

Relevance of Interventionist Pedagogical Approaches in the Context of Nepal

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Abstract

This paper examines the context of using traditional pedagogical approaches and the need of intervention to these traditional pedagogical approaches in the context of Nepal. Particularly, it aims to explore how the interventionist pedagogical approaches are relevant in the context of Nepal. I reviewed several books, journals and research articles to examine the shift in pedagogical approaches in global context, the emergence of interventionist pedagogies approaches and relevance of these approaches in the context of Nepal. From the review of various sources, I found the need of intervention to these existing traditional pedagogical approaches as they could not provide the equal opportunities as well as benefits of education to the diverse learners' population. This study further explored the relevance of interventionist pedagogical approaches in the context of Nepal where the existing pedagogical approaches have excluded many students from getting benefits of education and only prioritized the narrative way of learning that focuses only on rote learning and memorization. I also found that the interventionist pedagogical approaches as a panacea to many existing problems related with teaching and learning process. This study suggests to intervene the existing traditional pedagogical approaches and follow interventionist pedagogical approaches to offer equal benefits of education to people from all walks of life in democratic environment.

Keywords: *critical approach, interventionist pedagogical approach, traditional pedagogical approach*

Introduction

Pedagogy refers to the practice of teaching that involves the methods and techniques that are used in imparting knowledge and skills to learners. Traditional pedagogical approaches do not favor the active engagement of the students in the learning process and rather focuses on the behavioral impacts of immediate context and the teacher's role on learners (Khalaf, 2018). So, different alternative pedagogies have emerged to explore new possibilities for traditional approaches. These new interpretative pedagogies such as phenomenological, critical, feminist and postmodern pedagogies are alternative to the existing traditional teaching-learning

approaches. These new approaches are interventionist pedagogical approaches as they intervene traditional approaches and severely attack on almost all the premises of such approaches. All these interventionist approaches are transformative and dedicated to discover new possibilities for traditional pedagogies (Diekelmann, 1995). Critical pedagogical approaches as interventionist pedagogical approaches have emerged against traditional mainstream pedagogy and has also emphasized the importance of relating educational work to broader social activities (Woodin, 2007). These interventionist pedagogical approaches are context sensitive and prioritize the multidimensional aspects of the particular context of students such as social, cultural, political and economic one.

There is no question that pedagogies should be culturally relevant to enhance the effective learning of the learners. Endorsing a culturally relevant pedagogy remains essential if teachers really trust that schools should teach all children well. Culturally relevant pedagogy, like so many other aspects of teaching, is multifaceted and dynamic on which teachers have sociocultural consciousness and show a profound and holistic caring for students (Morrison et al., 2008). In order to provide meaningful knowledge and skills through teaching to today's diverse student population, alternative pedagogical approaches are required. Existing pedagogical approaches have just provided educational opportunities and their benefits to few privileged learners' group but the majority of the learners have been deprived from these opportunities and benefits. In today's pandemic condition also, our existing pedagogical approaches have not been functioning well. This condition reflects the need of alternative pedagogical approaches. Similarly, the existing pedagogical approaches are just producing docile citizen lacking critical eyes and conscious mind and also excluding many people from getting the equal benefits of education. In the global context where the existing pedagogical approaches have not yielded fruitful result, the relevance of interventionist pedagogical approaches have increased significantly. However, there is less discussion and studies about the relevance of interventionist pedagogical approaches in the context of Nepal where many people are still deprived from the opportunities of education and its benefits. So, this paper aims to explore how interventionist pedagogical approaches are relevant in the context of Nepal. In order to find out the answer of this question, I will review different books, journals and research articles under following themes.

Shift in Pedagogical Approaches

Shift on pedagogical approaches become essential when existing pedagogical approaches cannot offer equal opportunities and benefits of education to all. But the shifting process is rigorous as it has connection with other several factors. This shifting process cannot be targeted at once and in isolation from other interwoven components within education system. These interwoven components are the social, political and economic context in which the reforms are applied (Westbrook et al., 2014). The pedagogical approaches are not like one fits all, rather they need to be changed as context require for teaching to diverse students' population. To teach in today's cultural context, teachers have to critically analyze important issues such as race, ethnicity, culture, and also need to recognize how these important issues shape the learning experience for many students. The pedagogical practices of the teachers should recognize

students diversified socio-cultural contexts. Every day, as teachers involve in many practices, make several decisions and take a lot of actions in response to the learning of the students in their classes (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011), they should be able to design pedagogical practices that are significant and meaningful to students' social and cultural realities (Howard, 2003). But the existing pedagogical approaches have focused on narrative education that focuses on memorization and rote learning instead of prioritizing students' socio-cultural realities and their creativity. This kind of education kills the creativity of students and turn them as passive receptor of knowledge rather than active agent for the social transformation. So, the traditional pedagogies seem to underestimate the socio-cultural realities of the students and are mainly focusing on banking model of education (Freire, 1996).

Although the traditional pedagogical approaches seem to be completely failure to address the needs of diverse learners, little efforts are made to develop the suitable pedagogical approaches to address the learning needs of diverse students. In this regard, Cummins (2009) argues that although there are the issues of underachievement of low-income and culturally and linguistically diverse students, there has been little focus on the kinds of pedagogy needed to reverse this condition. He further claims that traditional pedagogical approaches are transmission-oriented that prepare students for test and these kinds of approaches ignore socioeconomic and sociopolitical factors that are responsible for underachievement of students. From my observation, pedagogical practices that focus on socio-cultural realities of the students have not been prioritized in the context of our country that has been one of the main causes of underachievement of the students. So, the shift in the traditional pedagogy has been really the dire need of our educational system. The changes on our pedagogical approaches, that can address the needs of diverse students and make them critical learners, have been essential in the context of Nepal where imposed traditional pedagogical approaches have not respected multiple views of learners and also boycotting individual differences and their rich individual learning experiences.

Interventionist Pedagogical Approaches

Interventionists pedagogical approaches are transformative in nature. These pedagogical approaches intervene the existing pedagogical practices and give priority on transformative learning. Brown (2004) claims that transformative learning changes the way people see themselves and their world. He further claims that transformative learning tries to clarify how learners' cultural norms and beliefs frame their expectation and influence the meaning they derive from their experiences. Similarly, Ukpokodu (2009) considers transformative pedagogy as activist pedagogy that encompasses constructivist and critical pedagogy and empower the students to examine critically their beliefs and values. It also develops a reflective knowledge base and a sense of critical consciousness, and respect multiple views. These transformative pedagogical approaches intervene the premises of traditional pedagogical approaches and stand completely on different philosophical base.

Critical pedagogy is an approach to teaching which is rooted in the work of Paulo Freire, Xerox, McLaren and Bell Hooks. The premises of critical pedagogy are built up taking the ideas from a variety of radical theories such as feminism, postmodernism, critical theory,

poststructuralism and neo-Marxism (Giroux, 2004a). In critical pedagogical approaches, changes are expected in almost all the aspects of traditional pedagogical approaches. In this regard, Dehler et al. (2001) state that critical pedagogy envisions changes in educational roles, curricular content, and classroom practices to create a learning space that supports and encourages students to engage in critical observation. They further claim that this space emerges when power in the classroom is de-centered, disciplinary borders become permeable, and issues are problematized.

The critical pedagogical approaches as emerging interventionist pedagogical approaches go far beyond the premises of traditional pedagogical approaches that assume teaching and learning just as process of giving and receiving knowledge. In this regard, Correa (2011) argues that critical pedagogies go against traditional pedagogies that accept traditional role of the instructor as a 'knowledge giver' and the learner as a 'knowledge receiver,' but critical pedagogies and constructivism go beyond such beliefs. He further claims that critical pedagogical approaches emphasize learners as active participant in learning, while the instructor remains as a facilitator. Similar views are expressed by McFarlane and Berg (2008). They make a claim that learning through critical pedagogical approaches can allow students to be active in their own learning and can enhance their learning ability as well as cultivate skills that are useful in today's workplace (McFarlane & Berg, 2008). The critical pedagogical approaches as interventionist pedagogical approaches can be suitable choice for many people in this 21st century to engage the learners from all walks of life in their learning process and make them critical thinker as well as the agents for social reforms.

Relevance of Interventionist Pedagogical Approaches in the Context of Nepal

Interventionist pedagogical approaches encompass all the pedagogical approaches that intervene traditional pedagogical approaches. Particularly, these interventionist pedagogical approaches encompass the critical pedagogical approaches that refute almost all the concepts of traditional pedagogical approaches such as school, learner and learning. Critical pedagogical approaches consider school as something more than a place where only teaching and learning take place. In this regard, Giroux (2018) states that critical pedagogies reject the idea that schools are only the places where teaching and learning takes place, rather the schools are both ideological and instructional sites and there is very little room to deconstruct the established meaning and received practices that characterize the day to day workings of schooling. As being a teacher, I have observed the supersession, domination, marginalization feelings the students have in the classroom. The teachers have dominant role in the teaching learning process treating the students as empty vessel and ignoring their self-agency. Rather than viewing teaching as technical practice, critical pedagogists view teaching as moral and political act based on the assumption that learning is not about processing received knowledge. Giroux (2004a) states, "critical pedagogy emphasizes critical reflexivity, bridging the gap between learning and everyday life, understanding the connection between power and knowledge, and extending democratic rights and identities by using the resources of history" (p. 34). He further argues that teaching is a moral and political practice rather than technical one

based on the assumption that learning is not about processing received knowledge but actually it is a struggle for individual rights and social justice. In language teaching, critical pedagogical approaches connect the word with world recognizing language as ideology not just system (Akbari, 2008).

In our education system and especially in our classroom practices, the insights of critical pedagogy seem to be quite relevant. As the practices and purposes of the critical pedagogical approaches can be connected to experiential learning, contextual learning, problem based learning, constructivism, outdoor education, indigenous education, democratic education, multicultural education, community-based education, etc. (Gruenewald, 2003), the relevance of these pedagogical approaches has increased significantly. These pedagogical approaches create modes of individual and social agency which enable rather than shut down democratic values, practices, and social relations (Giroux, 2004b). Similarly, a truly critical pedagogy involves the examination of existing social relationships (Smyth, 2011). As critical pedagogical approaches focus on education as a whole, rather than education as a series of curricula, teacher-student interactions, academic plans of study, or institutional goals, they appear more daring (Hendrix et al., 2003). Critical pedagogical approaches are more liberal and progressive than traditional approaches that are not capable of providing equal learning opportunities to all the learners and underestimate their multiple socio-cultural identities. Regarding the priority of critical pedagogies in English language teaching, Safari and Pourhashemi (2012) argue that critical pedagogy as an alternative approach to ELT prioritizes on social action, educational change, and the betterment of society and also empower learners to question, reflect, and act upon unfair, autocratic, oppressive institutions and social relations. So, in the context of Nepal different interventionist pedagogical approaches are essential to bring the benefits of education on the hands of everyone being involved in dialogic process of learning.

Conclusion

Pedagogical approaches lead the overall teaching and learning process. Pedagogical approaches have interconnection with other so many factors such as social, cultural, economic and political one. New pedagogical approaches need to intervene traditional pedagogical approaches when these pedagogical approaches cannot address the changing social, cultural and political dimension and also exclude majority of the learners from getting benefit of the education and gradually lose their relevance. In the context of Nepal, traditional pedagogies are still in practice focusing on transmission model of education and also overlooking learners' sociocultural and socioeconomic realities. Moreover, traditional methods have not prioritized the learning experiences of individual learner. These traditional pedagogies are one dimensional as they have only focused knowledge aspect of the learners. Majority of the learners have not got the chance of getting educational benefits from these traditional pedagogical approaches. These pedagogical approaches have produced docile citizen lacking critical eyes. These existing traditional pedagogies have not really addressed the needs of diverse students' population in the context of Nepal. So, these existing pedagogical approaches are no longer relevant and there is a need of intervention to these pedagogical approaches in the context of Nepal.

Different new pedagogical approaches such as phenomenological, critical, feminist and postmodern pedagogies are alternative pedagogies to the existing traditional pedagogies. These new interventionist pedagogical approaches can only provide equal learning opportunities to all the learners and the learners can also share equal benefits of education. As these interventionist pedagogical approaches are transformative in nature, they focus not only on transformation of an individual but the transformation of whole society through the means of education. Moreover, these pedagogical approaches empower the students to question, reflect and act against unfair, undemocratic, and oppressive institutional practices. The interventionist pedagogical approaches as an alternative pedagogy are essential for developing critical consciousness on the learners and oppose the narrative way of learning where memorization and rote learning are given high emphasis. These interventionist pedagogies approaches consider education as whole rather than series of curricula and priorities on experiential learning, contextual learning, problem-based learning, constructivism, outdoor education, indigenous education, democratic education, multicultural education, community-based education. As the existing pedagogies are boycotting many students from equal learning opportunities and also ignoring their self-agency, the need and relevance of critical pedagogy has increased significantly in the context of Nepal. The interventionist pedagogical approaches can only be the solution to almost all the problems related to education in the context of Nepal. So, this 21st century is the era of interventionist pedagogical approaches as these pedagogical approaches are more dynamic, democratic and progressive and also engage both learners and teacher in continuous dialogic process of meaning creation.

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