Diversity Management in Classroom: Exploration of Teacher's Role

Sherpa Dawa

Abstract

Nepal is a country of diversity in terms of ideological, cultural, religious, caste, geographical and sexual orientation, ethnicity, class and language. Diversity is not merely a problem, it is an opportunity for exploring creativity of individuals who have cultural, racial, and ethnic differences. In this context, this study aims to explore the role of teacher in diversity management in the classroom. I chose purposive sampling to identify the participant for my study. Headteacher, teacher and the students are the participant in my study. Multicultural education, Fair treatment and respect of differences are key for living diversity. Differences of the individuals need to addressed inside and outside the classroom. Diversity is the property of the school from which teacher and students learn different idea information and knowledge form the diversified students in his school. Diversity need to celebrate in the school in the different functions.

Keywords: Diversity management, holistic diversity, valuing differences, multicultural, inclusive school culture

Background

Diversity encompasses all the differences that people bring to an organization or group (Rosado, 2006). Nepal is a country of diversity in terms of ideological, cultural, religious, caste, geographical and sexual orientation, ethnicity, class and language. According to Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2011), there are 125 different castes and ethnic groups. Peoples settlements are scattered in various parts of the same cultural group or caste and ethnic groups are not settled in the same territory. There are different weather within the one-hour foot walk. Thus, the same national diversified nature is there in schools in terms of caste and ethnicity, religion, cultural, geographical location and invisible diversities such as cognitive aptitude, students background, level of motivation, diversity in beliefs and thought are found in classroom. Diversity in classroom teaches students how to live and work in a society. The ability to connect with peer, co-workers and neighbours with diverse backgrounds and abilities are very worthy and valuable it develops critical thinking skills and makes the students think differently. The effective role of teachers enhances quality education and creates a healthy learning environment in school (Chen & Velsor,1996).

It is a great challenge for every teacher how to address the needs and interests of studentswho are from diverse backgrounds in the classroom.But it needs to be addressed and managed well for the all-around development of the learners (Lewis, 2000). Diversity is not merely a problem, it is an opportunity for exploring creativity of individuals who have cultural, racial, and ethnic differences. Teacher's ability, knowledge and skills for the diversity management and learning environment affects students' behaviour, nature and interest in learning (Erdogan, 2010).

In this context, many questions arose in my mind such as what are the role and responsibility of teachers for diversity management in the classroom. How diversity can be managed well in the classroom ? So, this study aims at exploring the role of teachers in diversity management in the classroom.

Reviewing the Diversity Management

Diversity management handles diversities from a managerial perspective, and deals with the management style of organizations and administrators (Surveil et al., 2008). Furthermore, Hopkins and Hopkins (1999) states that diversity is not a problem - that should be managed. Hence, it can be stated that diversity leadership is a broader concept that includes diversity management. Diversity leadership is defined as:

> a process of acting respectfully, sensitively, and tolerably against the diversity of individuals with many differences, such as gender, language, religion, race, ethnic origin, personality and political view by accepting them as they are, making use of such diversity of individuals in line with the objectives of the organization and directing such people in line with common objectives by holding them together in harmony, thanks to an impartial and fair management mentality (Polat&Olcum, 2016, p. 72).

Individuals with widening differences in gender, age, and ethnicity have participated in the workforce under the impact of globalization and economic reasons in recent decades. The members of organizations who come together to achieve organizational goals, such as performance, profitability, productivity, and effectiveness want to adapt to their organizations and colleagues, and they also want to represent their differences (gender, age, disability, etc.) liberally, and hope to respect these differences in the workforce (Survegil et al., 2008). When differences are addressed at an organizational level, employee differences may help the emergence of new and creative ideas in the direction of different perspectives and opinions. Managing diversity should be a comprehensive, holistic process for managing these differences that people bring for the productive well-being of all, especially the firm and its mission." He has mentioned the diverse students based on ages gender, race,

ethnicity, sexual orientation, disabilities (Rosado,2006). He has suggested four imperatives which form the basis of the effective management of a diverse workforce is as:

> the heterogeneity of the workforce and dynamic of affirmative action are sensitive to the needs of the various groups comprising the workforce and the community population and the dynamic of valuing differences, Incorporate their contributions to the overall mission of the business the dynamic of managing diversity and create a cultural and social ambiance that is inclusive and empowers all groups in the corporation the dynamic of living diversity (Rosado, 2006, p5).

> These managing of diverse workforce assets me to focus on these issues in interview with the participant. Effectiveness means the degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent of which targeted problems are solved. It's a goal of management that focuses on outcomes, objectives and targets expected (Polat, 2017). Effectiveness is the degree to which the school achieves its goal, and is expressed as the product of both quality and quantity of the school outputs and the quality of the organization processes. The effectiveness of the school can be seen from the output of the school that can be measured in accordance with the average achievement of the student at the end of their formal education at the school. This means that the effective school is a school that shows the correspondence between the achieved and the expected results.

Lewis (2000) states that successful manager exhibits the following basic roles: controlling the organization environment and its resources, organizing and coordinating, using information and communication channels for identifying problems and for understanding the changing environment to make effective manager decisions, providing for growth and development, motivating employees, and handling conflicts and strategic problem solving. Effective school management in this case is considered as the ability of the school to use education inputs and produce quality graduates to compete in the market and employment. Effective management can be interpreted as the art of managing properly; the manner of treating, directing, carrying on, or using for a purpose; conducting administration; guidance and control in an organization.

Theorising Holistic Model of Quality Diversity.

The holistic model of quality diversity is known as total quality diversity. It is the total quality respect of the diversity. The holistic model of quality diversity focuses on differences that people bring to an organization or group. Rosado (2006), state that Holistic model of managing diversity recognizes its two dimensions: the primary or Horizontal (mainly biological, usually visible: age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation,

disabilities), and the secondary or Vertical (psycho socio-spiritual, usually invisible: values system, worldviews, mindsets, ethics, paradigms, core intelligences).

The primary or horizontal dimension concerned with embracing and valuing differences. It is said diversity is not problem but need to managed well. Even a twin there are difference with them so difference is the beauty of the society and institutions. Individual differences (age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disabilities) need to respect, accept and valued at home, community and school. In school diversified nature of students, teachers, parents can be found. Accept and respect of each other create peace, harmony and wellbeing of the school for the quality education and prosperous school. In school teacher and students, teaching staff and nonteaching staff, senior level students and junior level students, male and female different cast and ethnicity, disable students all need to enjoy, accept and respect from each other is the essence of the holistic model of diversity management. This embracing and valuing the difference help feel good with each other and enjoy among diversities(Polat, 2017).

The secondary or vertical dimension (sociocultural, usually invisible: language, education, values occupation, culture, learning style, etc.) focused on the institution (Ibid). People's sociocultural aspect, language, culture, education status, profession, knowledge and skills are the difference. In school different subject expertise with hierarchical knowledge level and position are in same school. Individual with diverse sociocultural background. Respect and acceptance of the each other's difference (cultural, educational, economical, gender, philosophical, geographical, generation) is diversity management. Diversity is the respect of multicultural prospect. It is being concerned with affirmative action was introduced in 1960 to 1970 and in 1980 concerned with valuing difference in 1990 managing diversity but in 21st century the focus of school and co-operation needs to be on living diversity (Rosado,2006,10)

Methods

I have applied the phenomenology research design. Phenomenological research generates a large quantity of interview notes, tape recordings, jotting or other records all of which have to be analysed (Creswell, 2013). This design helps me to study the teacher's cultural practices (Ollapally& Bhatnagar, 2009). Before selecting participants, I have taken consent from them and informed the purpose of study and its impact on them. two secondary schools from Kathmandu Valley, from which two head teachers, two school management chairpersons and two teachers were selected purposively for the study. I have engaged with my participant formally and informally and discussed related to diversity management in classroom. I observed the teacher's classroom and engaged with teacher and

students for purpose of data collection. I conducted unstructured in-depth interviews with participant. My questions were directed to the participant's experiences, feelings, beliefs and convictions about the theme in question. Data were obtained about how the participants think and feel in the most direct ways. I focused on what goes on within the participants and got the participants to describe the lived experience in a language as free from the constructs of the intellect and society as possible. The interview is reciprocal both researcher and research subject are engaged in the dialogue. I experienced that the duration of interviews and the number of questions varied from one participant to the other. I have noted records of each date and time concerning what the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the process.

During an interview with my participant I used a mobile as a recording device. I wrote a descriptive account of their experiences, which included all the events, examples, and anecdotes associated with diversity management experiences with some direct quotes significant to this study. In writing those accounts, the intended outcome of this process was to create a small number of summary categories to capture the key themes in their stories. Participants were articulate enough to explain their experiences and perceptions. I recorded all interviews on my mobile phone, wrote down on paper, and then selected common ground for general theme, basic theme and global theme. I transcribed the theme and edited for accuracy by the participation. Interaction, in-depth interviews were taken with participation developing rapport with them, and facts and data were collected. Hence, all the interviews were recorded, transcribed, coded and interpreted.

Teacher's Role in Diversity Management in the Classroom

Teachers are trying to make their class interesting and effective, so diversities management in their classroom is very momentous. The roles of teachers in diversity management in classroom are as follows:

Respect of Multicultural Education

Respect is a positive feeling or action shown towards someone considered important, or held in high esteem or regard. It takes a sense of esteem for good or valuable qualities. And, it is also the process of honouring someone by showing care, concern, or consideration for their needs or feelings. Multicultural education pursuing engagement, understanding and cultural exchange between and among cultures, so that different cultures can co-exist peacefully and with less stress (Tiedt&Tiedt, 1995). "Multiculturalism takes consideration on race, ethnic structure, language, gender, age, disability, social class, education, religious orientation and dimensions of other cultures. The goal of multicultural education is considered to provide equal educational opportunities for all races, nations and groups of

different cultures (Banks, 2008). Multicultural education respects each individual, his/her culture and creates a healthy environment in the classroom among the students (Sherpa, 2019).

Respect is the feeling of honour, which causes to behave someone or somebody in a careful, careful moderate way due to its value, superiority, senility, utility and divinity. My respondent head teacher stated that "in order to manage the differences effectively, it is essential to share the respect to differences value at school." In school there are various students from diverse backgrounds their language and culture are more valued for them, that is very important. In the same way another respondent teacher focused "Instructional leadership then must focus on trust within the learning environment." It shows academic leaders should believe or trust their students, it is necessary for instructors, staff, and administrators to undergo training in cultural competence, especially for educators who may have limited knowledge and awareness of diversity. Teachers from diverse backgrounds tend to be successful role models for diverse groups of students.

Fair Treatment and Respect of Differences

Teachers need to treat the students fairly in their every activity such as teaching, motivating, observing, giving feedback. Observing whether or not the distribution results and process in the classroom are genuinely fair to the students. That is to say so long as the teacher's way of doing things and treating his students make them feel that he is fair, the fact that the teacher is unfair sometimes will not affect students' attitude towards the teacher. Fairness of decision-making policies and practices is an important consideration for individuals. Interview with my respondent head teacher stated that

> All students from diverse backgrounds should feel fairly treated to them and feel that decisions are made in fair ways.All teachers should recognize that these judgments are just as important as and sometimes more important than how students feel about their overall activities such as praising, providing feedback, judgements, giving opportunity etc. Students expect an instructor to treat everyone in the class equally. Students expect an instructor to listen, consider, and thoughtfully reply to their ideas, even when they challenge the instructor's views.

The above statements stated that teachers should behave equally with the students. They should respect the idea views and opinion of the learners. Teachers should care about students and their academic performance, talk to them before and after class, answer the questions thoroughly, and invite students who appear to have problems with the course to discuss those problems and potential solutions. Another respondent teacher argues that "students have negative emotions when they feel they are not treated fairly". providing equal

opportunities for individuals, and not discriminating among individuals express the equity behaviour of a teacher. Teachers do not discriminate for reasons of differences in race, gender, language, religion, and ideology will benefit the creation of a common culture and a positive environment in and out of the classroom. An effective teacher encourages equity and equality in the organization. Equity refers to not basing preferences for someone over others upon prejudices and stereotypes. Prejudices may cause unfair evaluations and favouritism.

Developing an Inclusive School Culture

In successful inclusive schools, the curriculum teaching and learning processes are coordinated closely to the needs and abilities of students (Forlin, 2007). Modifying the curriculum in this way offers students with a broader choice of study paths, and presents curriculum content that is relevant and matched to students' interests and abilities (Hopkins& Hopkins, 2007). In terms of teaching methods, teachers vary their strategies for performance and for student engagement during lessons (Lewis & Batts, 2005). Assessment of learning method may also need to be modified. Underpinning these adaptations is a desire to create a supportive environment that respects and accommodates student diversity.

In the interview teacher states his argued that:

> In classroom teachers should develop inclusive school culture in open communication to enhance critical consciousness is beneficial for all students and most beneficial when facilitated by teachers from diverse backgrounds.

An inclusive school culture delights cultural characteristics, languages, communication styles, attitudes, experiences, and values. An essential component of such inclusion is developing a safe environment full of intergroup contact. Intergroup connections reduced prejudice and enhanced positive relationships cross-culturally. Such relationships led to interdependence between groups, friendships, and positive attitudes toward diversity Algozzine& Anderson (2007).Students skill ability, their cultural background, intelligence level, their interest is different. That should be addressed in the classroom and out of the classroom.According to Polat&Olcum (2016) the delivery of culturally relevant pedagogy is intrinsic to teachers of colour who possess a cultural understanding of the educational needs of students of colour. Thus, these teachers create and engage a curriculum that accounts for students social and community needs: Teacher form the minority group teachers tend to have a greater sense of how to develop (and therefore enact) culturally relevant curriculums and to understand the human, social, and communal nature of teaching and learning. Perhaps the opportunities to learn, to laugh, and to imagine the possibilities of schooling in the context of making a real difference in students' lives can

serve as a catalyst for minority group people to enter the profession as well as helping to retain those who already work there.

Developing Trust and Celebration of Diversities

Developing trust from others is a great matter, and engaging in individual culture is another important factor. Developing trust is important when it comes to professional practice because instructional leadership necessitates partnership with communities, including diverse populations. My participant headteacher state that "Without trust and respect of diversities it will be difficult to work together in the school". This statement focuses on trustworthy environment in each other among teachers and students. There need to be healthy atmosphere in organization each other where need to address the diversities who are from various background. Instructional leadership then must focus on fostering trust within the learning environment. Teachers may aim to attain this objective through the expansion of new instructional approaches and the institution of teaching capabilities in which their performance is evaluated based on how they nurture positive relationships with their students. Furthermore, it is necessary for instructors, staff, and administrators to undergo training in cultural competence, especially for educators who may have limited knowledge and awareness of diversity.My respondent teacher states that " cultural awareness, inclusive education and engage with the individual and respect their difference is significant". Valuing and respecting other is significant for managing diversities. School tries to manage environment to enjoy with diversified nature of teacher and the students in school. My respondent teacher state that "diversities need to celebrate in the school and community for inclusion and promotion and appreciation of the diversities for prosperity of the school." This statement highlights that the diversities is the property of the school and community where school and community can enjoy and celebrate with the difference is the essence of the living diversity. School can celebrate the diversities by different functions and program. In school students and teacher able to enjoy formal and informal setting with diverse group. Respecting the difference and developing a welcoming attitude and celebration create wellbeing and healthy atmosphere in school. Every teacher should engage with students and he should study his/her page to page. Schools that are dedicated to advancing diversity as an institutionalized value must consider faculty of colour as more than a tool, strategy, or demographic number(Polat, 2015). Hence, instructors must aim to address diversity by fostering equality and cultural competence in the academe and developing trust to establish a helpful and supportive learning environment for all students.

Conclusion

Diversity management is a process of acting respectfully, and sensitively against the diversity of individuals with many differences, respecting gender, language, religion, race, ethnic origin, personality and political views by accepting them as they are, making use of such diversity of individuals. It is an opportunity for exploring the creativity of individuals who have cultural, racial, and ethnic differences via diversity leadership. Differences becomes more prevalent across the nation, while big conversations about diversity and differences amongst people should happen at home. The classroom is a great place to begin the conversation and to educate students on diversity.

The school need to provide multicultural environment in their classroom respecting the difference of the students. Students can feel and enjoy with differences in school like in their family at home. School need to respect, listen and consider the students' demands and wishes. Each students' skill ability, their cultural background, intelligence level, their interest, are difference that need to be valued for the prosperous school. Multicultural education, Fair treatment and respect of differences are key for living diversity. All the student's ideas, views and opinion and their primary and secondary differences need to respect in the classroom. students' skill and ability, their cultural background, intelligence level, their interest, etc. are different, they should be addressed inside and outside the classroom. Diversity is the property of the school from which teacher and students learn different idea information and knowledge form the diversified students in his school. diversity need to celebrate in the school in the different functions. School need to be engaged with students and respect them addressing their queries.

References

Algozzine, B., & Anderson, K. (2007). Tips for teaching: Differentiating instruction to include all pupils. *Preventing School Failure*, 51, 3:49-54.

Banks, J. A. (2008). *Introduction to Multicultural Education.* Boston Newwork: Pearson Chen, C., & Van Velsor, E. (1996). New directions for research and practice in diversity leadership. *The Leadership Quaterly* , 285-302.

Central Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Population monograph 2014. Government of Nepal:* Central Bureau of Statistics CBS

Creswell, J.W. (2013). Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Erdogan. (2010). *Education and School Management.* Istanbul: Alfa Publishing.

Forlin, C.L. (2007). Inclusive educational practices: A way forward for Hong Kong. Chinese Education and Society, 40, 4: 63-75.

Hopkins WE, Hopkins, SA (1999). Diversity leadership:A mandate for the 21st century workforce. *Journal of leadership and Organization studies:5(3)*, 129-140.https://doi.org/10.1177/107179199900500311

Lewis, S., & Batts, K. (2005). How to implement differentiated instruction. Journal of Staff Development, 26 (4). 26– 31.

Lewis, D. (2000). Cross-cultural diversityleadership and work place relations in Australia. *Asia Pasific Business Review:7(1)* , 105-124.

Ollapally, A. & Bhatnagar, B. (2009). The Holistic Approach to Diversity Management: HR Implications, Indian Journal of Industrial Relations,44(3):454-471,

URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/27768218.

Polat, S. (2015). *Other perspective in the context of peace education and empathy.* Ankara: Pegem Akademi Publishing.

Polat, S. (2016). Characteristics of Diversity Leadership According to Teachers. *Anthropologist:24(1)* , 64-74.

Polat, S. (2017). Diversity leadership skills of school administrators:A scale development study. *Issues in Educational Research, 27(3)* , 512-526.

Polat, S., & Olcum, D. (2016). Characteristics of Diversity Leadership According to Teachers. *Anthropologist* , 64-74.

Rosado, C, (2006). What do we mean by managing diversity ? *Workforce Diversity, Vol. 3*

Hyderabad, India: ICAFAI University. (Originally work published 1997)

Sherpa, D. (2019). Exploring the Dimensions of Multicultural Education and its Implication in Teaching Learning. *Interdisciplinary Research in Education,* 4(1), 35-42. https://doi.org/10.3126/ire.v4i1.25708

Shurville,S., OGrady,T., and Mayall,P. (2008). Educational and institutional flexibility of Australian Educational Software. Campus-Wide Information Systems, Emerald

Surgevil O, B. (2008). A research to identify the organization's approaches to diversity management. *Dokuz: Eylul University: The Journal of Graduate School of Social Science:10(4)* , 65-96.

Winkler, I. (2010). *Contemporary Leadership Theories:Contribution to Management Sceince.* Berlin Heidelberg: Springer Verlag.

Tiedt, P., &Tiedt, I. M. (1995). *Multicultural teaching: A handbook of activities, information,and resources.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.