



네팔 특수학교의 효과적인 지적장애 학생 교육을 위한 과제

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Challenges of Effective Instruction to the Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Special Schools of Nepal

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ABSTRACT

[Purpose] The study is aimed to explore the existing challenges for instructing children with intellectual disability in Nepal. **[Method]** This is a qualitative research study followed by descriptive design. Study includes 5 special schools of Kathmandu Valley which were selected by purposive sampling method. Similarly, 15 respondent teachers out of which 5 head teachers and 10 teachers (2 teachers from each school) were selected by purposive sampling method. Data collected from classroom observations and interviews with teachers and head teachers were validated by getting reviewed with a special education expert. **[Results]** Study showed that improving curriculum to make it need-based, recruiting qualified teachers, strengthening home-school collaboration, preparing an actual IEP, and developing positive thinking in parents are the challenges. Furthermore, enhancing support services, strengthening school management, and making school system disability-friendly are also the challenges associated with effective instruction to the students. **[Conclusion]** There are a number of challenges which can be overcome by the joint effort from the strong tie among government's desire, strength of the schools, and qualified teachers.

Key Words : Intellectual disability, Effective instruction, Qualified teachers, Nepal special education

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I . Instruction

Educating people with disability does not exceed more than some decades in the educational history of Nepal. There has been many efforts such, as formulation of number of policies and programs to provide education for the people with disabilities (National Center for Educational Development, 2015; CERID, 2006). National Special Education Program (SEP) in 1993 with the financial assistance of Denmark under Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) I (1992-1999), Special Education Policy 1996, BPEP II (1999-2004), Education for All (EFA) 2004-2009, Special Education Operation Guidelines 2004, Consolidate Equity Strategy 2014, Inclusive Education Policy 2017 etc. are some important programs and policies contributing in the chronological development of special education for the students with disabilities in Nepal (CERID, 2006). Special Education Council established in 1973 is an apex body to formulate special education policy and establish special schools were the big achievements as the results of such efforts. Nepal is also the signatory of many international policies, declarations, treaties, guidelines, and protocols regarding the educational rights of the people with disabilities (Ministry of Education, 2017). Being a member of United Nations, Nepal has endorsed many UN declarations and understandings regarding educational rights of the people with disabilities to bring them into action in the country.

According to Human Right Watch (2011), increasing access and opportunities on education for all children, especially for those with disability is the growing and indisputable concern in the world. Students with disabilities need special education and such education is a distinctive provision with specially designed instruction which includes education for pupils with disabilities and disorders (Heward, 2013; Farrell, 2009). In this context, students with intellectual disabilities also deserve quality education which is possible in special education setting (Algozzine & Ysseldyke, nd.). This is because special education adopt special provisions to fulfill their individual needs, and the needs are treated in the best possible way as a subject of basic human right in most countries of the world. Also, the educational rights of every child with disability is ensured in the Constitution of Nepal 2015. The constitution has been declared that every citizen shall have access to basic education which is free and compulsory; and also can get free education up to higher level (Nepal Law Commission, 2015). Hence, the Constitution of Nepal

envisaged an unprejudiced and equitable society through social justice in education. In this regard, students with intellectual disabilities being reality of the societies, they unquestionably deserve quality education for their dignified and respectful life.

Nepal is on the way to find the goal of education for all citizens in the country considering those national and international guiding principles on education. Unfortunately, children with disabilities being entitled to attend school like all other children; tens of thousands of children with disabilities in Nepal are deprived of such right (Human Rights Watch, 2011). In the classrooms of Nepalese special schools, there have been lacking of proper curricula for children with intellectual disabilities including Down Syndrome. Furthermore, educations providing to those who attend school learn only basic skills, and mostly focused on self-care (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The report also mentioned that children with intellectual disabilities have very few opportunities to enroll in secondary education or in the university level. Hence, the educational opportunities for children with intellectual disabilities are not suitable to their cognitive level and style of learning. In addition to this, the School Sector Development Plan 2016/017-2022/023 of Nepal mentioned that there is heavy lack of information about the children with disability and their access, participation, and learning achievement which are challenging the education system of the country (Ministry of Education, 2017). Similarly, the lacking and mismanagement of educational resources are the most talked issues which are challenging the efficiency of education system of Nepal.

In this scenario, providing education for children with disabilities, especially for those with intellectual disabilities are more challenging in terms of designing and implementing curriculum, instructional methods, educational resources, and physical infrastructures. Importantly, there is no proper focus of the educational agencies of the government in the education of such group of children, hence, keeping their families in agony and despair. A large number of students with intellectual disabilities are attending special schools where education for them is limited only in learning some skills related to personal care and daily living. According to Jung and Niure (2017), despite of having many policies and programs on special needs/inclusive education in the country, many barriers are prevailing resisting to receive quality education by the children with all type of disabilities. Especially, there are some issues on relevancy of curricular contents and their effectiveness in implementation. These issues are posing additional challenges to provide quality education to the students with intellectual disabilities.

1. Problem Statement

The Flash Report 2013-2014 stated that total number of children with disabilities (5-18 years) is 179,000 throughout the nation. A total of 73,985 or only 41.3% of all children with disability are benefiting from some kind of educational opportunities. However, about 60% of children with disabilities, largely intellectual, psycho-social, deaf-blind and multiple disabilities are still deprived of the opportunity for basic education (Jung & Shrestha, 2018; Department of Education, 2013). These children are receiving very less opportunities of education which is forcing them in melancholic and despondent lives.

Another reality is that there are only handful number of research reports found in the field of education for children with intellectual disabilities in Nepal. Most of the study reports presented by the non-governmental organizations and freelance researchers focus on only status and statistics of disability in general. Similarly, very few number of study reports are published on behalf of the government of Nepal providing only the holistic scenario of disability prevailing in Nepal. None of the academic or non-academic research reports are focused on the education of children with intellectual disabilities depicting clear pictures of the existing realities and challenges. Hence, there seems a sheer absence of literatures on how overall functioning of each individual child with intellectual disabilities can be enhanced.

These days, providing high quality education for the children with intellectual disabilities has been a cross cutting issue in education system of Nepal. The government of Nepal has recently been implemented a special education curriculum for educating students with intellectual disabilities for the first time in her history of education (Curriculum Development Center, 2015). These days, curriculum has been implemented but official assessment regarding its effectiveness is yet to be done. In these contexts, this is high time for posing a question regarding the issue of relevancy and effective implementation of curriculum. Effectiveness and efficiency in education system come through proper school environment, availability of needful support services, qualified teachers, curriculum implementation process etc.

Often the challenges for the effective school system are related to these factors. Therefore, questions such as; Are the teachers well trained to implement the curriculum effectively? How is the curriculum, is it suitable, appropriate, and working for enhancing individual functioning? How is the situation of parental involvement in learning process? Is the existing curriculum well planned to meet all

the learning needs of students with intellectual disability? Are instructional technologies, strategies, and assessment procedures going as guided by individual education programs (IEPs)? Does the curriculum orient the education suited to cognitive ability, interest and needs of the students? etc. Answer of these questions would provide important reference for the concerned researchers of the developed countries like South Korea. Therefore, this study has significance not only for coping with the existing educational challenges educating people with disabilities in Nepal but also provide insights to concerned researchers of the different nations.

2. Objective and Research Questions

The main objective of the study was to explore existing challenges for instructing children with intellectual disability in Nepal. To fulfill the objective, following research question was formulated as; what are the perceived factors (such as curriculum, human resources, home-school collaboration, IEP, parents' attitude, support services, school management etc.) challenging for instructing students with intellectual disability?

II . Research Method

The study was carried out by using qualitative research paradigm (Danzin & Lincoln, 2005) and was followed by descriptive research design (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). There are 32 special schools in Nepal, among which 14 special schools are operating for students with intellectual disabilities (Ministry of Education, 2017). Five special schools of Kathmandu valley (three special schools from Kathmandu districts, one from Bhaktapur district and one from Lalitpur district) were selected by using purposive sampling method (Wiersma and Jurs, 2009). These samples were taken from urban and rural areas of the districts. All the head teachers, teachers, and parents related to these special schools of Nepal were taken as population of the study.

Altogether 15 respondents were selected for the study where 5 head teachers (head teachers from each schools) were automatically selected as respondents and 10 teachers (2 from each school) were selected by convenience sampling method

(Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In those sample schools, students with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities were studying. Although there were no distinct grades, rather the students were categorized as first, second, and third level according to their ages as indicated by the special education curriculum. The following table depicts the demographic information of the study:

<Table 1> Demographics of the study

Item	Sex		Age		Training received on special education			Teaching experiences (Yrs)	
	M	F	20-40 (yrs.)	40-60 (yrs.)	Less than 10 days	10 days to 1 month	1 to 5 months	Less than 2 yrs	More than 2 yrs
Head teachers	4	1	2	3	0	2	3	1	4
Teachers	4	6	8	2	5	3	2	4	6

Separate interview guidelines (Kaul, 2009) were developed and administered to the head teachers and teachers respectively. Interview questions were generated on the basis of certain criteria which were set by a model special school for students with intellectual disabilities of South Korea in a book of its school profile. The validity and reliability of the research tools were ensured by the consultation and revision with peers and experts in special education. Similarly, classroom observation (Creswell & Poth, 2018) form was developed to collect information by direct observation of instructional process. The observation form was developed basically to support the data collected from interview process. The information obtained from direct observation was helpful for triangulating the data collected from interview process to increase reliability of the study.

Before starting data collection procedure, consents from the respondents were received in advance. Most of the interviews were conducted during leisure periods of the teachers. Some of the interviews were taken through telephone calls. However, the time allocated for each participant was similar. Direct observations were made by observing the physical aspects of the schools and classrooms. Some information were also collected from the study of documents like special education curriculum, special schools operation guidelines etc. Interview process was conducted 20 minutes for each respondent and took almost three days to complete collecting data. Supportive documents were also reviewed to collect additional information to

enrich collected data. Hence, all the data were triangulated (Kaul, 2009; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) to ensure the reliability and validity of the study. The data were sorted out and categorized to form different sub-themes. Similar sub-themes were grouped under one major theme. Thus, the study incorporates data obtained from multiple sources were used to generate (Creswell, 2007) major themes. Finally, the themes were interpreted and analyzed to get meaningful results.

III. Results

Nepal being a developing country, obviously, there are many challenges in its education system. Therefore, challenges prevail in educating normal students in regular schools as well as schools for the students with intellectual disabilities. But the specific challenges for teaching students with disabilities, particularly to those with intellectual disabilities are crucial. In this study, some important challenges regarding curriculum, human resource, IEPs, home-school collaboration etc. are revealed so that effective instruction to the students with intellectual disabilities can be planned. Results are discussed below:

1. Improvement of Existing Curriculum

Special education curriculum has been enacted in special schools especially for students with intellectual disabilities in Nepal. It is the first curriculum ever prepared for special schools aimed to instruct students with intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, and autism spectrum disorders. The curriculum has been implemented these days, and teachers have some suggestions to improve present curriculum to make it more functional to the students with intellectual disabilities. One of the teachers stated:

The curriculum was not specifically designed for students with intellectual disabilities, and the curriculum was based on the age of the learners rather than their individual competencies on functional academics and adaptive skills. The evaluation system of the curriculum is largely based on observation and question answers. [Teacher 2 from School B].

From the above-mentioned statement, the curriculum for the students with intellectual disabilities was largely based on the age of the students rather than their severity of disability, and actual support needs for learning. The curriculum should be designed in a way that the intellectual or adaptive skills of the students are properly assessed and curricular contents and evaluation system should be incorporated with the abilities and performances of the students. The curriculum should tailor the skills to be learnt and knowledge to be gained in increasing level of performance of the students.

2. Recruitment of Qualified Teachers

Teachers' recruitment system in public schools has been a long-disputed issue among the scholars of education in Nepal. Recruitment of disqualified person on the basis of favoritism, nepotism, and political affiliation is the most talked educational issue and a rampant problem in the schools of Nepal (Jung & Neupane, 2018). Because of these reasons, there is a problem of recruiting qualified teachers in the majority of schools; and special schools are not exception for this. Regarding this issue, a head teacher said:

I agree that qualification of some of our teachers to teach students with intellectual disabilities are questionable because they are not from special education stream. However, our holistic efforts of teaching cannot be undermined [Head Teacher of School A].

The head teacher has accepted that teachers teaching in the special schools lack necessary qualification resulting ineffective delivery of instruction in teaching learning process. Nevertheless, teachers of special schools must be well qualified, well trained, motivated, and passionate in their job. Because of the teachers who come through unfair recruitment process has been ruining the quality of education. As a result, learning knowledge and skills by the students is not at the satisfactory level. A teacher said:

One of my students has not been progressing as I had expected; may be due to my inappropriate qualification and lack of experiences of teaching such students. Frankly speaking, another problem is the result of dishonest recruitment like nepotism, favoritism, and political affiliation [Teacher 1 from School C].

This is clear that teacher recruitment system in special schools needs open competition, standard criteria regarding qualification and experiences, and based on merit system. Teachers should also meet other professional competencies such as knowledge of the child, knowledge of instructional environment, pedagogical knowledge, good communication skills, attitudes for caring and loving etc. A separate special education teacher recruitment criteria should be set up by Teacher Service Commission of Nepal so that eligibility criteria to be a special education teacher is well defined and candidates can sharpen their knowledge in particular area.

3. Strengthening Home-school Collaboration

Home school collaboration is a rarely talked issue but highly influential in operating special education system. In special schools of Nepal, home-school or school-community collaboration process is not systematized on the legal base, but somewhere, it is used to be incorporated in the policies. There is no explanation about the conditions, duties, and responsibilities of parents, teachers, and school to foster collaboration. Teachers and parents need to work being more close to each other and the framework for collaboration should be prepared. A head teacher said:

The problem of better collaboration lies in the understanding and awareness between parents and schools. Both of them should be responsible to each other. But how? A framework is needed to shape our collaborative efforts. Inclusive Education Unit under the Department of Education (DOE) should initiate to develop such framework as soon as possible [Head Teacher of School A].

In collaborative process, not only parents and school, but there are multiple stakeholder who can contribute to enhance personal competencies through teaching functional academics and adaptive skills to the students with intellectual disabilities. Usually parents complain that they do not get enough time to participate in school activities due to household affairs to make their livelihood. They also think that they have nothing to do with their presence in school. But schools should aware the parents about how importance is their presence and how they can make difference in school for the future of their children.

4. Preparation of an Actual Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Preparation of IEP is an essential condition of special education program which is a legal document for a school to address individual learning needs of every child. All the sample school teachers and head teachers claimed to have prepared IEPs for their children without consulting any special education experts. In this sense, the authenticity of the IEPs is questionable. Also, using of IEPs was suspected when a teacher took long time to find the file of IEPs. Hence, preparation of actual IEPs with the help of experts is essential. This is proved by a statement:

Of course, we maintain the IEPs of every individual which are prepared by ourselves. In fact, we do not hire the experts for preparing it. However, I believe that we have done wonderful job so far [Head Teacher of School C].

The researcher had great inquisitiveness to see IEPs prepared by the schools and requested them to show. They told that the IEPs were prepared by themselves after they were participated in a workshop related to preparation of IEPs. Their attempts were praiseworthy, but the essential tenets of a standard IEP were lacking. Their IEPs were somehow like personal details with no exact goals and objectives, no comprehensive assessment procedures, and also lack appropriate trajectories about how exactly the IEPs contribute in enhancing individual functioning. The IEPs follow largely the activities for the students as mentioned in the curriculum. IEPs contained similar activities to teach adaptive skills and some functional academics to every student. Therefore, the role of IEP for teaching and learning adaptive skills and functional academics has been undermined.

5. Development of Positive Thinking in Parents

The role of parents in education process is indispensable and an indisputable fact in modern society. The participation of parents in teaching learning activities provides inspiration for schools to deal with the diverse children and their individual needs. This is because parents are those who keep the greatest amount of information regarding their children which are considered the most authentic and reliable. Schools go through an unfortunate situation when the parents underestimate

their own roles, do not believe on the capacity of their own children, and do over expectations from the schools. In short, when parents have negative thinking towards their child, it is difficult to bring desired academic and behavioral change in their children. In this context, a head teacher said:

Some parents are there who have enrolled their children in school and did not visit the school even for a year. This is because of their disbelief in their children's strengths and they believe that teachers and schools have mere responsibilities to teach and look after their children with intellectual disabilities [Head Teacher of School D].

Still there persists such type of perception of parents due to the lack of proper orientation on their own roles and responsibilities towards their children with intellectual disabilities. Many parents still believe in fatalism and think the disability of their children was due to their sin they had committed in their past lives. A teacher said:

Many parents think that disability is the result of what karma (deeds) the child had done in the past life. And it was all happened due to god's will. Parents are totally unaware about how important are their thinking, perceptions, and beliefs for their children's wellbeing [Teacher 2 from School D].

Such type of superstitious beliefs and negative attitudes of parents are also challenging to take responsibilities for their children's learning. Such parents do not involve in helping schools with wholehearted efforts. Therefore, schools need to work to change negative and develop positive thinking in parents of the students with intellectual disabilities. There should be scheduled meeting between teachers and parents frequently. Standard Individualized Education Plan (IEP) should be prepared and implemented so that role of the parents is well defined. Schools should assign tasks to the parents to help their children for learning skills. School should convince the parents to believe in their children's abilities and their roles to contribute more for their children.

6. Enhancing Support Service Networks

One of the basic characteristics of special education is to provide support services to the students with special needs; and such services are provided by the number of persons and agencies. Therefore, schools have to make networks to find the sources of support services. There may be various partners willing to provide services to the students with their resources or expertise or human capital. School should be capable of coordinating and handling the internal and external affairs to make support service network so that services could be received on appropriate time, quality, and quantity. Regarding this, a head teacher had the following opinion:

We have been doing our best to find different types of support services for the students. We coordinate with government and other organizations to receive support services for our school. We also have therapist and doctors who are voluntarily helping us. I have understood the networking of services is also a part of my duty for school management [Head Teacher of School A, C, & E].

Networking of support services is a complex process where the number of people and service providers have to be coordinated, facilitated, and conducted. Support service networks are not only concerned with few services to receive, but to make a continuum of wide variety of services. Students with intellectual disabilities need wide varieties of such services like therapies, regular health check up facility, guidance, psychological counselling, medical services etc. for enhancing wholistic development and level of human functioning.

7. Strengthening School Management

Management means organizing the things in order, utilization of limited resources to get maximum benefits or achievements, and keeping and motivating the staffs to orient towards achieving educational goals. Many schools of Nepal are passing through difficult circumstances because of their either mismanagement or weak management of their. In some cases, despite of having adequate resources in some areas, schools are not efficiently using the resources to provide optimum benefit to the students with intellectual disabilities. One of the teachers said:

Teachers alone cannot do many things without appropriate help from school management. If the schools consciously manage the available resources we have, we can do more for the students with intellectual disabilities [Teacher 1 from School C].

Parents and teachers are sure to improve delivery of instruction to the students with intellectual disabilities if the school management is doing their jobs in the perfect manner. Many private organizations and people are interested to make the school resourceful and ready to help. But such potential resources couldn't have utilized in the betterment of the schools. The school management should make a reference with respect to which progress could be marked regarding change in behavior of the students with intellectual disabilities. School management should orient their resources and efforts considering the reference in mind towards achieving desired results.

8. Creating Disability-Friendly Environment in Schools

It is simple to understand that in the era of social justice and diversity management, public institutions like schools need to be disability-friendly where the access and participation of students with disabilities are ensured. Disability-friendly means modifying and adjusting the physical and cultural environment in such a way that every student with disability can access to all type of places and services available in the school. Special schools by their nature, they must be disability friendly accommodating all students regardless of their disabilities and other sociocultural backgrounds. Disability-friendly schools refer to the situation or environment in the schools where every child with disability feel secure, welcoming, pleasure, and sense of belonging. One of the teachers agreed that school she is working lack disability-friendly environment in some instances. Head teacher of a school opined as:

In terms of government's expenditure for a single student with disabilities, we cannot say that our school is disability-friendly. Not only that, teacher training, support services the students have been receiving, use of assistive technologies, and other old and outdated physical infrastructures etc. are challenging us to make our school disability-friendly. I think many of us (staffs) are still not prepared in our mind

to make our school culture disability friendly. I am fully convinced that we have still a long way to go [Head Teachers of D & E Schools].

Making the schools disability-friendly is an ongoing process thereby changing the schools in such a way that all the students including students with disabilities can have easy access to the school premises, classrooms, other amenities, infrastructures, facilities and support services. Above statement of a head teacher is clearly speaking about how the school can be disability-friendly. Despite knowing the facts, school he is leading is not fully disability-friendly. This means there is something associated with the economic, management, support services, and other physical aspects impeding for the schools to be disability-friendly.

IV. Discussion

There are numerous challenges in effective teaching of functional academics and adaptive skills to the students with intellectual disabilities. It requires high level of expertise and creativity to engage the students meaningfully into behavior making process. A constructive teacher always makes positive outcome out of learning materials, learning events, and learning time. According to Rovegno & Dolly (2006), constructivist approach of learning utilizes the challenges to make meaningful result. Only thing to consider by the teachers is that they have to prepare a conducive environment for collaboration with parents and other stakeholder.

Curriculum is an effective tool to carry out teaching learning activities in a specific direction. In other words, a good curriculum provides flexibility for a teacher to make classroom more lively, creative, and effective. Constructivist approach of learning also denies rigid curriculum and emphasize on its functional and universal nature which is flexible, simple and intuitive, and having perceptible information. Heward (2013) stated that functional curriculum content increases students' independence, self-direction, health and fitness, and employment in everyday school, community, and home environments. The present curriculum is a good effort for teaching many skills to the students with intellectual disabilities, but not enough to teach all kind of functional skills. It should contain such fundamental element of learning by which incoming problems for some years can be solved.

Otherwise, years of valuable opportunities for meaningful learning can be wasted (Heward, 2013). Another trait of a good curriculum is to provide enough idea for evaluation of the knowledge and skills learnt by the students.

Only qualified teachers can implement the intent of curriculum in effective and constructive way. Constructivist approach of learning assumes that people around the child have central role in their learning (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010). Therefore, specifically in special schools, teacher must be well professional and qualified. Teachers recruited on the basis of nepotism, favoritism, and without any standard criteria can lead to a bad result. It is obvious that teacher quality comes through merit based selection meeting standard criteria and providing them pre-service and in-service training (Shrestha, Jung, Neure, & Ha, 2019). Qualified and well trained teachers have greater impact on students' outcomes than any other factor. Therefore, recruitment of quality teacher is a matter of serious concern for the schools and eventually for the societies and the nation. Masterkaasa (2011) stated as most of the researches agreeing on the fact that quality teachers are the greatest resource and hence making greatest impact on students' learning. This statement emphasize on teachers' professional competencies as a key for the success of every educational system across the world. For example, Korea's 2015 Elementary and Secondary Curriculum emphasizes that teachers are final decision makers and developers in teaching learning process. In the United States, NCLB (now ESSA) also defines special teachers as 'highly qualified teachers' which makes teacher professionalism very important in schools. Regarding the study area, the special school teachers' recruitment in the wrong way (if not all, in many cases) thereby leading to an incompetent academic environment because of less qualified teachers. Therefore, a fair and merit-based teacher recruitment system through open competition on the basis of standard criteria is essential to set up for quality education through school reform by the Teacher Service Commission of Nepal.

Apart from recruitment of the qualified teachers, enhancing quality education for the students with intellectual disabilities requires an effective implementation of IEP and practicing home-school collaboration. IEP provides a clear guideline for a child's learning trajectory and also mandates for collaboration with the parents (Jung, & Neupane, 2019). The social constructivist theory also emphasizes in providing social environment to the students to accelerate their learning because social and cultural environment foster learning of the child. IEP essentially seeks

the role of parents in education process thereby creating a social environment for students with intellectual disabilities in schools. Majority of the special education teachers of Nepal understand IEP as a lesson plan (Jung & Shrestha, 2018). Also in the study area, specifically in those special schools, preparation, and implementation of IEP in its true spirit is essential for effective home-school collaboration, and ultimately leading to quality education.

Social constructivist perspectives seek the role of social actors; for example, “more knowledgeable others” (MKO) to enhance creative learning of children (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010). Parents are the most important actors who have been interacting with their children with intellectual disability and collaborate with school administration. Therefore, they should have positive thinking towards children with disabilities and their learning. In a study by (Lee & Nie, 2015), parents have instrumental role in constructive learning of the students. With family supported education, students’ academic success and conceptual learning abilities were found to have increased gradually. Meaningful interactions and discourse between parents and their children with intellectual disabilities in many life activities and skill learning are highly important to children’s construction of knowledge, and acquisition of life skills and attitudes. Positive thinking of parents towards their children with special needs help to attain a higher degree of independence, good educational environment, and an ample opportunity to gain experiences. In the schools of the study area, parents were found unaware on the sensitivity about the children with intellectual disabilities and their educational rights. Positive thinking of parents is the basis for positive parenting, and positive parenting resulted into motivated, self-directed, and constructive learner. Parents should encourage their children to think, to question, to reflect, and to interact with ideas, objects, and gain experiences at home and outside environment. This means, parents can play great role in learning of their children if they think positively and act for their children.

Establishing a network of support service is also an essential task in special schools, especially for children for intellectual disabilities. Creating a support service network is one of the important characteristics of special education (Friend, 2006; Heward, 2013). School alone cannot manage all the essential services for the students with special educational needs. Therefore, schools should coordinate with the government agencies, NGOs, service providers, professionals, para-professionals etc. There are several factors such as physical, non-physical, financial, and

technical associated to influence the learning ability of children. Since, social constructivism assumes learning as a social process (Taylor, Richards, & Brady, 2005; Kim, 2001). Constructive learning demands such services to be available in the schools so that teachers can incorporate teaching learning activities to those services and provide the best opportunities for learning.

Availability of most of the support services in school depends upon the strength of school management and managerial competencies of school head teachers. A good school management can make big academic achievement by using little resources (Cooper, Fusarelli, & Randall, 2004). In the study area, participant parents perceived some weaknesses in school management to generate necessary resources for learning of their children. Schools should engage in meaningful learning (Tomlinson, 2017; Kadum-Bosnjak & Bursic-Krizanac, 2012) and the meaningful learning comes from the interactive environment. It is obvious that adequate resources and support services are necessary to make such environment in the schools. To make such environment in schools, head teachers or principals must demonstrate instructional as well as administrative leadership skills. Effective school management not only enhances students' academic achievement, but also does a lot in professional development of the teachers. Hence, it brings positive impact through changing style of administrative and managerial practices and building stronger support system.

These days, providing full access to education for the students with disabilities, also for those with intellectual disabilities is the most acknowledged agenda in the world educational scenario. Despite of accepting education as a part of human rights, there exist many challenges in providing education; for example economic challenges (Shrestha, Jung, Neure, & Ha, 2019) to the children with disabilities. Even more constraints such as economic, infrastructure, human resources, etc. are perceived in providing quality education for the students with intellectual disabilities. In the study, the schools seriously lack infrastructure facilities and support services for enhancing knowledge and skill of children with intellectual disabilities. The major concerns of students with intellectual disabilities is quality education which is possible in disability-friendly schools.

The schools of the study area lack disability-friendly environment in term of physical arrangement, physical facilities, school building, school culture etc. Lack of such environment cannot create creative learning situation. According to constructivist approach of learning, a good social environment provides a best sense

of learning environment (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010) and also must be disability-friendly in nature. Disability-friendly school environment should be welcoming, interactive, social, and inclusive in nature (Kirk, Gallagher, Coleman, & Anastasiow, 2015). Overcoming the challenge of this issue, the schools of Nepal must be reformed with the perspectives of making 'Schools for All' by creating disability-friendly environment.

V. Conclusion

There are many challenges to provide quality education for the students with intellectual disabilities. The study revealed some prominent challenges experienced by the teachers, head teachers and parents of the concerned special schools for students with intellectual disabilities. The core of any education system is quality education and quality education is a result of proper association, interaction, and management several tangible and non-tangible factors. Lacking, mismanagement, and negligence are the major constraints for making effective learning environment. The study has revealed following challenges of educating students with intellectual disabilities in the special schools of Nepal:

Firstly, the existing curriculum was based on age level rather than grading and students' performance. The activities and their evaluation procedures were not adequately explained in the curriculum. Second, the teacher recruitment process was not based on the merit system in one hand and on the other hand, candidates having subject-specific qualification are not available in the market. Third, the concept of home-school collaboration was not clear to the teachers and head teachers as well due to lack of appropriate guiding framework for collaboration. Fourth, Individualized Education Program (IEP) was self-prepared and did not consist the major components of standard IEPs. Teachers had wrong understanding regarding IEPs. Fifth, parents' superstitious beliefs about disabilities, and dis-beliefs on the ability of their child was another challenge. Sixth, school's support services are not sufficient because of weaker network among the service providers. Seventh, school management is the key to manage and cope the challenges posed by other factors. But the management system was weak to

provide quality education to the students with intellectual disabilities and finally, the schools are not adequately disabled friendly in their physical and technological environments. Therefore, government efforts, school administration and management, and teachers' professional development are crucial in providing quality education through their joint collaboration to the students with intellectual disabilities.

VI. Implication of the Study

Researchers working in this field are facing primarily the problem of paucity of research materials in the research subject. The study has some limitations such as small samples of schools and participants, limited research data available in the area of study, and also the research was delimited to find only the existing challenges to instruct students with intellectual disabilities. Despite of some limitations, it is expected from the research work that it will make contribution in educating students with intellectual disabilities in Nepal. This research work can be beneficial to students who are pursuing their higher study in the field of intellectual disabilities. Likewise, this study will be fruitful for other researchers, teachers of special schools, NGOs and INGOs working for the education for education of students with intellectual disabilities in Nepal. Similarly, agencies of the government of Nepal will also find it equally advantageous to carry out their efforts and services for students with intellectual disabilities. Besides these implications, people pursuing their career in research based on the developed country like South Korea can find this study to know the reality of educating children with intellectual disabilities in developing countries like Nepal.

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<국문 초록>

네팔 특수학교의 효과적인 지적장애 학생 교육을 위한 과제

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[목적] 이 연구의 목적은 네팔 특수학교에서의 지적장애아동 교육에 현존하는 어려움을 심층적으로 탐색하고자 하였다. **[방법]** 카트만두 벨리 지역 5개 특수학교에서 15명의 교사(5명의 수석 교사 포함, 각 학교에서 2명의 교사)가 목적 표집되어 현상학적 기술 방법을 적용한 질적연구에 참여하였다. 현장 수업 관찰과 심층 면담을 통해 수집되고 분석한 자료는 전문가의 타당성 검증을 거쳤다. **[결과]** 연구 결과, 학생의 교육적 요구에 기반한 교육과정 개선, 자격을 갖춘 교사 모집, 가장과 학교의 협력 강화, 실제적이고 실행 가능한 IEP 준비, 부모의 긍정적 사고 개발과 같은 과제들이 확인되었다. 지원 네트워크 강화, 학교의 자율적 책임 경영 및 장애 우호적인 학교 만들기 또한 지적장애학생을 위한 효과적인 교육에 필요한 요소로 제안되었다. **[결론]** 지적장애학생을 위한 수준 높은 교육을 제공하는 데 해결해야 할 여러 과제들을 위해 교육당국의 의지와 학교의 권한 강화가 필요하고 자격을 갖춘 교사가 함께 협력하여 해결해야 한다.

주제어 : 지적장애, 효과적인 교수, 자격을 갖춘 교사, 네팔 특수교육

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