

## Bachelor Level Student's Perspective on Teaching Methodology:

### Traditional vs. Modern

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### Abstract

#### Article History

##### Submitted:

6 December 2023

##### Reviewed:

13 January 2024

##### Accepted:

30 May, 2024

#### QR Code:

#### Publisher

Research and  
Innovation Committee  
(RIC), Vishwa Adarsha  
College, Itahari,  
Sunsari, Koshi  
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This study attempts to examine the present need for teaching methodology from the perspective of learners. It studies the ground-level opinion of students of Kathmandu Valley studying at the bachelor's level regarding traditional and modern teaching methodology. It is based on information provided by students collected through questionnaires and interviews, based on 536 respondents aged 18-22. The findings might be contrary to our existing knowledge and expectations of modern teaching methodology as most students were not ready to accept and adapt to modern teaching methodologies such as PowerPoint slides, group discussions, quizzes, etc. Even though their belief in modern teaching methodology was somehow positive, the study revealed that students still were not used to the modern method of teaching. They were unprepared to be independent learners and still depend on their teachers. This study implies that if universities and institutions in Kathmandu favor adopting modern teaching methodology as believed to be the best alternative to traditional teaching methods, student orientation and practice about modern methods is required.

*Keywords:* learning, teaching methodology, traditional pedagogy, modern pedagogy

## Introduction

Having spent more than two decades in the teaching field, we were still not sure why students tend to resist modern teaching methods such as PowerPoint slides, group discussions, quizzes, etc. This realization compelled us to think from a different perspective of what has been believed regarding the traditional and modern teaching methodology. Even though teachers are urged by the instinct to develop students' intellectuality and knowledge (Wilson & Peterson, 2006), students' interest in teaching methodology pushed us to examine the ground reality, and this research is an outcome of this realization.

The teaching method is a combination of methods teachers use to make the students learn, broadly classified into teacher-centered methodology and student-centered methodology (Lawrence & Peter, 2019). In the context of the teaching methodology, the objective of teaching is concerned with achieving educational goals. It expects a proper understanding of issues as instructed by the teacher. Good teaching is always influenced by diverse characteristics possessed by learners and available resources (Wilson & Peterson, 2006). So, it seemed necessary to research the most effective teaching methodology based on the change in the Nepali context, especially in the context of Kathmandu Valley.

Teacher-centered teaching practice has commonly been in practice, where the teacher is always the center of attraction. Learners follow instructions, guidelines, and opinions of the teachers. Their activities and performances are liberated but within the capability of their teachers' experience and understanding (Begum, 2018). Meanwhile, learners-centered teaching methodology has emerged as demanded in every dimension of teaching and learning. Here students are given freedom of what they learn and how they learn, which considers learners as leaders and decision-makers of their learning (Scrivener, 2005 p. 18- 19).

What and where we need to be tomorrow, is truly the outcome of the education we bestow to our growing generation (Biseth et al., 2022). Along with this, we need to make modifications and alternations in the methodology that we believe is the best, if required by the context. This research questions the effectiveness of existing methods and the viability of newer methods. So, considering the need for time and the

requirement for an effective teaching methodology, this research tries to uncover a method that can be more productive for bachelor-level students.

### **Review of Literature**

Very limited studies are conducted regarding the choice of methodology from the perspective of learners. There are no one-size-fits-all guidelines that work for every student. As a result, students are not able to choose which method suits them and their course of study best, which needs to be determined by the instructor. Traditional teaching methodology has become ineffective due to the advancement of modern technology and effective teaching is evaluated by its quick response to a context which becomes effective only after it is blended with various alternatives (Ismali, 2013, p. 104). Microteaching plays a prominent role in developing and acquiring knowledge and skills as faculty, as they receive the opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses that will influence them to correct their weaker side. (Elias, 2018)

Teachers provide a necessary positive learning atmosphere along with innovative teaching and learning strategies which will help learners develop critical thinking skills and enhance their knowledge level (Cassum, 2015, p. 4). Teachers play a major role, students follow the orders given, and even without understanding, they simply memorize the facts presented by their instructors. They advocated in student-centred teaching methodology where the instructor has to focus on experience-based learning rather than being based on textbooks. Simply put, tradition and our practice during the period can't guarantee its supremacy; they need to be backed by supportive evidence or a strong reason to accept them as fact (Halpin, 2014, p. 2). As we are always obsessed with new, all the researchers are influenced by it or they want to promote new methodology. It is difficult to have books that discuss the topic in favor of traditional teaching methodology. The modern teaching methodology is more productive but both are effective in bringing the desired result. (Boumova, 2008, p. 87).

### **Theoretical Review**

Methodology is a way to systematically solve the problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how a task is accomplished systematically (Kothari, 1990, p. 8). Teaching itself believes in different methodologies of delivering and upgrading the

performance of various learners, considering different contexts. Here, we have explored two broad teaching methodologies: traditional teaching methodology and modern teaching Methodology.

### ***Traditional Teaching Methodology***

It is a teaching methodology that hovers around a facilitator, teacher, lecturer, or professor whatever title or name is allocated. Learning happens within four walls of a classroom, which signifies its jurisdiction within the reach of teachers, within the same environment. The reliance on textbooks is significant. Specific guidelines are prepared in such a way that every student is bound to follow them strictly, which are based on established practices schools and universities have used for ages. Complete authority lies either on the teacher or the school. Here students master their skills by practicing and memorizing the knowledge provided by their teachers (Klemn, 2007). This methodology highly relies on a learner's memory capacity, which has its benefit, as learners and students can immediately respond to the situation, relying on the information stored within.

### ***Modern Teaching Methodology***

Context has demanded alternative pedagogy and teaching as people's reliance on traditional book-based teaching has faded. The development of the internet, wider reach of knowledge and easy availability of information have expected alternative methods of teaching contrary to ongoing traditional teaching methodology. Instead of focusing on one specific matter and behavior of knowledge, modern teaching methodology relies on learners themselves, their freedom enthusiasm, and hunger toward knowledge and learning. Modern teaching methodology energizes students' learning attitude by fostering their independence and allowing their freedom of exploration. Students are supreme here and teachers are simply facilitators to support them when in need. Some of the techniques of modern teaching-learning, which are in practice, are listed below.

**Flipped Learning:** Flipped learning incorporates four components, i.e. flexible environment, learning culture, intentional content, and professional educator. Flipped learning is a blend of the listed pillars that influence learning. This method allows more

time and opportunity for personal feedback and assistance to students allowing additional feedback from peers (Wiley & Gardner, 2013 p. 2, 3). It allows more time for a teacher, which helps teachers spend more time with students rather than lecturing them.

**Tactile Learning:** It is learning by touching or using the hands, which is also called kinesthetic learning. A learner has to experience the object to learn in this method of learning (Miller, 2016, p. 4). For eg. students learn the severity of fire by having a hand on it. Learners learn by holding, touching, squeezing, etc., allowing a real sense of understanding.

**Project-based Learning:** In project-based learning, students are free to plan, design, implement, and evaluate their research expecting real-world implications beyond the textbook (Thu, 2018 p. 230). Learning and knowing are not limited to memorizing but also finding and using.

**Problem-based Learning:** Problem based learning is student-centered learning that provides full freedom to the learner by allowing them to solve real word problems (Tawfik et al., 2021, pp. 2-8). More concentration is given to the problem before anything else in this method of learning.

**Collaborative Learning:** Cooperative learning involves students working together in small, mixed-ability learning teams to address specific instructional tasks, thus aiding and supporting each other during the learning process (Burden & Byrd, 2019, p. 160). This method helps a learner evaluate themselves and supports to in identifying where they need to improve.

**Thinking-based Learning:** Thinking and learning have a strong correlation. Thinking skills are vital for cognitive learning, and even though learning without thinking is also possible, it won't last long. (Malik, 2022, p. 87). It asks deeper questions to generate truth. This method of learning enhances thinking capability and boosts an individual's self-awareness.

**Independent Learning:** This method of learning gives freedom to learners, where they know what they are learning and why they are learning and aims to complete self-motivated, independent thinkers. (Gill & Halim, 2007, p. 3). The teacher acts as a facilitator by providing them feedback and material if needed.

**Gamification / Game-based Learning:** Game-based learning allows students to explore rigorous learning environments and concepts for target outcomes (Chen et al., 2018, pp. 164-176). The game should be designed to ensure the removal of the situation of boredom (Adipat et al., 2021), which allows learning and having fun at the same time.

**Visual, Audio, and Kinesthetic Learning (VAK Learning):** VAK learning has something for everyone as it compiles three different forms of learning, i.e. Visual, Audio, and Kinesthetic. It prioritizes individual differences in learning. The combination of this technique plays a relevant role in the reinforcement of knowledge (Ramadan, 2019, pp. 142-149). The three different modes of learning help anticipate upcoming situations.

### **Problem statement**

There is a generation gap between teachers and students in terms of what works effectively in the classroom. This issue is crucial as there is very limited literature on teaching pedagogy in the context of management classes. Methodologies that are in use can not be considered absolute without drawing on the perspectives of learners. In the context of Kathmandu Valley, several educational institutions still rely on the traditional lecture method. Therefore, as a study by Okoye (2020) reveals, investigating modern teaching methodologies through students' perspectives is essential. This research will try to look into the problem that still struggles to find ways to adopt modern methodologies of teaching. Therefore, the problem for this study concerns two key questions: Is traditional teaching methodology not useful? What do students prefer? This research relies on a questionnaire used to collect students' perspectives.

### **Research Methodology**

Research is designed to answer the questions that are unanswered or deserve better explanations than those at present. It provides answers to only those questions that we seek to answer (Singh, 2006). The research aims to identify hidden undiscovered truth (Kothari, 1990). In the context of this study, investigation into teaching methodology from students' perspectives is a rarely researched issue in the context of the management stream.

## **Sample**

More than 500 bachelor-level students aged between 18-22 from the colleges in Kathmandu Valley participated in the questionnaire survey. The study collected the perspectives of the students without any influence from their faculties and management. Despite some difficulties, 536 responses were collected.

## **Data Collection and Presentation**

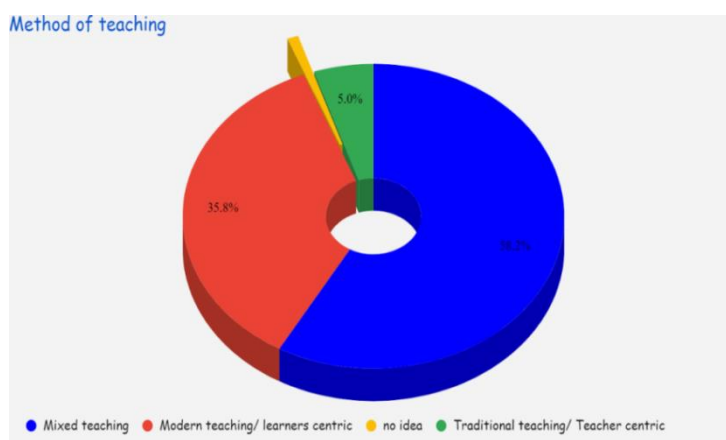
Google Forms was created to collect data and to make the respondents feel free to express their opinions. As it was focused on the student's perspective on methodology and all of the students were from Kathmandu Valley, no other demographic data was collected. It's a random sample collection. Some students were not interested in participating in the survey as the questionnaire required them to cross-check the responses. The study tried to cross-examine the reliability of respondents' responses, whether their responses were biased or not. Primary data collected through questionnaires were presented using simple tools of analysis, i.e., pie charts, bar diagrams, percentages, and simple statistics tools. s

## **Results and Analysis**

The study concentrates on students' understanding of the learning environment and their perception of the methodology that is in practice in several academic institutions in the Kathmandu Valley. In the sections that follow, we present the results and analysis.

## **Method of Teaching**

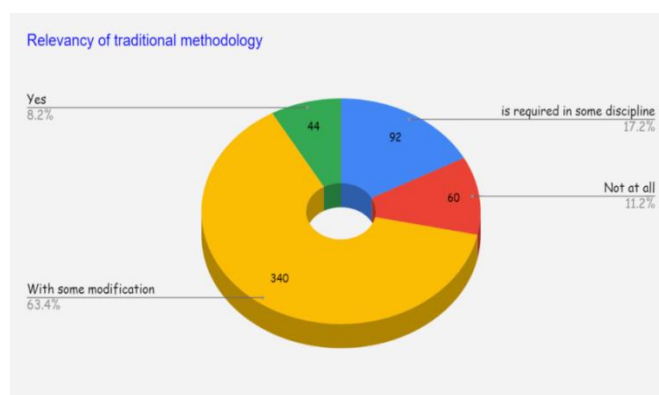
Students showed a very strong rejection of traditional methods of teaching. Only 5% of the respondents were in support of the traditional way of teaching that included lectures as a key medium of delivery. Only 5 respondents, that is 1%, not explicit even in the chart, had no idea which method was appropriate.

**Figure 1***Method of teaching*

35.8% of the students were found very confident about modern teaching methodology, whereas 58.2% of students still believe traditional teaching methodology is not outdated, nor have they completely relied on modern teaching methodology. As per them, the majority of respondents, a combination of modern and traditional teaching is appropriate.

### Relevance of Traditional Teaching Methods

The result of this study showed that traditional teaching methodology is still relevant to the present context of teaching. However, such respondents represent the fewest ones. Only 8.2% of the students favor the existing textbook-based teaching methodology with an additional 17.2% believing it useful in some specific disciplines but not in all contexts.

**Figure 2***Relevance of traditional methods of teaching*



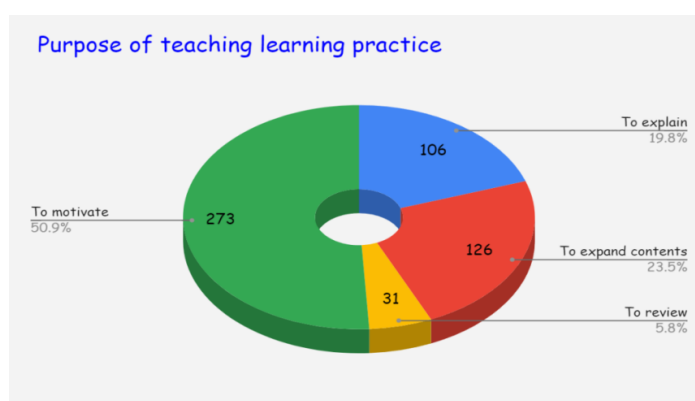
Out of the total respondents, 11.2% were completely against the expectation. They believe that there is no use of traditional methodology. The majority of the students, i.e. 63.4%, consider it still useful if some modifications are made. The chart presented above illustrates that the majority of the students, i.e. 88.8% are still not in complete favor of modern teaching methodology, and at the same time they don't stand in favor of traditional methodology too.

### **Purpose of Teaching-learning Practice**

Every learner has their own opinion and different understanding of the same content presented with a distinct purpose. Students' motivation determines what they do to learn (Ambrose, 2010). The chart presented below presents students' opinions about the purpose of teaching and learning.

**Figure 3**

*Purpose of teaching-learning practice*



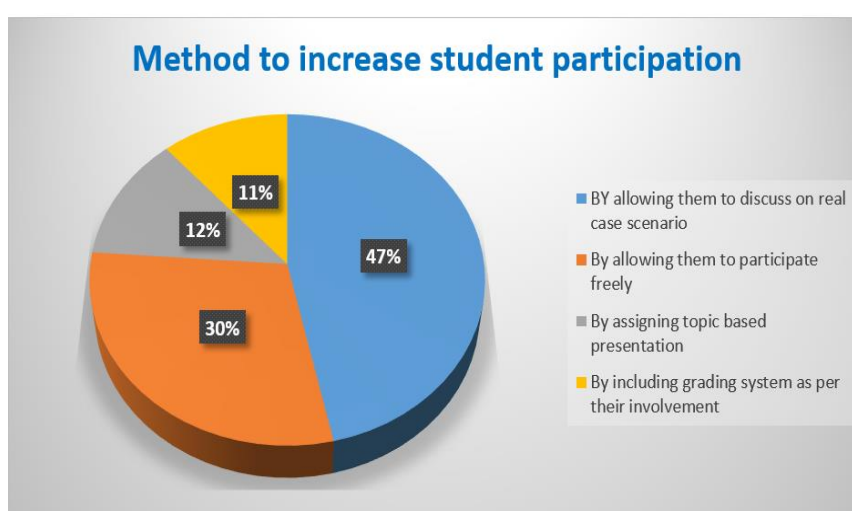
About 23.5% of the students consider the purpose of teaching just as the process of expanding the content. About 43% of the students considered the purpose of teaching-learning as explaining and expanding content, which is completely against the theme of the modern student-centered teaching methodology. In Table 1 above, only 5% of the students favored the traditional methodology. Here, the response is just the opposite of what they responded to earlier. A huge bump on the purpose of teaching methodology as an explanation is either negligence of respondents or they are themselves in dilemma. More than 50% of the students believe the purpose of teaching-learning should be motivation for learning. Motivated students perform and learn better than demotivated ones. Only 5.8% of the students believe that the purpose is to review the contents and theories presented to them.

### Method to Increase Student Participation

Student-centered teaching methodology highly focuses on the participation of students while learning, but students these days consider modern methodology a better alternative but are reluctant to integrate. Here a s per students, we have tried to discuss, how we can emphasize students to participate.

**Figure 4**

*Methods to increase student participation*



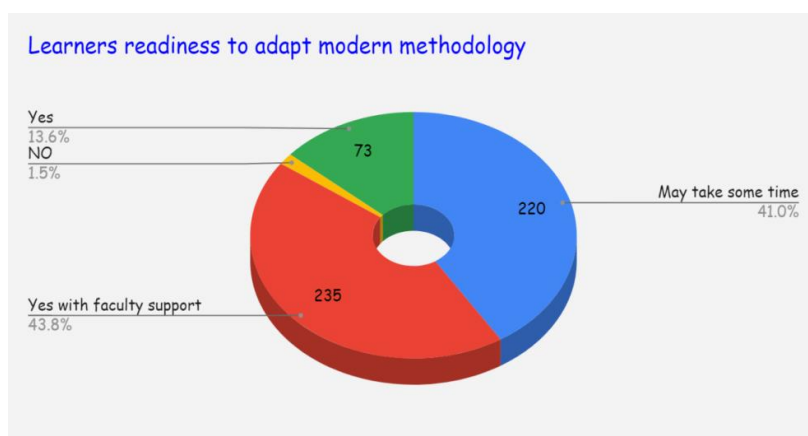
As the chart above reveals, real-case discussions are the most desirable teaching pedagogy in the classroom. It reveals the real-case scenario discussions are the common techniques that are being used by faculties these days. The chart presented above also shows that students desire freedom and choice in terms of the content and the lessons delivered to them. However, some favored even a grading system that can encourage students to participate. About 11% of students consider a participation-based grading system can be included to encourage participation accompanied by a topic-based presentation, i.e. 12%.

### Learner Readiness to Adapt to Modern Methodology

To favor one method over another method may be an easy task but if we look at this through the perspectives of students, we will have different observations. This study brought some unexpected responses. Only 13% could confidently say that they are ready to adapt to modern teaching methodology.

**Figure 5**

*Student readiness to adapt to modern methodology*



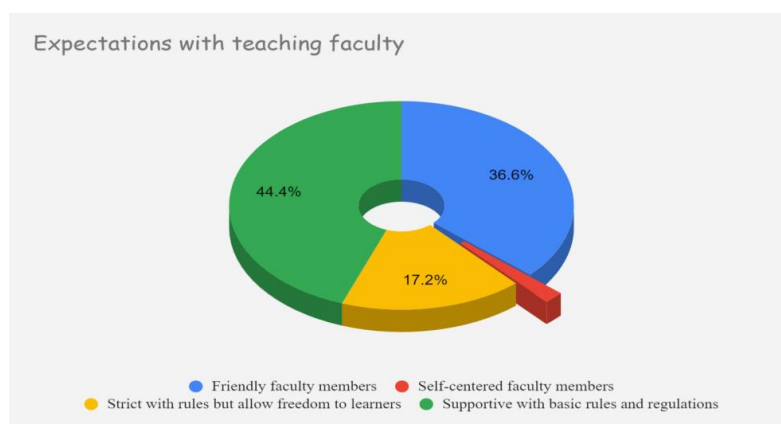
As presented in the chart above, only 1.5% of students said they may not adapt to modern teaching methods. The bright side is almost all the students consider it as a possible methodology if time is given or if the faculties are supportive. Faculty support and administration may help students adjust with time. It's a complicated task for students to move directly to a new methodology. To expect help or some extra time to adapt to new methods of teaching is quite normal and natural considering students' previous schooling and habits.

### **Learner Expectations with Teaching Faculty.**

As teachers are considered sources of information and intellectuality, the information about learners' expectations of the teaching faculty is crucial.

**Figure 6**

*learner expectations with teaching faculties*



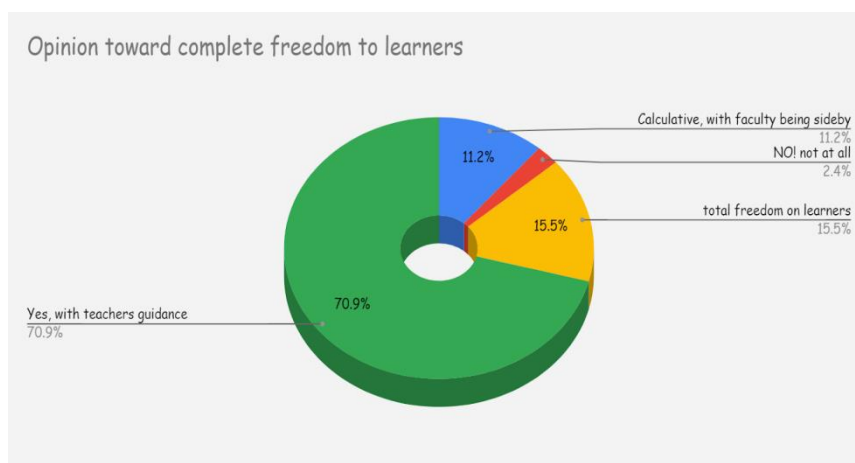
The majority of students, 44.4% stood in favor of supportive teachers who maintained basic rules and regulations for the smooth functioning of the classroom. As presented in the responses above, a study by Boumora (2008) also found that some support, rules, and regulations are still expected as norms in the classroom. However, 17.2% of the learners expected teachers to be strict with classroom rules while leveraging some freedom for the learners too. Almost double of them i.e. 36.6% of the respondents consider friendly faculty members as desirable for effective teaching and learning. Those who still prefer self-centered teachers were just 2%, which is nominal compared to other aspects.

### Opinion Toward Complete Freedom

It is quite natural for students to expect freedom as learners, especially in taking the lead and ownership of their learning. However, students had mixed responses in this regard. Surprisingly, 2.4% of the students showed disinterest in freedom, meaning that they did not require any freedom at all. This indicates that they prefer to rely on their teachers rather than doing anything on their own.

#### Figure 7

*Opinion toward complete freedom to learners*



As the chart above shows, 15.5% of students reported that they wish to have complete freedom. Closer to those responses, 11.2% of students expressed it as a calculative distribution, having faculty guidance by their side. The vast majority, i.e. 70.9% of students expected to have freedom with teachers' guidance. This means that students wanted to be independent learners with teachers' support and guidance. In that sense,

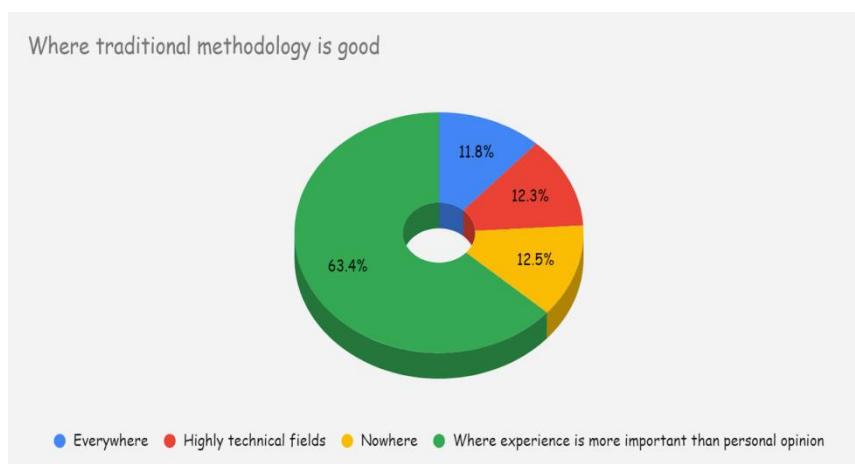
students did not expect absolute autonomy, instead, they expected the faculty's continuous guidance and support as part of their freedom to learn on their own.

### **Best Use of Traditional Methodology**

In our questionnaire, we asked a question with a choice to reject, "Where do you think traditional teaching methodology fits in?" In their response to this question, 12.3% of the students rejected this question as undesirable and irrelevant in the present context. They considered that traditional methodology is not of use at all. However, surprisingly, exactly almost the same no of responses (11.8%) took it as suitable everywhere. Their opinions are completely contradictory as shown in the chart below.

### **Figure 8**

*compulsive choice on traditional methodology, with the freedom to reject*



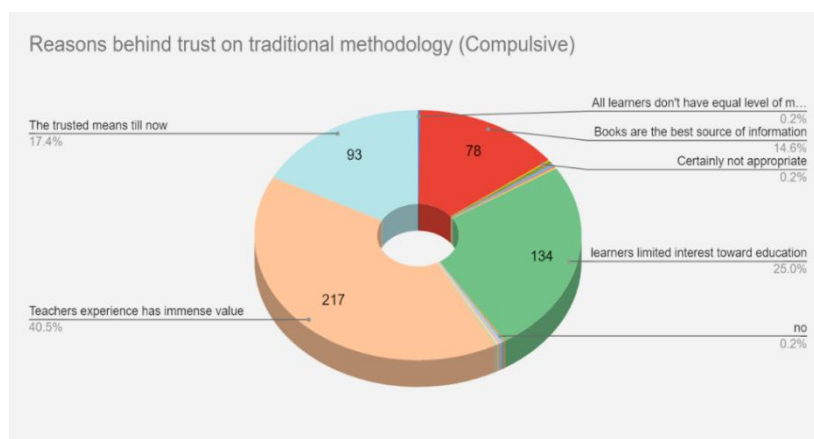
Some respondents, i.e. 12.3%, agreed that traditional methodology may be better in highly technical fields. This indicates that they do not have a clear understanding of the use of teaching methods in different disciplines. However, a majority 63.4% responded in favor of experience which means that in choosing the best use of traditional methods, teachers' experience, knowledge, and skills might be more important than other things.

### **The Reason Behind Trust in Traditional Methodology**

As the last part of our questionnaire, we included a question that required students to express their level of understanding about why they still have trust in and inclination toward traditional methodology. The chart below shows the respondents had different observations in this regard.

**Figure 9**

*Reasons behind trust in traditional methodology (Compulsive)*



40.5% of the respondents accepted that they have trust in traditional methods, especially in terms of teachers' experience and knowledge in the subject matter being delivered to them. They believe that teachers' experience has value in helping students understand more effectively than any other methods. 17.4% of the learners simply accepted it as one of the trusted means till now. Likewise, 25% of the students believed that learners are losing interest in education, so they need teachers' support and guidance to help them move on. In this regard, 14.6% of the students took textbooks as the best source of information, meaning that rather than innovations in teaching and learning, prescribed textbooks can serve their objective more fully.

### **Conclusion**

Teaching is a dynamic process that constantly evolves to meet the changing needs and expectations of students. In the context of Nepal, where education faces unique challenges, striking a balance between traditional and modern teaching methodologies becomes crucial. This study shows that students desire a supportive and approachable faculty. While very few advocate for complete learner freedom, most still expect guidance from teachers. This expectation does not necessarily align with the classical view of teaching, where the teacher is always right. Instead, students advocate for a modern teaching methodology that combines faculty support with learner autonomy.

The key aspect of this study poses a question: how to strike a balance between tradition and modernity in teaching. The traditional method, rooted in years-long practices, has its merits. It provides stability and continuity to the students. Students recognize its benefits but also acknowledge its limitations. On the other hand the modern teaching methodology emphasizes learner-centered approaches, active engagement, and problem solving. Students generally view this as a good approach. However, despite their preference for modern methods, students still seek faculty support. The findings of this study corroborate a study by Armellini and Nie (2021) who argue for balancing tradition and innovation in higher education. Both have strengths: while modernity fosters problem-solving and innovation, tradition provides stability. Thus, there is a need for symbiosis that views traditional and modern methodologies not as opposing forces but as complementary having symbiotic relationships.

In addition, this study shows that teaching methodologies should evolve harmoniously, and faculty members can blend the best of both worlds by adapting traditional practices to suit modern contexts. By integrating tradition with innovation, they can create a dynamic learning environment that empowers students and prepares them for the future. The knowledge for such an integration might come from a comparative analysis of modern teaching methodologies through students' perspectives (Okoye, 2020). Simultaneous progress in both approaches ensures a holistic learning experience. Professional development programs can bridge the gap between tradition and modernity. Therefore, encouraging teachers to embrace new pedagogical techniques while respecting established practices is essential.

### **Acknowledgment**

The authors express heartfelt appreciation to the anonymous reviewers for their insightful feedback. Sincere thanks are extended to all contributors and supporters for their invaluable assistance in the completion of this research.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Journal of Vishwa Adarsha College (JOVAC), Vol. I, No. 1, June 2024  
ISSN: 3059-9083 (Online) ISSN: 3059-9083 (Print)

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