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Challenges of the Use of Instructional Materials in Geography Classroom in Secondary School: Nepal

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ABSTRACT

Geography is an optional subject in the secondary schools in Nepal. This paper is an attempt to examine the challenges of using instructional materials in the geography classroom in community secondary schools in Kathmandu district of Bagmati Province. Geography teachers were selected by purposive sampling offering geography as an optional subject in secondary school. The semi structured interview method was used for data collection. The interviews were recorded on an audio recorder and transcribed. After collecting data, analysis of the data was made through the interpretations of the raw data by interpretative method. The results reveal that the challenges of using materials are non-availability of materials, laziness of the teachers, lack of skill and strategies, financial constraint, lack of appropriate materials in textbook, time constraint, lack of support from authority, lack of geography resource room etc. The remedies of the challenges of using materials are the organizing of training and workshop for teachers on how to use instructional materials, provision of funds by the authorities and government, regular supervision, the improvisation of the local materials and the provision of the various instructional materials which are necessary for teaching etc.

1. Introduction

Education attainment of any nation depends upon the quality of teaching. Quality teaching learning process more requires the use of different kinds of instructional materials in teaching. The materials are as objects or devices that help the teacher to make learning meaningful to the learners^[1]. Instructional materials are those materials that teachers need to incorporate in the teaching learning processes, to help the students benefit maximally from the learning experiences^[2]. Materials as things or materials that can be seen or touched, places or

persons that established conditions which enables learners to acquire knowledge, skills and attitude^[3]. Teaching learning in secondary schools can only be effective through the use of different types of materials that guide the teacher in explaining topics to the students effectively and efficiently^[4].

These materials could be different forms which include printed, graphic, objects, audiovisual, boards, local materials and many more. Instructional materials to be used meaningfully and effectively, they must meet some characteristics i.e. variety, economy, adaptable and accuracy^[5]. These materials must be well designed, instructionally

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recognized, address the learners need, portable, durable, relevant and economic. The language of these materials should be simple, unambiguous and communicative to the all type of learners.

Geography one of the branches of social sciences encompasses a lot of topics in our life on earth such as physical and cultural geography and topical, regional and systematic geography^[6]. Being the bridge between physical science and social sciences, geography depends on the use of different type of materials and resources in classroom. The purpose of use of materials is to improve the quality of teaching and reinforce effective teaching and learning. Implementation of any curriculum depends on the quality and quantity of materials available to teachers and students for use in schools^[7].

These materials assist the teacher in promoting teaching and learning in geography classroom. The use of adequate materials provides platforms for delivering information for teacher and they motivate learners to learn more. The use of materials can also help to reduce the length of time to concretize the concepts of the subject matter. Low extent of use of materials has hindered the teacher's effective presentation in classroom. When the students learn through more materials in classroom, learning becomes real, practical, effective and meaningful. The use of materials would make learning real, permanent and promote retention^[8]. The use of these materials play the important role in the teaching and learning process. However, they are not ends in themselves but they are means to an end^[9].

These materials provide the teachers with a kit of tools to carrying out diagnostic research and remedial work demanded by up to date instructional purpose^[10]. For effective and purposeful teaching and learning activities, the teacher has to make and use of the appropriate and adequate materials^[11]. Generally it is said that one picture is equal to thousand words. These materials are limited and scarce, for the teaching of geography, and this necessitates challenges for the achievement of the set objectives of the subject.

The essential materials for teaching learning are often unavailable in most of community secondary schools. The unavailability of such materials in secondary schools lead the teachers to talk and chalk in the teaching and learning. When the these materials are unavailable, learners cannot do well. This implies that when learners are not doing well the defined objectives of education and geography curriculum cannot be realized^[12]. When the materials are not properly utilized and well managed, they pose a lot of challenge to the teaching and learning of geography. The main purpose of this study is to find out the challenges of using different materials in the teaching of geography in community secondary schools in Kathmandu district of

Bagmati province.

2. Methods and Materials

Qualitative research method has been used in this study. Qualitative research is grounded in interpretivist philosophical position in the sense that it is concerned about how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced^[13]. This study is a descriptive study to gather the information on teacher's perceptions and experiences about the challenges of using instructional materials in geography classroom in secondary schools. The main purposes of descriptive studies are describing, explaining and validating research findings. Eight geography teachers were selected on the basis of purposive sampling out of community secondary schools offering geography as an optional subject in Kathmandu district. Information on the secondary schools offering geography as optional subject in secondary level was acquired from different official records.

The primary data were collected using semi structured interview with geography teachers. Semi structured interviews are commonly used in qualitative and interpretive research. This method is conducted according to an interview guide that focuses on certain themes and may include suggested questions^[14]. The interview were recorded on an audio recorder to avoid data loss and then after transcribed. The secondary data were acquired from the published, unpublished and electronic materials. The data were categorized from the raw data and tables were constructed with frequency. After collecting data, analysis of the data acquired was made through the interpretative method by interpretations of the collected data.

3. Results and Discussions

The survey was responded by eight geography teachers in different sampled secondary schools in Kathmandu district. The number of male teachers dominate all the posts and had at least bachelor degree in geography from Tribhuvan University. It is found that 50 percent teacher had a teaching experience over 10 years, 25 percent had teaching experience less than 5 years and 25 percent had teaching experience between 5-10 years. All teachers got different teacher training program as a secondary geography teacher.

3.1 Utilization of Instructional Materials

The researcher wanted to explore the use of instructional materials in teaching geography classroom in secondary schools. The geography teachers were asked to state the extent using instructional materials in geography

classroom. This question had a goal to find out the use of teaching materials by geography teachers in teaching in community secondary school. Table one below represents the responses of the most widely utilized materials by teachers in the geography classroom in secondary schools.

Table 1. Utilization of instructional materials in geography classroom

Instructional materials	Frequency
Printed materials (textbook, reference book, journal, magazine, teachers manual, newspaper, dictionary etc.)	8
Graphic materials (map, atlas, globe, chart, graph, diagram, poster)	8
Audio visual materials (video, mobile, computer, tape, cassette, radio, overhead projector, television, photo, slide)	5
Local materials (mud, stone, stick, brick, floor, culture and traditions etc.)	0

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

According to the findings all geography teachers have used different printed materials (textbook, reference book, journal, magazine, teachers manual, newspaper, dictionary etc.) in teaching geography in secondary schools. All teachers in study area used graphic materials (map, atlas, globe, chart, graph, diagram, poster) in teaching geography. Audio visual materials (video, mobile, computer, tape, cassette, radio, overhead projector, television, photo, slide) in geography class room is occasional. Table 1 shows that all of the teachers don't want to improvise local materials (mud, stone, stick, brick, floor, culture and traditions etc.) for teaching in geography classroom in the study area.

3.2 Challenges of Using Instructional Materials

The researcher wanted to investigate on the challenges that teachers face in use of instructional materials. The geography teachers were asked to state the challenges using materials in teaching geography. This question had a goal to determine the challenges of materials by geography teachers in teaching in community secondary school. Table 2 represents the teacher's response of the different challenges of using materials in the geography class room.

Table 2. Challenges of using instructional materials

Challenges	Frequency
Non-availability of materials in school	7
Laziness amongst the teachers	5
Lack of skills and strategies	5
Financial constraint	4
Lack of appropriate materials in textbook	3
Time constraint	2
Lack of support from administration/ authority	2
lack of geography resource room	1

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

Teachers in community secondary schools face some challenges in using materials in the geography classroom. Most of the teachers state that schools do not have instructional materials in school. According to finding other challenges of using materials in teaching of geography in community secondary schools showed that laziness of the teachers, lack of skills and strategies for improvisation and use of instructional materials, financial constraint, lack of appropriate materials in textbook, time constraints, lack of support from administration / authority and lack of geography resource rooms.

3.3 Remedies for Challenges of Using Instructional Materials

Semi structured interview on the remedies of the challenges of using materials in the teaching of geography in community secondary schools. Table 3 represents the response of the remedies of the challenges of using different materials in the teaching of geography in secondary schools.

Table 3. Remedies for the challenges of using instructional materials

Remedies	Frequency
Organizing of workshop on how to use instructional materials	7
Provision of funds by the school authorities and the government	5
Regular supervision by the authorities	5
The improvisation of the local materials for teaching by the teacher	4
The provision of the instructional materials needed for teaching by the authorities	3

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

From the findings the remedies of the challenges of using materials are the organizing of workshop for teachers on how to use instructional materials, provision of funds by the school authorities and the government, regular supervision by the authorities, the improvisation of the local materials by the teachers and the provision of the various instructional materials needed for teaching by the authorities.

4. Conclusions

The instructional materials are important tools for achieving educational objectives of the country. The study has been revealed that in secondary schools there is lack of more materials used in the teaching of geography. The administrators and authorities should make available the necessary materials for teaching in classroom. Similarly, it was observed that the causes of the challenges of using materials are very many. Therefore, workshops should be conducted to educate the teachers on the challenges of

using materials during teaching. The importance of use of instructional materials in teaching, should not be neglected. Therefore the challenges encountered during the use of the materials, should be tackled for effective use of these materials. When necessary materials for geography teaching are provided in schools and the challenges of using materials are solved, the aims of secondary level geography curriculum may be achieved and the performance of the students may be improved.

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