



English as a Medium of Instruction in Learning: Challenges and Prospects

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Abstract

English language has secured its prominence as a widely used means of communication in the global linguistic landscape. Its widespread appeal is evidenced by the multitude of individuals drawn to acquiring proficiency in English. The adoption of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) has emerged as a matter of global significance with several nations integrating it within their educational systems. This research delves into the perceptions, practices and experiences concerning the challenges and opportunities identified by teachers and learners. It also digs out the issue of the community's inclination towards EMI and its consequences. This qualitative phenomenological study focuses on the experiences of three teachers and two students selected from EMI-adopted schools in Hupsekot Rural Municipality. The study employed in-depth interviews guided by open-ended questions as the primary data collection method. The collected data were transcribed, coded and thematically analyzed to derive meaningful insights. The findings underscore the widespread attraction of EMI-based schools among both parents and children. However, they also highlight the pressing need to enhance teachers' capabilities to effectively instruct in English for enhancing learners' achievement. Moreover, learners from multilingual backgrounds encounter challenges expressing themselves in both Nepali and English.

Keywords: Phenomenological study, teachers' capabilities, cognitive development, multilingual background

Introduction

As a globally used international language, English language is being widely used as a means of communication. English language has gained popularity as the

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primary language of instruction in non-native English-speaking countries (Bradford, 2016), due to its high status as a widely used international language. The argument of receiving a dominant position by the English language in social and educational discourses in colonial as well as non-colonial countries is often being heard (Shah & Karki, 2023). “Global social, cultural, economic and political waves of changes have great impact on the wide use and rapid spread of English in the global sociolinguistic context” (Saud, 2020b, p.30). Thus, English has become an international language of communication and the use in education as a medium of instruction.

Medium of instruction refers to the language the instructors use to deliver the knowledge and instruction while learners use it to learn and communicate in an educational setting (Saud, 2020a). The language used as a medium of instruction in teaching and learning can be the national language of the country, a different language or both and encompasses the use of language in various instructional methods and assessment practices. The choice of language depends on the government directives and educational frameworks which can influence the choice of a language and implementation of the medium of instruction (Poudel, 2020).

English as a medium of instruction (EMI) denotes the use of the English language to teach academic subjects other than English itself where the first language of the majority of the population is not ‘English’ (Tai & Zhao, 2022). In the present scenario, there is a strong demand for EMI as a pedagogical technology for educational activities in institutions in those countries or regions where English is not the native language (Litovchenko & Shmeleva, 2020) like Nepal. These days, the attraction of students towards EMI is increasing as they are occupied with a deeply rooted belief in obtaining a job and securing a bright future if they learn through English (Ghimire, 2019). EMI policy has become a widespread phenomenon in Nepal’s school education system (Saud, 2024). It can positively impact learning by creating effective classroom instruction initiating classroom change via raising awareness and integrating content and language in specific disciplines through collaboration (Yuan, 2023). At the same time, while using EMI in the teaching and learning process, a range of obstacles such as the lack of professional competence as well as the ‘publish-or-perish’ culture (Rui et al., 2022) which is a pressure for the learner in the educational field to be confronted sometimes.

EMI has become a significant issue in the context of Nepal due to several reasons. Even though English is being taught as one of the compulsory subjects in Nepal from early grades (MoE, CDC, 2019), the essence of introducing English not only as a subject but also as a medium of instruction for the entire curriculum is rising these days (Sayer, 2015). The globalization of education and the increasing demand for English proficiency in the international job market have contributed

to the adoption of EMI in many educational institutions in Nepal. EMI allows the learners to access a wider range of resources and materials available in English which can assist in fostering global perspectives and help the learners stay updated in various sectors (Cakir, 2018). So many non-native English-speaking countries have adopted EMI due to the paradigm shift from teaching English as a foreign language to EMI (Saud, 2020a). This shift has raised concerns about the potential impact on students' learning outcomes, especially those from multilingual backgrounds. Additionally, there are challenges related to teachers' proficiency in English and their ability to effectively impart knowledge in a language that is not their first language. The emphasis on EMI can create an educational divide among learners from privileged backgrounds with high access to means and resources and those from under-resource areas may not be able to compete with others which can ultimately exacerbate inequality (Ojha, 2018). Moreover, the issue of balancing the promotion of English language skills with the preservation of the Nepali language and culture has also sparked debates and discussions in the country.

Nepal is a multicultural and multilingual country where learners from diverse backgrounds come to study in the schools (Saud, 2019). The adoption of EMI in Nepalese educational institutions poses several challenges and opportunities that require careful examination. The implementation of EMI contributes to the learners' English proficiencies (Aizawa & Rose, 2020) though it does not have an explicit language learning goal (Tai & Zhao, 2022). As the demand for English proficiency in the global job market grows, many schools and universities have integrated EMI into their curricula. This shift raises concerns about its impact on student learning outcomes, particularly for those from multilingual backgrounds. Additionally, educators face challenges in effectively instructing in English, and there is a pressing need for enhanced teacher training and professional development in this regard as sometimes, obstacles can be created in ensuring professional competencies (Rui et al., 2022). One of the frequently observed barriers to the implementation of EMI is the lack of English proficiency among the instructors, who are not trained to linguistically structure their lectures before adopting EMI in a classroom context (Ulfah et al., 2024). Moreover, the widespread inclination towards EMI among both parents and students raises questions about its potential influence on identity formation and the preservation of the Nepali language and culture.

Exploring the perceptions related to EMI in the Nepalese context is crucial for several reasons. First, it allows us to understand the challenges and opportunities associated with the adoption of EMI in educational institutions in Nepal. This exploration can shed light on the potential impact on student learning outcomes, especially for students from multilingual backgrounds. Additionally, investigating

perceptions helps in identifying the specific challenges faced by educators in effectively imparting knowledge in a language that may not be their first language. Furthermore, by exploring these perceptions, we can address the broader issue of balancing the promotion of English language skills with the preservation of the Nepali language and culture. Understanding these perceptions is essential for informed decision-making and policy formulation regarding the use of EMI in Nepalese educational institutions.

Therefore, this research explores the impacts of EMI on student learning outcomes, identifies the challenges faced by students and educators, and digs out the prospects and potential benefits of using EMI in Nepalese educational institutions. The following research questions have been formulated to guide the study:

1. How do the learners express their experience of studying in an EMI-adopted school including its impacts on their learning?
2. What prospects do the students see after studying in EMI-based classes?
3. How do the teachers perceive EMI in developing learners' achievements?

Literature Review

Various studies were conducted to explore the perceptions of different stakeholders, teachers and students towards EMI in the context of Nepal. Evans and Morrison (2018) claimed that the students from secondary schools who adopt their mother tongue as a medium of instruction have lower academic English language proficiency than those from EMI schools. Tai and Zhao (2022) emphasized that university students who previously attended secondary schools which adopted a medium of instruction other than English tend not to be disadvantaged in improving their academic English proficiency. Similarly, Ulfah et al. (2024), revealed the positive attitudes of instructors, stakeholders' support in EMI implementation and the need for training materials in training.

Cakir (2018) stated that EMI can significantly improve students' learning and English proficiency in all the receptive as well as productive language skills. The enhancement of English proficiency can open up the doors of opportunities in national and international educational settings, scholarships and future career development (Wei, 2019). In line with enhancing language proficiency, the use of EMI can promote the cognitive development of learners by utilizing creative thinking and reasoning, problem-solving skills, critical and analytical thinking skills and so on (Baker, 2001; Wei, 2019) as learners tend to think the things in an exponentially new language.

In the diversified multicultural and multilingual background of Nepal, students from such background, whose first language is not Nepali, may struggle

to grasp the concepts delivered in English (Ojha, 2018). The use of non-native language as a medium in learning environment can create disengagement of learners and ultimately can hinder their academic achievement (Poudel, 2017). Poudel (2017) revealed that due to the inadequacy of English language proficiency of some language teachers, they are facing difficulties in delivering instruction through the English language which can lead to unclear explanations, limited teacher-student interaction, and less engagement which ultimately hinders the learning outcomes of the learners.

Developing teachers' competency is crucial for the successful implementation of EMI because teachers need to have a high level of proficiency for the effective delivery of the content and meaningful engagement of the learners. Mahara (2023) examined the perceptions of the teachers on EMI in Nepalese public schools and the findings reveal that there is a demand for EMI due to its perceived economic benefits, however, the teachers grapple with challenges like limited resources, materials and training. Subsequently, Poudel and Li (2018) argue that the successful implementation of EMI needs careful planning and teacher training. Nevertheless, the perception of the teachers and students in those schools which are located in rural contexts is yet to be explored.

Policy Related to EMI

In the context of the historical evolution of education in Nepal, a noteworthy development occurred towards the end of the Rana regime with the establishment of 'Bhasha Pathashalas', which facilitated public access to education with a focus on promoting the Nepali language as a medium of instruction. Subsequently, following the downfall of the Rana regime, significant modernization of education was instigated through systematic policy changes. During the panchayat period, Nepal espoused the 'One-nation-one-language' ideology within its education system (Phyak & Ojha, 2019). However, with the advent of the Interim Constitution of Nepal in 2007, the country underwent a significant shift towards a neoliberal language ideology in education. This shift facilitated the inclusion of mother tongues, Nepali, and English as mediums of instruction, tailored to the needs and demands of the community and learners (Saud, 2020a).

In a policy report by Nepal's National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC), Dr. Hugu B. Wood recommended Nepali as the sole medium of instruction in Nepalese schools and universities. The choice of the medium of instruction in schools was placed under the purview of the respective School Management Committees (MoE, 2009), marking a significant milestone in the adoption of EMI in public schools (Saud, 2020a). As a result, English is now being taught as a compulsory subject and is also used as a medium of instruction in several educational

institutions. The constitution of Nepal has provisioned that the medium of instruction to be provided by the schools shall be the Nepali language, English language, or both languages (Constitution of Nepal, 2015). In line with this, there is the provision that English can be the medium of instruction except in subjects which concern national identity (MoE, CDC, 2019). There is the provision of enabling child-friendly environment in classrooms to ensure learning (MoE, 2010). Learners' physical and psychological safety has been given utmost concern in the School Education Sector Plan (MoEST, 2022), so the learners must not feel unsafe to learn due to the medium of instruction.

After the implementation of federalism, there has been a noticeable trend among parents to enroll their children in private schools, largely due to the appeal of English being used as the medium of instruction. Despite limited evidence showing a direct correlation between English-medium instruction and enhanced academic performance (Khatri, 2016), the preference for private schools persists. In response to the increasing demand for English-medium education, public schools have also begun to adopt EMI often without fully considering its potential implications (Khatri, 2016). Nevertheless, the use of EMI continues to expand its horizon and gain prominence in the educational landscape of Nepal, sparking ongoing and robust debate (Saud, 2020a).

Methods and Procedures

This is a phenomenological study where I have chosen two schools and five participants thinking that the smaller number of participants could make it easier for me to explore their lived experiences in depth and reveal the exact experience of those individuals (Smith et al., 2009). The participants' lived experiences have been explored to deal with matters in fact and provide a crystal-clear picture to understand how they feel. The research theme I have picked is an issue related to our educational context that can be explored through several cases within the school setting (Creswell, 2015). Identifying the schools that have adopted English as a medium of instruction, I purposively selected two community secondary schools of Hupsekot Rural municipality as my search site. One primary level teacher, one lower secondary level and one secondary level teacher, and one student from each of the schools were my research participants. The interview was the data collection technique of my study where I used some of the open-ended guiding questions as my research tool. For the purpose of meaning construction, the data was recorded, transcribed, and translated without distorting the meaning. After that, the process of coding and categorizing was done, and different themes were generated to organize similar ideas. And finally, literature support was taken for the meaning-making process (Green & Breece, 2020).

Results and Discussion

Based on the collected data obtained from the research participants, the received ideas and information were categorized and five themes were generated to analyze the data and make sense.

EMI as Demand-Driven Adoption

It is good if any programme is implemented only after assessing the needs of the concerned people and addressing their demands. The positive attitudes of the instructors and stakeholders support the implementation of EMI (Ulfah et al., 2024). The decision to adopt EMI is largely influenced by the demands of the parents and perceived benefits for the learners. Parents hold the belief that if the children are taught via English medium, that brings quality education (Saud, 2020a). In this concern, the collected data reveal that with the changing scenario, the attraction of the parents as well as the students was towards the English medium.

In this concern, a teacher participant, T-1 said that they started EMI to address the increasing demand of the parents. He mentioned that in the later years, the attraction of the parents seemed to rapidly increase towards English. He asserted, “Due to the high demand of the parents, and society and to control the flow of the students transferring to the private schools”. He further added that the enrollment of the students in public schools was in decreasing order and the parents desired to teach their kids in private schools due to the difference in medium. So, with the purpose of providing quality education via EMI, they started to teach in both mediums making two streams one Nepali and another English. And both of the mediums were running parallelly for a couple of years. He mentioned, “Though we started EMI as per the demands of the parents as well as our students, in the starting years, it was difficult for us to find students in English medium but these days, Nepali medium is on the verge of extinction since no students are found to choose Nepali medium of instruction in junior classes”.

Relating to this concern another teacher participant, T-2 opines that the medium of instruction should not be imposed by the stakeholders, but it should be according to the choice of the learners. He said, “Since we are teaching learners of multilingual backgrounds, the choice should be given to them. Thinking this we addressed the demand of the concerned people and started EMI from 2069 B.S. and running both mediums till date”. He asserted that they had started EMI to stop the flow of students towards private boarding schools. When I tried to explore the perception of the students who study English medium, one of my student participants said that EMI was their choice to be able to compete in the competitive world. Another participant S-2 said that she was a student from a poor economic

background and her father passed away when she was only four. She mentioned that she had a strong desire to study in an English medium school. She said, “Even though I didn’t get the opportunity to study in private schools, I feel proud to be called a student who studied in an English medium school.” She asserted that she was fortunate enough to get a quality education in EMI which can help her to foster her future. “Low investment, quality education! Tyo pani English medium ma! (Quality education in low investment! That too in English medium!) What do we need more than that?” The learners showed enthusiasm for getting opportunity to study in English Medium in public schools.

As English is taken as the linguistic capital which is beneficial for future careers and to expand international access achieving higher social status in society (Bourdieu, 1993), the obtained data reveal that the schools have started to adopt EMI to address the increasing demands of the parents as well as to fulfill the desires of the learners. Hence interest of the society is the push factor to use English as a medium of instruction.

EMI Bears Multiple Perspectives on Academic Proficiency

EMI is believed to be an assisting tool in enhancing academic proficiency providing access to a wider range of educational landscapes. It also helps the learners to access the educational resources and materials which are available on the Internet. The enhanced exposure to EMI fosters increased communication, and global perspectives, enhances better understanding and helps in keeping updated in this globalized world. EMI encourages the development of language skills.

In this concern, a teacher participant, T-1, with teaching experience of more than two decades has mentioned “Since we have adopted EMI, the flow of students is increasing every year and we have become able to give satisfactory results in BLE and SEE as well”. He further asserted that the students in his school are from multicultural and multi-lingual backgrounds, and English is the third language for them. So, they feel uncomfortable and awkward sharing things. He claimed that though the answers are known to the learners, they show an unwillingness to participate and share. He said, “No doubt, the medium has supported enhancing the better understanding and better results in English subjects, however, if we observe from a holistic perspective, this concept of EMI has limited proficiency in the Nepali language”.

T-2, a social teacher, opines that the medium of instruction can bring change in the way of thinking of the learners, as a result, it affects the learners’ learning outcomes. He asserted that in the previous years, ‘Social’ subjects used to be taught

in English which could just give a surface knowledge to the learners that resulted in a low understanding of cultures, traditions and morale of the learners. He further articulated, “Thinking that students could get the real taste of Nepalese traditions mentioned in the ‘social studies’ book, the government made a policy to teach it in Nepali medium. We also have started to deliver the content by using Nepali. But just the opposite, the learners are found feeling it difficult to grab some of the words and can’t express what they have understood”. According to him, due to the medium of instruction, there has been a significant difference in the learning outcomes of the learners. He said that the learners seemed to be listening but when they were asked to express themselves either in written or spoken form, they felt it was difficult.

Another participant, a science teacher, T-3 said that the learners do not feel comfortable and are not able to grasp the basic concept of science due to the medium of instruction. She expressed, “I sometimes find it a bit difficult to clarify some of the concepts using English. In such cases, I make use of both languages to give my learners a clear concept. So, I think, the medium of instruction is hindering the potentiality of the learners in some cases”.

One student participant S-1 has claimed that EMI assisted in developing her academic as well as linguistic proficiency. She said, “I always had a strong desire to be a fluent speaker like my English teacher. And I used to think that one day, I would be like her. But now, I realize that EMI helped me to achieve my goal. I regret that if we had used English not only as the medium of instruction but also as the medium of formal as well as informal communication, I would have been a better and more fluent speaker”. With a confident voice, she said, “I am confident in the sense that I always secure good scores due to the opportunity to study in English medium”.

EMI can significantly improve students’ learning and English proficiency along with enhanced language skills (Cakir, 2018). The above-mentioned data reveal that EMI can assist learners in developing their academic as well as academic proficiency which depends on the desire, determination and motivation of the learners. Since English can be the medium of instruction except in the subjects which concern national identity (MoE, CDC, 2019), the study has given some evidence that the diversified multicultural and multilingual background of students whose first language is not Nepali, may struggle to grasp the concepts delivered in English (Ojha, 2018). The use of non-native language as a medium in the learning environment can create disengagement of the learners and can hinder the academic achievement of the learners (Poudel, 2017). It makes clear that there is doubt about getting the anticipated benefits by using EMI.

EMI and Cognitive Development of the Learners

EMI significantly contributes to the cognitive development of learners. By engaging with academic content in English, students are exposed to diverse perspectives and approaches, which stimulates critical thinking and enhances problem-solving skills. When the learners are exposed to a new language, they try to infer and translate the terms with deductive reasoning to understand, which means they begin to closely relate to the processing of the language (Tai & Zhao, 2022). EMI encourages students to analyze, interpret, and synthesize information in a language widely used in academia and the professional world, thereby strengthening their cognitive abilities. Moreover, the need to comprehend and communicate complex ideas in English fosters linguistic and cognitive flexibility, leading to overall cognitive development.

In this connection, T-2 articulated that they had an organization named EMBOCS, which assisted in the promotion of EMI in community schools by organizing training for teachers and several innovative programmes for the students which were very beneficial for the cognitive development of the students. In a similar connection, T-3 said, “EMI is considered more useful for those learners who have supportive parents at home, have access to the Internet and are proficient in English. By exploring themselves, they can be engaged in searching the things and thinking critically.” She opines that English should not be imposed forcefully as a medium of instruction since it could hinder the cognitive development of those learners who do not understand English well. T-3 shared that EMI makes learners able to compete in the global job market by fostering a sense of global competitiveness. She also asserted that the learners were developing their skills to explore things which is the credit of EMI.

The student participant, S-1 has mentioned that she is highly influenced by some of the teachers’ English fluency in her school. She shared that she used to think to speak in the same way as her teachers. She along with her friends used to practice speaking by trying to find new words and taking the help of the teachers to translate some of the Nepali words into English. Being enthusiastic she shared, “When we could do the given assignment by using only English language, we used to be very happy”. In line with the similar veins, another student participant, T-2 said that since he is from Magar ethnicity, he is fortunate enough to have proficiency and command over three languages. He believes that his proficiency will open up opportunities for jobs in the future. In this connection, one of the teachers mentioned that they must keep themselves updated due to the adoption of EMI in the school. To keep him updated he used to explore the Internet and make excessive use of a dictionary at home since he is a teacher from the Nepali language background. He claimed, “A

teacher should be learner forever. Though it was difficult for me in the beginning days, it has helped my knowledge horizon”.

The data reveal that EMI has assisted the cognitive development of individuals. When the learners are exposed to an English environment, they have to think actively to understand the contents and when they are assigned to perform any task they are involved in the mental process of critical thinking, planning, focusing, problem-solving, etc. as there is the positive relation between EMI and cognitive abilities of the learners (Jeon & Yamashita, 2014). The use of EMI can promote the cognitive development of learners by utilizing creative thinking and reasoning, problem-solving skills, critical and analytical thinking skills and so on (Baker, 2001; Wei, 2019) as the learners tend to think the things in an exponentially new language.

Teachers’ Struggle Behind the Scene

Teachers are the source who create a safe learning environment in the classroom and engage the learners in learning. Sometimes, teachers have to face difficulty in delivering the content in English due to a lack of English language proficiency (Saud, 2020a).

In this connection, T-1, a primary-level teacher who graduated from Nepali medium of instruction opines that the teachers must be updated with the time. However, to fit in EMI, it was really difficult for those teachers who got an education in Nepali medium and were primarily appointed without any specific subjects in the primary level and with respective subjects in upper levels other than English. He said, “I am too, striving hard to manage everything despite having a strong desire to update myself”. I requested him to share his efforts, giving him an option to share if only he felt safe. When I insisted, he shared, “As a teacher, I have to study far more than I was a student. Buying and keeping a dictionary and books at home, I used to read each and everything prior to the upcoming class, know the meanings of difficult words, write in the books and try to build confidence within myself. To prepare myself, I spent many sleepless nights studying at home, though I’m happy in the sense that the concept of EMI has given me opportunities for my self-development. People always blame the teachers but no one knows how a teacher invests extra time and effort to update oneself”.

Aligning to this view, T-2 opines that if the learners do not understand what is being taught, the whole efforts of the teachers as well as the learners’ attempts will be worthless. So, the choice of the medium of instruction should address the learners’ ease and desires. That’s the reason they are running both mediums in their school. He added, “We teachers have to be very cautious while designing classroom activities to ensure learners’ participation and engagement otherwise we may fail in front of the learners”.

In a similar vein, another teacher participant who graduated from an English medium-based school, T-3 says that she does not have any linguistic insufficiencies but her learners do. She strongly claimed that she could deliver the content by using English, but when her students seemed puzzled during the delivery and showed less engagement in the activities that disappointed her. She asserted that she had shared the problem with her staff, tried to change her teaching styles, encouraged the learners, even started to use English and Nepali both languages as mediums of instruction, and tried to explore the Internet to get new ideas from others and executed them however the situation remained the same. With a perplexed face, “Science is believed to be one of the most difficult subjects. After collecting several ideas, I try to deliver the content and engage my students in learning activities using English. When I teach, they understand the concept but when I ask them to express whatever they have learnt, they can’t. This results in poor results, in which, I used to be blamed in society. Is it only my fault, mam?”, she questioned me.

The analysis of the data reveals that the use of non-native language as a medium in the learning environment can create disengagement of the learners and hinder the academic achievement of the learners (Poudel, 2017). Due to the inadequacy of English language proficiency of some language teachers, they are facing difficulties in delivering instruction through the English language which can lead to unclear explanations, limited teacher-student interaction, and less engagement which ultimately hinders the learning outcomes of the learners (Poudel, 2017). In some cases, EMI seems to be a burden for some teachers who are from Nepali language backgrounds (Saud, 2020a).

Challenges and Sustainability in Multilingual Background

EMI can be particularly challenging for learners with a multilingual background. Navigating academic content in a non-native language requires a high degree of linguistic dexterity and adaptability. The cognitive demand of processing complex concepts in English alongside managing multiple languages can be daunting. However, with perseverance and strategic language support, students can overcome these challenges and reap the cognitive benefits of engaging with EMI.

Regarding the challenges and sustainability of EMI, T-1 emphasized the preparation and implementation of a plan, policy and programme with a long-term vision as a crucial aspect. In this connection, he asserted, “Without preparing any sustainable policy and without prior plan and strategies, we can’t give the expected results, which become true to us as well”. He mentioned that they had started to implement EMI without any strategic plan, so they had felt difficulties in managing infrastructures and faced a scarcity of human resources which resulted in difficulty

in obtaining expected results. As both mediums have been run in both of the schools, there is a vast difference in the number of students in both mediums. The number of students is said to be very low in Nepali medium classes in comparison to EMI-based classes. Regarding the learners, they seem to be happy to get quality education at free of cost but still, they are not able to meet the targeted goal.

T-2 said he didn't believe that the medium of instruction hinders the learners in language proficiency. He highlighted, "Our ancestors also had command over several languages, so why can we not? But supervision is needed for us". He stressed that learners must have proficiency in English since it is a widely used language. Regarding the challenges, T-3 mentioned the diverse level of the learners, the proficiency level of the teachers, and multicultural and multilingual backgrounds are hindering the effective implementation of EMI.

Due to the pressurized demand of the parents, the medium of instruction has been shifted to English and EMI has been implemented in Nepal without any careful planning and necessary preparation (Ojha, 2018). Though the policy doesn't have any comprehensive plans for supporting the schools to implement EMI (Khati, 2016), the schools are striving to address the emerging demands of changing society by adopting EMI. Moreover, careful planning and vision are needed for its sustainability.

EMI and Future Prospects

While exploring the perception of the student, S-1 believes that the students have double benefits if they study in EMI-adopted public schools. She articulated, "There is a high chance of obtaining scholarships if we study in public schools and second, we do not have to pay much to get quality education here, and we also can get job opportunities as we have become able to search advertisements which are published in English and apply there". The analysis of the data obtained from S-2 reveals that the students can develop their English proficiency if their medium of instruction is English. She said, "We can easily communicate in English, so, if we want to go abroad, it may help us". Giving stress to the prospects and the need to develop teachers' competency T-1 said that the implementation of EMI has provided the teachers a platform to develop professionalism. T-3 claimed, "By using technology, we have to update ourselves, there are several ways of self-directed learning, just, we just have to have the desire to strive to be updated". Giving concern to the prospect for the learners, she added that those learners who are competent in English can get several opportunities in their higher studies as well as the job market so, the learners' base should be made stronger and they should be encouraged to use English while communicating formally and informally as well. She stressed the need to develop the competency of teachers as the teachers must be able to create a

supportive and inclusive learning environment by adapting innovative instructional strategies to address the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the learners.

The expression of the learners exhibited the foreseen opportunities that she could grab because of her achievements and proficiency obtained in the EMI-based public school. Moreover, students have a strong belief in getting better job opportunities in the national as well as international job market if they study in an English Medium school. Thapa (2016) asserts that making graduates able to get jobs in the national as well as international markets is the main reason for adopting EMI. While examining the perceptions of the teachers on EMI in Nepalese public schools, there is a demand for EMI due to its perceived economic benefits in the future (Mahara, 2023).

Conclusion

In the Nepalese educational setting, EMI is undoubtedly one of the emerging and growing phenomena that is thought to be able to open up the doors of opportunities in Nepalese public school landscapes. The study shed light on the present scenario of EMI in Nepalese public schools. The adoption of EMI is found primarily driven by increasing demand from parents and the desire to provide quality education through EMI in public schools. There is a perceived advantage in studying in public schools with EMI, such as the potential for scholarships and access to quality education at lower costs. Teachers are facing challenges in transitioning to EMI, especially those who were primarily educated in Nepali medium and experienced limited support for professional development. Student engagement in EMI classrooms seems to be impacted by the students' multicultural and multi-lingual backgrounds, with some expressing discomfort in participating in classroom activities though they are found to be satisfied with the achievements and prospects resulting from EMI-based school. Only very few numbers of students are in Nepali mediums.

The study's key insights could inform policymakers and educators about the effectiveness of EMI programmes in rural settings, considering the specific challenges and potential benefits. The need for additional support like teacher training in English language acquisition methods, or providing supplementary resources in the local language. Alternative approaches, such as bilingual education programmes, balancing the need to learn English with maintaining students' connection to their native language and culture are crucial. By examining the challenges and prospects of EMI in rural contexts, the study can contribute to developing more effective educational strategies that promote both English language acquisition and strong academic performance for all students, regardless of their background. Most importantly, Nepali mediums seem to be on the verge of

extinction, visionary plan is to be made. Further quantitative study can be done by covering a larger area to explore more.

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