

Educational Outreach Programs: A Study of National Museum of Nepal

**A Thesis
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DECLARATION

I, Anoj Subedi, hereby declare that this MA thesis, entitled "**Educational Outreach Programs: A Study of National Museum of Nepal**" submitted to the **Tribhuvan University** in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's degree in Nepalese History, Culture, and Archaeology in the academic year 2020, is entirely my original work which was accomplished under the supervision of Dr. Pashupati Nyaupane. I also confirm that, as required by the rules and conduct, I have acknowledged any materials, ideas, and results not original to this work by citation and references. The findings of this thesis have never been presented or submitted elsewhere for the achievement of an award or degree. No part of the contents has ever been published previously in any manner.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NMoN: National Museum of Nepal

NMoNCP: NMoN and Cultural Properties

DOA: Department of Archaeology (Nepal)

MoCTCA: Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation (Nepal)

ICOM: International Council of Museums

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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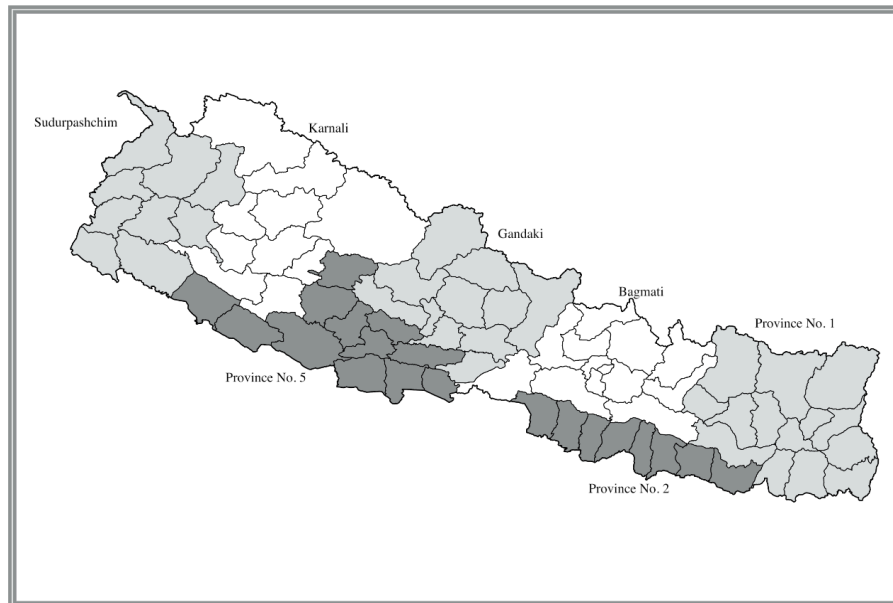


Figure 1: Map of Nepal, Map of provinces and districts of Nepal (2020)
(Source: Provincial Map of Nepal)

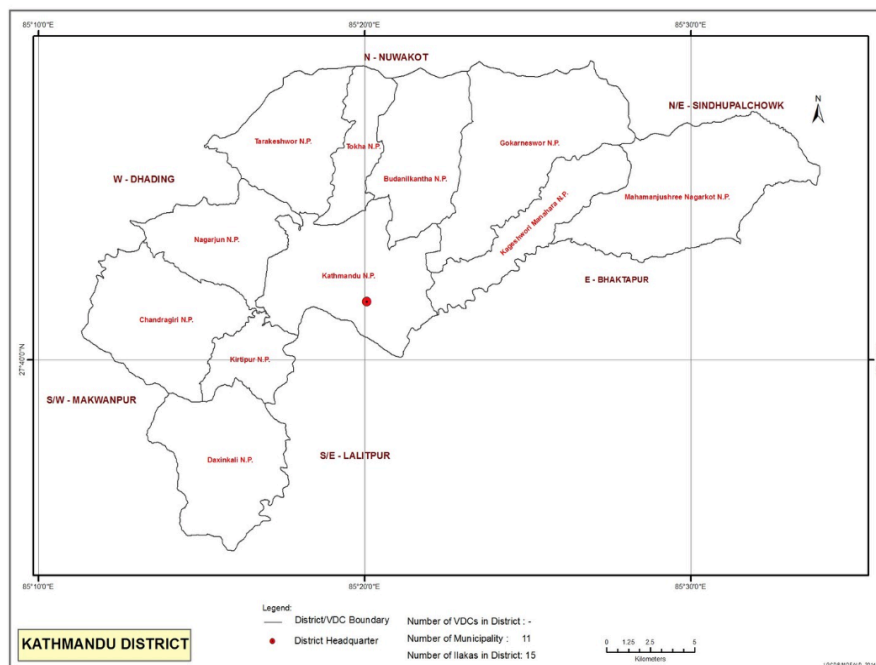


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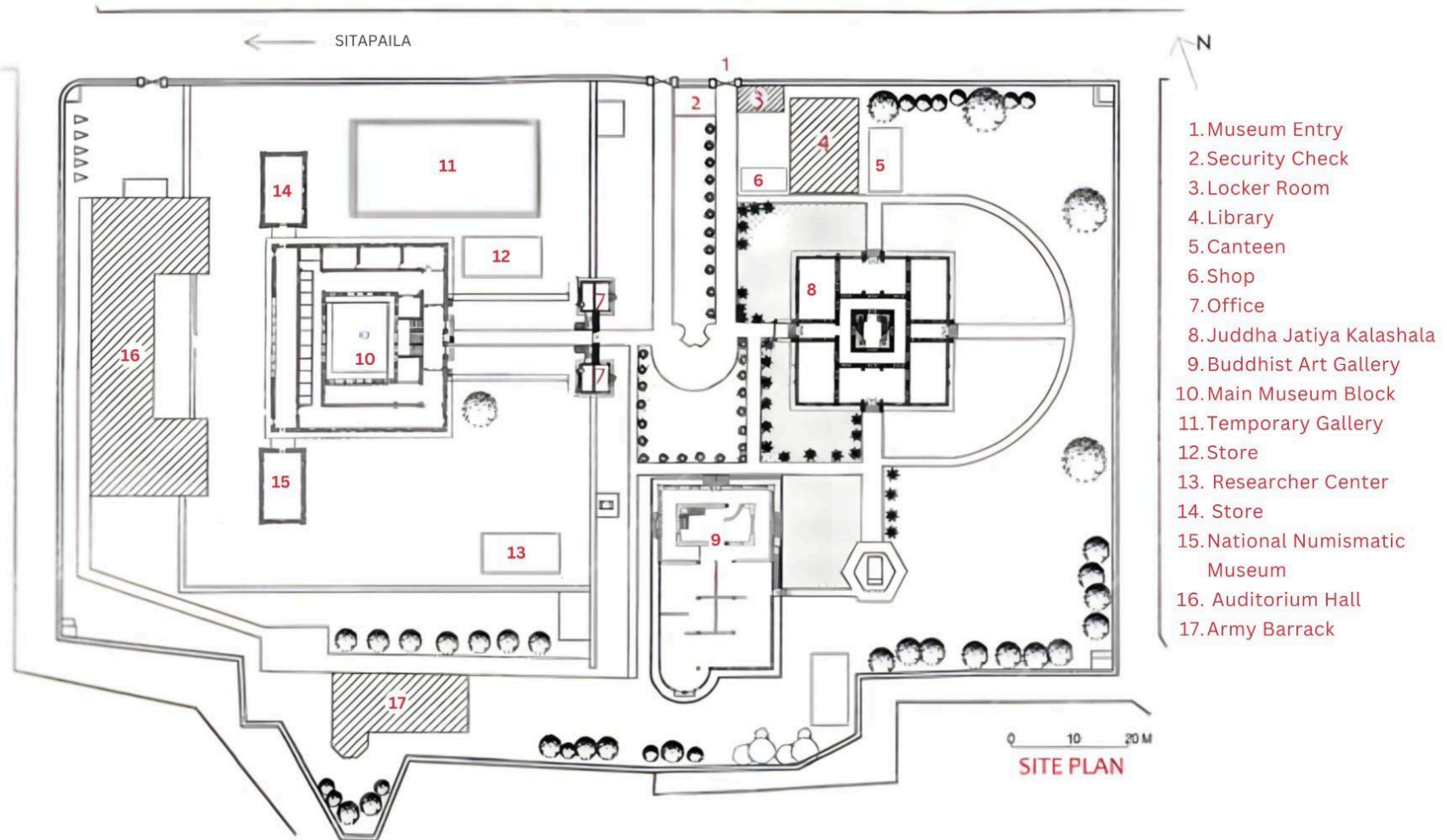


Figure 3: Site Plan of the National Museum of Nepal
 (Source: National Museum of Nepal)

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

This research delves into the exploration of educational outreach programs at the National Museum of Nepal, with a particular focus on student engagement. It investigates how these programs function within the museum's framework and compares them to global best practices in museum education. By examining the current strategies, barriers, and outcomes, the study aims to offer insights into planning improvements that can enhance museum education, making it more accessible, interactive, and inclusive for diverse student audiences.

Museums are essential institutions that bridge the past, present, and future and go far beyond their role as mere repositories for artifacts. As the concept of the museum evolves from the Ennigaldi Museum (530 BC) to the multi-purpose facilities of the present day, the transition to engaging and educational spaces is evident (J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2016a; Hooper-Greenhill, 2013).

According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), a museum is a non-profit, permanent institution that serves society through the study, collection, preservation, interpretation and presentation of its tangible and intangible heritage. Museums are open to all, accessible and inclusive, and promote diversity and sustainability. Museums work ethically and professionally, involve the community and offer a variety of experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and the exchange of knowledge (Etges & Dean, 2022).

The ICOM, founded in 1946, has been instrumental in promoting a global museum community by encouraging collaboration, providing guidance, and upholding ethical standards. It highlights the societal role of museums through initiatives such as International Museum Day and supports the professional development of museum staff to ensure that museums continue to be vibrant centers of education and culture (Mairesse, 2019b). In today's interconnected world, museum education and outreach programs are crucial for promoting cultural understanding, critical thinking, and a shared sense of humanity. ICOM emphasizes the importance of these programs in fulfilling museums' broader educational and connective missions (Mairesse, 2019b; Sandell, 2012). Cultural awareness and knowledge are vital for understanding and appreciating one's heritage (Black, 2020; Greenhill, 1992). The museums preserve artifacts, works of art, and historical objects that convey the stories of different cultures and civilizations.

By preserving and presenting these objects, museums disseminate knowledge to the public, promote cultural understanding, and spark curiosity and appreciation for the various cultural legacies. Given the importance of museums in preserving cultural heritage and promoting learning, a thorough examination of their outreach efforts is a matter of absolute necessity. The study of public engagement museum programs is critically important as they promote learning by making it both engaging and accessible (J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2016a). Such programs stimulate curiosity, creativity and critical thinking (Dewey, 1986). Furthermore, they contribute to a greater appreciation of cultural heritage and introduce people to diverse cultures and histories, thereby promoting inclusivity and a more wide worldview (Hein, 2002; Hood, 1983).

The history of museums in Nepal dates back to 1928 AD when the Arsenal Museum was established and was opened to the public in 1938 AD. Since then, Nepal has gradually built up many museums, many of which fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Archaeology (DOA). Among these institutions, the National Museum of Nepal (NMoN) in Kathmandu stands out as a major educational institution dedicated to the preservation and presentation of the country's diverse cultural heritage. The NMoN is an important institution dedicated to researching, preserving, and communicating the country's rich cultural, historical, and artistic heritage. Although it has immense potential to enhance the education of students, its outreach programs have not been thoroughly researched or analyzed. Despite the museum's significant contributions to cultural preservation and public education, there is a noticeable gap in understanding the effectiveness of its educational initiatives.

Before this research began, an internship in the curatorial department of the NMoN served to lay the essential groundwork for this research. It provided valuable insight into the workings and educational framework of the museum, including artifact documentation, creation of new documentation formats, and conducting archival photography. These insights were valuable in shaping the analysis of the museum's educational programs. Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of current outreach initiatives provides critical insight for developing more effective strategies for engaging diverse audiences. Museums can increase their impact and strengthen their role as a central institution in the cultural landscape of Nepal by ensuring that the country's rich history and culture are accessible to all. This research therefore aims to evaluate the National Museum's education framework by examining its infrastructure, policies, and outreach strategies. Combining fieldwork with a thorough literature review, this study assesses the museum's background and context, its impact on informal education, the effectiveness of its

programs, and how these initiatives align with broader educational goals. Furthermore, a deeper understanding of how educational programs work in these institutions could lead to more customized and inclusive experiences and ultimately encourage an appreciation of Nepalese heritage among younger generations. Investing in research and evaluation of these programs will not only demonstrate their effectiveness but also highlight opportunities for innovation and improvement.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Nepal, the NMoN is an important institution for the preservation and dissemination of the country's cultural heritage. However, there is a significant gap in understanding the effectiveness of its outreach programs, particularly in terms of how well they align with modern educational needs. As the educational landscape shifts globally towards more interactive, technology-driven and student-centered approaches, it is critical to assess whether the NMoN's current outreach initiatives are meeting these evolving needs. While museums around the world are utilizing digital tools, immersive exhibitions, and educational collaborations to engage diverse audiences, it is unclear whether the NMoN has fully adopted these strategies to create meaningful learning experiences. The lack of research in this area raises the question of whether the museum's programs are engaging students and educators in a way that meets today's educational goals. A further problem is that there is limited understanding of the specific challenges faced by the NMoN in delivering outreach programs that meet the diverse educational needs of different communities in Nepal. While the museum has made efforts to collaborate with schools, universities and local communities, the effectiveness of these initiatives remains uncertain. Moreover, traditional approaches to museum education may not fully meet the preferences of today's students who are becoming increasingly inclined to interactive learning environments and digital platforms. The gap in research regarding current museum outreach strategies highlights the need for further investigation into how these programs are being adopted and how they align with modern educational practices. As such, this lack of supporting documented research makes it difficult to assess the true impact of the NMoN's outreach efforts and their potential to effectively engage a broad audience.

1.3 Research Significance and Objectives

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the NMoN's educational programs, particularly focusing on student engagement. Being a key institution for the preservation of

Nepal's cultural heritage, the NMoN has the potential to play a central role in the education sector. Nevertheless, the impact and alignment of its outreach initiatives with modern educational needs is still unclear. More specifically, this study examines how these programs function in the changing educational landscape that increasingly emphasizes interactive and student-centered learning. Reviewing current strategies, challenges and findings, the study will shed light on how programs can be improved to make them more accessible, engaging and inclusive for diverse groups of students. Also, this research will examine case studies of successful museum education initiatives at a global level and draw comparisons with NMoN practices. Thereby, the focus is to identify best practices that could be adapted to the context of NMoN and provide practical recommendations to overcome challenges such as limited resources and the growing demand for digital learning. Furthermore, the research will provide an overview of national and international policies and assess their implication on the educational roles of Nepalese museums, focusing particularly on NMoN. In line with the significance of this research, the study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To review policies guiding Nepali museums, especially national museums, in promoting education and preserving cultural heritage.
2. To assess the current educational outreach programs at the NMoN's evaluating their effectiveness and identifying challenges.
3. To explore case studies of successful educational strategies from other museums and compare them with NMoN's practices to identify areas for improvement.

1.4 Research Questions

To effectively fulfill the significance and objectives of the study about the educational outreach programs of the National Museum of Nepal, a set of research questions were formulated as follows:

- a. What outreach programs has the NMoN implemented and how does it engage students in recent times?
- b. What are the challenges faced by the NMoN in engaging students in its outreach programs?
- c. What are the global best practices in museum education that can potentially inspire the outreach strategies in the NMoN?

1.5 Conceptual Framework

In any academic pursuit, a well-defined research design serves as the cornerstone for success. It acts as a comprehensive blueprint, guiding the entire research process from the initial stages of data collection to the final analysis and interpretation of findings. As Creswell and Creswell (2017) aptly state, "A research design is a plan or road map for how you will conduct your research. It specifies the methods you will employ to collect and analyze your data, as well as the procedures you will follow to ensure the validity and reliability of your findings" (p. 5).

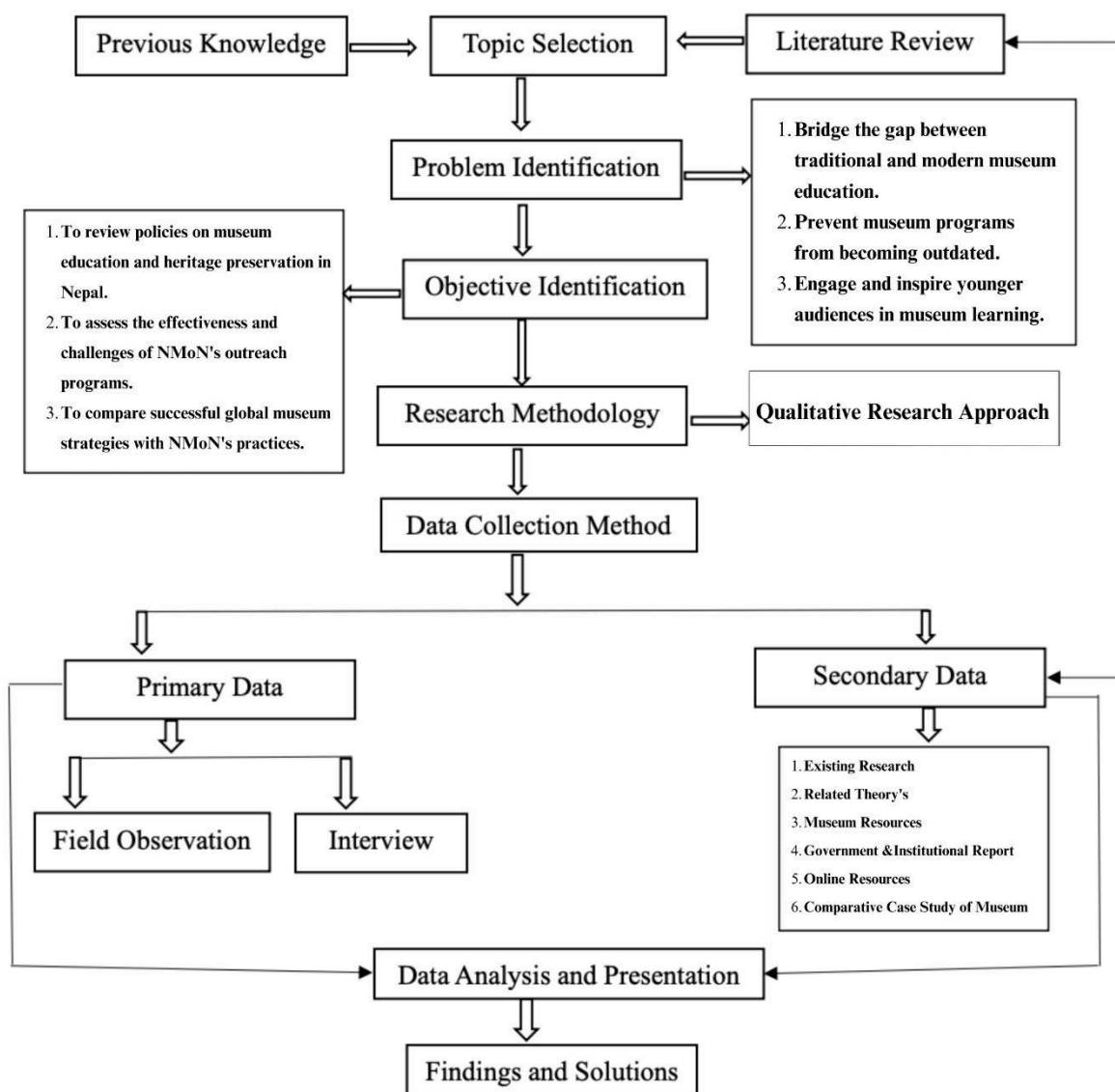


Figure 4. Conceptual Framework of the research

The diagram above outlines the research process, beginning with the foundation of previous knowledge, which serves as the basis for selecting a relevant research topic. This knowledge helps guide the researcher to identify an area that warrants further exploration. Once the topic has been

selected, the next step is to conduct a thorough literature review. This includes analysing existing studies and research papers to understand the current state of knowledge on the topic and identify gaps or unresolved issues. These gaps lead to problem identification, where specific challenges are pinpointed. In this case, the problems include addressing the generational gap in knowledge sharing, the risk of traditions and knowledge fading, and the need to engage young audiences in museum education.

With the problems clearly defined, the researcher moves on to objective identification. This step involves setting clear goals for the research, such as analyzing current outreach programs at the NMoN, understanding the challenges in engaging students with museum initiatives, and exploring global outreach models in museum education. The research then proceeds with the methodology phase, where a qualitative approach is chosen, utilizing purposive and snowball sampling methods to gather relevant data. The data collection method is divided into two categories: Primary Data, which includes field observations, and interviews, and Secondary Data, which is gathered from existing research, museum resources, government and institutional reports, online sources, and comparative case studies of other museums. Following data collection, the research moves to data analysis and presentation, where the information gathered is systematically analyzed and presented coherently. This analysis leads to the final stage, findings, and solutions, where the research culminates in conclusions and recommendations that address the identified problems, contributing valuable insights and solutions to the field of museum education.

1.6 Chapter Summary

The study begins with Chapter One: Introduction, which provides an overview of the research, outlining the significance of museum education programs at the National Museum of Nepal, key objectives, and research questions. Chapter Two: Literature Review explores relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks, including constructivism and sociocultural theories in museum learning, alongside empirical studies and policy reviews to highlight the research gap. Chapter Three: Methodology details the qualitative approach, focusing on case studies, interviews, thematic analysis, and comparative techniques used to analyze data. Chapter Four: Nepal National Museum introduces the history, evolution, and key facilities of the museum, including its buildings and galleries, as a context for understanding its relevance. Chapter Five: Analysis of Outreach Program investigates the current outreach initiatives of the National Museum of Nepal, analyzes stakeholder insights, and identifies challenges such as resource limitations and

engagement barriers. Chapter Six: Comparative Analysis of Global Best Practices evaluates international outreach models, comparing them with Nepal's efforts to suggest areas for improvement. Finally, Chapter Seven: Analysis of Findings synthesizes the results, providing recommendations, concluding insights, and directions for future research.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Literature Review

Based on the conceptual literature review, the evolution of museums from private collections to public educational institutions is assessed and explained. This overview provides a foundation for exploring the outreach programs of the NMoN based on historical context, guiding principles, and emerging trends in community engagement. This review highlights the historical context of museums and draws its evolution from 'cabinets of curiosities' to national institutions focused on public education and dissemination of cultural heritage. It explores the influence of Enlightenment philosophy, particularly the turn to experiential learning advocated by John Dewey, who has reshaped modern museum practice. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of diverse, engaging educational strategies that meet the different needs of audiences by pinpointing trends in interactive and visitor-centered approaches. Additionally, the role of digital technologies in enhancing outreach efforts and expanding access to museum resources is reviewed.

As museums transform from private collections to public educational institutions, this is an example of a broader societal evolution in terms of knowledge creation, accessibility, and dissemination. This metamorphosis is closely linked to shifts in educational philosophy, cultural policy, and public engagement strategies. During the 16th to 18th centuries, wealthy individuals maintained private collections known as “cabinets of curiosities”. Primarily used to showcase personal wealth and social status, these collections also provided the foundation for the educational role museums play today. According to Findlen (1994), such early collections encouraged a culture of collecting and displaying objects for educational purposes, thereby establishing the foundations for modern museum practice. An important change took place during the Age of Enlightenment, during which museums were recognized as instruments of public education and the dissemination of knowledge. According to Impey and MacGregor (1985), this period saw the introduction of a rationalistic approach to museum collections, transforming them from private specimens into public institutions with a defined educational mission.

Notably, national museums such as the British Museum and the Louvre emerged during this period, which were based on the principles of public access and the dissemination of cultural heritage. As Bennett (2013) argues, these institutions not only focused on the display of artifacts

but also contributed to the shaping of national identity and a sense of citizenship through the public dissemination of knowledge. Progressive educational philosophies, particularly John Dewey's, have had a considerable influence on museum education. Dewey advocated experiential learning, which is a principle that continues to shape museum practice today. Similarly, Hein et al. (1998) examine how Dewey's emphasis on active, participatory learning has impacted the design of museum exhibitions by encouraging the direct involvement of visitors in the learning process. Indeed, this shift towards interactive learning represents a key development in museum education, improving accessibility and relevance for a diverse range of audiences. In the 20th century, museums began diversifying their educational offerings, reflecting an expanded public interest and engagement. Greenhill (1992) highlights this growing specialization, noting that museums started catering to various educational objectives by integrating art, science, and history into their collections and programs. Falk and Dierking (2016a) further emphasize the rising importance of museums as venues for lifelong learning, supporting both formal and informal educational pathways.

A prominent trend in museum education has been the shift towards interactive and experiential learning. Simon (2010) and Rowe (2018) emphasize the significance of hands-on exhibits and participatory experiences for engaging modern audiences. These strategies are in line with today's findings about different learning styles and the need to facilitate multi-sensory experiences that enable deeper engagement. By moving from passive observation to active participation, museums enhance learning outcomes and visitor satisfaction. The emergence of visitor-centered approaches has also redefined museum education, making it more inclusive and relevant to a broader array of audiences. Black (2012) and Janes & Sandell (2019) advocate for developing programs that cater to the diverse needs, interests, and backgrounds of museum visitors. Audio-visual research, feedback and data-driven design allow museums to tailor their offerings to specific groups and ensure that exhibitions appeal to a wider range of visitors. This personalized approach enhances the visitor experience and builds a sense of belonging and engagement with the institution. The improvement of accessibility and inclusivity of museum programs is essential for museums as it aligns with their core missions of preserving cultural heritage, promoting education and public engagement.

The research underscores that accessibility goes beyond physical accommodations to encompass cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic considerations, ensuring museums are welcoming to diverse audiences (McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001; Sandell, 2012). Promoting inclusion

programs not only enable democratic access to cultural resources, but also enhance educational impact by increasing visitors' empathy and understanding (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007).

Advancements in technology, such as 3D modeling and customizable audio experiences, play a vital role in enhancing accessibility, allowing individuals with disabilities and those speaking different languages to engage fully with exhibitions (Bennett, 2017). In addition, institutional commitment and leadership are critical to promoting sustainable change, strengthened by policies that emphasize inclusivity and partnerships with community organizations and disability advocates (Davis, 2021). By embracing these strategies, national museums can expand their reach, enrich visitor experiences, and contribute positively to societal cohesion and cultural appreciation.

The integration of digital technologies has revolutionized museum education, facilitating more interactive, inclusive, and expansive programs. Parry (2010) and Drotner (2020) highlight how digital tools, such as virtual tours and online exhibitions, have broadened the reach of museums, particularly during global events like the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited physical access. Digital platforms promote self-directed exploration, allowing users to control their educational experiences and embodying the concept of the "museum without walls" (Arvanitis, 2013). This shift aligns with constructivist educational principles, which prioritize learner agency and interaction (Giannini & Bowen, 2019). Digital technologies also offer rich, immersive experiences that enhance comprehension and engagement beyond traditional static displays. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, developed by Mishra & Koehler (2006), emphasizes integrating content, pedagogical, and technological knowledge to maximize educational outcomes. Empirical studies, such as Eghbal-Azar (2016), demonstrate that mobile guides improve visitor engagement, lengthening stay time and enhancing information retention. Despite these benefits, significant challenges accompany the adoption of digital technologies, particularly for smaller institutions. Parry (2010) notes the financial and technical barriers that museums face when implementing digital systems. These challenges, along with the ongoing need for updates and technical support, complicate modernization efforts for smaller institutions. Nevertheless, the transformative potential of digital technologies in museum education remains undeniable.

Museum-school partnerships represent an innovative approach to bridging formal education with informal learning environments. Barton (2003) conceptualizes the "third space" as an educational framework that integrates diverse forms of knowledge and identity, challenging traditional educational hierarchies. Stocklmayer et al. (2010) further explore how museums

contribute both physical and conceptual dimensions to this third space, enriching the traditional classroom environment with real-world, context-based learning experiences. These partnerships provide students with opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary exploration, especially in art-based explorations of scientific issues (Burnham & Kai-Kee, 2011). Linking academic, artistic and everyday discourses, these programs promote an inclusive educational environment in which students are exposed to different areas of knowledge.

This reflects a broader cultural and epistemological shift towards valuing diverse forms of knowledge (Eisner, 2003). Additionally, museum-school partnerships promote critical thinking, creativity, and reflection, enabling students to connect their academic learning with the world around them (Hein et al., 1998). The sustainability of such partnerships, as Raaijmakers et al. (2021) highlight, necessitates ongoing development and collaboration between museums and educational institutions.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

A literature review of the existing theoretical framework is fundamental in research as it supports the entire study and informs the research questions, assumptions, and methodology (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). Also, it grounds the research in established theories, identifies gaps in the literature, and places the study within broader scientific discussions (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009). In addition, it guides the interpretation of the results by linking them to existing theoretical frameworks and providing deeper insights into the research problem (Maxwell, 2013). The theoretical framework for this study on the National Museum of Nepal's outreach programs covers two key areas. It begins with museum education foundations, using constructivist and sociocultural theories to explain how engagement and social interaction enhance learning. Next, it addresses meaningful learning, focusing on how integrating new information with existing knowledge leads to deeper understanding through museum experiences. It also highlights intrinsic motivation, emphasizing curiosity and fun to boost engagement and learning.

2.2.1 Constructivism and Sociocultural Theory in Museum Learning

Constructivist theory, pioneered by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, provides a crucial framework for understanding learning, particularly in museum contexts. This theory proposes that learning is an active, dynamic process where individuals establish their understanding through interactions with their environment (Piaget, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978). Piaget's emphasis on direct

engagement with surroundings underscores the value of hands-on, exploratory activities in museums. Such activities allow learners to interact meaningfully with exhibits and artifacts, facilitating deeper comprehension (Hofstein & Rosenfeld, 1996). Museums, with their tangible artifacts and immersive experiences, naturally align with constructivist principles, offering opportunities for learners to explore and interpret based on their personal experiences (Hein et al., 1998). Kolb's (2014) expansion on Dewey's (1986) ideas of experiential learning describes a cyclical model that includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Museums provide a natural setting for this learning cycle, allowing visitors to engage with exhibits, reflect on their experiences, form new concepts, and apply these in new contexts (Packer, 2006).

Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of social interactions in learning, positing that knowledge is co-constructed through dialogue and collaboration. Museums facilitate these interactions, enabling learners to engage in discussions, share perspectives, and construct knowledge collectively (Rogoff, 2003). Museum visits, generally recognized for their unique educational value, provide students with an immersive learning environment that differs significantly from traditional classroom instruction. The foundational work of Falk and Dierking (2016a) presents a comprehensive framework that captures the nature of museum learning and emphasizes its distinctiveness and the contextual nature of the learning experiences that museums provide. Importantly, this is particularly evident in museum education programs that extend the educational reach of the museum beyond its physical boundaries by providing students with personalized and engaging experiences. Such programs not only improve student engagement and learning outcomes but also play a critical role in democratizing access to cultural and educational resources. Building on constructivist ideas, Kolb's (2014) model of experiential learning complements this framework by outlining a cyclical process of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Museums provide a unique environment where this learning cycle can unfold organically. Visitors engage with exhibits, reflect on their interactions, develop new concepts, and apply these concepts in varied contexts. Packer (2006) supports this view, noting that museums offer transformative and engaging learning experiences that align with Kolb's model and are educationally significant.

The consideration of Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory further enriches museum education by emphasising the role of social interactions in cognitive development. Vygotsky (1978) argued that

knowledge is co-constructed through dialogue and collaboration. Museums facilitate these social interactions by providing opportunities for discussions and collaborative learning (Rogoff, 2003). This sociocultural perspective underscores the importance of integrating social and collaborative elements into museum outreach programs to enhance the learning experience. Constructivism also emphasises the importance of combining new knowledge with existing knowledge. Falk and Dierking (2016a) suggest that museum outreach should build on students' prior knowledge and interests to create more relevant learning experiences. Inquiry-based learning, a key component of constructivism, encourages students to ask questions and explore through interactions with their environment (Deanna, 2009; Reiss & Tunnicliffe, n.d.). This approach promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, allowing students to actively construct their understanding of exhibits and concepts (Schwartz, 2007). Applying these theories in museum education leads to more engaging and effective learning experiences.

2.2.2 Conceptualizing the Relevance of Museum Visits

Museums occupy a significant position in the educational landscape, offering immersive and interactive experiences that extend beyond traditional classroom instruction. To maximize the educational potential of museum visits, it is crucial to understand how these experiences can be effectively designed and structured. In this framework, key theories of meaningful learning and intrinsic motivation in the museum context are reviewed, with insights into how museums can improve visitor engagement and learning outcomes.

The concept of meaningful learning, as articulated by Ausubel (1960), is essential for evaluating the educational effectiveness of museum visits. For Ausubel, meaningful learning occurs when new information is integrated into a person's existing cognitive framework, leading to in-depth understanding and retention. This principle emphasizes the need to link educational content to learners' prior knowledge to facilitate deep learning experiences. Falk and Storksdieck (2005) extend this understanding by emphasizing that the success of museum experiences depends on their ability to relate to visitors' existing knowledge and personal experiences. They argue that museum visits are more impactful when they bridge new information with what visitors already know, thereby enhancing comprehension and retention. Hein et al. (1998) corroborates this view, noting that exhibits designed to relate directly to visitors' prior knowledge and experiences are more likely to yield meaningful learning. Hein's research underscores the importance of relevance and context in achieving educational outcomes within museum settings.

Intrinsic motivation theory, as proposed by Ryan & Deci (2000) emphasizes the importance of encouraging the inner drive to engage with new topics and to learn. This theory suggests that learners are more likely to engage deeply and persistently when they find the learning experience inherently enjoyable and interesting. In the context of museum visits, Falk et al. (1998) demonstrate that intrinsic motivation is a critical factor influencing the depth of engagement and learning. Their research indicates that visitors who are genuinely curious about the exhibits are more likely to achieve enhanced learning outcomes. This finding implies that museum programs should aim to stimulate curiosity and cultivate a genuine appreciation for cultural heritage. Krapp (2005) supports this perspective by emphasizing that intrinsic motivation is essential for maintaining engagement in informal educational settings such as museums. Krapp's work highlights the necessity of designing experiences that resonate personally with visitors to sustain their interest and promote long-term learning.

2.3. Empirical Literature

A comprehensive overview of the existing empirical literature can provide valuable input on previous research and its findings. Boote & Beile (2005) highlight its importance in placing new research in the context of existing knowledge to build a solid foundation for further investigation. Similarly, Ridley (2012) emphasizes the importance of identifying research gaps to improve understanding in an area. In the case of the National Museum of Nepal, a review conducted in this way can uncover overlooked areas or innovative outreach strategies and direct future research toward finding new approaches to improve community engagement. Museum outreach programs have become essential for extending educational and cultural resources to diverse student populations, particularly in areas where access is limited by geographic, economic, or social barriers. Despite their significance, there is a lack of comprehensive literature on global museum outreach initiatives.

2.3.1 Western Case Studies

The global case studies of museum outreach programs can be effectively connected to the literature on museum education and community engagement as outlined by Anderson et al. (2002), Black (2012), Hooper-Greenhill (2013), and others. These scholars provide frameworks for understanding how museums have evolved to meet the diverse needs of their audiences, particularly through outreach initiatives that extend beyond the physical museum space. Hooper-Greenhill (2013) emphasizes the importance of communication in museum outreach. This

can be seen in programs like MetAccess at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which offers virtual tours and online resources to democratize art education, serving as a model for using digital tools to reach students in remote areas. The use of digital resources mirrors Hooper-Greenhill's argument that museums must adapt their communication strategies to engage with broader audiences through both physical and virtual means. Anderson et al. (2002) describe museums as centers for lifelong learning and community engagement. It is a concept reflected in the Victoria and Albert Museum's program for schools and young audiences, which integrates museum resources into national curricula and demonstrates how museum content can enrich formal education and promote more in-depth cultural learning. Similarly, Falk & Dierking's (2016b) notion of informal learning in museums is relevant when examining outreach programs like Science on Wheels at the Pacific Science Center. This program deploys mobile science labs to underserved schools, demonstrating how museums can overcome geographic and economic barriers to provide interactive and informal learning experiences. The mobile outreach approach echoes the principles of informal learning environments as powerful educational tools, particularly for engaging younger audiences.

2.3.2 Asian Case Studies

Outreach programs in South Asia further illustrate how museums are extending cultural education beyond their traditional boundaries, particularly in rural or underserved areas. These initiatives also align with global best practices in community engagement and informal education.

The Museum on Wheels program from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya in Mumbai uses a specially designed bus to bring museum artifacts and interactive exhibits to rural schools, offering insights into how mobile museums can bridge the gap between urban institutions and remote communities. This program embodies (Anderson et al., 2002) vision of museums as inclusive learning spaces that reach beyond their physical locations. Similarly, the Liberation War Museum's Busing-In program in Dhaka aims to raise national identity by bringing historical exhibits about the Liberation War in Bangladesh to schools and communities. This program aligns with Sandell's (2012), that museums play an important role in promoting national awareness and historical understanding through outreach. The National Museum of Korea's "Traveling Museum" initiative is an example of how mobile outreach can fill educational gaps in different regions. This program brings curated exhibitions, workshops and lectures to schools and public institutions and shows how digital and physical strategies can work together to promote cultural education. The participatory elements of the program resonate with Simon's (2010) concept of a participatory

museum, where communities actively engage with museum content, strengthening relations with cultural heritage.. In summary, the global outreach initiatives described in these case studies reflect best practices as discussed by leading scholars in museum studies. These programs illustrate how museums are adapting to become more inclusive, participatory, and impactful by reaching diverse communities through innovative and accessible outreach strategies.

2.4 Review of Policies and Planning Strategies in Museum Outreach Program

In this literature review, the policy and legal frameworks that influence museum outreach programs in Nepal are examined, including the Constitution of Nepal (2015) and the National Policy on Cultural Heritage (2010). It highlights important laws such as the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act (2056) and the Museums and Archives Act (1989) and emphasizes the importance of aligning with international standards set by UNESCO and ICOM to enhance community engagement and inclusivity in museum practice. Furthermore, this report includes various global studies on sustainable policies and addresses the implications and challenges associated with implementing effective outreach initiatives.

2.4.1 National Policy and Planning for Museum Outreach Programs

The Nepalese government has shown a strong commitment to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage through various national strategies and legal frameworks. The Constitution of Nepal (2015) identifies the protection and promotion of cultural heritage as a fundamental responsibility of the state. This constitutional provision lays the foundation for the development of museum education programs and the broader cultural heritage sector within the country. One of the key policies shaping museum work in Nepal is the National Policy on Cultural Heritage established in 2010. This policy underscores the importance of systematic documentation, preservation, and promotion of Nepal's cultural assets, both tangible and intangible (Government of Nepal, 2010). It enhances the role of museums by positioning them as vital educational spaces and by promoting public engagement through outreach initiatives. According to the policy, “museums should act as public educational institutions that contribute to the knowledge and awareness of cultural heritage” (Government of Nepal, 2010, Clause 6.4).

In terms of legal support, the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1956 provides the framework for preserving and managing historical monuments across Nepal. This act safeguards heritage sites from destruction and ensures their conservation for future generations.

The National Culture Policy (2010) also contributes to the advancement of cultural heritage management. According to this policy, the government is tasked with the creation of cultural councils, upgrading national museums, and enhancing archives to better serve educational and public engagement needs. The policy also advocates for necessary legal reforms to improve the management of cultural resources, including both museums and intangible cultural heritage (Clauses 9.1 to 9.5).

Moreover, aligning Nepal's museum outreach programs with international standards is deemed essential. UNESCO (2014) and ICOM (2016) emphasize inclusivity, interactivity, and community engagement as core principles of successful museum education and outreach programs. Nepal's national museums are urged to align their initiatives with these global guidelines to create more inclusive and engaging public programs. According to ICOM (2014), "Museums around the world are recognized not only as custodians of cultural heritage, but also as educational institutions that play an important role in outreach and as active learning environments" (Bounia, 2014, p. 45). International frameworks such as those provided by UNESCO (2016) also underscore the importance of outreach to diverse populations and the creation of active learning environments within museums. Such practices are vital for engaging various communities in meaningful educational experiences, thus supporting the broader mission of museum institutions (Mairesse, 2019a).

2.4.2. Integrating Sustainable Plans and Policies in Museum Outreach Programs

Sustainability policies are fundamental to the preservation of cultural heritage as they respond to the threats posed by climate change, urbanization, and environmental degradation. According to the World Heritage Center, including sustainable practices in cultural heritage management helps to ensure the longevity of significant sites so that future generations can appreciate and learn from them (Nations, 2015). The alignment of museum operations with broader sustainability goals involves integrating the principles of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into core museum practices.

Among these is a commitment to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those focused on community engagement and environmental protection. By promoting inclusivity, facilitating public dialogue, and making marginalized voices heard, museums can serve as important resources for the community, supporting Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. A sense of belonging and empowerment within their communities can be cultivated by museums

through exhibitions and programs that raise awareness of social issues. Furthermore, museums can play an important role in achieving Goal 13: Climate Action by adopting sustainable operating practices and educating the public about environmental stewardship. Part of this includes reducing their carbon footprint through energy-efficient technologies, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing of materials for exhibitions. Incorporating these principles, museums do not just preserve cultural heritage, but also act as “agents of social change” and contribute to a more sustainable future while fulfilling their educational mission (Bergman et al., 2018; Nations, 2015).

A study by Pop, Ighian, Toader, and Hahn (2024) explores key factors that influence the implementation of sustainability strategies in museums. Using a survey of 86 Romanian museums, their research shows that environmental behavior and certain aspects of social responsibility, particularly cultural heritage management, and community involvement, have a positive influence on the implementation of sustainability strategies. On the contrary, economic performance indicators such as financial self-sufficiency, efficiency, and productivity were not found to have a significant impact on the adoption of sustainability strategies.

This indicates that museums are more inclined to adopt sustainability practices driven by environmental and social imperatives rather than financial factors, which is partly due to their reliance on government subsidies and their primary focus on cultural and social objectives (Pop et al., 2024). It suggests that museums aiming to increase their impact on sustainability should focus on environmental and social responsibility rather than prioritizing economic performance. Those museums that engage communities and emphasize environmental stewardship are more likely to implement effective sustainability strategies.

Such a shift is crucial when it comes to aligning museum operations with broader sustainability goals, such as the United Nations 2030 Agenda goals, which emphasize the importance of community engagement and environmental protection for sustainable development. The findings provide valuable insights for museum managers and suggest that addressing social and environmental concerns will lead to more effective sustainability practices in the museum sector (Pop et al., 2024).

In the article "Toward Sustainable Museum Education Practices: Confronting Challenges and Uncertainties", Kristinsdóttir (2017) reviews the need for museum educators to apply critical pedagogy and reflective practices and argues that these approaches can empower both educators and museums. In particular, she emphasizes the role of museum educators as drivers of change

who have the potential to influence their institutions and environments significantly. However, Kristinsdóttir points out the challenges museum educators face, explaining that outdated organizational structures in museums often prevent innovation and professional growth. For educators, these structures can prevent them from initiating transformative educational programs, even if they have the necessary expertise. Kristinsdóttir argues that sustainable museum education requires supportive structures and professional recognition of educators' expertise in informal learning and community engagement. Furthermore, Kristinsdóttir draws attention to a significant research gap in museum education that needs to be addressed for sustainable outreach programs, especially those aimed at school children. By combining interdisciplinary approaches and encouraging inquisitive learning, museums can create powerful educational experiences that support lifelong learning and outreach programs (Kristinsdóttir, 2017).

Harrison-Buck and Clarke-Vivier (2020) examine the establishment of an archaeological museum in Crooked Tree, Belize, in their article “Making Space for Heritage: Collaboration, Sustainability, and Education in a Creole Community Archaeology Museum in Northern Belize”. The goal of this project is to highlight 6,000 to 9,000 years of human-environment interaction in the lower Belize River watershed, encompassing both Maya and Creole history. They use the Crooked Tree Community Archaeology Museum project to examine sustainability policies in museum operations and outreach. They argue that sustainability in this context encompasses not only environmental aspects but also cultural and educational dimensions.

The authors emphasize that the museum's development has been guided by three overarching goals: Collaboration with local stakeholders, sustainability of cultural content and physical structures, and educational outreach to local school children (Harrison-Buck & Clarke-Vivier, 2020). They stress that community engagement is key to the museum's sustainability policy. By involving local actors in the exchange of oral traditions and the creation of exhibitions, the museum encourages ownership and pride and helps to preserve cultural practices that are threatened by modernization (Harrison-Buck & Clarke-Vivier, 2020). Additionally, educational initiatives developed in collaboration with local teachers enhance the national curriculum and promote cultural vibrancy, reinforcing the museum's commitment to preserving community identity and local heritage (Harrison-Buck & Clarke-Vivier, 2020).

Thus, museums play an important role in this process by engaging communities in sustainability initiatives, which promotes a sense of stewardship of local heritage. Furthermore, by

emphasizing educational programs that highlight the relationship between sustainability and cultural heritage, museums can also empower visitors and local communities to adopt preservation practices and support cultural continuity (Kagan, 2014). Eventually, the link between sustainability and heritage preservation not only protects these resources but also increases the social relevance of museums in today's society.

2.5 Research Gap

The preservation and transmission of cultural heritage is becoming an ever-greater challenge in the current age of rapid globalization, urbanization, and the widespread influence of advanced digital media. Research suggests that outdated methods may be undermining the effectiveness of museums in engaging younger audiences (Black, 2020). When people can easily access information and virtual experiences, they may be less motivated to visit in person. Studies show that online content can lead to lower visitor numbers (Packer & Ballantyne, 2002), and digital technology often shifts engagement away from physical spaces (J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2016a). Furthermore, social media is shaping cultural consumption habits and contributing to a decline in visitor numbers among schoolchildren (Sánchez-Fernández & Jiménez-Castillo, 2021).

This trend presents a major challenge in finding innovative ways to reach school audiences and make museum visits more attractive and relevant in the digital age. The Nepal National Museum, a key institution for the protection of the country's rich cultural heritage, has been directly confronting this issue. While the museum plays a critical role in preserving Nepal's diverse cultural heritage, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how effectively it engages with the public, especially through educational programs directed at schools, universities, and local communities. Cultural practices are coming under increasing pressure from traditional methods of transmission and understanding, risking the destruction of essential practices fundamental to cultural identity (Hofmann et al., 2021; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2017). The traditional exhibition approach may not meet the expectations of today's students who are used to interactive and multimedia experiences.

These generational shifts have led to decreasing attention spans and increased distractions that are often not addressed by traditional museum approaches (Black, 2020; Parry, 2010). Museums, as stewards of cultural heritage, have a unique opportunity to address this challenge by offering

immersive and educational experiences that resonate with contemporary audiences (J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2018; Silverman, 2009).

Although the NMoN has introduced various outreach programs aimed at increasing public engagement and forming stronger connections with the community in response to such challenges, there is limited research on the practical implementation and effectiveness of these initiatives. Despite robust policy frameworks like the Constitution of Nepal (2015) and the National Policy on Cultural Heritage (2010) that emphasize the educational role of museums, it remains unclear how well these outreach programs fulfill this mandate. Existing legal frameworks such as the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act (2056) and the prioritize preservation but offer little guidance on modern, interactive outreach strategies that could engage diverse communities. (Archives Preservation Act, 2046 (1989), n.d.)

Global guidelines by UNESCO and ICOM emphasize inclusivity, sustainability, and interactivity in museum outreach, yet there is a lack of understanding regarding how effectively Nepalese museums align with these standards. For example, international sustainability goals like those in the UN 2030 Agenda are increasingly relevant to museum practices, yet Nepalese institutions have been slow to integrate environmental and community-driven strategies into their outreach.

Furthermore, the role of museum educators is critical in driving these programs, but outdated organizational structures may hinder innovation and the full utilization of their expertise. A notable gap is the lack of research on how well Nepalese museums engage marginalized or rural populations, especially considering the digital divide and lack of access to technology in some areas. Although museums globally are seen as agents of social change, Nepalese museums have yet to fully adopt interdisciplinary approaches that could make their educational programs more impactful. In addition, partnerships with local communities and sustainable practices remain underdeveloped, limiting museums' ability to encourage public dialog on social and environmental issues.

In the absence of an in-depth evaluation, our understanding of whether these initiatives are successfully achieving their goals or how they are perceived by different segments of the public is limited. Without systematic evaluation, it is difficult to assess the success of these outreach initiatives, weakening the museum's ability to refine strategies and ensure that programs remain engaging, relevant, and impactful. Evaluation is critical for understanding whether programs

achieve their intended outcomes and for identifying areas needing refinement (Patton, 2009; Weiss, 1998). Studies indicate that factors such as program accessibility, engagement, and alignment with contemporary educational needs are essential for success (Berk & Rossi, 1999; Bokhorst-Heng, 2007).

Additionally, effective communication of the value of collections is vital for maximizing public engagement (J. Falk & Dierking, 2000). Outreach programs are essential for the NMoN to promote engagement in the community and to communicate the country's rich cultural heritage, but they face significant obstacles. A notable gap is the lack of research on public perceptions of these initiatives, which limits the museum's ability to assess their effectiveness and relevance within local communities.

This gap not only hinders outreach efforts but also limits the museum's collaboration with students and educational institutions. Furthermore, the lack of systematic evaluations of current outreach initiatives makes it difficult to understand their impact and alignment with the educational needs of the community. Without solid evaluation, it is difficult to identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing programs, resulting in missed opportunities for improvement and innovation. The lack of such evaluation undermines the museum's ability to refine its strategies and ensure that its programs remain engaging, relevant, and impactful. Additionally, it is important to examine best global practices in museum outreach and education, which could offer important perspectives on effective and culturally relevant approaches that reach diverse audiences. By examining these practices, the NMoN can adopt strategies that enhance its educational offerings and strengthen its role in cultural preservation.

In light of these concerns, a comprehensive evaluation of the NMoN's outreach programs is essential. An evaluation would provide crucial information about the program's effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and guide the development of tailored strategies that better serve students and local communities. By incorporating global best practices and innovative approaches, the museum can increase its educational impact, strengthen community relations, and fulfill its mission of preserving and promoting Nepal's cultural heritage in an increasingly dynamic educational landscape.

Chapter Three

Methodology

In this chapter, the methods and approaches used to achieve the research questions outlined in the introductory section 1.3 are described. It explains why a qualitative and collective case study was most appropriate for the research and how the cases were selected. The chapter also describes the research design and data collection methods used to answer the questions. Analytical frameworks were developed based on the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 and are presented within this chapter. The ethical considerations during the research and the contributions and limitations of the study from a methodological perspective are also discussed in this chapter.

3.1 Qualitative Approach

A qualitative research design was selected to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the complex factors influencing museum-student interactions. By examining the museum's outreach programs through the lens of its stakeholders, including museum staff, educators, and students, this study aims to uncover underlying issues and identify opportunities for improvement. This chapter details the research methodology, data collection techniques, and analysis procedures employed to achieve these objectives. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited for investigating complex, context-specific phenomena where the goal is to gain a deep understanding rather than to generalize findings (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Given the delicate and complex nature of museum outreach programs, a qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the methods, challenges, and potential improvements in engaging students.

My previous internship at the NMoN involved direct engagement with museum documentation and archiving, which has significantly informed my methodological approach in this research. The practical experience of handling archival materials and understanding documentation processes has equipped me with a nuanced perspective on the challenges associated with museum education. This background has guided my qualitative approach, enabling me to design research questions and data collection methods that are informed by real-world museum practices.

3.2 Qualitative Case Studies

Comparative case studies of successful museum outreach programs from around the world were analyzed to identify best practices and innovative approaches that could inform the National

Museum of Nepal's strategies. By examining these case studies, the study aimed to draw lessons and insights that could be adapted to the Nepali context, providing practical examples of effective outreach strategies, challenges encountered, and solutions implemented. Sources included academic publications, museum websites, and reports from international museum associations, featuring notable outreach programs from museums in the United States, Europe, and Asia, renowned for their innovative educational initiatives.

3.3 Data Collection Approach

The study on the outreach strategies of the NMoN involves a comprehensive approach to primary data collection, aimed at providing a nuanced understanding of how museum educational programs and outreach initiatives are practiced within museum settings. This research methodology is designed to capture a multifaceted view of the museum's outreach programs by integrating various data collection methods. This approach allows for a thorough exploration of both the practical aspects and theoretical underpinnings of museum education and its engagement. The primary data collection is organized into four distinct phases, each contributing to the overall objective of assessing and improving the museum's educational impact through digital and traditional outreach methods.

3.3.1 Establishing Propositions and Method Alignment

The initial phase involved defining propositions relevant to the research questions. These propositions were derived from the literature in museum studies, sociology, learning sciences, and personal experience. Preliminary informal interviews with museum staff, including insights gained from my internship, provided initial insights into the research topic within the specific context. My internship experience in the Curatorial Department, from November 2, 2022, to June 10, 2023, where I engaged in documenting and managing the museum's collection, offered a valuable perspective that informed the research questions and methodological alignment. This phase also included aligning research questions with appropriate methods and addressing any unanticipated or competing situations throughout the research process.

3.3.2 Conducting Field Work and Collecting Data

Observations were conducted on-site to assess the implementation of outreach programs and the interactions of students with these programs. This approach collected real-time data on the museum environment, student behavior, and their reactions. The main goal was to document how

outreach programs are carried out, focusing on the methods used by museum educators and the responses of the students. Observations took place during scheduled outreach activities, with detailed notes made on the structure of the activities, the content presented, and the interactions between educators and students. Where possible, photographs were used to supplement the written notes. These visits, combined with insights gained from my internship, helped refine interview questions and provided a deeper understanding of the projects, thus addressing the research questions effectively.

3.3.3 Executing Interviews

Interviews were conducted to gather perspectives from museum staff, students, and teachers involved in the outreach program. A total of 36 semi-structured interviews were carried out, utilizing the snowball sampling technique to identify additional participants. Alternative methods, such as attending conferences and events, were also conducted. Interviews were primarily face-to-face and audio-recorded with permission. The interviews were supplemented by site visits and visual data collection when applicable. The integration of insights from my internship facilitated deeper engagement with museum staff and informed the interview process. This multi-phase approach, which integrated secondary data, visual data, and interviews, ensured a comprehensive analysis of the outreach program. The semi-structured format allowed for guided conversations on specific topics while also providing flexibility for participants to introduce new ideas. Unstructured interviews were also conducted to facilitate open-ended discussions. The target population included museum educators, administrators, and local school teachers collaborating with the museum. An interview guide, developed based on the research questions and theoretical framework, covered topics such as the goals and structure of outreach programs, their perceived effectiveness, challenges, and suggestions for improvement, while allowing the conversation to explore emerging themes in depth.

3.4 Supporting Data and Contextual Information

This section provides essential background and supplementary resources to enhance the study. It includes a synthesis of existing research, internal museum documents, and secondary data, offering context and credibility to the findings. By integrating academic literature and internal reports, this part helps ground the research in established theories and best practices, supporting a more comprehensive understanding of the National Museum of Nepal's outreach strategies.

3.5 Data Analysis

The analysis of the collected data involved a systematic and iterative process aimed at identifying key themes, patterns, and insights related to the outreach programs of the National Museum of Nepal. The data analysis process was guided by the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 2 draws on museum education theories. In line with the qualitative research design, the analysis focused on understanding the lived experiences and perceptions of museum staff, educators, and students. The combination of primary and secondary data was carefully synthesized to address the research questions and provide actionable recommendations for improving museum outreach strategies.

3.5.1 Thematic Analysis

A thematic analysis approach was employed to systematically analyze the qualitative data gathered from observations and interviews related to the National Museum of Nepal's outreach programs. Thematic analysis is particularly effective for qualitative research as it allows for the identification of patterns within the data, revealing underlying meanings and insights (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The following steps were undertaken to conduct the thematic analysis:

- a. **Familiarization with the Data:** This process began with a thorough review of all field notes, interview transcripts responses. The data was read and re-read to develop a deep understanding of the content. Initial observations focused on recurring ideas, challenges, and experiences related to the museum's outreach efforts and student engagement, including feedback from students about their museum experiences and teachers' perspectives on educational impact.
- b. **Generating Initial Codes:** Information was manually examined and categorized by identifying key pieces of information and labeling them with preliminary codes. This step involved grouping similar ideas and concepts into categories such as "Motivations and Engagement," "Preferences for Learning Styles," and "Barriers to Participation" based on student interviews. Additional categories included "Educational Impact," "Challenges in Utilization," and "Need for Structured Support" derived from teacher responses, as well as "Educational Resource Value" and "Areas for Enhancement" based on staff feedback.
- c. **Identifying Themes:** Related codes were grouped into broader themes, capturing significant and recurrent topics found in the data. Themes included "Effectiveness of Outreach

Methodologies," "Barriers to Student Engagement," "Innovative Global Practices," and "Alignment with Educational Needs." For example, student preferences for interactive learning were a recurring theme, aligning with Falk and Dierking's (2000) assertion on the importance of interactive exhibits. Challenges such as logistical issues and the need for better curriculum alignment were also prominent themes.

- d. **Reviewing Themes:** Each identified theme was carefully reviewed and refined to ensure relevance and coherence. Overlapping or overly broad themes were redefined or combined, and themes with insufficient supporting data were removed. This step ensured that the final set of themes accurately represented the core findings of the research, such as the need for improved outreach methodologies and the integration of interactive elements.
- e. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Themes were clearly defined and named to encapsulate their essence. For instance, "Barriers to Effective Student Engagement" addressed logistical, technological, and motivational challenges, while "Innovative Outreach Practices" highlighted successful strategies from global examples that could be adapted for the National Museum of Nepal.
- f. **Writing the Analysis:** The identified themes were used to structure the analysis and develop a coherent narrative addressing the research questions. This thematic analysis allowed for the integration of both primary and secondary data, linking insights from global best practices with the specific context of the NMoN. The approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the museum's outreach programs, challenges, and potential improvements

3.5.2 Triangulation of Data

Triangulation was used to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings by cross-referencing data from multiple sources and methods. This approach involved:

- a. **Cross-Referencing Sources:** Observations and interview responses were compared to identify consistent patterns and discrepancies. For example, insights from staff about digital outreach were compared with student and teacher feedback to assess alignment and divergence.
- b. **Integrating Secondary Data:** Secondary sources, including museum reports, academic literature, and case studies from other museums, were used to contextualize the findings.

This included comparing the NMoN's practices with successful global outreach strategies to evaluate their relevance and applicability.

- c. **Analysing Global Best Practice:** The approach to analysis considered global best practices in museum outreach, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 'MetAccess' programme and the California Science Center's 'Science On Wheels' programme, to identify strategies that can be adapted to the local context. In this way, innovative practices and solutions to common challenges faced by the museum could be identified. This helped to identify innovative practices and solutions to common challenges faced by the museum.
- d. **Evaluating Challenges and Recommendations:** The triangulation process also involved a thorough evaluation of challenges identified in Chapter 6, such as financial constraints, infrastructure limitations, and barriers to student engagement. Recommendations were developed based on these challenges and insights from successful global practices, aiming to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the museum's outreach programs.

3.5.3 Comparative Case Study Analysis

The Comparative Case Study Analysis began with the systematic selection of international museum outreach programs noted for their effectiveness and innovation. These programs were chosen to represent a spectrum of successful strategies for overcoming challenges and enhancing outreach. Data collection comprised both secondary sources, such as literature and reports, and primary sources, including direct observations and interviews from the National Museum of Nepal. This dual approach provided a comprehensive view of methodologies, challenges, and outcomes from both global and local perspectives. The analysis employed thematic coding to identify recurring patterns and themes, which were then compared between international practices and the National Museum of Nepal's outreach efforts. By examining methodologies, common barriers, and alignment with educational needs, the study highlighted key differences and similarities. The findings were synthesized into practical recommendations aimed at improving the National Museum's outreach programs by integrating successful strategies from global examples.

3.5.4 Selection of Case Studies

Comparative case studies of successful museum outreach programs from across various regions were analyzed to identify best practices and innovative approaches that could inform the National

Museum of Nepal's strategies. By examining these case studies, the study aimed to draw lessons and insights that could be adapted to the Nepali context, providing practical examples of effective outreach strategies, challenges encountered, and solutions implemented. Sources included academic publications, museum websites, and reports from international museum associations, featuring notable outreach programs from museums in the United States, Europe, and Asia, renowned for their innovative educational initiatives.

Table 1: Selection of Case Studies of Outreach Program

Outreach Program	Museum & Location	Description	Relevance to the National Museum of Nepal	Official Museum Website
MetAccess	The Metropolitan Museum of Art NYC, USA	Offers virtual tours, interactive online resources, and on-site workshops to democratize art education.	Provides a model for using digital tools to reach students in remote areas.	https://www.metmuseum.org/events/programs/access
Science On Wheels	Pacific Science Center California, USA	Deploys mobile science labs with interactive exhibits and teacher workshops to underserved schools.	Demonstrates how mobile outreach can overcome geographic and economic barriers.	https://pacificsciencecenter.org/education/science-on-wheels/
Schools and Young Audiences	Victoria and Albert Museum London, UK	Integrates museum resources with national educational curricula through on-site and online resources.	Shows how to align museum content with national curricula to enhance educational impact.	https://www.vam.ac.uk/info/schools
Museum on Wheels	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Mumbai, India	Uses a specially designed bus to bring museum artifacts and interactive exhibits to rural schools.	Offers insights into how mobile museums can extend cultural education to remote communities.	https://esmvs.in/museum-on-wheels/
Busing In	Liberation War Museum Dhaka, Bangladesh	Brings curated historical exhibits on Bangladesh's Liberation War to schools and communities.	Provides a model for promoting national identity and historical understanding through outreach..	https://www.liberationwarmuseumbd.org/page/projects-and-programs
Traveling Museum	The National Museum of Korea Seoul, South Korea	Brings curated exhibits and artifacts to schools and public spaces across South Korea, offering interactive workshops, lectures, and demonstrations to engage visitors of all ages.	Demonstrates how digital and physical strategies can bridge educational gaps in diverse regions.	https://www.museum.go.kr/site/eng/home

The table above highlights six prominent museum outreach programs from various regions, chosen for their innovative strategies in making museum resources to diverse and underserved audiences.

3.5.5 Interpretation of Findings

In the final step of the data analysis, the results were interpreted in alignment with the research questions and theoretical framework. This interpretation aimed to address key questions, such as how the NMoN's educational programs could be enhanced to better engage students, and what lessons could be drawn from best practices from various regions. The findings were synthesized to form a set of clear conclusions and recommendations that considered both the strengths and limitations of the museum's current educational strategies. This approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of the museum's programs and provided practical insights for future improvements.

Chapter Four

Nepal National Museum

4.1 Introduction of Nepal National Museum

The National Museum of Nepal, situated at the base of Swayambhu Hill in the Kathmandu Valley, covers an area of approximately 25,436 square meters and has undergone significant transformation since its inception. Originally constructed in 1824 by General Bhimsen Thapa as an arsenal house, it was repurposed and expanded in 1926 by Rana Prime Minister Chandra Shumsher, who renamed it the Silkhana Museum (*Introduction – National Museum, n.d.*). The National Museum of Nepal, established in 1928 under King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah and initially known as "Chhauni Silkhana," (*Introduction – National Museum, n.d.*) has evolved significantly over the years from a repository of military artifacts during the Rana regime to a comprehensive guardian of Nepal's cultural heritage. Originally, the museum focussed on Nepal's military capabilities. Through significant acquisitions and donations, it expanded its mission to include the country's broader history and artistic traditions. Notable additions include rare artifacts like a 10th-century sculpture from the Lichhavi dynasty, illuminating early Nepali art, and extensive collections of Thangka scroll paintings, enhancing the understanding of Nepali Buddhist art (*Introduction – National Museum, n.d.*). Archaeological excavations across Nepal have also enriched the museum's holdings with artifacts spanning weaponry, religious objects, everyday items, and ancient artworks, reshaping narratives of Nepal's vibrant historical tapestry. Today, the NMoN stands as a testament to the country's cultural richness, offering a journey of discovery and preservation to global visitors. Its commitment to scholarly research, educational programs, and international collaboration reinforces its role as a vital institution in promoting and safeguarding Nepal's heritage worldwide (*Introduction – National Museum, n.d.*).

4.2 Evolution of the National Museum

The transformation of the NMoN from a private or restricted space to a public institution marks a pivotal moment in its history, reflecting broader shifts in Nepal's cultural and educational landscape. While the exact year of its public opening can be debated, historical records point to a significant change around 1938 AD under the leadership of Prime Minister Juddha Shumsher. This shift represented a growing recognition of the importance of cultural heritage and a desire to share Nepal's artistic and historical treasures with a wider audience. Initially known as "Chhauni Silkhana," translating to "The storehouse of arms and ammunition," the museum's early identity

underscored its origins as a repository primarily focused on military artifacts. However, around 1938, it was renamed "Nepal Museum" as it began opening its doors to the public (*Introduction – National Museum*, n.d.). This renaming signified a profound transformation as the museum embraced a new role as a custodian of Nepal's broader cultural heritage. Several factors likely contributed to this transformative decision. Firstly, as Nepal's sense of national identity evolved, there was a growing emphasis on preserving and showcasing cultural artifacts beyond military history alone (*Introduction – National Museum*, n.d.). Opening the museum to the public allowed the nation to celebrate and preserve its rich artistic heritage alongside its military past. Secondly, the museum's public accessibility has widened access to knowledge and inspired a sense of ownership and pride in the community. This educational aspect not only informed the public about Nepal's history and culture but also inspired future generations to become stewards of their cultural heritage. The effects of this change were profound. Public access transformed the museum into a hub of cultural exchange and community engagement (*Introduction – National Museum*, n.d.).

4.3 Museum Buildings and Galleries

The NMoN has transformed from a mere repository of artifacts to a dynamic center for learning and cultural engagement. The museum is located in the former palace of Nepal's first Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa and covers an area of around 25,436 square meters. It consists of three main exhibition buildings: the historical building, the Juddha Jatiya Art Gallery, and the Buddhist Art Gallery. These buildings display a rich variety of unique artifacts that significantly enhance the educational content of the museum. Each building offers a comprehensive exploration of Nepali art and culture, giving visitors a deep learning experience (*Introduction – National Museum*, n.d.).

4.3.1 The Historical Building (Chhauni Silkhana Museum)

The historic building, built in 1824 by General Bhimsen Thapa, originally served as military barracks. It reflected the pre-modern concept of museums as repositories of curiosities in transformed buildings. In 1926, additional modern sections were added and in 1938, the museum was officially started as the Chhauni Silkhana Museum, focusing on the weaponry of the country. This expanded the museum's role in promoting national identity through its weaponry collection. Today, the historic building houses various artifacts in diverse sections, including natural history, dolls, ethnology, the Mustang section, arms and ammunition, portraits, and exhibitions on illegal

trafficking. In the natural history section, specimens of Nepalese flora and fauna are displayed, which provide an insight into the country's rich biodiversity. The doll collection displays traditional and ceremonial dolls from different regions, symbolizing different ethnic groups and cultural practices. The ethnology section focuses on the cultural practices, artifacts, and daily life of the different ethnic communities of Nepal and the Mustang section highlights the unique cultural and historical aspects of its remote territory. The Arms and Ammunition section has an extensive collection of historical weapons that illustrate the evolution of weapons techniques in Nepal. The portrait gallery displays paintings, photographs, and other visual representations of prominent historical figures of Nepal. The smuggling exhibitions highlight the illegal trade in artifacts, wildlife and other smuggled goods which educate the visiting audience about the consequences of such activities on a country's cultural heritage and natural treasures. Visitors can explore Nepal's rich heritage through visual displays, gaining insights into its political history, community practices, and cultural development. Due to the earthquake of 2015 A.D., some sections of the Historical Building's upper floors are temporarily closed for renovation (*THE HISTORICAL BUILDING – National Museum*, n.d.).

4.3.2 Juddha Jatiya Kalashala

The Juddha Jatiya Kalashala, named after Rana Prime Minister Juddha Shumsher who personally financed its construction in 1942-1943 A.D., is located opposite the main historical gallery and represents Nepal's first purpose-built museum. Its architecture, reminiscent of India's Sanchi stupa, features narrative panels at the entrance depicting the birth of Buddha and Hindu mythological stories like Samudra-Manthan. Inside, the gallery houses a variety of Nepalese art forms including stone, terracotta, bronze, wood, and paintings. The stone sculptures, some predating the Lichchhavi period, display distinct Nepali features influenced by Indian art, while the Lichchhavi sculptures stand out with their exquisite detail and polished stones. Terracotta art, originating from the 3rd century BC and flourishing under Lichchhavi's influence, is exemplified by pieces from the 17th-18th centuries depicting various deities and mythological scenes. Nepali bronze art, emerging from the 7th century onwards, reflects influences from Northern India's Pala-Sena School and Tibetan styles, featuring tantric deities like Samvara and Avalokiteshwar renowned for their symbolism and craftsmanship. Nepali wood art, celebrated for its delicacy, reached its pinnacle during the medieval period, visible in temple carvings and architectural elements such as windows and struts, with pieces dating back to the 15th century on display. Paintings in Nepal, tracing back to the Lichchhavi period and surviving in manuscript form from

the 10th century AD, include manuscript paintings, scroll paintings (Thangka or Paubha), and narrative paintings, with notable examples like an 18th-century depiction of Markandya-purana. Together, the Juddha Jatiya Kalashala offers a comprehensive journey through Nepal's artistic heritage showcasing the artistic brilliance of Nepali craftsmen across diverse mediums (*THE JUDDHA JATIYA ART GALLERY (JUDDHA JATIYA KALASHALA) – National Museum, n.d.*).

4.3.3 Buddhist Art Gallery

The Buddhist Art Gallery, established with support from Japan's Cultural Grant Program in 1995 and subsequent grassroots project funding in 1996, was ceremonially inaugurated by His Imperial Highness Prince Akishino of Japan on February 28, 1997. This gallery stands as a testament to Nepal's rich Buddhist heritage, showcasing a diverse array of artifacts of both archaeological and iconographical significance. On the ground floor, the gallery is meticulously organized into three sections representing distinct geographical and cultural contexts. The Terai section features rare and precious artifacts excavated from the sacred sites of Lumbini and Kapilvastu, including stone sculptures, bronzes, and wooden artifacts that illuminate the early Buddhist presence in the region. These objects offer insights into the ancient practices and art forms associated with Buddhism in Nepal's southern plains. The Kathmandu Valley section features intricate sculptures and rituals of the Newar Buddhist tradition, highlighting the artistic prowess and spiritual devotion of the community. In the Northern Himalayan Zone, visitors find miniature bronze models used in Tibetan Buddhist rituals like kapala, phurba, and Dorje, reflecting spiritual practices in Nepal's high Himalayan regions. Upstairs, the Mandala Gallery designed by Prof. Tachikawa portrays the mandala in Tantric Buddhism, surrounded by panels with 220 Bodhisattvas symbolizing spiritual enlightenment. The gallery preserves Nepal's Buddhist heritage and bridges cultural understanding between Nepal and Japan, inviting exploration of the profound connections between art, religion, and history in the region. This chapter explores the evolving landscape of museum education, with a specific focus on the NMoN. Here we examine the changing trends that are shaping museum education practices globally, the outreach programs offered by the NMoN, the target audience for these programs, and the challenges faced by the NMoN in implementing such initiatives (*THE BUDDHIST ART GALLERY – National Museum, n.d.*).

Chapter Five

Analysis of Outreach Program

5.1 Current Outreach Program at the National Museum of Nepal

In the context of an evolving educational landscape marked by rapid technological advancements, museums worldwide, including the NMoN, are embracing innovative approaches to engage audiences and enhance learning experiences. A notable trend within this transformation is the integration of digital learning platforms. The NMoN has taken significant strides in this direction, exemplified by the launch of a virtual tour of its renowned Lichhavi dynasty sculpture collection, which allows global visitors to explore these remarkable artworks in detail. Such platforms, encompassing virtual tours, multimedia presentations, and interactive websites, provide accessible avenues for exploring museum collections and educational resources online, thereby reaching broader audiences beyond the confines of physical space. Beyond digital initiatives, the NMoN has established robust community engagement strategies, collaborating with local schools and cultural organizations to co-create programs that resonate with community interests and priorities. This approach to collaboration promotes inclusiveness, accessibility and relevance and empowers communities to actively engage in cultural dialog and contribute to the preservation and interpretation of their cultural heritage.

5.1.1 Structure of Outreach of Programs

The outreach programs at the NMoN are designed to engage a diverse range of audiences through a comprehensive overview of annual educational initiatives. These programs encompass educational awareness campaigns, hands-on workshops, and competitive events tailored for distinct groups, including students, teachers, researchers, and the general public. Held across various locations—from schools to the museum itself and online platforms—these initiatives are facilitated by museum staff, local artists, and subject matter experts. The objectives of these outreach efforts are multifaceted, focusing on:

1. Raising awareness about cultural heritage preservation
2. Enhancing knowledge about museum exhibits
3. Encouraging artistic expression

While the NMoN's outreach programs provide significant educational enrichment, offering

deeper insights into cultural heritage and traditional arts, their effectiveness in engaging younger audiences and aligning with contemporary educational needs has yet to be systematically evaluated. Workshops on inscription deciphering and sculpture reproduction not only impart technical skills but also cultivate a sense of appreciation for historical artifacts and techniques. Competitions such as sketch and quiz contests stimulate creative and critical thinking, encouraging participants to engage more deeply with cultural themes. The NMoN has built up a substantial education program over the last 17 to 18 years. An important part of this is the annual museum education program, in which around 20 schools participate each year. Each school sends 5 students and 2 teachers, usually those who teach social studies. Schools that are members of the museum program are given priority, which shows how important these memberships are to the museum's outreach efforts.

Table 2: List of Schools Affiliated with the NMoN

No.	School Name	Location
1	Bijeshwori Gyan Mandir Sainik Mahavidyalaya	Swoyambhu, Kathmandu
2	Brihaspati Vidasadan	Maligaun, Naxal Kathmandu
3	Caribbean Secondary School	Mahalaxmasthan, Lalitpur
4	Galaxy Public School	Gyaneshwar, Kathmandu
5	Gautam High School	Lagan Tole, Kathmandu
6	Jyoti Academy	Sitapaila, Kathmandu
7	Laligurans Batika School	Jadibuti, Kathmandu
8	Modern Nepal Academy	Dallu, Kathmandu
9	Nightingale International Secondary School	Kupondole, Lalitpur
10	Pragati Shiksha Sadan Higher Secondary School	Kupondole, Lalitpur
11	Reed Model School	Swoyambhu, Kathmandu
12	Sainik Awasiya Mahavidyalaya	Sallaghari, Bhaktapur
13	Shanti Adarsh Secondary School	Jorpati, Kathmandu
14	Shree Adinath Secondary School	Chovar, Kirtipur
15	Southwestern School	Basundhara, Kathmandu
16	St. Xavier's School	Jawalakhel, Lalitpur

Source: National Museum of Nepal

The list of schools associated with the National Museum of Nepal (NMoN) is shown in Table 2. With this initiative, the museum is committed to improving its outreach programs and introducing students to the rich cultural heritage of Nepal. However, the list is quite small compared to the actual number of schools in Kathmandu, which is around several hundred. The museum offers a Membership Program for students from classes 1 to 10, which allows unlimited visits with a friend. This initiative has successfully encouraged frequent engagement with the museum's educational resources. Historically, the museum's outreach primarily focused on organized school visits and awareness campaigns. Recently, however, there has been a shift towards more informal educational programs, providing students with a wider range of learning opportunities. The integration of digital technology has been pivotal in modernizing the museum's educational efforts. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the necessity of a digital presence, prompting the museum to conduct online quizzes and essay competitions. Currently, digital platforms such as Facebook and the museum's website are used to promote programs and increase awareness.

Table 3: List of Annual Museum Education Program (2016 - 2024 A.D)

Year	Program	Type of program	Target Audience	Location	Facilitator (s)	Objectives
2024 A.D	Importance of Cultural Heritage and Museum Awareness Program	Educational/ Awareness Program	Community, Students, Teacher	Bhairabi Secondary School, Nuwakot	Museum Staff	Raise awareness about cultural heritage preservation
2023 A.D	Inscription deciphering & Chemical preservation of museum artifacts workshop	Workshop	Students, Researchers	National Museum	Experts in Field	Teach inscription deciphering & preservation techniques
2022 A.D	Sketch competition	Competition	Students	National Museum	Local Artist	Encourage artistic expression
2021 A.D	Online Quiz & Essay Competition	Competition	Students	Online	Museum Educators	Enhance knowledge about museum exhibits
2020 A.D	Museum sculptures reproductions workshop	Workshop	Art Students, Enthusiasts	National Museum	Sculptors	Teach sculpture reproduction techniques
2019 A.D	Quiz contest	Competition	Students	National Museum	Museum Team	Enhance Knowledge about

						the museum
2018 A.D	Drawing workshop & Inscription deciphering.	Workshop	Students	National Museum	Experts in Field	Drawing class for class 5 students & inscription deciphering for classes 8 to 9.
2017 A.D	Formal & Informal Learning at the Museum, Awareness Program	Educational/ Awareness Program	Students	National Museum	Museum Educators	To highlight the educational programs and resources offered by museums.
2016 A.D	A Talk on Iconography and the Power of Traditional Painting	Art Appreciation Talk	Students	National Museum	Local Artists	Raise public awareness of the concept of iconography and its importance in understanding traditional painting

Source: National Museum of Nepal

The museum's educational programs are diverse and adaptive. In 2024, a notable program was held at Bhairabi Secondary School in Nuwakot, focusing on cultural heritage preservation. This initiative aimed to educate local communities, students, and teachers about the importance of safeguarding Nepal's cultural heritage, demonstrating the museum's commitment to outreach beyond its physical location. In 2023, a workshop on inscription deciphering and chemical preservation of artifacts provided hands-on training for students and researchers, offering practical skills essential for preserving Nepal's cultural history. In recent years, various other programs have been implemented to promote creativity and improve knowledge. For instance, the 2022 sketch competition encouraged artistic expression, while the 2021 online quiz and essay competition deepened students' understanding of museum exhibits. Workshops on practical skills have also been a focus. The 2020 session on museum sculpture reproductions and the 2018 drawing and inscription deciphering workshop offered valuable insights into art and historical preservation. Quiz contests in 2019 and 2017 further integrated educational objectives with cultural engagement. A significant initiative in 2016 was a talk on iconography and traditional painting, which aimed to raise awareness about conventional art forms and involve local artists. This approach not only educated participants but also connected them with traditional art practitioners.

5.1.2 Visitors Analysis at the National Museum of Nepal

The visitor statistics for the NMoN (2080-2081 B.S) show a diverse range of visitor types. The

total number of visitors is 65,227, with student visitors making up the majority at 43,384, followed by 15,178 Nepalese visitors, 4,689 foreign visitors, and 1,976 visitors from SAARC countries. Notably, Mansir has the highest student visitor count at 8,003, while foreign visitors peaked in Baishakh with 533. The data suggests a strong student presence throughout the year, with significant fluctuations in general and international tourist numbers across different months.

Table 4: Visitor Statistics for the NMoN(2080- 2081 B.S)

No	Month	Foreign Visitor	SAARC Countries Visitor	Nepalese Visitor	Student Visitor
1	Shrawan	364	96	1620	3153
2	Bhadau	244	117	1203	3179
3	Aswin	440	117	795	3590
4	Kartik	331	90	781	2161
5	Mansir	389	87	1182	8003
6	Poush	293	192	1432	4322
7	Magh	403	93	1285	4896
8	Falgun	448	174	1190	4389
9	Chaitra	491	260	1474	1600
10	Baishakh	533	120	1411	1489
11	Jestha	391	395	1444	3952
12	Asar	362	235	1362	2650
	Total	4689	1976	15178	43384

Source: National Museum of Nepal

The high student visitor numbers demonstrate the effectiveness of educational initiatives, which are likely a core component of the museum's outreach efforts. Additionally, the data suggests areas for improvement in attracting foreign and SAARC country visitors, pointing to potential gaps in international outreach.

5.2 Stakeholder's Insights on Outreach Programs

5.2.1 Student Insights

Through semi-structured interviews with 16 students, key insights emerged regarding their

experiences with museum outreach programs. These insights highlight the gap between students' expectations and the current offerings of museums. The interviews provided a clear understanding of how students engage with museum initiatives, revealing their preferences, interests, and areas for improvement.

i. Desire for Interactive Experiences

Many students expressed interest in visiting museums but noted a strong preference for interactive and technology-driven experiences. They often found traditional presentation methods, which rely heavily on text and static displays, to be disengaging. One student succinctly articulated this sentiment, saying, "Museums are interesting, but they can get boring if there's too much reading. I prefer watching videos or trying things out." This highlights a critical need for museums to innovate and incorporate multimedia elements that cater to the preferences of younger audiences.

ii. Timing Conflicts

Scheduling conflicts emerged as a significant barrier for students trying to participate in museum programs. Several students mentioned that museum events often coincide with school schedules or exam periods, making it difficult for them to attend. For instance, one student noted, "One challenge is timing because the museum programs sometimes clash with our school schedule or exams." This indicates a pressing need for museums to develop more flexible programming that accommodates the busy lives of students and aligns better with their educational commitments.

iii. Limited Interactive Content

Students reported that some museums lack sufficient interactive content, which diminishes their engagement during visits. When exhibits do not invite participation or interaction, students may feel as though they are merely passive observers rather than active learners. They expressed a desire for hands-on activities and technology such as virtual reality experiences, which could transform passive observation into immersive learning. This points to a larger trend in educational practices that favor experiential learning over traditional teaching methods.

iv. Need for Collaboration and Social Media Engagement

Students suggested that museums should work more with schools and use social media platforms for challenges and competitions that would pique their interest. Engaging students through familiar channels such as social media can increase visibility and enthusiasm for museum programs. By developing interactive campaigns that appeal to young people's interests, museums can increase participation and cultivate a sense of community among students.

5.2.2 Teachers Insights

Interviews with twelve teachers gives us additional insights on problems faced in implementing museum outreach programs. These insights are crucial for understanding how educational institutions can better facilitate student engagement with museums.

i. Frequency of Participation

Teachers reported that their students typically engage in museum outreach programs only once a year. While they noted a positive response from students who returned with excitement and curiosity, the infrequency of visits limits ongoing engagement and learning. This poses a challenge for educators who seek to integrate museum experiences into the regular curriculum. Frequent visits could reinforce concepts taught in class and provide a continuum of learning that aligns with educational standards.

ii. Coordination and Scheduling Conflicts

Scheduling conflicts between school calendars and museum programs are significant barriers for teachers as well. This challenge complicates the organization of museum visits and often requires extensive coordination to ensure that all students can participate. One teacher remarked, "Scheduling and funding can be significant barriers for us," highlighting the need for better communication and collaboration between educational institutions and museums to streamline planning processes.

iii. Need for Tailored Programs

Teachers expressed a strong desire for outreach programs that align more closely with specific

curricular topics. Tailored programs that address the unique needs of different subjects would enhance the educational value of museum visits. For instance, a program focused on local history would be particularly beneficial for social studies classes. By working closely with educators to develop personalized content, museums can become vital partners in the learning process.

iv. Lack of Pre- and Post-Visit Resources

Teachers also emphasized the need for pre-visit materials and post-visit resources that bridge the museum experience with classroom activities. These resources could include lesson plans, discussion guides, and educational kits that help integrate museum content into the curriculum. Access to digital resources related to exhibits would provide teachers with tools to reinforce learning objectives and ensure that museum visits translate into lasting educational experiences.

5.2.3 Museum Staffs Insights

Insights from museum staff highlight several key factors that influence the effectiveness of outreach programs. These insights underline the complexities of running successful outreach initiatives within the constraints of limited resources and institutional priorities.

i. Financial Constraints

Museum staff frequently voiced concerns about budget limitations, which hinder the development and sustainability of outreach initiatives. Financial constraints often lead to a restricted scope of programming and limit the quality of experiences that can be offered. Subash Krishna Dangol expressed, "With limited funding, we struggle to create comprehensive programs that can sustain long-term engagement." (Personal Communication, 16 May, 2024). This indicates a pressing need for increased financial resources to support diverse and high-quality outreach efforts.

ii. Limited Rural Outreach

Many staff members noted that outreach efforts often neglect rural areas and diverse communities, leading to cultural disconnection and inequitable access to educational resources. Sharmila Uprety (Aryal) highlighted, "We recognize that students in rural areas miss out on experiences that could enrich their understanding of culture and history." (Personal Communication, 16 May, 2024). Expanding outreach efforts to include rural populations is crucial for promoting inclusivity and ensuring that all students have access to cultural education.

iii. Few Outreach Programs Offered

Staff indicated that the museum conducts only a limited number of outreach programs each year, which restricts opportunities for engagement with schools and communities. Bindra Shrestha remarked, "The few programs we do offer can only engage a limited number of participants, which means we're missing out on the chance to connect with a broader audience." (Personal Communication, 16 May, 2024). Increasing the frequency and variety of outreach offerings would enable museums to reach a wider audience and create more educational opportunities.

iii. Lack of Technological Integration

Staff emphasized the necessity of leveraging technology to enhance outreach efforts, particularly for underserved communities. Utilizing digital platforms can broaden access to educational resources and experiences, especially for those who may not be able to visit the museum in person. Govinda Neupane stated, "Leveraging technology can help us bridge the gap and reach audiences that we might not be able to connect with physically." (Personal Communication, 16 May, 2024). This approach not only addresses physical accessibility but also caters to the evolving preferences of younger audiences.

5.3 Challenges of the National Museum of Nepal's Outreach Programs

The NMoN faces several significant challenges in its outreach and educational programs. Despite commendable efforts to promote cultural preservation and public engagement, key issues persist. Securing adequate funding for outreach and education initiatives remains a constant struggle, while aligning museum programs with school schedules often proves difficult due to overlaps with peak class times. Furthermore, many schools are unaware of the museum's offerings, leading to limited enthusiasm for participation in educational initiatives. Currently, the museum has a limited number of affiliated schools, primarily concentrated in the Kathmandu Valley, which highlights the urgent need to include more institutions from rural areas and across the country. By reaching out to these schools, the museum can ensure that a wider audience benefits from its educational programs, promoting integration and cultural awareness among students across Nepal. One primary issue is the lack of clearly defined objectives and measurable outcomes, which makes it difficult to assess program success. This absence of effective feedback mechanisms hampers the implementation of necessary adjustments to enhance programs based on participants' needs. Additionally, the museum's reliance on traditional lecture-based formats fails

to engage students effectively, as contemporary learners prefer interactive, hands-on experiences that encourage active participation. Current school visits typically involve small groups, with around 160 participants per visit, restricting the museum's ability to reach a broader audience and fully utilize its resources. To enhance the educational impact of its programs, the NMoN should explore strategies to accommodate larger groups and develop additional outreach initiatives.

Additionally, the NMoN faces challenges similar to those identified in museum education literature. A significant concern is the generational differences in learning preferences that current outreach programs do not adequately address. Younger audiences are drawn to interactive, technology-infused experiences, necessitating the creation of adaptable program formats that cater to diverse learning styles (Sandell, 2012). Financial and infrastructural constraints significantly impact the development and maintenance of outreach initiatives, limiting their quality and scope (McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001). Issues related to infrastructure further restrict the museum's capacity to support modern outreach activities, such as interactive exhibits and digital presentations, ultimately diminishing the visitor experience. Also, ineffective promotion and insufficient documentation hinder public awareness and engagement with the museum's offerings. The lack of effective marketing as a cultural and educational resource restricts outreach, while inadequate documentation and research make it challenging to evaluate program success and implement informed improvements (Throsby, 2001).

Key Challenges:

1. The lack of clearly defined goals makes it difficult to evaluate and effectively improve outreach programs.
2. Securing adequate funding for outreach and education initiatives remains a constant struggle.
3. Relying on traditional lecture formats does not appeal to young learners who prefer interactive and hands-on experiences.
4. Learning preferences of different generations are not adequately addressed as current programs do not appeal to the different learning styles of varying age groups.
5. Current school visits take place in small groups, usually with around 160 participants per visit, which limits the museum's reach.
6. Financial and infrastructural constraints limit the overall quality and scope of outreach initiatives and reduce their effectiveness.

7. Insufficient advertising and documentation of programs discourage public engagement and make it difficult to evaluate their success.
8. The limited number of schools affiliated with the museum is mainly concentrated in the core Kathmandu Valley, highlighting the need to involve more institutions from rural areas.

To overcome these challenges, the NMoN must engage in strategic planning, collaborate with educational institutions, and adopt innovative practices. Systematically addressing these challenges will enable the museum to serve diverse communities effectively and promote cultural appreciation, thereby enriching Nepal's educational landscape.

Chapter Six

Comparative Analysis of Global Best Practices

The comparative analysis of the National Museum of Nepal's outreach initiatives with successful global programs is essential for several direct reasons. First, it helps enhance engagement by allowing the museum to adopt best practices that create more interactive and hands-on experiences, which are particularly appealing to students. It also identifies gaps in current strategies, such as reliance on traditional methods, prompting the museum to innovate and adapt its programs to better meet audience needs. Furthermore, the analysis addresses common barriers to student engagement like funding limitations and logistical challenges, by providing insights into how successful initiatives have overcome these obstacles. Learning from established evaluation frameworks can inform the museum's strategic planning and resource allocation, ensuring its initiatives are effective and sustainable. Strengthening community ties is crucial, as incorporating community feedback makes the museum's educational content more culturally relevant. Additionally, promoting Nepal's rich cultural heritage benefits from insights gained from global best practices. Also, understanding these trends can open up collaboration opportunities with other institutions, facilitating resource sharing and enhancing impact. In summary, this analysis is vital for the NMoN to improve its outreach strategies, tackle challenges, and effectively fulfill its mission of education and cultural preservation.

6.1 Global Best Practices in Museum Outreach

Thematic analysis of global outreach programs provides several key themes that contribute to their success:

6.1.1 Effectiveness of Outreach Methodologies

Innovative strategies focusing on accessibility are vital for effective outreach. Programs like MetAccess at the Metropolitan Museum of Art utilize digital tools to democratize art education, offering virtual tours and interactive resources that broaden educational reach (figure 11). This initiative exemplifies how museums can adapt their communication strategies to engage wider audiences, particularly those with varying access to physical spaces or resources. Similarly, the Science On Wheels initiative from the California Science Center delivers hands-on STEM education directly to underserved communities, empowering educators and breaking down geographic barriers (figure 12). This approach not only circumvents geographical limitations but

also aligns with Falk & Dierking's (2016a) concept of informal learning in museums. The Museum on Wheels program from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya connects urban museums with rural schools in South Asia, illustrating the potential of mobile outreach to extend cultural education (figure 14). The importance of bringing educational experiences directly into local schools to promote national identity and understanding is highlighted by programs such as the "Busing In" initiative at the Liberation War Museum in Dhaka (figure 15). The Schools and Young Audiences program at the Victoria and Albert Museum further reinforces the importance of curriculum integration. By aligning museum resources with national educational standards, this initiative enhances the relevance of museum content within formal education systems, demonstrating how museums can effectively enrich student learning and cultural understanding (figure 13). Anderson et al. (2002) emphasize the importance of formative and summative evaluation in understanding the success of outreach programs. Normally, a formative evaluation assesses the development process and identifies potential improvements before a program is fully implemented, whereas a summative evaluation evaluates the outcome and impact of the program after its completion.

6.1.2 Barriers to Student Engagement

While outreach programs have made significant strides, they encounter several barriers that can impede student engagement and overall effectiveness. Logistical challenges are particularly pronounced in mobile outreach initiatives, such as the Museum on Wheels program in Mumbai. These programs require meticulous planning to manage the transportation of artifacts and interactive exhibits, which can strain available resources and impact the quality of educational experiences. Another significant barrier is the difficulty of measuring the impact of outreach efforts. Comprehensive evaluation tools are essential to assess long-term educational outcomes, but the variability in implementation and the diversity of audiences complicate this process. Without effective metrics, museums may struggle to demonstrate the value of their outreach programs and secure ongoing support. Cultural relevance is also critical. Programs must be designed with the unique backgrounds and contexts of their audiences in mind to maximize educational effectiveness. Failure to address cultural sensitivities can lead to misunderstandings and disengagement, underscoring the need for thoughtful program development that reflects community needs. A lack of funding is a common challenge in museum outreach, especially for institutions in developing countries. Most museums, such as the Louvre and the British Museum, have developed robust funding models that include government grants, private donations,

corporate sponsorship and revenue from ticket and merchandise sales. In addition, these institutions often apply for international grants and work with global organizations such as UNESCO to obtain additional funding for special outreach projects. On the other hand, New Zealand's Te Papa Tongarewa Museum, for example, has developed a mixed funding model that combines both public and private support. It has also established a successful public-private partnership in which corporate sponsors fund mobile outreach units in exchange for brand visibility and association with arts education. Besides ensuring financial sustainability, this model also encourages closer collaboration between the cultural and corporate sectors.

6.1.3 Innovative Practices and Curriculum Alignment

Innovative practices in museum work highlight the importance of curriculum adaptation and active community engagement. The Liberation War Museum's "Busing In" program in Dhaka promotes national identity by bringing curated historical exhibits directly into schools. This initiative emphasizes the role of museums in promoting historical awareness and cultural understanding, aligning with Sandell's (2012) assertion that museums are crucial for encouraging national awareness. Similarly, the Traveling Museum initiative by the National Museum of Korea combines digital resources and physical exhibits to engage diverse audiences. By providing workshops and lectures, this program effectively bridges educational gaps while promoting a connection to cultural heritage (figure 16). The participatory elements of these programs resonate with Simon's (2010) concept of a participatory museum, wherein communities actively engage with and shape museum content.

In summary, the global outreach initiatives discussed illustrate best practices in museum education and community engagement, as identified by scholars like Anderson et al. (2002), Black (2012), and Hooper-Greenhill (2013). These programs demonstrate how museums are evolving to become more inclusive and impactful by utilizing innovative and accessible outreach strategies.

6.2 The National Museum of Nepal's Outreach Programs

Thematic analysis of the National Museum of Nepal's outreach programs identifies several key themes and insights:

6.2.1 Effectiveness of Outreach Methodologies

The National Museum of Nepal's initiatives, such as the "Cultural Heritage Preservation" project at Bhairabi Secondary School in 2024 and the "Inscription Deciphering and Chemical Preservation" workshop in 2023, reflect a commitment to outreach and heritage preservation.

However, feedback from interviews indicates that while students appreciate these efforts, there is a clear preference for interactive exhibits over traditional displays. This suggests a need to enhance the interactive nature of the museum's programs.

6.2.2 Barriers to Student Engagement

Despite the museum's effective outreach efforts, several barriers hinder student engagement. Securing adequate funding remains a significant challenge, limiting the scope and frequency of programs. Additionally, aligning museum activities with school schedules can be problematic, especially when programs coincide with peak class times. There is also a general lack of awareness about the museum among schools, which can lead to limited enthusiasm for participation.

6.2.3 Innovative Practices and Curriculum

The museum has implemented various innovative practices to enhance its educational outreach. The integration of digital platforms has modernized engagement strategies, allowing for broader reach and accessibility. Programs like online quizzes and essay competitions have not only maintained interest during challenging times but also attracted a diverse audience. Hands-on workshops, such as those on inscription deciphering and artifact preservation, provide practical skills, reinforcing the importance of cultural preservation. Furthermore, initiatives like the cultural heritage preservation program at Bhairabi Secondary School exemplify the museum's commitment to community involvement and education beyond its physical location. The museum's educational programs are designed to align with school curricula, particularly in social studies, by providing relevant content that complements classroom learning. Workshops and activities focus on practical skills and cultural education, enhancing students' understanding of Nepal's heritage. However, challenges in scheduling and a lack of awareness about the museum's offerings can disrupt this alignment. To improve effectiveness, ongoing collaboration with schools to ensure program relevance and accessibility is essential, thereby reinforcing the educational value of the museum within the broader curriculum.

6.3 Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis explores the outreach initiatives of the National Museum of Nepal (NMoN) in comparison to successful programs around the world, emphasizing effective methods, barriers to engagement, and innovative practices. Several commendable initiatives have been

undertaken by the NMoN, including the cultural heritage conservation project and the workshop on deciphering inscriptions and chemical conservation. Although feedback suggests that these efforts are appreciated, a growing demand exists for interactive and participatory experiences, indicating a need for engaging, hands-on learning models. In contrast, successful global outreach programs such as MetAccess at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Science on Wheels initiative illustrate innovative methods that prioritize accessibility, mobility and interactivity.

The MetAccess project, for example, utilizes digital tools to democratize access to arts education and extend outreach to those who are unable to visit the local museum. On a similar basis, Science on Wheels brings STEM education directly to unserved communities and demonstrates the effectiveness of mobile outreach in overcoming geographic and socioeconomic barriers. These two initiatives offer valuable lessons for the NMoN, which has yet to fully integrate such mobile or digital approaches into its outreach efforts. Even though NMoN recognizes the importance of interactivity, its reliance on more traditional methods reflects a gap in adopting these innovative global strategies. Through the adoption of digital tools and the development of mobile museum units, the NMoN could overcome many of its current limitations, including reaching rural and isolated communities in Nepal.

Major barriers to student engagement exist at both local and global levels. NMoN faces challenges such as limited funding, logistical difficulties in aligning programs with school schedules, and lack of awareness of its offerings among educational institutions. Such challenges discourage participation, especially in remote areas where schools do not have the resources to transport students to NMoN's main facilities in Kathmandu. Likewise, successful global programs such as the Busing In initiative at the Liberation War Museum and the Museum on Wheels have faced logistical and cultural challenges. In many cases, such programs are challenged by resource constraints and the need for effective impact measurement. Nevertheless, while both the NMoN and its international community partners confront significant obstacles, the NMoN's limited financial resources and lack of a comprehensive evaluation framework indicate a more compelling need for strategic improvement. Overall global outreach initiatives often benefit from an established framework for evaluating the effectiveness of outreach efforts, an approach that the NMoN could adopt to better assess the long-term impact of its initiatives. Gathering evaluation tools such as regular interviews, focusing focus groups, and partnering with educational institutions can allow the NMoN to gather structured feedback and refine its outreach programs accordingly. In addition to improving the quality of the museum's outreach offerings, these

methods would also help secure additional funding by demonstrating the value and impact of outreach efforts. Adopting such an approach could also increase the NMoN's chances of obtaining international grants from organizations such as the ICOM and the Asian Cultural Council, which both support cultural preservation and education initiatives.

Regarding the innovative practices and curriculum adaptation, the NMoN has taken steps to modernize its outreach strategies through digital platforms, such as online quizzes and essay contests. Together, these initiatives have expanded the museum's reach and provided students with alternative ways to interact with the NMoN's content. Beyond this, hands-on workshops that focus on practical skills related to cultural preservation are aligned with social studies curricula and reinforce cultural literacy. Nevertheless, problems such as scheduling conflicts and a general lack of awareness of these programs remain, potentially limiting their overall impact. There are global outreach programs such as the National Museum of Korea's traveling museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum's program for schools and young audiences that allow for a more consistent integration of museum content into educational curriculums. Promoting close alignment with educational objectives, as well as ensuring that the museum's educational offerings are not only impactful but also culturally sensitive. Through integrating feedback from the community and developing adaptation strategies, such global programs can bridge the gaps between museum resources and formal education and ensure that content evolves to meet the needs of students and educators. NMoN potentially benefits from adopting similar practices, particularly by incorporating participatory elements that encourage greater community involvement.

Overall, the NMoN's outreach programs demonstrate a commitment to education and cultural preservation. Yet they face significant challenges in terms of methodology, commitment and resource allocation. However, by learning from global best practices, particularly those that prioritize mobility, technological integration and comprehensive evaluation frameworks, NMoN can improve its outreach strategies and expand its educational impact. The effort to promote closer collaboration with the Ministry of Education and local schools and diversify its funding sources through partnerships with private companies and international organizations will also allow NMoN to overcome the geographic and socioeconomic barriers that constrain its outreach. These efforts would enable the NMoN to fulfill its mission of preserving and promoting Nepal's rich cultural heritage and ensuring that future generations can learn from and appreciate the country's unique historical legacy.

Chapter Seven

Analysis of Findings

This chapter analyzes the findings from the outreach program and the comparative analysis presented in the previous chapters. It highlights the main challenges and opportunities to improve the NMoN's educational efforts, especially in reaching out to younger target groups such as high school students. The chapter evaluates the effectiveness of current outreach initiatives based on feedback from students, teachers, and staff and offers thoughtful suggestions for improving the museum's outreach efforts, both in Nepal and in similar global contexts. In addition, the discussion is presented to align with the literature review and provide a deeper understanding of how the findings align with existing research.

7.1 Discussion

The NMoN is an institution dedicated to preserving Nepal's rich cultural heritage but faces significant challenges in effectively engaging the community, especially students. Underlining the potential role of the museum not only as a preserver of cultural artifacts but also as a dynamic educational center, this study highlights the importance of the museum's role as a cultural heritage center. In an era characterized by rapid globalization, urbanization, and the ever-present influence of digital media, traditional methods of communicating and understanding cultural practices are under increasing pressure. This pressure risks the erosion of essential traditions, as Magu (2015) and Robertson (1995) note. Museums are in a unique position to address these challenges by offering immersive and educational experiences that appeal to contemporary audiences (J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2018; Silverman, 2009). Therefore, to adapt to these changing dynamics, the NMoN must evaluate its current outreach programs, identify barriers to student participation, and adopt successful global practices to improve its effectiveness. Findings from interviews reveal critical insights into the museum's outreach effectiveness. Students reported a preference for interactive, hands-on learning experiences rather than traditional, text-heavy displays, underscoring the need for the museum to integrate more interactive elements into its programs (J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2000). This preference reflects a broader trend where traditional exhibition methods fail to captivate modern audiences due to shorter attention spans and increased distractions driven by digital media (Black, 2020; Parry, 2010a). The study also highlights low participation rates in the museum's outreach programs, suggesting issues with communication and accessibility. Positive

feedback from participants indicates that while the current programs have potential, there is a need for more engaging and innovative approaches. Teachers, who recognize the educational value of museum resources, face barriers such as financial constraints, logistical issues, and a lack of structured support. These challenges are consistent with Hein et al.'s, (1998) observations that logistical difficulties can hinder effective utilization of museum resources. Teachers have called for better integration of museum resources into the national curriculum and more support in the form of curriculum guides and professional development, aligning with recommendations from (J. H. Falk et al., 1998). The museum staff's feedback further highlights the need for improved alignment with educational curricula and enhanced digital engagement to address funding and accessibility challenges. The review of the NMoN's outreach programs reveals both achievements and challenges in enhancing its educational impact. The museum effectively engages student audiences and shows a strong commitment to cultural education. However, feedback indicates that students prefer interactive and hands-on learning experiences over traditional, text-heavy displays, which aligns with modern educational theories emphasizing sensory engagement. Teachers appreciate the museum's resources but often face logistical and financial constraints that limit their effective use. While museum staff are dedicated, they struggle with funding and infrastructure challenges, highlighting the need for better digital engagement and alignment with national curricula. The museum's initiatives, such as the Annual Museum Educational Program and Membership Program for students, successfully attract young visitors. However, the varying levels of foreign and SAARC visitors indicate challenges in attracting international audiences, likely due to limited marketing efforts, accessibility issues, and engagement barriers. The NMoN faces challenges common to museums in developing countries, particularly financial constraints that hinder its ability to preserve collections and develop effective educational programs (F. Cameron & Neilson, 2015; Lord et al., 2012). Limited funding compromises artifact maintenance and exhibition quality, while inadequate infrastructure, such as climate control and security, jeopardizes cultural preservation (F. R. Cameron & Mengler, 2012). Additionally, high costs prevent the integration of modern educational technologies, like interactive digital tools, which are essential for engaging younger audiences (Parry, 2010). Staff often juggle multiple roles, limiting their capacity for program planning (F. Cameron & Neilson, 2015). However, solutions exist in community partnerships that can pool resources and enhance outreach, especially to rural areas (Marty & Jones, 2008). Utilizing cost-effective digital tools, such as social media, can also help engage local and global audiences by showcasing Nepali culture. Despite ongoing challenges, these collaborative approaches can help the NMoN achieve its educational goals. A comparative

analysis of global museum initiatives indicates that the NMoN can significantly enhance its effectiveness and engagement by adopting successful outreach practices. Based on the findings and the literature review discussed, the following recommendations are proposed for the National Museum of Nepal. Aligning the museum's educational materials more closely with the national curriculum would facilitate easier integration into classroom teaching. Research by (Anderson et al., 2007; Griffin, 2004) underscores the importance of curriculum alignment in successful museum outreach programs. Developing curriculum guides and organizing teacher workshops can further support educators in effectively utilizing museum resources. By doing so, the museum can ensure that its educational offerings are relevant and accessible to teachers, enhancing their utility and impact. Given the preference of students for interactive exhibits, the museum should integrate more hands-on learning opportunities into its outreach programs. Studies by Falk and Dierking (2000) emphasize that interactive and experiential learning is crucial for maintaining student engagement. Programs such as "Science On Wheels" serve as successful models for incorporating interactive elements that captivate student interest and deepen their understanding. Exploring digital strategies is essential for extending the museum's reach to students in remote areas and overcoming geographic barriers. Virtual tours, online learning resources, and other digital initiatives have proven successful in broadening museum access, as evidenced by the Met's "MetAccess" (de los Santos et al., 2018; Ferris et al., 2020). Implementing similar digital outreach initiatives could significantly enhance the museum's ability to connect with a wider audience and offer valuable educational experiences. Addressing funding and logistical challenges through strategic partnerships is vital for the sustainability of outreach programs. Collaborating with educational institutions, NGOs, and government bodies can provide crucial support and resources, as recommended by (Bennett, 2017; J. H. Falk & Dierking, 2016a). The International Council of Museums (ICOM) also emphasizes the importance of establishing partnerships to enhance museum practices and community engagement (ICOM, 2021). Additionally, seeking grants and donations specifically aimed at educational outreach and cultural preservation can help secure the necessary funding to sustain and expand these initiatives

Furthermore, the Constitution of Nepal (2015) mandates the protection and promotion of cultural heritage as a state responsibility, supporting museums as educational spaces. The National Policy on Cultural Heritage (2010) further emphasizes the role of museums in enhancing public awareness of heritage. Additionally, the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act (1956) provides a legal framework for safeguarding Nepal's heritage while ensuring museums fulfill their educational role. Given the national policies, museums in Nepal should actively design and

implement educational outreach programs that align with the constitutional and legal commitments to cultural heritage preservation. These programs should aim to engage diverse audiences, including students, local communities, and tourists, by providing opportunities to learn about Nepal's rich cultural history and heritage. National museums should collaborate with schools, universities, and community organizations to create educational resources, workshops, and events that promote awareness and understanding of cultural heritage. By doing so, they will not only fulfill their role as educational institutions but also contribute to the broader national effort to preserve and promote Nepal's heritage in line with the National Policy on Cultural Heritage (2010) and the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act (1956).

The study has yielded findings listed below:

- Declining local participation in museum events and outreach programs, especially among older generations.
- Lack of interactive elements in educational programs, limiting student engagement.
- Absence of structured policies for collaboration with community organizations.
- Insufficient funding restricts the development, frequency, and quality of outreach programs, affecting the museum's ability to engage broader audiences.
- Static exhibitions with minimal dynamic or interactive experiences.
- Outreach programs not inclusive of marginalized groups or individuals with disabilities.
- Delays in infrastructure upgrades and exhibit curation hindering modernization.
- Untapped potential for partnerships with international museums for best practices.
- Limited frequency of outreach initiatives reduces sustained engagement with schools and communities.
- Minimal utilization of social media platforms for promotion and engagement.
- Absence of modern formats like podcasts, webinars, and long-form videos.
- Lack of dynamic content creation, such as video series or expert interviews, to engage audiences.

7.2 Conclusion

Overall, this study makes it clear that there are significant policy gaps and opportunities for strengthening museum education in Nepal. One important finding is the lack of comprehensive museum rules, regulations, and guidelines, particularly regarding education, public outreach, and cultural preservation. Establishing clear guidelines and protocols would provide a basic

framework for standardizing practices across national and regional museums. Furthermore, increased government funding for the development of durable museum education programs is crucial. Greater financial support would enable institutions like the NMoN to hire qualified personnel, improve technological infrastructure, and adopt innovative methods such as interactive exhibits and virtual tours. Another critical aspect is the integration of museum visits into the national curriculum. Collaboration between the Ministry of Education and museums could create a structured approach to museum learning, enhancing the educational experience for students nationwide. Additionally, developing national standards for museum education would ensure consistent quality of programming and address issues of accessibility, program development, and staff training, ensuring that educational services are both relevant and high quality.

To improve the reach and impact of education, national museums in Nepal should employ several practical strategies. Regular audience research and needs assessments can tailor education programs to diverse visitor demographics. Utilizing tools such as interviews, focus groups, and visitor feedback will help museums understand the evolving needs of their audience and refine their programming. In addition, it is essential to invest in interactive learning environments. Static exhibits should be complemented by multimedia experiences and hands-on activities that encourage visitor engagement and support long-term learning. Expanding digital reach and accessibility is also crucial. By offering virtual tours, digital collections, and interactive online content, museums can reach a wider and more diverse audience, especially if materials are provided in multiple languages to accommodate Nepal's multilingual population. Developing partnerships with schools, community centers, and local organizations can extend the museum's reach, particularly in underserved areas. Programs such as traveling or mobile exhibits can effectively bring cultural education to rural and remote communities.

To address these challenges, several strategic recommendations emerge. First, aligning educational programs with national curricula and providing structured support for teachers could significantly enhance the integration of museum resources into classroom settings. Second, expanding digital and virtual outreach, inspired by global best practices, could help the museum reach a broader audience, particularly in remote areas. Third, developing partnerships and securing funding through grants and donations could alleviate financial constraints and support the sustainability of outreach programs. By implementing these recommendations, the NMoN can build on its existing strengths and address current limitations. Embracing innovative practices and aligning more closely with global standards will not only improve engagement with both local and

international audiences but also ensure the museum's long-term success in preserving and promoting Nepal's rich cultural heritage. Professional development for museum staff is essential to maintaining an effective education program. Ongoing training in the form of workshops, conferences, and exchange programs with international museums can expose staff to global best practices and empower them to implement innovative education strategies.

While this study provides valuable insights, future research could address additional areas for improving museum education in Nepal. Evaluating the impact of current museum education programs through data collection can guide future developments by assessing learning outcomes, visitor satisfaction, and participation rates. Investigating how museums contribute to the formation of national identity through their education programs could also yield valuable insights, particularly in aligning museum narratives with the objectives of cultural identity formation. Comparative studies of successful museum education initiatives in neighboring countries such as India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh could facilitate the adoption of effective strategies tailored to similar cultural contexts. Important insights into the engagement of students and teachers reveal several preferences and needs. Students prefer interactive exhibits with multimedia elements, re-enactments, and hands-on activities, with short and visually stimulating displays being particularly effective for those with shorter attention spans. Teachers value museum visits as a complement to classroom learning and express a need for curricula and activities aligned with museum exhibits to better integrate with their teaching practices. Additionally, students from rural areas desire exhibits that showcase the cultural diversity of Nepal, while those preparing for higher education abroad express interest in global art and history.

Accessibility remains an urgent concern, with both students and teachers emphasizing the importance of multilingual explanations to accommodate Nepal's diverse population. Students with special needs require customized pedagogical approaches and sensory-friendly exhibits, underscoring the need to incorporate accessibility into museum design and programming. Although the NMoN offers educational programs such as guided tours, workshops, and lectures, some institutional challenges remain. The accessibility of these programs is a key issue. While existing programs are well received, more offerings tailored to specific age groups are needed, particularly virtual tours for schools in remote areas. The need for interactive and live exhibits has been identified as critical for engaging students, but funding constraints hinder the development of these elements. Additionally, improving accessibility for visitors with disabilities is an ongoing challenge, exacerbated by limited resources and infrastructure. Finally, addressing the multilingual

and multicultural challenges in the museum environment requires a focused effort, including training staff to use museum technology effectively and creating multilingual resources for exhibitions. Training staff, particularly on digital strategies for engagement via platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, is essential for increasing reach and enhancing the visitor experience.

7.3 Limitations

In academic research, acknowledging the limitations of a study is essential for several mandatory reasons. Doing so with transparency allows readers to critically evaluate the applicability and generalizability of the findings while providing a foundation for future research by identifying gaps and suggesting areas for further investigation (Bryman, 2012; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Several limitations must be considered in the context of this study of the NMoN's outreach programs, including challenges and potential improvements. Specifically, as the focus was on the museum's outreach programs, a comprehensive examination of other potentially influential factors was necessarily excluded. This study was conducted within a specific time frame, which limited the depth and breadth of exploration of the complex historical and administrative dimensions of the museum.

In addition, focusing on the NMoN brings with it certain limitations that may affect the general applicability of the findings. The museum's unique outreach programs and specific challenges would mean that the findings may not be directly transferable to other museums. Thus, the context-specific nature of the research limits its generalizability (Lieberson, 1991; Ragin, 2014). This research also depends on the resources available and the engagement of the participants, potentially affecting the quality of the interview data. Having limited resources or low commitment may lead to incomplete or less reliable data (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Moreover, biases in participant selection or study design could affect the overall representativeness of the study. Consequently, this may limit the results and limit their relevance to a broader context (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). Research methods used in this study are limited by time and resources. Therefore, they may not capture all relevant changes or external factors such as political or socioeconomic changes that could influence the outreach programs and participants' responses. The researcher's perspective could also shape the interpretation of the data, which could affect the objectivity of the analysis (Kvale, 2009). Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the education programs of the National Museum of

Nepal. The study contributes to the discussion on museum education and cultural awareness and serves as a basis for future research by highlighting areas for further investigations and improvements.

7.4 Future Research Directions

Based on the findings of this study, several future research directions emerge that could further enhance our understanding of how to improve museum outreach and engagement, particularly for institutions like the National Museum of Nepal. One crucial area for future research is evaluating the long-term impact of interactive and hands-on exhibits on student engagement and learning outcomes. Research should explore how these interactive elements influence students' retention of knowledge and their attitudes toward cultural heritage over extended periods. Another critical area is exploring the effectiveness of digital outreach strategies. With the growth of digital media, research should evaluate how tools like virtual tours and mobile apps influence student participation and learning. Identifying which digital methods work best can help museums overcome geographical and resource challenges and better engage students. Additionally, future studies should investigate how well museum resources align with national curricula and the barriers that hinder student participation, such as logistical issues, communication gaps, and financial constraints. Research into these challenges can lead to targeted solutions and improved accessibility. Also, evaluating the impact of strategic partnerships with educational institutions, government bodies, and NGOs can enhance resource management and support sustainable outreach programs. Lastly, understanding which community engagement and promotional strategies are most effective can help museums refine their marketing efforts and increase public involvement.

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Appendix A

List of Museum for Case Studies of Outreach Program

SN	Museum Name	Country	Website
1	The Metropolitan Museum of Art	New York City, USA	https://www.metmuseum.org/events/programs/access
2	Pacific Science Center	California, USA	https://pacificsciencecenter.org/education/science-on-wheels/
3	Victoria and Albert Museum	London, UK	https://www.vam.ac.uk/info/schools
4	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya	Mumbai, India	https://csmvs.in/museum-on-wheels/
5	Liberation War Museum	Dhaka, Bangladesh	https://www.liberationwarmuseumbd.org/page/projects-and-programs
6	The National Museum of Korea	Seoul, South Korea	https://www.museum.go.kr/site/eng/home

Appendix B

Name List of Interviewee

School Teacher

SN	Name	School	Subject Teacher
1	Anjana Adhikari	Bagmati Boarding Secondary School	Social Study
2	Arun Poudel	Greenfield National Higher Secondary School	Science
3	Dipak Subedi	Southwestern School	English
4	Kalpna Karki	Shree Panchakanya Secondary School	Nepali
5	Laxmi Rana	Dallu Awasiya Vidyalaya	Social Study
6	Manju Ghimire	Greenfield National Higher Secondary School	Social Study
7	Pradeep Gurung	Gyanodaya secondary school	Nepali
8	Rajesh Shrestha	Shree Panchakanya Secondary School	Social Study
9	Rina Shakya	Dallu Awasiya Vidyalaya	Science
10	Santosh Bhandari	Southwestern School	Science
11	Saraswati Khadka	Bagmati Boarding Secondary School	Nepali
12	Sushila Bhattarai	Gyanodaya secondary school	Social Study

Museum Staff

SN	Name	Museum	Designation
1	Jayaram Shrestha	National Museum	Museum Chief
2	Subash Krishna Dangol	National Numismatics Museum	Museum Chief
3	Nabaraj Adhikari	National Museum	Museum Officer
4	Sharmila Uprety (Aryal)	National Museum	Museum Officer
5	Bindra Shrestha	National Museum	Store Keeper
6	Sarita Lamichhane Timilsina	National Museum	Store Keeper
7	Govinda Neupane	National Numismatics Museum	Information Officer

School Student

SN	Name	School	Class
1	Aayush Shahi	Greenfield National Higher Secondary School	8
2	Alisha Maharjan	Southwestern School	10
3	Anil Tamang	Shree Panchakanya Secondary School	9
4	Asmita Bhattarai	Gyanodaya Secondary School	7
5	Bijay Thapa	Dallu Awasiya Vidyalaya	9
6	Deepak Lama	Bagmati Boarding Secondary School	9
7	Kishor Maharjan	Southwestern School	8
8	Kriti Paudel	Gyanodaya Secondary School	8
9	Manish Acharya	Greenfield National Higher Secondary School	10
10	Mina Gurung	Shree Panchakanya Secondary School	10
11	Pratima Lama	Gyanodaya Secondary school	9
12	Rajesh Dhungana	Bagmati Boarding Secondary School	7
13	Ramesh Shrestha	Dallu Awasiya Vidyalaya	9
14	Sanjay Karki	Southwestern School	10
15	Sita Rai	Greenfield National Higher Secondary School	8
16	Sushmita Sharma	Gyanodaya Secondary School	9

Appendix C

Questions for Student

1. How do you feel about visiting museums? Do you find them interesting?
2. Have you ever been part of a museum outreach program? If yes, what was your experience like?
3. What type of activities or experiences would make museum visits more engaging for students your age?
4. Do you think museums should focus more on modern technology, like social media or virtual tours, to engage students?
5. How do you feel about learning Nepali culture and history through museum programs? Do you think it's important?
6. What are some challenges you and your friends face when visiting a museum or participating in outreach programs?
7. Do you think the museum programs do a good job of including topics that interest students like you?
8. What can museums do to encourage more students to get involved in their outreach programs?
9. Do you feel that your school does enough to encourage visits to museums or participation in cultural programs?
10. What's one thing you would change about museums to make them more appealing to young people?

Appendix D

Questions for Teacher

1. How often do your students participate in museum outreach programs, and what has been the general response?
2. Can you describe a specific museum visit that had a significant impact on your students? What made it memorable?
3. What benefits do you believe museum outreach programs provide for students in social studies or science?
4. Have you encountered any challenges in organizing museum visits? If so, what are they?
5. In your opinion, how can museums improve their outreach programs to better align with your curriculum?
6. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of museum visits on your students' learning and engagement?
7. What resources or support do you wish museums would provide to help you integrate their materials into your teaching?
8. How do museum visits influence your teaching methods or lesson planning?
9. Do you feel that all age groups benefit equally from museum visits, or do certain age groups benefit more? Why?
10. Would you recommend museum outreach programs to other educators? What advice would you give them about making the most of these experiences?

Appendix E

Questions for Museum Staff

1. Can you describe the museum's current outreach programs? How do they serve different communities, especially rural areas?
2. What are the primary challenges the museum faces in securing funding for new or existing programs?
3. How do budget constraints impact the quality and sustainability of the museum's educational and outreach programs?
4. What steps has the museum taken, or could take, to expand its outreach to rural areas and underserved communities?
5. What strategies have been most successful in engaging the local community with the museum's programs?
6. How does the museum balance between promoting cultural heritage and managing operational costs?
7. Are there any partnerships (with schools, cultural organizations, or NGOs) that the museum has developed to overcome challenges, such as financial limitations or rural outreach?
8. What do you believe is the most significant impact the museum could have on cultural education with improved resources?
9. How do you measure the success and impact of the museum's outreach programs on students and local communities?
10. In your opinion, what would be the most important improvement or addition to the museum's current programming to better fulfill its mission?

Pictures



Figure 5: Juddha Jatiya Art Gallery of National Museum.
(Source: National Museum)



Figure 6: Buddhist Art Gallery of National Museum.
(Source: National Museum)



Figure 7: The Historical Building of the National Museum.

(Source: National Museum)



Figure 8: Inscription deciphering workshop,
Annual Museum Education Program 2023. (Source: National Museum)



Figure 9: Chemical preservation of museum artifacts workshop, Annual Museum Education Program 2023. (Source: National Museum)



Figure 10: Museum Awareness Program, Annual Museum Education Program 2024. (Source: National Museum)



For Visitors Who Are Blind or Partially Sighted



For Visitors Who Are Deaf



For Visitors with Developmental and Learning Disabilities and Those on the Autism Spectrum



For Student: Saturday Sketching (Ages 12- 18)



For families with children ages 18 months–6 years: Storytime



For visitors of all ages: how works of art were created.

Figure 11: Educational Outreach Program by The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art)



Figure 12: Science on Wheels by Pacific Science Center
(Source: Pacific Science Center)



Figure 13: Schools and Young Audiences by Victoria and Albert Museum
(Source: Victoria and Albert Museum)



Figure 14: Museum on Wheels by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya
(Source: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya)



Figure 15: Busing In by Liberation War Museum
(Source: Liberation War Museum)



Figure 16: Traveling Museum In by The National Museum of Korea
(Source: The National Museum of Korea)