**While implementing the local curriculum was there enough orientation for the teachers about the information of teaching pedagogy on behalf of the local Education Department and Municipality? How was that?**

No, it is misfortune of Nepal which never happened before informing the teachers and providing an adequate amount of instruction about the new as well as Local curriculum. However, it is running in a reverse way. First, they implement the curriculum, finding the problems through the teachers and trialing about the solutions. However sometimes, somewhere they inform earlier about the possible problems and weaknesses of the curriculum and orient the teachers about the improvements. In some cases, they have called us and we have been there to for the proper orientation although that was not enough.

**At the end, is there anything else you would like to say about the local curriculum?**

Now, what I think is that Bhubaneswari, Shantidham, Flag hill is being very popular in our local curriculum. Because of this, the ancient history was not explored. Tarakeshwar is the place which holds the history Having a main road to visit the west in the past. The inscription of 517 B.S proves that Buddhist chaitya founded by Manjushri, the temple of Manamaiju, its glory, the ponds of Sangla, the serpent ponds of Futung, all are behind promotion. The history is being hidden due to the glorification of these new structures. So, the concern body and the stakeholders should pay attention timely on those aspects.

Thank you, sir, for your time and information.