

Editorial

Welcome to the latest issue of the Shikshak Journal (Vol. 18, No. 1, 2026). As a dedicated peer-reviewed academic publication, the journal serves as a dynamic platform for educators, researchers, and policymakers to exchange empirical findings, pedagogical innovations, and theoretical insights. Our primary purpose is to bridge the gap between educational research and classroom practice while addressing contemporary socio-educational challenges. This edition brings together a diverse and thought-provoking collection of seventeen research papers that span across technology, environmental education, health, language, and literature. We are proud to present these scholarly contributions, which offer valuable insights and practical recommendations for our readers alike.

Several studies in this volume explore the **integration of technology, artificial intelligence, and digital tools** in research and pedagogy. The first paper, authored by Amit Bhattarai and Ranju Kumari Shiwakoti, introduces an advanced deep learning model for flood detection in Nepal using a 5-channel U-Net architecture alongside Sentinel-1 satellite imagery and topographic data, offering a robust tool for disaster management in cloud-prone mountainous regions. Turning to technology in higher education, Bishnu Maya Joshi and Padma Koirala investigate the adoption of digital technologies in university-level economics teaching through Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory, revealing that while educators recognize digital tools' benefits, poor infrastructure and lack of training hinder integration. Complementing this, Milan Acharya discusses the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in fostering digital readiness among university students, showing that students' self-efficacy, combined with emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement, plays a crucial role in how effectively and responsibly they utilize generative AI tools like ChatGPT for academic activities.

A strong cluster of papers examines **pedagogical practices, equity, and mathematics education**. In mathematics instruction, Jaya Bishnu Pradhan explores the pedagogical value of integrating historical narratives into secondary education, showing it helps students view math as a meaningful cultural endeavor rather than rigid rules. Addressing instruction medium, Krishna Chandra Paudel examines the impact of English versus Nepali on secondary students' mathematics self-efficacy, finding no statistically significant difference and concluding that effective pedagogy matters far more than language alone. Further dispelling traditional assumptions, Shree Prasad Ghimire investigates gender differences in mathematics performance through successive terminal examination scores, finding minimal differences between boys and girls and promoting mathematical equality. Broader pedagogical and inclusive practices are also highlighted: Srijanadevi Khadka evaluates students' responses to teacher education skills, concluding that interactive, student-centered, and culturally responsive learning environments significantly enhance student engagement. Meanwhile, addressing inclusive education, Kumar Thapa and co-authors highlight the gap between examination policies and actual practices for students with disabilities in Nepal, emphasizing the urgent need for standardized national guidelines, accessible infrastructure, and teacher capacity building.

Language and literary studies form another major thematic pillar of this issue. Shiv Ram Pandey and co-authors examine strategies for creating collaborative learning environments for English language learners in Kathmandu, finding that teachers face challenges like limited classroom resources and lack of administrative support despite active group-work efforts. Turning to the Nepali language context, Dharmananda Panta presents a detailed linguistic profile of the Sudurpashchim Province, analyzing census data to map regional mother tongues and calling for the preservation and promotion of local languages in education and administration. Focusing on higher education, Shaktiraj Nepal explores Master's level students' perspectives regarding academic writing in Nepali, identifying practical and theoretical challenges and emphasizing the need for structured guidance and continuous practice. Finally, Basudev Gautam offers a critical literary analysis of Dhruba Chandra Gautam's novel *Upasamhar Arthat Chautho Antya*, dissecting its narrative elements to reveal its sharp critique of socio-political anomalies, corruption, and human character flaws in contemporary society.

The remaining papers address vital aspects of **public health, adolescent well-being, environmental education, and economic policy**. Govinda Prasad Devkota and co-authors explore basic-level students' attitudes toward waste segregation in Chitwan, demonstrating that targeted environmental education intervention programs significantly improve sustainable waste management behaviors. In public health, Thuma Kumari Paudel and co-authors review risk factors behind the rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Nepal, urging policies focused on health awareness, active lifestyles, and reducing tobacco and alcohol consumption. Focusing on adolescent and college youth, Shanta Upadhyaya and co-authors investigate physical discomfort and pain management strategies among adolescent girls during menstruation, underscoring the need for nutritional support, health education, and a caring environment. Similarly, Min Raj Adhikari and co-authors examine the relationship between study time and premarital sexual behavior among college students in Kathmandu, finding that lower study time correlates with riskier sexual behaviors and calling for comprehensive sexual health education. Synthesizing education and macro-development, Basudeb Khanal revisits economic growth theories to establish education as a primary catalyst for economic development, arguing that sustained public investment in education boosts human capital and innovation while supporting social equity, stability, and good governance.

As we present this volume to our readership, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to our contributing authors, diligent peer reviewers, and the entire editorial board for their unwavering commitment to academic excellence. We remain dedicated to fostering a vibrant scholarly dialogue that bridges the gap between research, policy, and practice. It is our sincere hope that the diverse perspectives offered in this issue will not only enrich your understanding but also inspire innovative solutions to the contemporary challenges we face in education, health, and society at large. We invite you to engage critically with these works and look forward to welcoming your continued contributions in our future editions.

Editor-in-Chief
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