

A Progress Report
Of
A Seminar-workshop program
On

Quality Education in Community Campus:
Problems and Prospects

Organized by
Ragani Chandeshwari Campus
Khijidemba-2, Ragani, Okhaldhunga,
May 11, 2024

Submitted to
University Grants Commission
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

1. Background

With the rapid development of technology and the fast communication system, education has not been confined to the developed countries. In recent years, a large number of higher education institutions have been opened even in developing countries. New communication technology has made access to knowledge and scholarship easier and quicker. Accordingly, consciousness about the significance of education has grown more than ever before.

In Nepal too, many higher education institutions have been opened in rural areas. More than a dozen of universities are running and more than a thousand constituent and affiliated campuses have been opened in rural areas also.

However, higher education system in Nepal is based on teaching and evaluation alone. Many institutions lack adequate infrastructures and qualified human resources. They have no qualified and experienced teachers. The knowledge management system is weak. There are not enough capacity building programs for teachers and staff. Even the educational entities seem confused about what exactly should be done to improve the situation.

Educationists around the world are beginning to realize that education through teaching alone is not enough to cater to the growing needs of students in the changed context. Since we live in a rapidly changing world, the knowledge transmitted through teaching is inadequate. We have known many things about the universe through formal educational institutions, but we still have to know much more through other means of education. In this regard, Richard I. Arends (2012) says:

We don't know exactly how schools will look by the middle of the twenty-first century. The futurists, however, have argued that the formal schooling as currently conceived and practiced will be out-of-date in the system of learning as horse and buggy are in the modern transportation system. (p. 9)

This statement suggests that only teaching are not enough to provide education in the changed context.

Our need today is the quality education that should focus on knowledge and skill both. It also should aim at equity, inclusion, and accessibility. As the SDG4 says:

Education is a fundamental human right and an enabling right. To fulfill this right, countries must ensure universal equal access to inclusive and equitable quality education and learning, which should be free and compulsory, leaving no one behind irrespective of their gender, disabilities, or social and economic situation. Education shall aim at the full development of the human personality, and promote mutual understanding, tolerance, friendship, and peace. Education should go beyond basic literacy and numeracy skills, and equip individuals with creative, critical thinking, and collaborative skills while building curiosity, courage, and resilience.

However, Nepali education system does not seem to address these principles. Nor does it seem to achieve the goal in performance and practice. The condition of community funded campuses is even worse.

Research is done to find a solution to academic and practical problems of life. As Booth et al. (2008) say, "We do research whenever we gather information to answer a question that solves a problem" (p.10). John Creswell (1994) also says that research is important because it is a focused study "that may emerge through an extensive literature review, be suggested by colleagues, researchers, or advisors, or be developed through practical experiences (p. 4). In either case, research can be a reliable method of finding a solution to the problem.

Whereas higher education institutions have introduced research-based activities in their curriculum and teaching, governments of many nations have also established some research centers and allocated budgets for their operation.

In addition to teaching, research, and publication the community-funded campuses have also to organize academic programs such as workshops, seminars, and conferences to train the faculties and staff to build capacity for more knowledge and better performance.

In this context, Ragani Chandeshwari campus organized a seminar-workshop program on the subject of quality education in community campuses.

Objectives

The general of this seminar-workshop is to bring out the essentials of quality education to the stakeholders of community campuses. The specific objectives of the program are:

The main objective of this seminar is to bring out the essentials of quality education to the stakeholders of community campuses. The specific objectives of the program are:

- To give some knowledge and information about the concept of education as envisioned and practiced in the past and present
- To explain the concept of quality education as endorsed in SDG4.
- To create awareness about the challenges to quality education and suggest some solutions so that we can contribute to the agenda and practice of quality education.
- To suggest ways to reduce (inter)national migration.

At the end of the seminar-workshop, the participants of the seminar will be able:

- To know what is meant by quality education
- To understand the agenda of quality education as endorsed in SDG4
- To understand the challenges to quality education, ways forward, and take initiatives to improve the quality of education.
- To be aware of domestic and international education.

Work Schedule

This seminar-workshop program was organized by Gramodaya Yugakabi Siddicharn Campus on Baisakh 29, 2081 (May 11, 2024).

Methodology

The seminar was conducted in face-to-face mode. Since this was held in a small group of teachers, students, and other stakeholders, a question-answer system of interaction was used. The questions were based on the points detailed in the presentation slides.

Conclusion

The resource person presented a seminar paper on **Quality Education in Community Campus: Problems and Prospects**. The participants were nagged in discussion of a major question: What are the factors that lead to low quality (no quality) in education in community-funded campuses, and what can be the ways to improve the situation? The major problems as raised in the discussion were as follows:

- Backward regions
- Lack of Infrastructure
- Access inequality
- Lack of high-grade scoring teachers
- Weakness in knowledge management
- Absence of capacity building training
- Absence of research culture
- (Inter) national migration of young students (brain drain)

Recommendations

Based on the nature of the challenges and the discussions the following remedies were suggested:

- Additional funding to backward regions
- Funding to construct adequate infrastructures
- Creating access equality through digitalization
- Attractive wages to high-grade-scoring teachers
- Opportunity for PhD and further studies
- Provision of practice like fieldwork, social projects, etc.
- Training, seminars, and workshops for capacity building
- Incentives for research and publication
- Attraction to youths for home return (brain gain)

Expert/ Resource person: Prof. Dr. Bhupa P. Dhamala, a retired Professor from Tribhuvan University. He also worked as the Executive Director of the Center of International Relations in the same university

List of participants & Photographs

Please see on the separate sheet