

## **Public Relation Detachment of Community Schools : A Study of Duduwa Rural Municipality, Banke, Nepal.**

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### **Abstract**

*A strong bond between school family and community should be indispensable. Students severely suffer when they fail to maintain mutual respect between these two stakeholders. This study suggests a viable solution after unfolding the existing detachment of the secondary level community schools with the social accessory in Duduwa Municipality of Banke district in the western part of Lumbini Province, Nepal that affinity with the society gears up quality education. I purposively selected the all the secondary schools of Duduwa Rural Municipality to explore the problematic in relationship with society and the school family. The rationale behind the selection lies in the low academic achievement of the students. I used observation, interview, and document review to collect the information from the selected schools. The school teachers and guardians have a grudge against the lack of proper educational value and quality upgrading education. The academic discussion got the inference that imagined dominant knowledge of the head teacher, members of the school management committee, president of parent teachers' association and teachers detaches relation with the society. Therefore, the research recommends measures to be taken by the school management committee and the school family to develop smooth and healthy relations with the public to improve public involvement in quality accreditation.*

**Keywords:** community, detachment, donation, quality, social affinity

### **Introduction**

Community kinship is the main aspect of the qualitative change of community schools. It advances thoughts mutually for quality accreditation. The attachment of society to physical development and quality awareness supports the entire development of the schools. The assessment results show that there are five community-based schools in Duduwa Rural Municipality. They are Shree Secondary School, Shree Gyan Deep Secondary School, Shree Sahid Smarak Secondary School, Shree Pashupati Secondary School, and Shree Saraswati Secondary School. These schools need further tie-up with the people of the community to create social credibility. The investment of society and the Public for land donation, building construction, and financial support for the schools, regular monitoring and evaluation consisting of feedback for the schools (Performance Audit of School, 2022) are the checklists in the observation that play a noteworthy part for the identification of the relation between society and educational institutes. However, these schools failed to maintain them.

Conversation held separately with school members and the public found that the latter are disenchanted and dissatisfied with the response they receive from the school members. Guardians expressed that principal, teachers and management committee have to realize the importance of the guardians. Gulyamova, J. Irgasheva, S. & Bolthio, S. (2014) hint at the "realization among teachers" (p.60)

for quality enhancement. In the same way Dayoub & Bashiruddin (2012) advocate for collaboration “with other effective schools and educational institutions” (605) for the promotion of quality schooling. Based on the observation, interview and document study, the article argues that it is the responsibility of the school to retain confidence of the public and make them feel a sense of ownership and belongingness with the school for which they made immense contribution. The rapport with the society contributes for the quality accreditation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The discourse of the five schools indicates that they should bounce back to the initial stage for rapport building with society through necessary research and findings. Without establishing harmony with society, the massive needs of schools cannot be fulfilled. Why do the people stop funding for the community schools? What are the reasons for the public detachment? How can we bridge the gap between school family and society? These are the fundamental questions for the quality accreditation. The taken-for-granted nature of the school administration, pedagogical channels and policy do not support the demand of society. The self-esteemed knowledge of the educational leaders detaches the institution from society. Public relations with all school-related activities plays a dominant role in school eminence.

### **Review of Literature**

Quality sanction of the community schools for financial sustainability is the main concern of the education policy of Nepal. Goodwyn (1997) values “professional development” (p.1) for effective teaching. For Adler achievement level of the learners increases only through the Adler, J. (2002) “classroom intrusion” (p.9). He adds the significance of “teacher education” for quality improvement. Gabriel, D.M. (2004) strongly recommends for “improving student learning” (p.1). Attwood, M., Margaret, C., Curtis, A., Pitts, J. While, R. (2005) recommend change “through the learning from the talk as well as learning to talk” (p.7). Bubb, S. (2005) expresses the need of the change for the quality improvement, “One of the ways to develop a teacher’s career without moving is to have different types of experience within the same school, teaching a different year group or teaching a new subject” (p.102). Teachers’ involvement for varying subjects every year supports for the career development for the educators. Quality enrichment has to be the apprehension of the stakeholders to promote community schools. Iredale, A. (2018) highlights the importance of, “repeated classroom practice” (74). Prochner, L., Cleghorn, A., Kirova, A. & Massing, C. specify that (2016), the significance of “Media and digital ... in teacher education” (p. 149). For them, modern technology in the classroom to promotes learning achievements. Anderson, J. & Chung, Y. (2011) follow the same track of “digital technology” that “offers a range of tools” to “support creative teaching” (p.65). Their inclination is that creativity increases through digital assisted learning. Clarke, M. (2011) suggests for “reflective verbalization” that can “work as a framework” (528) for the quality accreditation.

Community add-on develops the sense of team-work at school. Avery, L. (2010) asserts that there has to be teamwork for improvement. The alliance with donors is a part of family sense. To develop the sense of belongingness, the schools have to felicitate the existing family members who contributed

during the establishment in yearly program. This motives them and the others to contribute for the further development of the schools. The donors' photograph has to be placed at the office so that the visitors develop the sense of donation. Those who have donated in cash, the land or the building have to be highlighted in every program so that new donors feel proud to donate. Agbayanoun, J.P., Ecole Normale S Porto-novo, N.S. (2018) advocate for the importance of team work with staff for the identification of the problem and plan for the implementation. Therefore, team work with the stakeholders: students, staffs, guardians and the society gear up the quality of education at the school. Critics have appreciated professional development, student friendly teaching learning process and methods, use of modern devices to run academic session classroom activities, and group work with staff for the identifications of the problem, However, they failed to consider the significance of community affinity with the educational institutes. Community kinship with the institution functions as the bedrocks for quality education. Community schools play significant role in creating awareness of the society towards schools' current activities. The government has invested for the infrastructure development for the school development. But the expectation for the achievement has not meet yet. There has to be maximum achievement of the venture. Self-esteemed superiority of the head teachers and the rigidness of school management committee along with teachers has generated gap between society and school family that has affected the quality accreditation of the school. There is need of balanced work for public relation and school activities to stretches positive results. The internal linking among quality related proportions evolving at the level of excellence advances the excellence of the communal schools.

### **Methodology of the Study**

I purposively selected all the five community-based schools: Shree Secondary School, Shree Gyan Deep Secondary School, Shree Sahid Smarak Secondary School, Shree Pashupati Secondary School, and Shree Saraswati Secondary School in Duduwa Rural Municipality, Banke Nepal. Then visited the schools in person, talked to the head teachers to support for the study and asked to help to invite ten guardians of the students studying at class Eight, Nine and Ten. I used structured and unstructured interview to identify the relation of school family with the community. For the structured interview The Performance Audit Framework of School- 2022 was used to assess the role of society in the quality increment of education. On completion of the individual interview, I studied the documents of the schools to find out the ratio of guardians visit at school, and the donation of the community for the schools. Teachers and guardians from all these schools actively involved in the discussion and supported to search the historical document to get the facts in relation to the donation. This is a qualitative study that justifies the logic from the sources of information drawn from the observation, interview and document study. The primary source of data is the information and facts from the five community schools, interview of the ten guardians from each school. The views concerning the reformation of school qualitative analysis and interpretation have been done.

### **Discussions and Findings**

The change in the personal and social attitude concerning quality development through social participation helps the increment of quality. Simultaneous and independent relations with experts,

leaders, students, guardians, and teachers support the development. Systematic discussion among the stakeholders is the primary requirement to identify the common necessities of the school. People in society want to receive exclusive attention and loyalty from the school family which the schools under study failed. Community schools do not have social affinity rather they have run on the basis of the consigned interest of the limited leaders of the society. Consequently, the schools have lost the spirit of the common conscience. The prime concern is to revive the lost essence and contribute for the intensification the eminence.

Shree Secondary School Bankatti, situated in Duduwa-6, is a physically narrow and clogged area for students' academic and sports activities. The establishment of the school was with the support of community donations. The society donated one bigha, two katha and twelve dhur land for the establishment of the school realizing the need for the educational institute.(School Record, 2022). After its establishment, no landed property has been added so far. Till now there is no increase in the school area. Apparently, the school donors gradually became complacent and their involvement was seen to be dwindling. Parent A stated his view about school:

*School has to organize parent-teacher interaction but the school has not organized it. Home work of the children has not been evaluated for two months. Teachers and principal have not taken the task seriously. I reported about the quality decrease but they in turned used bad-mannered words for my illiteracy.*

This severed the relationship between the community and the school family and management. However, the school family could not identify the reason of this detachment. People stopped for the donation at the school but the school family did not identify the reason for the detachment. The school family did not acknowledge the contribution/significance of the guardians that the guardians complained. Unstructured personal interviews indicated that the relationship between the school and the public has strained significantly. Out of ten guardians, eight of them asserted that they are unwilling to visit the school because they do not get response from the school family either of the students' progress or of the school budget. Only two got the answer of their children about the result of their children. So, there is a lack of harmony with the public. In the current fiscal year, the total investment from the fee donation of the students accounts for 46150/-which is only 0.41 per cent of the total investment. For the donation, there has to be a genuine reason but they felt the excess for the investment. People are reluctant to visit the educational premises simply because they have failed to feel friendly environment from the part of head teacher and teachers. The guardians complained of the rude remarks of the head teacher and teachers during their visits. Because of this uncongenial atmosphere at the school, there has been a tremendous decline in the frequency of guardian visits to school. Apart from discharging their formal/official responsibility, guardians visit school only for the tasks which are mandatory.

During its establishment of Shree Gyan Deep Secondary School Duduwa-5 Dalaipur, two bigha, ten katta land was acquired from the public land (School Record, 2022). Though community people did not donate the land, they supported the construction of three buildings. The school has received

grants 33.71 percent income from the local level (School Record, 2022) which is the highest of all the community schools of this municipality. This school has internal income source because it has collected a fee from the technical wing at the secondary level. The motivation of the students for the technical wing has supported the school. However, it is strange that the school guardians have neither donated nor prepared for developing rapport with the school. Parent B grumbled about the school in this way:

*Teachers have to stay whole 45 minutes in the class during the teaching hour as my child said that they stay only 20 to 25 minutes in the class. School does not have sports materials due to which they can not play games. The regularity of the students is the must but the school has not maintained the record. Students never get practical and project work. We complaint several times but they do not hear our complaint.*

Out of Ten guardians, only one of them was happy because his child got scholarship from the school. Rest of them complained about the regularity of the subject teachers, and regular evaluation of the homework and regular interaction with the guardians.

Shree Sahid Smarak Secondary School Duduwa-5, Kamdi covers four Bighas of public land. The local people constructed one building for the classroom (School Record, 2022). After this initial contribution, financial support from the society went down. Even during the establishment, the society did not have to invest much but for the construction of the building they happily donated. Contribution from student donation amounts to only 6.58 per cent of the total income (School Record, 2022) which is very low. This school has the lowest level of community affinity. The school lacks adequate infrastructure, even a basic requirement like school boundary, which has multiple effects like school bunk, security and the protection of the assets of the school. All the interviewee complained for the lack of sports materials and homework evaluation at school. They had complained even before but the school family turned a deaf ear towards them. One of the guardians said that teachers tease for their illiteracy. Consequently, he stopped visiting school to give feedback. Arguably, the aforementioned downsides are attributable to the lack of an intense relationship with society.

Shree Pasupathi Secondary School, Duduwa-2, Naurigaudi runs classes from pre-primary to ten. It is an education hub of the rural municipality. Due to lack of land enough the students cannot participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. There is neither a canteen nor an alternative system for breakfast during school time (Field Survey, 2022). Although there is no question about the qualification of the teacher, the number of subject teachers does not support quality education. Despite such favorable background, the community-school relationship does not sound to be harmonious because as the evidence shows the society does not feel an integral part of the school. Parent C specified

*The school family including teachers and principal hesitates even to respond our questions about the progress of our children, result of the children and lapses of the children. They bluntly said*

*that they should come during result day. But I am labor and could not be present at the result day.* Shree Saraswati Secondary was established in 2053. Mishreelal Mishra donated to the construction of two buildings (School Record, 2022) but these buildings are very old and need renovation. The record shows that it is his personal attachment that motivated him to contribute for the construction in the past. Nevertheless, the monetary investment is 8862.96 (0,095%) in recent year which comes only from the student fee. During the discussion with the Ten guardians they said that the President of the school management committee and elected members of the municipality were simply indifferent to address the demand of the guardians to appoint the subject teachers at the secondary level. Parent D stated:

*My child goes to India even during school time as the area is connected to the boarder to bring goods and sell them. I stated about it at school to convince the child but the activities of the child did not change. Teachers have to motivate the child to be regular and the school has to maintain absent record and inform the guardians. There has to be additional attention of the head teacher for the children. Guardians requested several times to appoint subject teacher but the appointment was long pending. This standoff has occurred because of a complete detachment among the stakeholders.*

Shree Pasupathi Secondary School, Duduwa-2, is one of the examples of social affinity in the past. Late Mewalal Chaudhary had donated 5 katha, 11 Dhur land for the establishment of the school in 2017 BS (School Record, 2022) but in 2022, only 1.55 per cent of the total expenditure was collected from the student's donation but guardians are no longer willing for the investment at school. Parent E said:

*My child does not pay attention at reading books and doing homework. I reported at the school but no one listened my complaint. When our children do not get good education, why should we visit school? Why should we donate for the school? Even elected members of the municipality do not listen our complaint.*

The regular inspection by the guardian about education and infrastructural development is significantly low. The lack of even such basic requirements as a canteen, boundary wall, separate toilet for the girls and boys and classrooms is gravely regrettable. Neither the municipality nor the school administration is very serious about this issue raised by the parents. Classrooms do not have enough furniture for schoolchildren. School boundary develops a sense of security which the school has failed to maintain due to the lack of financial support. The guardians are not unfamiliar about this horrible condition, but they have low motivation for the enhancement of the school because they do not believe that the schools can provide quality education to children. The members of the school family have continued to dismiss guardians' suggestions to improve the classroom conditions.

The five cases above clearly reveal that a rupture in the relationship between the public and the school is most likely to lead to adverse consequences. The examples show that when detachment occurs between the school and its equally key stakeholders, the public, overall academic atmosphere



is gravely undermined. Additionally, other ancillary activities, such as infrastructural development are also disrupted considerably. Immediate victims of this situation are the innocent school children, for whom education in an amiable environment is an inalienable right. To ensure the physical as well as academic enhancement of public schools, a harmonious and reciprocal relationship between the school members and the community is vital. What has come out from the visits to the five schools mentioned above is that because of the lack of communication between two partners—school and community-- overall school activities have been adversely affected.

Educational institute is the agent of change that should dismantle the superiority behavior of the school leaders for the betterment of the public. This leads the people to feel free to participate in the discourse once they realize that there is no mistrust and jealousy. Without damaging self-esteem discourse among the experts and the guardians has to be launched. The parochial feeling of the leaders' hints at the limited knowledge of human behavior. Articulated program and vision at the meeting motivate the people for the active participation. Dialogue with the guardians in relation to the quality education minimizes resistance to change from the readymade framework. So, head teachers have to establish rapport with the community. That demand is internal acquaintance and oneness. The municipality has to identify the real need for the students along with teaching during school time which is possible only through community affinity.

Five schools under study do not have enough sports materials for the small children throughout school time. Involvement in sports supports the physical as well as mental well-being of the students. But the guardians hesitate to write written complaints to Municipality about the lack of sports materials because elected leaders have shown disinterest to address their oral appeal. Here lies the real social detachment of leaders from the guardians. Irregularity of the students is one of the issues of all the schools that is due to the lack of internal derive of the students to be at school. The hesitation generates due to the problem diagnosis of individual students. Problem identification is possible only through harmonious relation of teachers with guardians. The general complaint is the poverty of the students but to address the students who are below the poverty level school family has to do action research. Without research school family generalized and promoted the one sided complain levelling the guardians. The five schools do not have updated records of where about of the students drop out. The result after drop out is massive because they might involve in the unlawful activities in the absence of education. This is so because society and guardians do not feel that school functions as the change agent. The schools have to study the reasons for being absent and make plans for making them regular to come to school.

The teachers have to put the cumulative record of every student so that their problem diagnosis and solution is possible that in turn supports the positive result. Guardian-teacher interaction develops kinship which the schools haven't done regularly. Guardians complain that teachers have to stay full-time in the class during their period either through classroom activities like homework evaluation individual problem solving or creative tasks and give feedback to them. Regular evaluation of homework from the side of the teacher has to be implemented. Teachers complain that during the

guardian interaction program, there is a low number of participants. But those who visited the schools have to feel the value of the presence which the guardians did not feel. Neither teacher's information about the absent students to the guardians nor the guardians ask about the whereabouts of their children. School boundary has to be completed which is possible through community support but school families never approach the donors for the investment at school to stop student's bunk. To maximize the relationship, there has to be productive guardian-teacher interaction at least three times a year that minimizes the complaint of one to the other.

Therefore, the school principal, president of the school management committee, and teachers have to maintain bond with the public for the financial and social support. Problem diagnosis is possible only through tuneful relation of instructors with society. That in turn develops internal derive for the donors for the venture at school. The collective effort of the stakeholders gears up the quality of the schools.

### **Conclusion**

In short, those secondary schools of Duduwa Rural Municipality have barely maintained the quality education to the students. Consequently, the school family and community have almost lost connection to enhance the standard of education in this region. The study infers the status of community schools regarding the public and the possible systems for improvement. The researched five schools have poor quality education. The reason behind the weak performance is the lack of affinity between society and community school families. The affinity presents school administration, leaders of the school management committee and the elected members have high self-esteem values. Hence, the need of mutual cooperation is key need there. And that belongingness between the schools and the society supports two-way development for cooperation and collaboration. Then only people become aware of the hurdles of the school and able to support the infrastructure development and the quality advance of the community schools.

### **Recommendations**

Schools have to maintain mutual work and cooperation with the society to improve the quality accreditation. Investment has to be directed to improve the classroom activities that in turn motivates the guardians to visit the school and support for the educational empowerment. High kinship with improved motivation uplifts the quality for which municipality has to plan and implement. Specialized enhancement has to orient to a high social aspect which is possible only by treating society as the change agent. The municipality has to organize discussions for planning and implement the plan through collective decision inviting the guardians at least twice a year at the verge of academic session. Visiting the other well performed school of the area by teachers to identify the ways to improve social relations and understand its importance to sustain the school is the final suggestion.

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