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## Ethical Lapses in Profession: Case of Community School Teachers in Nepal

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### Abstract

This study embraces how teacher performs duty under the institutional rules and regulation in the course of their professional life. The unpunctuality in duty, mistreating to students, poor dedication in responsibility, lack of collaboration among professionals misleads to teacher to accomplish their responsibility and hence undergoes to rupture an ethics of teaching profession. The main aim of this study is to explore the lived experience of children about the behavior of teacher in the classroom activity. The five students of different level representing diversified characteristics were purposively selected and interviewed through semi structure interview guidelines in their natural setting. The interview responses were transcribed as verbatim and analyzed by extracting theme within theoretical framework based upon post structuralism and discourse analysis. In the students' narratives more than five themes were identified from the discussion regarding with ethical lapses of teacher in the class room. The study explored punctuality, professional identity, social acceptance, accountability, discriminatory behavior in the classroom. Such type of lapses cannot contribute to effective teaching learning environment. And hence learning performance of children is residing back to the expected goal. This study result can become way out to set up strategies for making ideal teacher. The teacher also knows about their responsibility to be carried out in the line of student development.

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### Introduction

The features in our country is embedded with a full of diversity along with academic and non-academic differences. The various difference embodied in the community is reflected in the class room. The class room diversity embraces the activity of teacher acting to address diversity in the class room. The teacher instruction is influenced by his perception on differentiating treatment. These activities are hanging to the professional ethic of teacher that guides in his professional career. Fenwick (2005) claims that the best way to explore an issue of professional ethic is by evaluating the ethical conflict that the teacher faces in the relationship with staff, students and parents. The interpersonal, professional, institutional and social conformity can lead to ethical dilemmas as they act in class room (Sabbagh, 2009) <sup>[11]</sup>. Being teacher, the morale, values and assumption are connected with professional development. If he lacks in performing duty by soul his morale value will be ejaculated from the atmosphere of trust and ideal. Research has shown that today, the teacher are falling to maintain their dignity and losing their professional identity. The duty style, overestimated attitude and lack of dedication in work are making teaching profession less delightful job (Campbell, 2000) <sup>[3]</sup>. In the degradation of professional ethics and dedication, the organization goal as well as student development mission are regretted and falling behind to imagination and dream. The students cannot ensure their future by education. Moreover, negative attitude have been evolved during acquisition of education (Strike & Soltis, 2015) <sup>[17]</sup>. There is decreasing number of people who see the future by education.

Sims and Felton (2006) observed teachers' work performance revealed that teachers' general behavior with students and the relations with a co worker, the process of teaching, and working conditions are not so satisfactory in the favor of students development and goal of education rather than consuming job. The nature of the job, salary and allowance, and work environment influences to the motives of job satisfaction (Campbell, 2003) <sup>[4]</sup>. The study indicates that the teachers who are not dedicating to their jobs demonstrate low level of organizational behavior, job performance, commitment, and retention in school in the course of entrepreneurship development (Bozalek *et al.*, 2014) <sup>[11]</sup>. Teacher job dedication is a key factor for quality education. The term Teachers' professional ethics is rarely determined through examination (Miñano *et al.*, 2017) <sup>[9]</sup>. Job ethics among school teachers is considered to be one of the crucial aspects in the arena of teaching and learning (Seghedini, 2014) <sup>[12]</sup>. There has been no systematic, large-scale research or small-scale research which extracted major issue in professional ethics to determine psychological indicators in Nepal. The number of secondary schools in Nepal has increased after democracy. Due to the increasing number of secondary schools in Nepal, school academic staff may face more problems in their job to reveal their performance. Almost most of the permanent teacher is reluctant to drop maximum effort after their job security. The student is expecting heavy support from teacher without any laziness but it is not found in practice (Lantz *et al.*, 2011) <sup>[8]</sup>. Teacher behavior and teaching involvement have a significant impact on educational outcomes, considering that teaching is the main objective of the educational process (Davis *et al.*, 2006) <sup>[6]</sup>. In this context, the aim of this study is to explore lived experience of students toward teaching responsibility in class.

### Conceptual framework

In my opinion, teacher and student are the inter-mutually related like nail and muscle. The teacher is the priest and students are god in the temple. So they are equally valued within education system (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011) <sup>[13]</sup>. Before highlighting the professional lapses of teacher I want to mention the work performance of teacher in the classroom (Tirri & Husu, 2002) <sup>[18]</sup>. A teacher school without teacher is just like body without soul, skeleton without flesh and blood. The ethical values are the crucial in education system regarding students learning outcomes and professional performance (Husu & Tirri, 2001) <sup>[7]</sup>. In education act ethics of teacher are clearly determined as both organizational principles and objects of basic and secondary level schools. The teacher's ethical practice is concerned with classroom behavior. But the practices are not explicated accordingly.

### Theoretical Framework

The major cause of ethical lapses is in teaching and learning is rapidly increasing corruption in education institution. It is defined as the systematic use of public office for private benefit whose impact is found in the availability and quality of education goods and service as result of access, quality and equity in education (Singh & Purohit, 2011a) <sup>[14]</sup>. Privatization of education institute is another cause of declining ethical values in education system. Government of Nepal has allowed opening self-financing private institution with recognition which may be considered as private enterprise. The government teacher engages in own

institution and less consume time in community school (Singh & Purohit, 2011b) <sup>[15]</sup>. According to Garg *et al.* (2019), the education has acquired the status of marketable commodity where educational institutes are traders and students are consumers. According to Betweli (2013), teacher absenteeism is one of the causes of ethical decline in education. It reduces effectiveness of school. Student performance, damages school's reputation and induces pupils absenteeism (Puhan *et al.*, 2014) <sup>[10]</sup>. Spencer (2000) <sup>[16]</sup> asserts that in the sense of giving voice to teacher the behavior and intervention of teacher in the classroom are seemingly ethical dilemmas and subjectively presented by subjects in professional situation are expected as vehicles within teaching strategies (Ugoani, 2016) <sup>[19]</sup>. So the concepts points out dialogic prospective through which student tensions are closely examined and overcome by observing situational constraints (Caetano & Silva, 2009) <sup>[2]</sup>.

### Methodology

This study has adopted the interpretative phenomenology as a research design which studies shared meaning of lived experience from social phenomena (Creswell *et al.*, 2006). The proposed design seeks to study the perception of students in ethical character of teacher in their course of teaching life. The experience and feeling of students are drawn from the participatory school. The students who were participated in this study had been studying in secondary level of community school located in Morang district, province no.1. Five students from the secondary level were purposively selected from the participant school. Regarding the overcome of ethical dilemma the participant were taken informed consent. In depth interviews were conducted for rigorous information. Various journal articles, books, reports and publication of related organization had been thoroughly studied to overview an issue of the study.

Interviews with the participants were recorded by audio recorder. Recorded interviews responses were transcribed as verbatim and developed code. Similar codes were organized to generate theme. The similar themes were organized as a main theme of the study. The main themes were discussed on the basis of ground data and theoretical support. They were compared and contrasted with data to data and data to literature.

### Result and Discussion

This section reveals the result and interpretation of result obtained from the analysis of narratives as verbatim with the theoretical lens adopted for this study. The findings extracted from the quotation of participant are illustrated thematically in the following ways.

#### Leadership anomalies

The process of influencing other by activities and accountability comprise with leadership. In order to run organization, team work efficiency is very much essential. The head teacher of the school roles as captainship for the academic enhancement in the school by coordinating and facilitating to subordinates to achieve the goal of school. In this context, participant ST1 said

Our head teacher is an insurance agent and always roams to the community to make Clint for the insurance. In school, he always comes late and departs before school ends. In such behavior of a head teacher, no teacher and

students are controlled. During the school hours the teacher gathers in the tea shop and talks about politics.

In relation to above assertion, head teacher of this school is not attentive to school and academic circle. He is engaging with business motives for earning money. In the haphazard character of head teacher other school staffs are also show carelessly behavior in the school. The head teacher is nominal and not performing duty under the rules abides by education act. In such condition student and teacher are beyond the control of school. In such condition, the head teachers are more sensitive about the academic dynamism of school and lead to school with the transformative approach. Another participant ST2 said.

In this school most of the teacher are engaged in different organization existed in community. When teacher enters to the class with mobile at hand, phone starts ringing. He receives cellular phone and get out by advising chapter to read thoroughly. We cannot understand English math and science by self-study and stop it. The head teachers are falling to control the aforementioned activity of teacher. The teacher seems to be more powerful with their political ideology in the school.

In this assertion, the teacher are showing the political strength which is against of education act. Bylaw, the teachers are prohibited to hold the membership of political party but they are indirectly engaging in their respective affiliation. The odder thing is the teachers are related to more organization running to community due to conscious citizen. With the various responsibilities, the teacher lacks to prepare subject matter and sometimes leave the school without any accountability. For the resolution of such activity, the teacher must be energetic and should monitor the activity of teacher in the lines of academic enhancement.

### **Social recognition and Accountability of teacher**

The exposition of teacher in the social institution as role model of the community refers to the social cognition. The various responsibilities to be performed in the society can hamper to the professional accountability of teacher in teaching and learning. In order to accomplish the accountability in the social institution, he/she has to devote more time and instead less time in school. In this context, participant ST1 said,

The teacher is actively participating in the community for different purpose. In every function and organization teacher has taken responsibility because he is familiar with each community. He is recognized as a social being due to his activeness to role the community responsibility. With this reason the teacher is less attentive to teaching activity of school. Any time he is busy in outdoor activity and spends little amount of time in school for his job.

In this assertion, the teacher is recognized as social being with his academic carrier but he is failure to maintain this professional dignity. In most of the time he engages in social activity. Being a teacher, the major responsibility is to engage in school activity in developing student strength. The assumption is that if student is unable to know than the teacher did not teach. To prevent from this blame, the teacher must always sincere about the student reading and need to

facilitate about their problem solving activity. The teacher needs to be model of problem solver and development path seeker. Being social being, he should engage in society but not whole timer. The accountability towards social function should not hamper the student learning in the classroom. In the favor of above argument another participant ST2 said,

The community people recognize teacher as the social transformer in the society. Politically, he might be affiliated with any party but he is not treated in such a manner by the community. He can play a vital role in the development of society. As a candle gives light to others by burning itself; the teacher also contributes to society in the same prospect. When the teacher actively participates in the party, he gives less emphasis to school. His conception is to be secured by political party if any challenges occur with him.

Concerning to above argument, the teacher seems as social transformer and development agent. In this essence, the community people think the teacher must engage more time in social function. But, without education, it is not possible to develop society and the present children are the pillar of development in the future. In this way the teacher must be responsible for school as major role and community thereafter. Similarly in context of teacher's accountability participants ST3 stated.

Our math teacher is from another province and shows laziness in his duty the time of instruction he comes to class and talks about transfer into the same province. He express bitter feeling from this school. He frequently says school has not supported him for transfer in their hometown.

Concerning to above context, the outside teacher are seemed to serve lightly and less dedication. When he appoints and attends to his job, he intends to transfer as soon. He is unable to dedicate in the job rather than government job. He spends time only of salary and monthly income. He does not contribute as social service and in favor of student development. They always expect to be supported by school to ease transfer facility from school.

In the same context another participant ST4 said, In this school teacher behave like irresponsible about their teaching profession. Some of the teacher who is from outside of the school located community shows alternative thought in school. Late coming of school and showing inactive behavior in class reflects his inattentiveness in his job. They think that school is just platform of beginners. After getting permanency, their intention changes to transfer for their home town. They are less responsible for social contribution.

The teachers who belong to community associated to school is more accountable than the outside teacher. The local teacher is always accountable for the local society and work hard for the development of school. The outside teacher keeps in mind, responsibility is just for job. Social accountability is not so high for them. In the duration of the job, he shows so-called accountability and dedication to enhancing school. In the present context, the outside teacher always wants to transfer to his local areas with the support of

the political back force.

### Time Consuming Practice

The spending of allocated time in classroom by showing their teaching behavior refers to time consumption. The teacher likes to enjoy with inappropriate practice by using hand phone. The students are excluded from the creation of active learning involvement.

The teacher enters the classroom after 10minute when the bell ring. The teacher enters without any lesson plan and holds the class by traditional approach along with directed instruction. The teacher likes to see cellular phone without engaging student in the class room with specific content. No student is allowed to participate in creating dialogic environment. Sometimes the science teacher makes students open page no and recites without any demonstration.

In this assertion, the teacher often enters lately to classroom and without plan. If teacher enters without plan he won't teach any matter effectively. In the absence of plan teacher is unable to formulate strategies for gainful learning and becomes only traditional learning culture. By traditional types of teaching and learning, the students learning needs are not fulfilled by school education. In such case teacher need to be trained about the daily lesson plan and instructional strategies. The teacher professional ethics should be maintained by acquiring professional skills. The punctuality, accountability of teacher is the important assets for ideal teacher. So the teacher should present professional efficiency by their attitude and behavior.

In the above context, another participant ST2 narrated as,

The teacher comes into the classroom and asks about the content. He prefers the lecture method without any assignments in the class. His focus is only to cover the course in the allocated time. He does concern about the knowledge-gaining process for the student but instead, he is driving by the force of course cover earlier to academic session.

In this assertion, the teacher's instructional strategy is completely guided by ritualistic thought and applies traditional method of teaching in the classroom. The teacher is hurried to finish the course without fruitful learning. The teacher's intention should not be directed to job oriented but instead goal oriented. The teacher need to think that learning is possible by active involvement student in the class room activity.

### Teacher's Role in the Community

The involvement of teacher in the social function of community comprises with teacher's role in the community. The teacher is recognized as dynamic and familiar person in the community. In this context, participant ST1 said,

In this school teachers are doing politics with shadow presentation. In every political function, they seem being participated. In the constructive activity of road and drainage, they are selected membership and actively function in the motives of earning. By the political divide rule head teachers are elected and works in the favor of same political party.

In relation to above, the teacher is seemingly affiliated to political party and indirectly presents in the political function. The teacher involve in the local development function by relating to conscious person. The teacher intends to participate by earning motives keeping relationship with political member. The head teacher are also appointed from the political influence. In such condition, the teachers are restricted from the political affiliation which is illegal. The teacher's mobility and dynamism are monitored by government. If found violating law, they should be fired without any compromise.

### Impatience in Responsibility

The prolonged engagement in performing duty toward the goal achievement comes under the dedication in the responsibility. The active involvement in the job enhances the strength of professional ethics and qualities of good teacher. In this context participant ST1 said,

In the classroom hour teacher comes late and talks about matter other than course content. He spends time by talking about sometimes politics and bullying students. He is not serious about classroom teaching and learning performance of students. We some of the students are average minded and cannot perceive subject matter thoroughly. The weak students are assisted by subject teacher on the basis of their need.

In the above assertion, the teacher is seemed to be less punctual and talks beyond the content areas. Any way he spends time by flooring out of subject matter. He frequently talks about political situation but student cannot understand. The teachers are not sincere about student reading. The average type of student always feels trouble while asking question to arrogant teacher. In such context, the teachers need to facilitate for all types of learners with their different need.

### Opportunist motives

The benefit taken from the school on the behalf of duties and service as being local teacher corresponds with the opportunist thought. The opportunist teacher takes duty as time consuming accomplishment in formal boundary. The teacher reacts with general accountable authority as the local proudest.

In this context participant said,

I have been reading in this school since the last 10 years. I see that the local teacher is affiliated with different type of organization running in society. Being the executive member of the organization, they are called frequently in the meeting and miss the class. At that time we are imposed to do different activity. If we keep the comments into office, we will be punished from teacher side. I have heard that the teacher is relative of head teacher.

Concerning to above, the local teacher are taking advantages from the school as being neighborhood from school.

Another participant said,

I need to make the presence in every function. In this type of business, I can devote limited time in teaching learning activity. Head teacher allows local teacher to participant community function of the local areas. The assistant head



teacher belongs to outer community and damp care about the leading process.

In the above context, the local teacher wants to take benefit from school and head teacher in the name of societal responsibility. Such types of teacher are wants to skip from their responsibility. The teachers spend time in informal talks instead of taking class. The unaccountable teacher for teaching is burden for the school as well as students. Such type of teacher cannot stand as ideal teacher for the facilitation of students learning. In this regard, the school administration need to monitor the activity of teacher whether they are smoothly performing duty or not. Being the teacher they need to teach students in a time and facilitate them with essential knowledge and expertise.

### Conclusion

The ethical gap in sighted by student in performing the institutional role of teacher was the major aim of this study. The organizational success of school depends on the performance of stakeholder within the school. Being the teacher as the navigator, his roles are associated with student development and holistic development of school. If teacher are not performing their duty according to the rules and regulation of school, the goal of school is misled and runs to the wrong destination. The teacher fails to run in proper track if he is not punctual. Punctuality, accountability, social acceptance are the major ethical lapses as experienced by the participant in the school. Discrimination behavior at class, lack of professional identity, social identity and so forth are the major ethical lapses reported by this study. Since teacher is important property and globally accepted as backbone of education system. The teachers are milestone for the transmission of knowledge and skills in the respective areas. The teacher's quality and ideal significantly affects to the student learning outcomes and development. Due to the political interference the ethical values of the Nepalese teachers are declining and results deterioration to value orientation in the teaching and learning field. So it is necessary to increase ethical values, philosophical thinking and morale development in education development.

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