

# Effectiveness of Local Curriculum Implementation in Nepal

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**Abstract:** This article discusses curriculum in general and local curriculum in particular, with a focus on the implementation of local curriculum in Sankhuwasabha's primary schools. This article connects the government's policies for implementing local curriculum in Nepal's primary schools with efficient implementation at the local level. The situation of creating and implementing local curricula in the district is examined in this article. It assesses the efficiency with which the local curriculum is implemented in Sankhuwasabha's primary schools. Finally, this article recommends several strategies for improving the district's adoption of local curriculum in Primary schools.

**Key Word:** Local Curriculum; Primary School; Government's Policies; Efficiency.

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## I. Introduction

The word curriculum comes from the Latin word "currere," which meaning "to run" or "runway." In a limited sense, it is also synonymous with syllabus. 'The curriculum encompasses all of the learner's experiences, in or outside of school, that are included in a program that has been created to help him develop emotionally, socially, spiritually, and morally,' according to Crow & Crow. [1]. According to UNESCO, "curriculum" refers to "all pupil experiences that are planned and directed by schools and instructors to achieve educational objectives" quoted by Wagley & Poudel in 2054 B.S. Local curriculum is a detailed educational framework developed at the local level to provide pupils with local information, skills, and experiences. It is founded on democratic, open, inclusive, balanced, and fulfilling societal and national needs and activities ideals. It is built on a fully decentralized educational system. Curriculum construction is the process of delegation and devolution of power in education. To address students' experiences at the local level, the 'National Curriculum Framework - 2063' specifies education policy based on local requirements. 'Design local curricula including the substance of local matters,' it suggests-National Curriculum Framework -2063B.S.

Primary School Curriculum-2062 B.S. also materializes the policy and manages 20% of the course content in social science and a subject of local needs or mother tongue based on local issues. 'To design local curriculum to Curriculum Construction Centre through the development of directories, and every District Education Office is accountable to form local curriculum with the support of local experts in their respective districts,' according to the School Sector Reform Plan (2009-2015) reported by SSRP, 2066-72B.S..

The right to an education is a basic human right. It is the key to long-term development, peace, and stability inside and between countries, and thus an essential tool for effective involvement in the twenty-first century's societies and economies, which are impacted by fast globalization. The achievement of EFA objectives should not be put off any longer. Everyone's basic learning needs may and must be provided as soon as possible [2].

Nepal has its own calendar, which is roughly 57 years ahead of the Western calendar. B.S. is the abbreviation for the Nepalese calendar. Primary, secondary, and higher education are all under the purview of the Ministry of Education. The Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training coordinates technical and senior secondary vocational education (CTEVT). The Nepalese education system, known as the three-tier sixteen-year school system, was traditionally oriented after the Indian system. The shortcomings of this system became more evident from the 1950s onwards, prompting a series of reforms in an attempt to build a more competitive education system. The existing educational system, which is still in its early stages of development [3].

Nepal has come a long way since British historian Daniel Wright (1877) famously noted that "the subject of schools and colleges may be addressed as briefly as the subject of snakes in Ireland." According to the government of Nepal's 2014 education statistics, there are a total of 34,806 schools in Nepal, with 29,133 community schools and 5,673 institutional schools. There are 895 religious schools among them, including 745

madrasas, 78 gumbas, and 72 ashram schools. At the elementary level (grades 1–8), the school-to-student ratio is 1:179, while at the secondary level (grades 9–12), it is 1:145. At the primary level, the net enrolment rate is 87.6%, while at the secondary level, it is 34.7 percent [4].

One of the crosscutting concerns that would obstruct achieving EFA (Education For All) by 2015 is the high dropout rate. The 2012/13 primary school dropout rate is at 5.2, the repetition rate is 10.6, and the promotion rate is 84.2. This indicates that attaining EFA in primary school by 2015 is unlikely. Every year, 4.8 percent of students drop out of school, and the incidence of repetition is also high, which has been one of the biggest issues in the field of education. The Ministry of Education of Nepal is likewise investing heavily in primary education, but the results are unsatisfactory. The government has set aside Rs. 86.03 billion for the improvement of the whole education system, with basic education taking precedence. There is no substantial difference in the dropout rates in 2011/12 and 2012/13. The dropout rate was 5.4 in 2011/12 and 5.2 in 2012/13, a difference of 0.2 percent that will not meet EFA standards [5].

With the birth of democracy in Nepal in 1950, a new awareness of the importance of education arose. The need for widespread literacy and education has been felt across the country, from the Mechi to the Mahakali, and from the Himalayas to the Terai. Nepal has pursued a policy of isolation, as a result of which it has been kept in complete darkness, uncontaminated by modern civilisation. It has been horrible in the sense that the world has evolved so far while we have regressed to the point where only 2% of the population can read and write. There are no fast communication options or a stable economic situation. As a result, the country's problems are enormous, and the chances of change are practically impossible to imagine [6].

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are being implemented in Nepal and around the world (SDGs). According to the recently promulgated constitution, the country is likewise entering a new age of federal education governance. In terms of education, the SDGs agenda and the new constitution call for universal, equitable, and high-quality access to early childhood, primary, secondary, and postsecondary education, as well as technical and vocational training. In this context, the government's School Sector Growth Program (SSDP), which will run from July 2016 to July 2022, aims to reflect the SDGs and the new constitution's ambitions by putting education reform at the forefront of Nepal's development. All of this is in keeping with the government's goal of removing the country from the list of least developed countries (LDC). The current Education Sector Plan is the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP). The SSDP will build on the government's efforts to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education through programs such as Education for All (EFA), Secondary Education Support Program (SESP), Community School Support Program (CSSP), Teacher Education Project (TEP), and the Student Support and Retention Program (SSRP) [7].

### **Statement of the problem**

The Ministry of Education of the Government of Nepal proclaimed a local curriculum strategy in its documents, however its execution, as well as evaluation and monitoring methods, are under dispute. The service providers are underperforming, and the local population is not benefiting from the local curricula policy. In this light, the Sankhuwasabha study on the Effectiveness of Local Curriculum Implementation in Primary Schools is justified in arousing all stakeholders. The researcher has posed the following questions in this study: What is local curriculum? The Ministry of Education of the Government of Nepal proclaimed a local curriculum strategy in its documents, however its execution, as well as evaluation and monitoring methods, are under dispute. The service providers are underperforming, and the local population is not benefiting from the local curricula policy. In this light, the Sankhuwasabha study on the Effectiveness of Local Curriculum Implementation in Primary Schools is justified in arousing all stakeholders. The researcher has posed the following questions in this study: What is local curriculum?

### **Objectives of the study**

The study's goals are to: a. define local curriculum and elaborate the government of Nepal's local curriculum policy; b. assess the current state of drafting and implementing local curriculum in the district; c. assess the effectiveness of implementing local curriculum in primary schools in Sankhuwasabha; and d. identify some measures to improve local curriculum implementation in primary schools.

## **II. Material and Method**

Many books, dissertations, journals, and articles were used to conduct this research. This section briefly discusses the books, journals, and papers linked to this study.

For the delegation of local curriculum design at local level institutions, the CDC (2062B.S.) *Local Curriculum Design Directory stresses* the concept of educational decentralization and curriculum reform approach [8]. Local curriculum is defined as "the curriculum that is planned and implemented with the cooperation of local stakeholders in response to local requirements." It discusses the local curriculum's provisions and requirements. It also explains the strategies and steps involved in developing local curricula.

With the amendment provision, it explains the procedure of implementation and the responsibility of course design (Primary Education Curriculum-2062) However, nothing is said concerning the implementation mechanism's evaluation and monitoring. Not only that, but the authority institution has not conducted any research into the effective implementation of the directory's rules.

*Interim Constitution of Nepal, 2063 (2006)* the law expressly stipulates that "every community has the right to receive elementary education in their native tongue." Clause no.-17, Sub-clause no.1) (Part-3 Fundamental Rights, Clause no.-17, Sub-clause no.1). Similarly, subclause no. 3 declares that "any community living in Nepal has the right to protect and develop its language, script, culture, cultural civilization, and heritages" (ibid) Fundamental rights provisions in the constitution are obligatory for the state's authorities to enact through legislation. The legal laws are adequate for the implementation of local curricula in this context, but local government institutions are unaware of the matter and are not paying close attention.

*National Curriculum Framework -2063(2006)*, 'It is widely agreed that education should be based on local requirements and should correctly meet those needs,' adds the author. The following issues with implementing the local curriculum in Nepal are highlighted. — There is a lack of expertise to design the local curriculum — There is a problem managing child-friendly trained teachers — There is a lack of environmental leadership to actively design and implement local curriculum — There is a lack of institutional mechanisms to provide technical assistance and counseling for the development and implementation of curriculum at the local level. (2.12 Education tailored to local needs, pp. 17 and 18) The NCF clearly identifies the issues in implementing local curriculum at the local level. The authority should have set aside personnel and financial resources to address the issues presented by NCF. However, the CDC implemented the initiatives with little prior experience in the field.

*Primary Education Curriculum classes 1-3 & 4-5(2062/ 2065 B.S.)* Locally useful issues such as profession, business, religion, tradition, culture, values and way of life, local heritages, environment preservation, agriculture, local technologies, festivals, and so on can be studied. Local curriculum and course materials can be developed with the assistance of the Resource Center and under the supervision of the District Curriculum Coordination Committee. It can be developed at the district or resource center level.

The curriculum is excellent in theory, because it encapsulates the principles of inclusivity and education for everyone. However, it is regarded as ambitious and unrealistic in practice. The formal processes for developing and implementing local curriculum are considered as weak and ineffectual. Sandara [9], *Think Globally, Act Locally quotes Canagarajah (2005)*... Using local knowledge in... classrooms entails working in ways that are "not accepted or encouraged by authorities or professionals," but nevertheless refer to "the beliefs and direction coming from a community's past" (ibid).

Knowledge, in her opinion, is formed on a local basis. Local curriculum, including local issues, must be implemented in school education in order to achieve this. This is extremely beneficial to the knowledge-building process and meets the needs and experiences of the local community. Local knowledge has a practical use at the local level. The primary level curriculum is introduced by the CDC under the Ministry of Education in 2062 for grades one through three, and in 2065 for grades four and five. Local course is taught as a hundred-mark subject in these curricula at the primary level [10].

Local subjects or mother tongue might be offered as a course to embody the ideas of inclusion and education for people with special needs. However, due to a lack of local level officials' initiative in the creation and execution of native courses, Sankhuwasabha's elementary schools are forced to adopt English courses. Local specialists aren't even invited to help design the course on the ground. The rising demand for English is also making it difficult to design and implement a local course. To substitute the native topic, most schools use Sajha and Optional English. The state's curriculum and procedures for implementing the local curriculum are paralyzed as a result of this scenario.

**Presentation of the information**

**Primary Information**

The data collected from the sample population are the primary information which is concisely presented in the following table.

Table 1: Primary information form Administrative, management committee, Teachers and Students

S.N.	Participants	Factors Responsible for Not implementing Local Curriculum in Participants View in Percentage			
		Wrong Policy	Human Resources	Financial Constraints	Unknown
1.	Administrative Personals	40%	40%	20%	0%
2.	Management Committee	25%	40%	25%	10%
3.	School's Teachers	24%	24%	52%	0%

4.	Students' of the School	-	25%	-	75%
Cumulative View		89	129	97	85
Cumulative Percentage		22.25%	32.25%	24.25%	21.25%

**Main intervention**

Sajha English (Optional English) have been used as the local curriculum course in 99% of the primary schools in Sankhuwa-sabha.

**III. Result and Discussion**

**Theoretical Perspective**

The concept of a curriculum must take into account the adaptation of studies to the needs of existing community life: it must select with the purpose of enhancing the life we live in common so that the future will be better than the past,' Dewey states [1]. The six periodic goals of education for everyone are put forth in the Dakar Declaration on "Education for All" (2000). Nepal has established a National Framework (2001-2015) that includes a seventh periodic aim to address the country's linguistic and ethnic diversity. 'Protect the rights of all ethnic and lingual minorities living in the country to receive basic and primary education in their mother tongues,' it reads in another goal (Vishnu Prasad Adhikari, 2069\070B.S.)

Knowledge should be developed rather than passed down or transmitted. It can be received through exposure through sensory experience (empiricists), generated (mentalists cognitivists), or constructed (constructivists). Working in the actual world is required to develop knowledge and abilities. The best information for human prosperity is local primitive indigenous wisdom. National level policies in curriculum creation and implementation that keep theories in mind are commendable. However, these policies are being stymied in practice.

**Statutory perspective**

The country's primary law is the Constitution. The state is required to act and implement the core provisions of the constitution. The establishment and implementation of local curriculum in primary schools, on the other hand, is a farce in the eyes of the state. The Education Act of 2028 and the Education Regulations of 2059 both strive to implement a local curriculum; however both legal provisions are likewise ineffective. Local curricula and local matters were given high emphasis in all educational commissions, plans, programs, and policies, but they were never implemented in practice. What's the matter with it? Vidhyanath Koirala [11] is a fascinating figure to quote. "We're well aware that policy is incorrect. However, we are unsure of what is contained in the policy and what we require.

We can claim the curriculum is incorrect, but we can't tell what has to be removed or added." (Nepali to English translation) (Shikshak Masik, Sept-Oct, 2014). The Primary Level Curriculum (2062 B.S., Classes 1-3 & 2065 B.S., Classes 4-5) has added a course to the local curriculum. Its curriculum provides for four instruction periods per week. However, according to the curriculum, only four schools in Sankhuwasabha teach mother tongues, namely Yakha and Limbu. It's odd to say, yet there are four schools in the district that teach mother language as part of the local curriculum. Isn't it a sham in the field of education? Isn't this a case of educational indifference? Who will be held accountable for the malfunction?

Where there is no provision in the programs, policies, commissions, laws, acts, and other formal mechanisms to teach Sajha English or Optional English, these subjects are taught in all primary schools in the district under the guise of a local curriculum course. The NCF-2063 (2006) highlights the difficulties in implementing the local curriculum. Expertise is lacking, as is the ability to manage child-friendly trained teachers, a conducive environment for designing and implementing local curriculum, and institutional mechanisms for technical assistance and counseling for the development and implementation of local curriculum at the local level. (2.12 Education tailored to local needs, pp. 17 and 18) Why didn't the school system create methods to address these issues? The state's authority's neglect is clearly seen.

'Local curriculum is designed and executed with the cooperation of local stakeholders, encompassing topics of local requirements,' according to the Local Curriculum Construction Directory (LCCD) (2062 B.S.). It goes on to add that our country is diverse in terms of geography, culture, language, ethnicity, and other factors. We have a variety of materials in a variety of locations. Our requirements are also distinct. The curriculum developed by the center may not be applied in every location in the same way... ..

The necessity for local curriculum in our country, according to LCCD, can be summarized as follows:

- To promote subject areas in accordance with various societal needs
- To meet needs by asking individuals, groups, and society
- To protect and develop natural resources, pay homage to festivals, and mobilize spatial specialties, arts and architectures, business, and cottage industries, among other things
- To make curriculum useful, relevant, and needs oriented
- To build capacity of stakeholders and institutions at the local level

### **Primary information perspective**

In total, 411 schools are located within the district. There are fifteen resource centers that house these schools. The clusters are made up of eighteen to thirty-seven schools. Each cluster is led by an RP who is in charge of overseeing the schools' teaching and learning environments. These resource centers (clusters) are viewed as the district education office's outstretched arms. They must provide a monthly report to their focal person and the district education office on the schools. In the LRC Khandbari and Chainpur RC field offices, the school supervisors coordinate the RPs and serve as focal points. The district is divided into two constituencies, with a school supervisor serving as the DEO and RCs coordinator in each.

At the district level, there is a local curriculum construction and coordination committee. In addition, each RC must organize a committee. However, they have yet to form in order to meet the requirements. Any changes to the local curriculum are not implemented. Except for the yearly meeting of the District Curriculum Coordination Committee, there are no meetings. In all of the district's elementary schools, the English course is taught under the name of the local curriculum, which is known as optional English or Sajha English. Although it is necessary in primary schools to introduce and teach local subjects, only three primary schools offer mother tongues as a local topic to some selected students (Yakha in two Ankhinbhuin RC schools and Limbu in two Pokhari RC schools). However, these mother tongue curricula are created and administered by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The majority of SMCs and students were unaware of the subject to be offered, according to FGDs. However, once they realized it, they were quite interested in adopting local curricula. They also provided some local information for the subject to include in the course.

'Local curriculum' is vital in good education, according to 100% of administrative personnel working in DEO and RCs who responded to the questionnaire. Similarly, 86 percent of teachers choose to teach a local subject over optional English (Sajha English). 'There is no choice of teaching English,' the teachers responded. 86 percent of teachers felt they had no choice but to teach English. More than half of teachers and CMC members disagree with the political disturbance and administrative personnel response for 'Rarely disturbed' on the subject of political disturbance in local curriculum designation and implementation. Political turbulence is minimal in this case. Local administrative initiative appears to be the root of the failure to develop and implement local curricula.

It is also clear that a lack of human resources is one of the most significant impediments to the development and implementation of local curricula, accounting for 32.25 percent of the total. The second source of impediment is a lack of funds. However, if we are determined, we may turn these obstacles into opportunities. They provided quotations of interest for professionals in Chitwan and Dhankuta, for example, to materialize local curricula in 'environment' and 'vegetables,' respectively. Some respondents also express their opinions on the government's bad policies, but the responses are so low that they are negligible.

## **IV. Conclusion/Finding and Suggestion**

### **Findings**

The country's constitution mandates the implementation of local curricula.

- The education laws and rules are extremely helpful in developing and implementing a local curriculum.
- The NCF highlights the difficulties in developing and implementing local curricula, while simultaneously emphasizing the value and necessity of such curricula.
- SSRP also has a strategy to introduce local curriculum, although local curriculum was not accepted in the district at the time of SSRP termination.
- —The primary level curriculum (2062 B.S.) and (2065 B.S.) include a requirement to educate local topics in several subjects as well as a 100-point course. It allots four periods each week to the subject's instruction.
- The district's DEO has organized a local curriculum construction and coordination committee, but it is ineffective in terms of developing and implementing local curriculum.
- The majority of elementary school students and SMC members are uninformed of the local curriculum.
- The majority of teachers support teaching local curriculum, which includes local issues.
- Teachers are compelled to teach an English course rather than a local curriculum.
- The building and implementation are hampered by a lack of human resources and financial constraints.
- The district's administrative personnel have minimal experience with local curriculum development and execution in other Nepalese districts that have their own local curriculum.
- Political unrest has had little impact on the development and execution of local curricula.
- Effective implementation of local curriculum necessitates administrative effort and collaboration at the local level.
- Local curriculum is a necessary for good education, according to all respondents and participants.

### **Suggestions**

- Legal provisions that are required to be implemented must be scrutinized and published with the cooperation of a wide range of stakeholders.
- For the development of local curriculum, the District Curriculum Coordination Committee needs to be reorganized and made more effective.
- Each RC should have established a local curriculum construction and supervision committee led by the RP.
- Educational administrators and supervisors should tour districts that have developed and implemented local curricula.
- The District Education Committee must contribute positively to the development and implementation of local curricula.
- For the creation of local curricula, a bidding competition for specialists at the local and regional level should be launched.
- Following a wide spectrum of stakeholder debate, the District Education Committee can provide the framework and skeleton of the curriculum.
- Financial concerns can be remedied by publishers and publishing houses, who can compensate writers and experts if book sales are guaranteed for a set length of time.
- The term "sustainability" can be used to refer to both human resource and financial difficulties.
- Financial assistance from the local government, line agencies, and NGOs/INGOs is possible.
- Local cultural heritages, hydroelectricity, Rudrakshya, Cardamom, herbs, Community forest, touristy areas, and other topics should be included in the local curriculum.

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