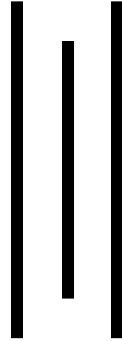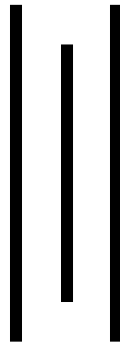# INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES AND ITS IMPACT ON LEARNING OUTCOMES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LOW-END AND HIGH-END SCHOOLS IN KATHMANDU

A THESIS DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF SOCIOLOGY
IN
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

SUBMITTED BY
SHAIBYA SHAH (RANA)
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research entitled "Inclusive Teaching Practices and Its Impact On Learning Outcomes: A Comparative Study Of Low-End And High-End Schools In Kathmandu" submitted to the Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University under the supervision of Sudeep Singh Nakarmi PhD. The data and information provided in this research report is authentic to the best of my knowledge. This has been undertaken for the purpose of partial fulfillment of Master of Sociology.

……………………..

Shaibya Shah (Rana)

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

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KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU

NEPAL

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Shaibya Shah (Rana) has completed her research work entitled **"Inclusive Teaching Practices And Its Impact On Learning Outcomes: A Comparative Study Of Low-End And High-End Schools In Kathmandu"** for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master's Degree in Sociology under my supervision. To my knowledge this work has not been submitted for any other degree. This thesis report is the result of her own words and she has not copied any aspects from other thesis. I, therefore, recommend this dissertation for final approval and acceptance for the final evaluation.

……………..………………

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APPROVAL LETTER

This dissertation entitled **" Inclusive Teaching Practices And Its Impact On Learning Outcomes: A Comparative Study Of Low-End And High-End Schools In Kathmandu"**, submitted by Shaibya Shah (Rana) has been accepted as the partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master's Degree in Sociology.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

HIV - Human Immuno Deficiency Virus

AIDS - Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome

ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder

UN - United Nations

CRPD - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

UNICEF - United Nations Children Fund

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

SDG - Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 4 - Sustainable Development Goal number 4

CSO - Civil Service Organization

IEP - Individualized Education Program

COVID - Coronavirus Disease

UDL - Universal Design Learning

ABSTRACT

Within Nepal's diverse social context, children from minority castes, such as Dalits, often encounter historical and systemic discrimination that impacts their educational opportunities. Inclusive education seeks to challenge discriminatory attitudes and provide an inclusive space where all students can feel valued and respected, irrespective of their caste or social background. In addition, children affected by the challenges of differences face stigma and social isolation, which can hinder their participation in regular educational settings. Inclusive teaching practices encompass the development of a compassionate and supportive learning environment that addresses the unique needs of these children and ensures their holistic well-being. This study studies effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices in catering to the needs of children with disabilities, those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, children from minority castes like Dalits, and those affected by HIV/AIDS by exploring the challenges faced by different schools in implementing inclusivity, we can unravel the underlying socio-economic, cultural, and institutional factors that either facilitate or hinder the realization of inclusive education for these vulnerable groups.

Key words: Inclusion, Socio-economic, Pedagogy, Disability, Minority.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The field of sociology of education has long recognized the intricate relationship between society and education, with a focus on understanding how social factors influence the educational system and its participants.

Education is a fundamental human right that lays the foundation for individual development and societal progress. Inclusive education seeks to create an environment where all students, irrespective of their abilities, backgrounds, or socio-economic status, can access quality education on equal terms. Julie Allan (2005) has referred Inclusion as 'an ethical project'. Not to be inclusive is to be unethical.

Inclusive education is part of the effort to counter the often pointless global struggles for economic dominance, and the encouragement of seemingly endless competition between institutions, teachers, parents, and young people. Every society that aspires to create a decent, humane, and effective system of education should think in terms of inclusion (Bhatti. G, 2019).

Within this context, inclusive teaching practices have gained significant sociological attention in recent years. These practices focus on adopting pedagogical approaches and strategies that cater to the diverse learning needs of students, including those with disabilities, coming from economically deprived backgrounds, belonging to minority castes such as Dalits, children affected by the challenges of HIV/AIDS. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance learning outcomes and foster a more equitable and just educational system. (UNICEF, 2017)

In the sociological realm, inclusive education takes on profound significance as it reflects broader social dynamics and power structures within educational institutions. Schools are not merely

spaces of academic learning but microcosms of society, reflecting the complexity of human interactions and social hierarchies. Recognizing and embracing the diversity present within the student population, which includes varying physical and cognitive abilities, cultural identities, economic backgrounds, and health challenges, is crucial for nurturing a socially cohesive and inclusive learning environment. Inclusive teaching practices transcend the conventional "one-size-fits-all" approach to education, aiming to dismantle barriers that may disproportionately affect specific student groups. Children with disabilities often encounter physical and attitudinal barriers in educational settings, impeding their access to learning opportunities. Inclusive education endeavors to provide necessary accommodations, support services, and adaptive teaching methods to empower these students to participate fully in the learning process (Rapp, A. C., & Corral-Granados, A. 2021, June 27).

Developing countries contend with a multitude of disparities, including those related to caste, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, and language. Therefore, their primary objective should be to ensure that education is socially inclusive, addressing these various dimensions of inequality.

This illustrates that the concept of "inclusive education" can vary significantly from one place to another. While inclusive education is advocated for in theory, it often faces substantial practical barriers at different levels and across various dimensions in the real world. Some exclusions we can see in the practical world as in Kathmandu are cultural, religious, caste and ethnicity, gender, physically and intellectually challenged, and academically low performing students.

This research places its interest in these areas and studies about the effect and out comes in the learning of the students and its progress. The research was conducted in six schools within the Kathmandu Valley with three schools categorized as high-end schools and three as low-end schools. It utilized interviews to collect raw data. It utilized purposive sampling which helped to

find the appropriate respondents for the program. There was a total of three respondents from each school with one being a teacher, another a student and the student's parent. The student was kept as a primary locus of the interview as it tried to explore the lived experience of the students and their perceptions of inclusiveness and it impact in outcomes on learning. In this research study, I have adopted a qualitative approach focusing on interpretive paradigm because the focus of this study is to explore stories/ experiences of the participants in order to be able to generate meaning out of them from the field test. It also correlated these lived experiences with existing literature and how it can further serve the purpose of the research.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nepal, a diverse nation with a rich tapestry of ethnicities, castes, and religious groups, grapples with heightened risks of social exclusion due to prevalent caste, class, and gender discrimination. Deeply rooted in tradition and culture, these societal norms have perpetuated social evils, stigmas, and discrimination. An example of this is the widespread practice of child marriage, which obstructs children from receiving a complete education and diminishes their future employment prospects. Notably, there is a lack of specialized schools tailored for students with physical and mental impairments, leaving them to confront accessibility challenges rather than solely educational barriers, thus leading them to mainstream schools (Siddhi, 2022).

Additionally, students with lower academic performance encounter hurdles in accessing inclusive education, as both teachers and parents often segregate high and low-performing students, favoring the former while neglecting the latter.

In Kathmandu, educational disparities persist, hindering the realization of inclusive and equitable education for all (Sapkota YD, et. al, 2015). Despite the recognition of education as a fundamental human right, children with disabilities, those from poor economic backgrounds, children belonging to minority castes such as Dalits, and those affected by HIV/AIDS face significant barriers that impede their access to quality education. The problem at hand revolves around the lack of effective implementation of inclusive teaching practices in educational institutions, leading to unequal learning outcomes and perpetuating social inequalities.

The existing educational landscape reflects a stark contrast between low-end and high-end schools. Low-end schools, which predominantly cater to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, often struggle to provide the necessary resources and support systems to accommodate diverse learning needs effectively. On the other hand, high-end schools, attended

primarily by students from more privileged backgrounds, may have greater access to educational resources but might not adequately address the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

This disparity underscores the urgent need to investigate the impact of inclusive teaching practices on learning outcomes for children with special needs in both low-end and high-end schools. The study identifies the barriers and challenges faced by schools in implementing inclusive education strategies and explores the perceptions of teachers, students, and parents regarding the effectiveness of such practices.

The research on inclusive teaching practices in low-end and high-end schools in Kathmandu is limited, with a noticeable gap in studies specifically focusing on their implementation and impact. Existing research on inclusive education often tends to be more general or restricted to specific regions or countries, leaving a dearth of comprehensive studies in this context.

Furthermore, the lack of comparative studies between low-end and high-end schools adds to the research gap. While some studies have examined inclusive education in these two types of schools separately, a comparative approach is essential to gain valuable insights into the similarities and differences in the implementation and effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices across different school settings.

The implementation of inclusive teaching practices in Kathmandu's low-end and high-end schools remains an unresolved issue, resulting in unequal learning outcomes for the children with special needs. This study explores the reasons behind the disparities in inclusive education practices and their impact on the academic achievements and overall well-being of vulnerable student groups. The research contributes to the broader understanding of inclusive education and guide the development of policies and strategies to foster a more equitable and inclusive educational system in Kathmandu. To that end, the research focus was on the following research questions.

1. What is the current situation of inclusive teaching practices in the research areas?

2. How does the effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices vary between low-end and high-end schools in Kathmandu?

3. What is the impact of inclusive teaching practices on the learning outcomes of students from vulnerable groups, in both low-end and high-end schools in Kathmandu?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aims to achieve several objectives mentioned below, to comprehensively investigate the impact of inclusive teaching practices on learning outcomes for vulnerable student groups in Kathmandu.

- Evaluate the level of inclusivity in teaching practices, assessing the implementation of inclusive strategies in low-end and high-end schools, with a focus on accommodating diverse learning needs, including children with disabilities, those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and minority castes.

- Analyze the impact of inclusive teaching practices on learning outcomes for vulnerable student groups by comparing academic performance between students in low-end and high-end schools, aiming to determine the effectiveness of inclusive education strategies.

- Identify barriers and challenges in implementing inclusive teaching practices, examining institutional, social, and cultural factors that hinder inclusivity in schools, and explore the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents regarding inclusive and equitable education in Kathmandu.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

Education is a fundamental pillar of societal progress and a fundamental human right. In, Kathmandu, educational disparities persist, posing significant challenges to achieving inclusive and equitable education for all. While the concept of inclusive education has gained attention, its effective implementation remains a pressing concern.

Nepal has made significant progress in developing legal and policy frameworks to ensure inclusive education for children with disabilities. Ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons

with Disabilities (CRPD), the adoption of the Disability Rights Act, and the Inclusive Education Policy for Persons with Disabilities demonstrate Nepal's commitment to inclusive education. However, despite these policies, children with disabilities in Nepal still face significant obstacles to quality, inclusive education. The government often segregates them into separate classrooms, and teachers may not receive adequate training to provide inclusive education where children with and without disabilities learn together.

Additionally, inclusive education practice in Nepal extends beyond including only children with disabilities. It aims to encompass children from diverse backgrounds, including caste, sex, religion, and children with different learning abilities. The definition of inclusive education in Nepal emphasizes creating a non-discriminatory environment that respects multicultural differences, promoting equality, and embracing diversity.

In conclusion, the study's rationale is grounded in the urgent need to investigate the impact of inclusive teaching practices on learning outcomes for these vulnerable student groups. It aims to comprehensively investigate the status and effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices by addressing three key research questions and corresponding objectives. The study seeks to understand the current inclusivity levels in teaching practices, evaluate their impact on learning outcomes, and identify barriers to implementation. By examining these aspects, it aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for promoting educational equity and fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment that upholds the fundamental principles of inclusive education in Kathmandu.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This research is organized into several interconnected chapters to provide a comprehensive analysis of inclusive teaching practices and their impact on learning outcomes for vulnerable

student groups in Kathmandu. The study follows a logical sequence to delve into various aspects of inclusive education and contribute valuable insights to the field of educational research.

Chapter one chapter serves as the foundation of the study and introduces the research topic, problem statement, objectives, and rationale. It provides an overview of the significance of inclusive education and its relevance in the context of Kathmandu. The chapter also outlines the research questions guiding the study, setting the stage for the subsequent chapters.

The second chapter, the literature review, involves a thorough assessment of prior research, theories, and ideas pertaining to inclusive education, inclusive teaching methods, and their influence on educational achievements. This chapter involves an in-depth examination of both international and local studies, investigating initiatives in inclusive education and evaluating their effectiveness. It involves a critical analysis of existing theories and research by establishing a dialogue among the examined literature sources and contrasting them to determine their relevance in the context of inclusive education in Nepal. This review underscores the pivotal elements that impact inclusive education, such as educator training, adjustments to the curriculum, parental engagement, and inclusive classroom strategies.

Chapter Three, Methodology, outlines the research design, methodology, and data collection procedures employed in the study. It explains the rationale behind choosing a qualitative method approach. The chapter details the process of selecting study participants, data collection instruments, and data analysis techniques. Ethical considerations in conducting the research are also addressed.

Similarly, Chapter Four represents the central component of the study, devoted to presenting the research results. In this segment, I delved into the implementation of inclusive education in schools Kathmandu encompassing a spectrum from those considered high-end to those at the lower

end, taking into account factors like culture, religion, caste, physical and mental challenges, as well as gender. Additionally, this chapter explores the effects and impacts of embracing inclusiveness on learning outcomes.

Chapter Five, titled "Conclusion," serves as the concluding segment of the study. Within this chapter, I have offered a comprehensive recapitulation of the study's pivotal discoveries. I conducted a comparative analysis between schools at the higher and lower ends of the spectrum in terms of their inclusive education practices, examining the resulting impact and implications. Furthermore, I have discussed the study's contributions to the field of inclusive education. This chapter also revisits the research objectives and provides answers to the research questions originally posed in Chapter 1. Ultimately, the chapter wraps up with reflections on the broader significance of the study's findings and potential avenues for further research.

Lastly, the References section contains the list of sources used in the research study to evaluate prior research, theories, and concepts related to inclusive education and teaching practices, and their impact on educational outcomes. Likewise, Annexure consist of supplementary materials, including data collection tools, interview transcripts, and extra statistical analyses, providing additional support for the study's findings and conclusions.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review critically examines existing research, theories, and concepts related to inclusive education, inclusive teaching practices, and their impact on learning outcomes. This chapter delves into global and local studies, exploring inclusive education initiatives and their effectiveness. The review highlights the key factors influencing inclusive education, such as teacher training, curriculum adaptation, parental involvement, and inclusive classroom practices.

The field of education has witnessed significant advancements in recent years, with an increasing emphasis on promoting inclusive teaching practices that cater to diverse student populations. This literature review delves into the pivotal topic of "Inclusive Teaching Practices and Their Impact on Learning Outcomes," focusing on a comparative study conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal. As education systems strive to provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, the examination of inclusive practices becomes crucial. By analyzing the differences between low-end and high-end schools in Kathmandu, this study aims to shed light on the extent to which inclusive teaching approaches influence students' learning outcomes. This review navigates through existing research, theoretical frameworks, and empirical studies related to inclusive education, ultimately aiming to contribute valuable insights into the effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices within the unique context of Nepalese education.

2.1 Introduction to Inclusive Education

Inclusive education stands as a transformative concept that has garnered widespread attention in the world of education, challenging traditional paradigms and advocating for equal access and participation for all learners.

Inclusive education involves placing all students, irrespective of any obstacles they might face, into age-appropriate general education classes within their local community schools. This

arrangement ensures that they receive effective teaching, necessary interventions, and the assistance required to achieve success in the fundamental curriculum. (Almazan, et. al., 2012)

At its core, inclusive education entails creating learning environments that accommodate the diverse needs, abilities, and backgrounds of every student, regardless of differences in their physical, cognitive, emotional, or social dimensions.

Both students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers experience enhanced learning outcomes. Numerous studies conducted over the past thirty years have revealed that inclusive education leads to increased academic achievements and improved skills for students with disabilities. Simultaneously, their classmates without disabilities also gain advantages from this approach. (Bui, et al., 2010)

Departing from the exclusivity of models which segregate, inclusive education strives to foster a sense of belonging and empowerment among students, fostering an atmosphere where every individual can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

2.2 Theoretical Framework of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education stands as a multifaceted concept, encompassing intricate interactions between diverse stakeholders, cultural dynamics, and educational practices. To comprehensively delve into this complexity, this research adopts a theoretical framework that integrates several perspectives, namely System Theory, Social-Constructionist Theory, Student-Centered Learning, and Universal Design for Learning. These perspectives collectively provide a multidimensional lens to explore the intricacies of inclusive education, facilitating a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms and factors shaping its implementation and outcomes within the context of low-end and high-end schools in Kathmandu.

2.2.1 System Theory Perspective

The System Theory Perspective, deeply rooted in sociological thought, offers a lens through which educational institutions can be perceived as intricate and interconnected systems. Incorporating Niklas Luhmann's System Theory, the theoretical framework delves into the complex landscape of inclusive education. Luhmann's perspective views educational institutions as intricate systems comprised of interconnected components, including students, teachers, parents, and administrators. The interdependence of these elements underscores their collaboration in fostering an inclusive learning environment.

Luhmann's theory suggests that the success of inclusive teaching practices and their impact on learning outcomes can be comprehensively understood by analyzing collaborative efforts, effective communication, and coordinated actions within these educational systems. The theory focuses on the dynamic interactions of stakeholders and how these interactions collectively shape inclusivity.

Moreover, Luhmann's insights connect inclusion and exclusion to the construction of meaning within self-referential social systems. Inclusive and exclusive processes are intricately woven into these systems' communication mechanisms. The theory highlights the role of communication in determining which operations are suitable for inclusion within a system, thereby influencing the effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices. (Rapp & Corral-Granados, 2021)

This framework also incorporates Qvortrup and Qvortrup's proposition of differentiating inclusion according to various dimensions. Qvortrup and Qvortrup's framework of inclusive education underscores the importance of fostering a culture of inclusion within the education system, particularly in the context of recent global emphasis on inclusion. The framework recognizes

exclusion as a multifaceted issue linked to various factors, including living conditions, and stresses the need for a unified and operational definition of inclusive education through collaborative efforts among relevant authorities (Qvortrup & Qvortrup, 2017).

Luhmann's system theory aligns with this proposition by acknowledging the interconnectedness of subsystems within society, such as politics, economics, religion, and education. These subsystems respond to societal complexities and are built upon communication needs, such as adaptive education.

System theory, as a theoretical framework, underscores the interdependence of various components within a system and their collaborative interactions that contribute to a cohesive whole. Applied to inclusive education, it aids in comprehending the multifaceted nature of the system involving students, teachers, parents, administrators, and policies. System theory's application lies in elucidating the ripple effects of changes in one part on other elements, such as the impact of policy shifts or teacher training on inclusivity. It also sheds light on power dynamics, revealing their influence on inclusiveness, and highlights the interconnectedness of educational components. Ultimately, system theory offers insights into how these interplays shape an inclusive educational environment, providing a comprehensive perspective on inclusive education's complex dynamics (Rapp & Corral-Granados, 2021).

2.2.2 Social-Constructionist Perspective

Social-constructionist theory is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of understanding how social norms and values shape our understanding of inclusion and exclusion. It suggests that inclusive education should be studied from a perspective that recognizes the role of language, culture, and power in shaping our understanding of inclusion and exclusion (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2011).

This theoretical framework suggests that our understanding of inclusion and exclusion is not fixed but is shaped by social norms and values. For example, the way we define disability and the types of support we provide to students with disabilities are shaped by social norms and values. Social-constructionist theory suggests that we need to be aware of these social norms and values and how they shape our understanding of inclusion and exclusion in order to create a more inclusive environment. Inclusive education, according to social-constructionist theory, should be studied from a perspective that recognizes the role of language, culture, and power in shaping our understanding of inclusion and exclusion. This means that we need to be aware of the language we use when talking about inclusion and exclusion, the cultural norms that shape our understanding of inclusion and exclusion, and the power dynamics that affect who is included and excluded in the educational system (Rapp & Corral-Granados, 2021).

The Social-Constructionist Perspective offers a vantage point that recognizes the profound impact of social norms, cultural dynamics, language, and power dynamics on shaping perceptions of inclusion and exclusion within the context of education. This perspective operates as a critical lens through which the nuances of inclusive education can be examined.

Central to this perspective is the acknowledgment that societal beliefs, cultural values, and linguistic frameworks significantly influence how individuals conceive and define the concepts of inclusion and exclusion. As education operates within the framework of societal structures, understanding these underpinning constructs becomes crucial for comprehending the multifaceted nature of inclusivity.

By delving into socio-cultural constructs, this approach highlights the intricate interplay between individual experiences and broader societal contexts. It unravels the intricate threads of meaning and significance woven into the perception of inclusivity within various educational settings. The

Social-Constructionist Perspective calls for an examination of how these constructs manifest in practices, policies, and interactions within classrooms and schools.

Mallory & New (1994) identified three aspects of social constructivism with potential for enhancing inclusive practices in early childhood: 1) the influence of sociocultural context on learning, 2) the significance of social activities in the learning process, and 3) the learner's active involvement in their development, as cited in (Jamero, 2019). In this study, Jamero, explores play interactions of children with ASD in an inclusive early childhood setting, underlining the importance of a robust theoretical framework for inclusive practices. Social constructivism, valuing learning within social contexts, serves as this foundation. The study showcases how children with ASD engage in diverse play interactions, highlighting peers' and adults' roles in shaping outcomes. The findings emphasize social relationships' significance in successful inclusion, aligning with the social constructivist framework.

Inclusive education, when observed through this lens, reveals a complex web of interpretations and representations that vary across different cultural, linguistic, and societal dimensions. The perspective emphasizes that achieving a universally shared understanding and practice of inclusivity demands an in-depth exploration of these cultural variations, their impact on communication, and the negotiation of power dynamics within educational contexts.

In essence, the Social-Constructionist Perspective serves as a reminder that inclusive education is not a fixed concept but a fluid and evolving construct deeply intertwined with societal norms and cultural identities. By scrutinizing these intricate elements, educators, policymakers, and researchers gain insights into the barriers and possibilities for achieving true inclusivity in education across diverse environments.

2.2.3 Student-Centered Learning Perspective

The Student-Centered Learning Perspective is a theoretical framework that places paramount importance on recognizing and addressing the unique needs, abilities, and learning styles of each individual student within an educational context. This perspective shifts the spotlight from a one-size-fits-all approach to a more personalized and inclusive approach. It underscores the critical role of crafting educational programs that are sensitive to the diverse characteristics of students present in the classroom (TEAL Center Fact Sheet No. 6: Student-Centered Learning, n.d.).

In essence, this perspective seeks to understand and capitalize on the various ways in which students absorb and process information. It acknowledges that learners come with their distinct preferences, strengths, and challenges, and thus, educational strategies should be flexible enough to accommodate this diversity. By embracing the principles of student-centered learning, educators aim to create an environment where each student feels seen, heard, and catered to in their educational journey.

A theoretical framework for an inclusive educational approach, emphasizing the core dimensions that practitioners can use for making pedagogical decisions consists of six dimensions: Learning and Difference, Social Justice and Human Rights, Empowerment, Creativity, Humanism, and Praxis. These dimensions are explored individually to highlight their significance in shaping inclusive practices. Learning is depicted as a journey of change and diversity, while Social Justice and Human Rights underscore equity and the right to education. Empowerment stresses the importance of valuing voices and viewpoints, Creativity is seen as essential for accommodating varied outcomes, and Humanism places humans at the heart of ethical decision-making. Praxis, rooted in research evidence, drives improvement in learning. The implications of adopting this

inclusive framework, including language changes, political engagement, and shifts in professional dynamics, are recognized as transformative steps toward more inclusive education (Regmi, 2017). One of the key tenets of this perspective is the recognition that engagement and active participation are crucial for effective learning. When students feel that their learning experiences are tailored to their individual styles, interests, and abilities, they are more likely to become invested in their education. This approach encourages students to take ownership of their learning, promoting a sense of empowerment and autonomy.

In the context of inclusive education, the Student-Centered Learning Perspective takes on a particularly significant role. It contends that inclusivity goes beyond mere physical presence; it involves catering to the cognitive, emotional, and cultural diversity that students bring to the classroom. By understanding and accommodating these differences, educators can create an environment where every student has the opportunity to thrive (Chapter two theoretical framework for an inclusive approach, 2020).

This perspective also implies that teachers should possess the skills and knowledge to adapt their instructional methods to suit various learning profiles. They should be equipped to identify individual needs, provide appropriate support, and create opportunities for active engagement. Schools adopting this perspective often prioritize ongoing professional development for their educators to ensure they remain adept at meeting the diverse needs of their students.

Therefore, the Student-Centered Learning Perspective underscores the importance of tailoring education to the individual characteristics of each student. By doing so, it not only enhances the learning experience for all students but also lays the foundation for an inclusive educational environment where diversity is embraced and valued.

2.2.4   The Ecological Systems Theory

The Ecological Systems Theory, formulated by Urie Bronfenbrenner, offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the intricate interactions between individuals and their environments. In the context of inclusive education policies and delivery, this theory centers on the learner as the focal point and recognizes that their experiences are shaped by various interconnected systems. The theory identifies several interrelated layers, each influencing inclusive practices and subsequently impacting learning outcomes:

Microsystem: The microsystem represents the immediate environment in which the learner interacts directly. This includes the learners themselves, their parents, teachers, peers, and the physical setting of the school. In the context of inclusive education, understanding how these immediate factors interact and support or hinder inclusive practices is crucial. For instance, the relationships between students, teachers, and parents can significantly affect the effectiveness of inclusive teaching strategies.

Mesosystem: The mesosystem encompasses the relationships and interactions between the different components of the microsystem. This involves how different elements within a municipality or community collaborate to support inclusive education. Collaboration between schools, community organizations, local government, and other stakeholders can influence the implementation of inclusive practices. The effective coordination and partnerships within this layer can contribute to better learning outcomes for all students.

Exosystem: The exosystem involves external factors that indirectly impact the learner's experiences. This includes policies, regulations, and institutions that influence the educational environment. For instance, national and global education policies, governmental regulations, and

educational funding can affect the extent to which inclusive practices are implemented and supported.

Macrosystem: The macrosystem consists of broader sociocultural and economic structures that shape the values, beliefs, and attitudes of society. Socio-cultural factors such as cultural norms, gender roles, and economic disparities can impact the inclusivity of educational practices. The macrosystem's influence on inclusive education extends beyond the classroom to societal perceptions and expectations.

Chronosystem: The chronosystem takes into account the element of time and historical changes. This dimension acknowledges that societal and educational contexts evolve over time, and these changes impact inclusive practices and policies. Historical events, cultural shifts, and policy reforms can influence the direction of inclusive education efforts.

By examining the different layers of the ecological systems in the context of inclusive education, we can gain a holistic understanding of the factors that contribute to or hinder the successful implementation of inclusive practices and subsequent learning outcomes. This theoretical framework encourages a multidimensional approach to studying inclusive education, recognizing that it is not only the immediate classroom interactions but also the broader socio-cultural, economic, and historical contexts that play a significant role in shaping the educational experience for all learners (Theoretical framework, n.d).

2.2.5   Equity and Political Economy

Integrating Ainscow's "ecology of equity" framework and the political economy lens enhances my research by providing a comprehensive perspective on equity in education, particularly within marginalized communities. This approach thoroughly explores the intricate interplay of both intrinsic and extrinsic elements that shape fair learning outcomes. It underscores the necessity of

establishing a nurturing ecosystem across educational tiers to foster inclusivity and equal opportunities. Rooted in the ecological systems theory, this framework acknowledges diverse layers of influence on students with varying requirements, enriching your study's depth and insight into equitable educational dynamics (Ainscow, 2020).

2.2.6 Ecology of Equity Framework (Ainscow):

Ainscow's Ecology of Equity Framework identifies three crucial dimensions for achieving educational equity: within-school factors, focusing on inclusive teaching practices and classroom dynamics; between-school factors, emphasizing collaboration and interactions among educational institutions and authorities; and beyond-school factors, encompassing societal and policy-level influences like socio-economic disparities and family dynamics. Additionally, the Political Economy Perspective examines power dynamics, resource allocation, and policy influence in the educational system, exploring how decisions, resources, and policies impact marginalized communities' access to quality education, thus shedding light on the complex web of factors shaping educational equity.

In the context of inclusive education, if we consider two schools in the same city—one affluent and the other in a low-income area. The affluent school excels in inclusive teaching practices with ample resources and strong connections to local authorities, while the low-income school lacks support systems and faces challenges due to limited resources and external collaborations. This example illustrates how a complex interplay of within-school (teaching practices), between-school (resources and collaborations), and beyond-school (policies and socio-economic factors) factors impacts educational equity, emphasizing the significance of addressing these multifaceted dynamics to achieve equitable learning outcomes (Leithwood, 2021).

2.3 Impact on Inclusive Teaching Practices and Learning Outcomes

By integrating the "ecology of equity" framework and the political economy perspective, this research offers insights into how structural inequalities manifest within the educational system and impact both inclusive teaching practices and learning outcomes. This approach acknowledges that achieving equity requires a comprehensive understanding of the multi-layered factors that influence educational experiences. It enables you to explore how the interplay of power, resources, policies, and societal dynamics shapes the extent to which inclusive teaching practices are implemented and how they, in turn, affect the learning outcomes of marginalized students. This holistic perspective enhances the depth and relevance of your research in understanding the complexities of equity in education.

2.4 Factors Influencing Inclusive Education

Research highlights several crucial factors in promoting inclusive education. Firstly, teacher attitudes significantly impact the creation of an inclusive environment, with educators who embrace inclusive principles more likely to implement them effectively (Chuaungo, n.d.). Secondly, teacher self-efficacy, defined as a teacher's belief in their ability to teach all students, including those with disabilities, plays a pivotal role in fostering inclusivity (Wray et al., 2022). Effective communication among teachers, parents, and administrators is essential, enabling inclusive teachers to advocate for resources like peer tutoring, instructional materials, and assistive technology (Wray et al., 2022). Additionally, the role of educational policies and organizations is critical, with inclusive policies that promote equal access for all students being paramount (Rapp & Corral-Granados, 2021). Acknowledging and accommodating student diversity in terms of physical, cognitive, academic, social, and emotional differences is central to inclusive education (FutureLearn, 2023). Lastly, equipping teachers with the necessary training and professional

development opportunities is essential to empower them to address the diverse needs of their students effectively (Xue et al., 2022; FutureLearn, 2023).

2.5 Global Perspectives on Inclusive Teaching Practices

Global Perspectives on Inclusive Teaching Practices encapsulates a comprehensive overview of inclusive education practices across diverse international contexts. This examination underscores the significance of inclusive teaching in fostering equitable and effective learning environments for all students, including those with special needs or diverse backgrounds.

Many International organizations have been conducting research and advocating for inclusive education. UNICEF is dedicated to closing the educational disparity gap for children with disabilities by actively promoting inclusive education through a multifaceted approach. Their engagement encompasses advocacy efforts that bring inclusive education to the forefront of discussions, high-level events, and public awareness campaigns aimed at policymakers and the general public. Additionally, UNICEF conducts research, hosts roundtables, workshops, and events to highlight the specific needs of children with disabilities, fostering increased awareness among government partners. To empower education systems, UNICEF provides capacity-building initiatives, offering training to teachers, administrators, and communities. They also extend technical support to governments to strengthen their inclusive education policies and practices. To ensure effective implementation, UNICEF aids partner countries by actively monitoring and evaluating progress, bridging the gap between inclusive education policies and their real-world application. Through these concerted efforts, UNICEF plays a crucial role in advancing the cause of inclusive education globally (Inclusive Education, n.d.).

In alignment with its Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), UNESCO underscores the significance of inclusive education as a cornerstone for equitable and quality learning

experiences. SDG4's emphasis lies in ensuring accessible and lifelong educational opportunities for all individuals. Inclusive education stands as a pivotal factor in realizing this goal by fostering equity and granting access to quality education irrespective of diverse abilities and backgrounds. Despite progress in enrollment, challenges persist, with millions of children remaining excluded from education due to various constraints. The goal necessitates focused endeavors, particularly in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, aimed at vulnerable populations like those with disabilities, indigenous communities, refugees, and underserved rural inhabitants. SDG4 recognizes education as an ongoing process beyond formal schooling, highlighting the importance of lifelong learning. Ultimately, UNESCO's SDG4 underscores the imperative of inclusive education to foster equitable access to quality education while addressing disparities and extending educational opportunities throughout life (Goal 4: Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All — SDG Indicators, n.d.).

There have been some successful case studies in inclusive teaching practices. One case study can be taken from Mrs. Brown's success story published in Resilient Educator in November 2017. Mrs. Brown's proactive collaboration with the special education teacher, Mr. Lopez, and her careful planning to involve students with disabilities in her classroom have yielded positive outcomes. Her efforts have led to academic progress for students with disabilities, exceptional achievements by regular education students, and an environment characterized by cooperation and positivity. This case demonstrates the real-world impact of inclusive teaching practices and the potential they hold to transform educational experiences (Inclusive education: Definition, examples, and classroom strategies 2023).

2.6 Local Context of Inclusive Education in Nepal

The Nepalese government's commitment to inclusive education is evident through its endorsement of international agreements like the Salamanca Agreement and the incorporation of inclusive education provisions in the 2015 Constitution, emphasizing the right to free and compulsory education up to the secondary level for all citizens, particularly those with physical disabilities and economic disadvantages. Moreover, Nepal's Child Act of 1992 has led to positive practices by establishing institutions such as child welfare committees and orphanages, underscoring the country's dedication to the well-being of children (UNICEF, 2003) as cited in. Ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the adoption of the Disability Rights Act, and the Inclusive Education Policy for Persons with Disabilities demonstrate Nepal's commitment to inclusive education as cited in (Shahi, 2022).

Despite advancements in policy and legislation, implementing inclusive education remains challenging in Nepal. A notable hurdle is the separation of children with disabilities into segregated classrooms, a practice that persists. Moreover, the lack of adequate teacher training and support poses another obstacle to effective inclusive education. Ambiguities in the interpretation of inclusive education within policy and strategy documents also add complexity (Nepal | INCLUSION | Education Profiles, n.d.).

Various stakeholders, including the Department of Education and different organizations, have embarked on initiatives to advance inclusive education in Nepal. Among these initiatives are integrated and inclusive education programs tailored to children with disabilities. UNICEF's partnership with World Education and local government entities is pivotal in modeling inclusive education practices within municipalities. Inclusive education. (n.d.)

The concept of inclusive schools in Nepal refers to settings where children with disabilities receive education in regular schools alongside their peers. However, the implementation of inclusive schools may vary, and there may be a need for further development and support in this area (*Nepal | INCLUSION | Education Profiles*. n.d.).

The crux of inclusive education in Nepal centers around active community involvement and the creation of non-discriminatory educational environments. These efforts encompass embracing cultural diversity and ensuring that education remains accessible to all members within their respective communities (*Nepal | INCLUSION | Education Profiles*. n.d.).

2.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review has provided a comprehensive overview of inclusive education, its theoretical frameworks, and the global and local perspectives that shape its implementation. Inclusive education represents a transformative concept that advocates for equal access and participation for all learners, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. It involves creating learning environments that accommodate the diverse needs, abilities, and backgrounds of every student, ultimately leading to improved learning outcomes for all. The theoretical frameworks discussed, including System Theory, Social-Constructionist Theory, Student-Centered Learning, Ecological Systems Theory, and the Ecology of Equity, offer multidimensional lenses through which we can understand the complexities of inclusive education. These frameworks emphasize the importance of considering various factors, such as teacher attitudes, policies, resources, and societal dynamics, in achieving equitable and effective inclusive education. Furthermore, we explored the global and local context of inclusive education, highlighting both progress and challenges in Nepal. Despite policy advancements, there are still hurdles to

overcome, including the need for improved teacher training and a shift away from segregated classrooms. Inclusive education in Nepal centers on community involvement and non-discriminatory educational environments. This literature review serves as a foundation for the subsequent research, shedding light on the critical importance of inclusive teaching practices in shaping the future of education and the learning outcomes of all students.

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CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter incorporates philosophical consideration highlighting the ontological, epistemological and axiological standpoints on this research study. This chapter also deals with methodological perspectives which focuses on research design, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, quality standards and ethical consideration.

3.1 Philosophical consideration

This section deals with ontology, epistemology and axiology which are theory of reality, theory of knowledge and theory of value for the research under study.

3.1.1   Ontology

Ontologically this research is based on the inner realities of my participants where there are multiple realities held by the participants which are based on their sociological and cultural traditions. Therefore, this research gave emphasis on multiple realities which are set of diverse societies and cultures.

3.1.2   Epistemology

Epistemologically, this research is based on the knowledge constructed through the researchers and participants. Where, the participants and the researchers interact and co-create knowledge in order to bring a constructive outcome for the research study. Therefore, this study strongly believes that knowledge can be constructed.

3.1.3   Axiology

In this research, participant's perspectives were valued objectively and at the same time the researcher's perspectives based on the knowledge we have also been valued for the subjective interpretation of the research findings and analysis. Therefore, this study was also value laden.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative approach focusing on interpretive paradigm because the focus of this study is to explore stories/ experiences of the participants in order to be able to generate meaning out of them from the field test. It also correlated these lived experiences with existing literature and how it can further serve the purpose of the research.

3.4 Area of study and sample size

The sample population which was taken for this study involved students, teachers and parents from Kathmandu Valley. They were chosen purposively as a form of snowball sampling. The respondents were taken from a total of 6 schools in Kathmandu Valley as it provided research with a qualitative quality. 3 schools were termed as high-end schools while 3 schools were termed as low-end schools. The schools were categorized as a High-end school in terms of a majority of students coming from high income earning families. (ARCGIS, 2013) meanwhile the schools were categorized as a low-end school in terms of a majority of students, 50 percent or more, fall below the poverty line. (Kelleher, 2017) In each of the schools there were a total of 3 respondents which comprised of 1 teacher, 1 student and 1 parent of the particular child. The student was taken as the primary locus as it offered a wide overview of the subject and the data. It offered ease of access as it meant that the quality of data would be higher. There was a total of 18 respondents who were interviewed and asked questions from a semi-structured question frame. (See Annex I)

3.5 Sampling method

The research takes in both empirical and literary information from sources like publications, governments, academic journals, newspaper articles, books, conference papers, etc. The main source of data from the field was from the interviewees/respondents.

3.6 Data collection Techniques

3.6.1 Interview

The research looked to delve into the nature of impact on learning outcomes inclusive education would have. In order to analyze the phenomenon through the practices which were being followed data from the source was required. Interviews were organized with the help of the school leader in order to select through which respondent the purposive snowball could be initiated. From the perspective of the research at hand an interview would provide the necessary flexibility to collect data with minimal bias which is why it was chosen over other forms of tools. The research was initiated from the students as they were the initial starting point.

Interviewing is a valuable qualitative research technique that involves engaging people with specialized knowledge or expertise in a particular field or topic. These interviews provide unique insights and perspectives that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of complex issues. Here are some of the benefits of conducting interviews in research and decision making:

In summary, as the research required a versatile tool the informant interview is a versatile tool that enriched the research projects and guide effective decision-making. Insights provided by experts help capture the intricacies of a topic, leading to more informative and contextual results. This allowed constant interaction with the respondents during the course of the study. Apart from the data from the interviews, publications and other empirical evidence were also utilized in the form of techniques.

3.7 Data collection tools and procedures

The basic tool used in this research was the interview guidelines in which interviews were asked to the participants. Similarly, observations were also important in order to verify and certain periods draw raw data from the field. The interviews were unstructured in nature and provided the

respondents with the opportunity to give in-depth answers. The interviews were 20-minute interviews which were taken through an online and offline medium. The interviews were also guided by a checklist and proper notetaking was to be done to collect the data. By listening to the audio recording of the interview data with audio was transcribed for further analysis. Till the time my data was not saturated the procedure was not to be carried forward.

The collected data were enlisted under a database using note taking and desk-reviews and required analytical inferences were done.

3.7.1 Snowball sampling

Intentional snowball sampling is a qualitative research technique that involves identifying participants initially with specific characteristics and then asking them to recommend other participants who share the same characteristics. point. This approach has proven particularly useful for uncovering hidden or hard-to-reach populations, as well as deepening understanding of social relationships and networks. It was used in the research for as it is an inclusive process which helps to unravel many hidden or latent phenomenon.

Purposeful snowball sampling allows researchers to access populations that can be difficult to identify or locate using traditional sampling methods. This is especially beneficial when studying marginalized, stigmatized, or elusive groups.

This method has uncovered potential relationships and social networks that may not be immediately visible. By leveraging participant connections, researchers can better understand interpersonal dynamics and information flow in these networks.

Participants were introduced by snowball sampling who provided rich background information on the topic being studied. Their familiarity with the topic allows for deeper discussion and deeper understanding.

Snowball sampling broke down the initial barriers that might exist when approaching participants who were cautious or reluctant to participate in a study. Referred participants often feel more comfortable joining because of the connection with the original participant. As the snowball effect continued to unfold, more participants were included, contributing to a broader perspective on the research topic. This diversity has led to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. In studies involving cultural or social dimensions, snowball sampling helps ensure that participants are sensitive to the nuances of the subject. References from original participants are more likely to share similar experiences or cultural backgrounds.

Purposeful snowball sampling accelerated data collection by leveraging participants to identify potential new participants. This is especially useful in studies with limited resources or tight deadlines.

When participants talked about others, a sense of trust and connection was established more quickly. References act as an endorsement, promoting a sense of credibility and legitimacy to the research. Because the participants were connected in some way, the information shared led to the identification of emerging themes, patterns, or unexpected aspects of the research topic that might have been overlooked when using other sampling methods.

In summary, intentional snowball sampling offered unique advantages for the research which looked to uncover hidden populations, social networks, or cultural phenomena. It provides access to participants with relevant knowledge and experience, facilitates exploration of interpersonal dynamics, and imparts insights that would otherwise not discovered. However, it is essential to consider the limitations and potential biases associated with this sampling method when interpreting study results.

3.8 Selection criteria for schools

A brief survey was conducted with the schools to qualitatively analyze the appropriate school for the research. The criteria which was set in order to select the school is as follows:

Resources and Facilities:

High-End Schools:

- Well-maintained, modern classrooms, advanced technology equipment, well-stocked libraries, state-of-the-art laboratories, spacious sports facilities.

- Highly qualified teachers with advanced degrees and specialized expertise, experienced educators with a track record of success.

- Comprehensive counseling services, career guidance, academic support, mental health resources, tutoring options.

- Well-maintained buildings, aesthetically pleasing campus, clean and organized facilities.

- Opportunities for teacher training, attendance at workshops and conferences, emphasis on continuous learning.

Teaching Staff

Low-End Schools

- Fewer teachers with advanced degrees, challenges in retaining experienced teachers, potential lack of specialization.

- Limited or basic counseling services, lack of dedicated academic support, potential absence

- of mental health resources.

- Poorly maintained infrastructure, signs of wear and tear, limited investments in upkeep

- Limited or infrequent professional development opportunities, potential lack of investment in teacher growth. Outdated or limited classroom resources, lack of modern technology, limited library collections, basic or inadequate laboratory facilities.

Based upon the criteria the research selected the 6 participating schools. The school leader was approached through which the researcher was directed towards the respondents. The purposive snowball sampling helped to build a rapport with the respondents along with the leader of the school.

3.9 Data management and analysis

Collected data were analyzed through a process. Firstly, the data was transcribed based on the audio recording and notes taken during the interviews. The qualitative data was then compared to and contrasted with the different themes linking signature literatures and theories discussed so far in the review of literature/ chapter II. The analysis of data was done through both descriptive and inferential analysis techniques.

3.10   Ethical Consideration

The researcher's biasness was minimized as far as possible and field sincerity, honesty and truthfulness during data collection was ensured. Informed consent was taken from all the participants before carrying out the interviews. Similarly, verbal consent was taken before recording audio and also while taking photos and videos. Confidentiality of the respondents was maintained throughout the research and responses were not identified and judged individually during the time of data analysis and while drawing conclusion and recommendations. Pseudo names were used while transcribing the data.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

After the meticulous collection and thorough analysis of data, the research has unveiled its significant findings, which are encapsulated and presented in this dedicated chapter. The culmination of data collection, interpretation, and analysis has enabled the research to shed light on various facets of inclusive education, offering valuable insights and implications for the educational landscape. Here are the key components of the findings chapter:

4.1.1 School

After the schools fit into the criteria set a low-end school and a high-end school was selected for the study. The features of the school as per the findings are described below:

High-end school

The school was categorized as a High-end school in terms of a majority of students come from high income earning families. (ARCGIS, 2013) In order to further substantiate the definition certain experiential observations upon the infrastructure and the educational system in the school were made such as the school has state-of-the-art facilities, including classrooms, well-equipped laboratories, an extensive library, and top-notch sports and arts facilities. With small class sizes, students receive individual attention from highly qualified and experienced teachers, facilitating a focused learning experience. These criteria can be found the section of choosing sampling. Innovative technology is seamlessly integrated into the curriculum, enhancing the learning process and preparing students for the world of technology. An extensive curriculum offers a wide range of subjects, advanced courses and extracurricular activities catering to diverse interests.

Many extracurricular opportunities in sports, arts, clubs and organizations allow students to discover their passions and develop well-rounded skills. International exchange programs and

study abroad opportunities give students a global perspective, increasing their cultural awareness. The school actively engages parents in the educational journey, promoting a strong partnership between the school and the family.

The school has sufficient resources to invest in teaching materials, support services, professional development and teaching innovation. A diverse student body, including students from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, enriches the learning experience and promotes understanding. The school maintains close relationships with the local community, partnering with outside organizations to enhance student learning and community engagement.

Low-end school

The school was categorized as a low-end school in terms of a majority of students, 50 percent or more, fall below the poverty line. (Kelleher, 2017) In order to further substantiate the definition certain experiential observations upon the infrastructure and the educational system in the school were made. The school's difficulties lay in its limited financial resources. This was also found to affect the practice of inclusion. This limitation has impeded the allocation of funds to specialized programs, assistive technologies, and assistive services needed to meet the diverse needs of students. An important finding was that the presence of inadequate infrastructure, including inaccessible classrooms and physical barriers, hindered the school's ability to create an inclusive environment for students with disabilities or special needs.

The study found a lack of cooperation among stakeholders, including teachers, professionals and parents. Poor communication and coordination have negatively impacted the implementation of inclusive practices and support mechanisms. The lack of response plans has hindered the school's ability to provide individualized support and interventions to students with diverse needs.

One of the main findings was the lack of support services, such as therapy and counseling, needed to meet the individual needs of students. The absence of these services is detrimental to a student's academic progress and well-being. The study highlights that teaching materials and teaching methods are not adequately tailored to meet the diverse learning needs of all students, which prevents them from accessing quality education.

The results indicated cases of involuntary exclusion of students with disabilities from formal educational and extracurricular activities. Research shows that parents of students with special needs are less involved in decision-making and planning. This lack of commitment has hindered collaborative efforts towards inclusive education. The teachers lack consistent and inclusive professional development opportunities. This lack of training has hindered the adoption of effective inclusive teaching strategies.

4.2 Respondents

4.2.1 Age

The study focused on selection and as per the discussion with the school leader and parent, on students who were twelve years old and in the eighth grade at their respective schools. This age group and grade level was deliberately chosen to ensure a balanced comparison between the two participants while capturing an important stage in their educational journey. At the age of twelve, students often transition into adolescence, and eighth grade is a pivotal time in their personal and academic development.

By selecting students of the same age and grade level, the study aimed to minimize developmental differences that might arise if participants were at different stages of their educational journey. In addition, this age group is at a point where they are starting to form more independent opinions and experiences, which allows for more insightful feedback when collecting data. In addition, the

eighth year is an important academic period, as students are exposed to more advanced curriculum content, complex academic expectations, and preparation steps for higher education. This grade level also tends to be associated with higher levels of interaction with peers, teachers, and the school environment as a whole, which contributes to shaping attitudes and perceptions toward education.

Focusing on 8th and 12th graders, the study aims to document their experiences, perspectives and challenges in the context of inclusive education. This age- and grade-level alignment has facilitated a more focused examination of their academic, social, and emotional interactions in upper and lower school settings.

Alignment of participants' characteristics with age and grade level ensures that the study captures a specific stage in their inclusive education journey. This strategic approach has facilitated further exploration of this phenomenon and its implications for students in this age group.

4.2.2 Socio-economic Status

As Socioeconomic status is defined as "the position of an individual or group on the socioeconomic scale, which is determined by a combination of social and economic factors such as income, amount and kind of education, type and prestige of occupation, place of residence, and—in some societies or parts of society—ethnic origin or religious background." (APA, 2020) we have categorized to view the respondents of the interviews in a similar manner.

In respect to the research three students were from a relatively strong background. Their parents all belonged to upper castes from society and were from well-to-do backgrounds. One of the children's parents was a doctor, another an engineer and a teacher in the same school. These children belonged to the higher end school. Their diversity included two from Brahmin community

and one respondent from Indigenous community respectively. The teachers from the higher end school were also found to be of a similar socio-economic standing. They were also all found to be living in Kathmandu.

On the other hand, the low-end school respondents were comprised of a Dalit respondent and two from indigenous communities. Their parents were found to be wage workers and it was difficult for them to fund the education of their children at times. Two of the respondents had recently shifted into Kathmandu for a better life. The teacher respondents were all Brahmin and had been appointed in the schools as permanent teachers. This meant that they were relatively well off.

4.3 Inclusive teaching practices

Teachers in both educational contexts have demonstrated skillful use of different teaching methods, emphasizing creativity and participation as key pillars of their approach. Their effective strategies cover a wide range of techniques, including creating visually appealing posters and other imaginative materials, combining reading and writing into storytelling, and facilitating articles. interactive presentations, engage students in sports-related activities, and integrate musical projects into the educational framework. In addition, the integration of technology has emerged as an essential addition to the teaching toolkit, enhancing the effectiveness of classroom methods and promoting a holistic learning journey for their students.

Teachers in schools commonly practice differentiated instruction by adapting their teaching methods and materials to cater to the varying needs and abilities of students in the classroom. This approach ensures that students receive the support they need to succeed.

In recognition of linguistic diversity, many schools promote multilingual education. Teachers use students' mother tongue as a bridge to facilitate learning, gradually transitioning to the national language and English as students progress through their education. UDL principles are gaining

traction in schools, emphasizing the importance of creating flexible learning environments. Teachers are increasingly providing multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities. Collaborative learning is encouraged in schools, fostering peer-to-peer interaction and group work. Students engage in collaborative projects and activities that enable them to learn from one another, share diverse perspectives, and develop a sense of belonging. Many schools have integrated elements of local culture, history, and traditions into the curriculum. This approach helps students connect with the content, fostering a sense of pride in their cultural heritage.

Professional development opportunities are being provided to teachers to enhance their knowledge of inclusive teaching practices. These programs aim to equip teachers with strategies for effectively accommodating diverse learners in their classrooms.

Some of the programs found in the school addressed bullying related to gender, ethnicity, disability, and other factors, promoting a respectful and welcoming environment. Schools are actively involving parents and the local community in the education process. Parents are encouraged to participate in school activities, share their perspectives, and support their children's learning at home.

Schools were also found to be encouraging all students to participate in extracurricular activities, such as sports, arts, and clubs, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, promoting inclusion beyond the classroom. Teachers and schools are proactively seeking feedback from students, parents, and colleagues to assess the effectiveness of inclusive practices. Adjustments are made as needed to continuously improve inclusive education. The role of technology as a bridge to address differences in learning among students is of considerable importance. Technology has become a tool to increase engagement, understanding and interaction in the learning process. Many

interactions have highlighted the important role technology plays in creating a more inclusive educational environment.

4.3.1 Pedagogy

It was found that the teachers, although maybe new to the concept of inclusion, were already trying to incorporate it into their methodology. They believed that a diverse classroom would serve the learning outcomes of the students better. The pedagogy of the teacher at the high-end school would try to accommodate the students of disability and marginalized communities. To help the process of inclusion she mentioned how the use of technology has greatly aided her. The practices in the high-end schools mostly involved the use of technology as many of the homework which is provided to the children is done online.

The low-end schools were found to have a rough concept of inclusion. The teacher from the school suggested that there was no discrimination amongst the students and that he tried his best to cater to the individual needs of the students. His pedagogy included games, presentations, group work and lecturing. He mentioned how difficult it is to cater to the needs of the students as his class was diverse. Although it was diverse, he did not have language or communication barriers. The use of technology is still a problem in low-end schools. The practices of inclusion are rare as the pedagogy which is owned in the low-end schools is still orthodox.

A parent of the child from one of the high-end school believed that it was "agreeable" to include children with mild intellectual disabilities. He suggested that severe disabilities could prove to hamper the studies of other students in the classroom. He was fine with students of any minority group of any caste although he expressed that he has found students from diverse backgrounds may become a "bad influence" to his child. Till now he has had no knowledge of children who have any type of disabilities or are from a minority who have affected the learning of his child. He

mentioned though that he knows that there are a few children from minority communities in his child's class. He initially in the interview said he did not believe that it would adversely affect the rest of the children but upon discussion he did mention that diversity in a classroom could mean that children from "lower backgrounds" could ill influence his children into bad habits. It was observed that the parent was extremely protective of the child and was worried in respect to who his child would associate with.

Following the interview with the parents of the children from the low-end school it was found that they did not know much about the life of their children in the school. She mentioned that she knew that they were doing well in school but were unaware of the type of classmates her two daughters had. She, upon further enquiry into the second round of the interview, was open regarding her feelings toward the inclusion. She explained how "*She was from a marginalized community and felt that society had come a long way from how it treated people from lower castes before. She feels that it is non-existent in terms of her children studying in school*" It was found that the school provided study materials and there were even remedial classes conducted in the children's school after the COVID pandemic to help them recover from their gap in studies.

4.3.2 Classroom activities

The teacher's active approach is evident in her participation in short courses on the subject. With their training, they have successfully integrated many inclusive practices into her classroom. Although the teachers have no students with disabilities in her class, they demonstrate a strong commitment to creating an environment that supports all students, regardless of background or ability. Interestingly, the teacher emphasized the contrast between the absence of students with disabilities at school and the presence of economically disadvantaged children in their class. One of the teacher's based on their training, devised strategies to meet the diverse needs of these

students. classroom activities reflect their commitment to making all students feel valued and involved in the learning process. Regarding access options, teachers acknowledge that the school does not provide resources for students with disabilities. However, she has proactively adapted her teaching methods to suit different learning styles and needs. This accommodation demonstrated their dedication to maximizing each student's learning opportunities within the limits of available resources.

The teachers' concern about protecting children with different needs underscores their awareness of the larger challenges students face. To meet these challenges, the teachers were found to have implemented classroom strategies that promote empathy, respect, and understanding among her students. This approach fosters a positive classroom culture where all students can feel safe and supported.

The teacher's proactive efforts in guiding disadvantaged students show their dedication to their all-round development. They found that academic success was closely linked to emotional well-being. By integrating counseling into her classroom activities, she aims to empower students to overcome challenges and build confidence in their abilities. Furthermore, his observation that a child's schooling from a lower background does not negatively affect school performance challenges conventional assumptions. Its success in creating an inclusive classroom environment shows that these practices can make a positive contribution to overall learning outcomes, promoting not only academic growth but also academic growth. social and emotional development. A teacher from the high-end school had taken short courses on inclusion and mentioned that she was able to incorporate many of the practices in her classes. It is worth noting that she did not have a child in the class who had a disability, however there were children from weaker backgrounds in her class. She explained how the school did not possess accessibility options for students with disabilities.

This was further elucidated as she said there were no mechanisms in place for the safeguarding of the children in respect to the different needs the children might have. She explained how it was difficult for students of this background to cope with all the children as they are often bullied.

On the contrary, another teacher from the low-end school was not clear regarding inclusive education. As the interview progressed, he knew the concepts which inclusive education is comprised of. He further stated that he actively tries his best to incorporate the practices of inclusion into his classroom. The students at his school and the classrooms the teacher taught did not have any disabilities. He pointed out that there were many students who were from diverse backgrounds in his classrooms which included many marginalized communities. The school also did not have any accessibility provisions for children with disabilities. As the school he taught in was a community school he explained that the school provided the children with the necessary materials along with free basic education. "*Most of the children in which I teach do not have strong financial status*", was a highlighted statement. Although he believed that financial role played a part in the ability of the children to learn, it was affected by many other factors. The teacher stated that he believed having diverse children would enable them to have a "*broader perspective*" and improve their learning not only in academics but also in their life. He explained that there was no discrimination amongst the students in terms of disability, gender, caste, or class. He also pointed out how many CSO's provided sessions on different topics including concepts which were very close to inclusion.

As discussed in the literature review section, the application of Bloom's Taxonomy in a diverse classroom can be highly effective to improve learning outcomes in a classroom. The taxonomy also helped analyze the outcomes of inclusive education according to the questions asked to the respondents, as it acted as a map for the categorization and basis to correlate the findings with.

With the discussion with the teachers in order to improve both the higher order thinking skills and lower order thinking skills of the students in their class it was found that the following practices help to improve their learning outcomes:

4.3.3 Infrastructure & Human resources

One of the schools featured in the study also has a close partnership with the CSO that specializes in disability. This partnership highlights the school's proactive approach to addressing disability. promoting inclusive education Together with the school was able to create a truly accessible learning environment for students with different disabilities. Schools are taking steps to ensure that students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations and support. This includes the provision of assistive technologies, extra time for assessments, and the development of individualized learning plans.

The school's commitment to inclusion is evident in its comprehensive provisions that address the diverse needs of students with disabilities. These terms include not only physical accessibility, such as ramps and lifts, but also extend to the implementation of specialized teaching methods, assistive technology, and support staff. These measures have been specifically designed to address the unique challenges that students with disabilities face in their learning journey.

In addition, the school's dedication to fair assessment has been demonstrated by its support for students with disabilities in exams. Recognizing that traditional forms of testing pose a barrier for these students, the school worked with CSOs to develop alternative assessment methods to ensure a fair assessment of knowledge. and their skills. This approach includes more time to take the test, the availability of assistive devices, and even personalized assistance to meet individual needs.

By prioritizing working with CSOs and implementing these initiatives, the school has come up with an inclusive education model that not only welcomes students with disabilities, but also

allows them to grow academically and socially. society. This partnership not only demonstrates the school's commitment to diversity and equity, but also fosters a more inclusive and caring school community, setting an inspiring example for others to follow. according to.

It was enquired whether the schools' hired teachers who had capabilities in respect to safeguarding and upholding inclusiveness. It was found that both the schools lacked a proper hiring mechanism in practicing inclusion in respect to the hiring policies of the schools. On the other hand, one of the teachers from the high-end-school was able to participate in a training session on inclusiveness which was initiated by the school she was teaching in. The low-end school on the other hand did not have any training courses or capacity development workshops for the teachers in respect to training them in order to be inclusive. The teachers mentioned that a hiring policy might not be the answer as opposed to the idea that if the teachers had the opportunity to attend a training, they would more than be willing to attend and participate in the workshop.

4.4 Effectiveness of Practice of Inclusive teaching practices

In the context of classroom dynamics, research shows that students' perceptions of diversity largely revolve around aspects of caste and socioeconomic class. While there is recognition of different backgrounds Based on these factors, one important aspect emerged — it appears to be the lack of representation of students with disabilities in the same class.

Notably, students noted that class composition did not include any students with disabilities, which raises questions about the extent to which the classroom environment actually embraces diversity as a whole. The absence of students with disabilities in the classroom raises concerns about the school's efforts to promote an inclusive learning environment that meets the needs of all students, regardless of ability.

In addition, students' views of the teacher's attention highlighted potential challenges in the classroom. This student shared that sometimes he feels like the teacher has not paid enough attention to his difficulties and challenges in class. This idea raises important considerations about the effectiveness of classroom instruction, communication, and support systems. It highlights the importance of educators' role in creating an inclusive atmosphere where all students feel heard, understood and supported on their learning journey.

Together these findings underscore the importance of inclusive diversity in educational settings. To truly embrace diversity, it is imperative that schools not only recognize differences in caste and class, but actively include students with disabilities. Additionally, the findings highlight the need for close communication between teachers and students and a responsive support system to ensure that each student's learning needs are effectively met. The information gathered from this student's perspective highlights potential areas for improvement in terms of inclusiveness, support mechanisms, and overall classroom dynamics. The following have been taken into account to analyze the findings upon which the partial fulfilment of inclusiveness might resemble in context to the learning outcomes of a child:

4.4.1 Cultural Inclusiveness

High-end school

The high-end school had a high tolerance to in terms of cultural inclusivity. Teachers and parents emphasized the importance of acknowledging and respecting diverse cultural backgrounds among students as a teacher mentioned, "In our school, cultural inclusiveness means not just acknowledging our students' diverse backgrounds but also incorporating their cultural experiences into our lessons. For example, when we discuss history, we bring in stories and events from different cultures, making the subject matter more relatable and engaging." Students also reported

feeling more engaged and connected to the curriculum when their cultural experiences were integrated into the lessons.

Teachers and parents emphasized that cultural inclusiveness goes beyond simply acknowledging differences; it involves integrating diverse cultural perspectives into the curriculum. For instance, history lessons were enriched by including narratives and events from various cultures, making the content more relatable and engaging. Students reported that when their cultural backgrounds were incorporated into the learning process, they felt a greater sense of pride in their heritage and a deeper connection to their studies. This led to increased motivation to learn and excel academically, for example in respect to the Newari culture.

Low-end schools

The lower-end school also had similar practices when it came to cultural inclusiveness. The diversity which was found in the low-end schools was diverse in nature. The teachers mentioned, "*We have students from various walks of life and it is important that they accept each other as it helps them to learn from each other. It also fosters feelings of peace and understanding.*" It was also found that in the lower end schools, teachers and parents underscored that cultural inclusiveness transcends mere recognition of differences; it entails the integration of varied cultural viewpoints into the curriculum. To illustrate, history lessons were enhanced by weaving narratives and historical events from diverse cultures, rendering the content more relatable and captivating. This meant that the curriculum to a great degree had been translated into the local context. Students conveyed that when their cultural heritages were interwoven into the learning experience, they experienced an amplified sense of pride in their backgrounds and forged deeper connections with their academic pursuits. The students also mentioned how the culture was important as a student

mentioned, "*We have been able to learn a lot from each other. It has also helped us to excel in our studies as various cultures bring knowledge.*"

4.4.2 Gender Inclusiveness

High-end school

Teachers noted the significance of fostering a safe and supportive environment for all genders as a teacher mentioned, "*Creating a gender-inclusive environment requires constant effort. We encourage open dialogues about gender issues, challenge stereotypes, and ensure that all students feel safe expressing their identities. It's about fostering equality and respect.*" Parents appreciated the school's efforts to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality. As the Students expressed satisfaction with the availability of gender-neutral facilities and the presence. Teachers also noted that fostering a safe and supportive environment for all genders required continuous effort. They emphasized the importance of promoting open dialogue about gender-related issues, including stereotypes and biases. Furthermore, parents appreciated the school's proactive stance in challenging traditional gender roles and educating students about gender diversity. They felt that this education positively influenced their children's attitudes towards gender equality and inclusivity. Students expressed that having gender-neutral facilities and extracurricular activities that were open to all genders created an atmosphere of acceptance and equality, making them feel more comfortable and respected.

Low-end schools

It was found that in the low end schools the teachers noted the significance of fostering a safe and supportive environment for all genders as a teacher mentioned, "*Creating a gender-inclusive environment requires constant effort. We encourage open dialogues about gender issues, challenge stereotypes, and ensure that all students feel safe expressing their identities. It's about fostering*

equality and respect." Parents appreciated the school's efforts to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality. As the Students expressed satisfaction with the availability of gender-neutral facilities and the presence. Teachers also noted that fostering a safe and supportive environment for all genders required continuous effort. They emphasized the importance of promoting open dialogue about gender-related issues, including stereotypes and biases. Furthermore, parents appreciated the school's proactive stance in challenging traditional gender roles and educating students about gender diversity. They felt that this education positively influenced their children's attitudes towards gender equality and inclusivity. Students expressed that having gender-neutral facilities and extracurricular activities that were open to all genders created an atmosphere of acceptance and equality, making them feel more comfortable and respected.

4.4.3 Socioeconomic Inclusiveness

High-end school

Teachers in the high-end schools recognized that addressing socioeconomic disparities involved more than just financial assistance. They emphasized, "*The need for mentoring and support to ensure that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds could thrive academically.*" The context of the low-end and high-end school was in stark contrast as the meaning of socio-economic inclusiveness highly differed. The students did not seem to mind the diversity although the parents said, "I*t might be better if the students were to belong to a similar socio-economic background*" in order to avoid disparity. Teachers in high-end schools demonstrated an acute awareness that addressing socioeconomic disparities entailed more than merely providing financial assistance. They underscored the need for mentoring and comprehensive support systems to ensure that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds could not only access education but

also thrive academically. This commitment extended beyond financial aid and aimed at leveling the playing field in terms of opportunities and academic success. The contrast between the contexts of low-end and high-end schools was particularly stark in terms of the understanding of socio-economic inclusiveness. In high-end schools, socio-economic inclusiveness was seen as a multifaceted effort to provide not only financial assistance but also mentorship and academic support. This comprehensive approach is aimed at breaking down barriers and promoting equal access to educational resources.

Interestingly, the students themselves did not appear to harbor concerns about the diversity in socioeconomic backgrounds within their schools. They seemed to embrace the diversity and often formed close friendships regardless of economic disparities. For students, what mattered most were shared experiences, interests, and values, transcending socioeconomic differences. In contrast to students' perspectives, some parents expressed a viewpoint that suggested a preference for students to belong to a more similar socio-economic background.

Their rationale was rooted in the desire to minimize disparities and potentially create a more homogeneous socioeconomic environment within the school. While their intentions might have stemmed from concerns about disparities, this perspective highlighted the complexities of balancing diversity and inclusiveness in the context of different economic backgrounds.

These insights underscore the multifaceted nature of addressing socioeconomic disparities in education. While teachers in high-end schools advocated for holistic support systems, students in both high-end and low-end schools demonstrated an openness to diversity. However, parents' concerns about potential disparities raised important questions about the challenges and nuances of achieving socioeconomic inclusiveness while maintaining diversity within the school community.

Low-end schools

It was found that the low-end schools had a combination of students from various socio-economic statuses. As aforementioned there were students who found it difficult to pay their school dues. One of the teachers from the respondent schoolteachers said, "*We provide extra support beyond financial assistance to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Our mentoring programs and tailored academic support have been instrumental in helping these students excel academically*." Parents felt that the school's initiatives, such as providing free meals and organizing community outreach programs, had a tangible impact on reducing the academic achievement gap and promoting social equity. Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds shared how the support they received improved their confidence and motivation, enabling them to perform better academically and participate more actively in school life of supportive peer networks.

It was found that the teachers recognized the need to provide additional support to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. On the other hand, parents commended the school's initiatives, such as financial assistance programs and free meals, in addressing socioeconomic disparities. Furthermore, it was found that the students felt that these support measures positively impacted their academic performance and well-being.

4.4.4 Language Inclusiveness

High-end school

Teachers in the schools recognized the value of bilingual education. "*Language inclusiveness is crucial for us. We offer bilingual education to ensure that all students can communicate effectively and appreciate different cultures. This promotes cross-cultural understanding and empathy.*" as they observed that such programs enhanced cross-cultural communication skills.

Parents appreciated the efforts to preserve and celebrate students' home languages as a few of the schools had recently been able to adopt local languages in the curriculum as a choice. A parent was reported to say, "*Language inclusiveness has improved my child's communication skills. They now speak multiple languages and are more open to understanding different cultures*." Students highlighted how language inclusiveness improved their language skills and

Parents appreciated that their children were learning about different languages and cultures, which they believed would prepare them for a globalized world.

Students noted that language inclusiveness helped them become more empathetic and open-minded, enabling them to communicate effectively with peers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. "*Learning about and accepting children who speak different languages has been cool. It helps me understand people from all over the world, and it's fun to teach my friends some words in my language.*"

Low-end schools

Similar to the High-end school the low-end schools have contextualized the languages which the parents, teachers and students appreciate. Similar to the high-end schools, low-end schools have also adopted a practice of contextualizing languages within the educational context. This approach has garnered appreciation from parents, teachers, and students alike. It signifies a commitment to recognizing the linguistic diversity within the school community.

Parents in low-end schools expressed their appreciation for the school's efforts to contextualize languages. They recognized that this approach helped their children better understand and engage with the curriculum. It also fostered a sense of inclusion and belonging, especially for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Teachers in low-end schools demonstrated their commitment to this approach by incorporating local languages and cultural nuances into their teaching methods. They recognized the value of making learning materials and instructions more accessible to students from various linguistic backgrounds.

Students in low-end schools appreciated the use of contextualized languages in the educational context. They found it easier to comprehend complex concepts when presented in a familiar linguistic context. This approach contributed to their overall academic success and helped them feel more connected to their studies.

4.4.5 Religious Inclusiveness

High-end school

Students reported feeling respected and supported in their religious diversity, contributing to a more harmonious school environment which meant that the discrimination would be limited. Teachers and parents noted that accommodating students' religious beliefs and practices required flexibility and an understanding of various faiths. "*We celebrate festivals of different faiths and recognize the foundations of the religions.*" Was a comment made by the students. As, Teachers and parents recognized the significance of accommodating students' religious beliefs and practices as they mentioned how it helps to promote secularism. The parents said that they were happy that religious tolerance existed in the school as it would definitely make the students more accepting in nature which would make it an environment conducive to learning.

Low-end schools

In the low-end schools, both teachers and parents underscored the profound importance of accommodating students' religious beliefs and practices within the school environment. They recognized that this accommodation not only respected individual religious freedoms but also

played a pivotal role in promoting secularism. By allowing students to practice their faiths freely and fostering a culture of acceptance, schools contributed to a more harmonious environment where discrimination was limited.

Students' Experience of Respect and Support: Students reported feeling deeply respected and supported in their religious diversity. This positive experience had a transformative effect on the school environment, significantly reducing instances of discrimination or prejudice. The active accommodation of religious diversity contributed to a school culture characterized by tolerance and mutual respect. Teachers and parents emphasized that accommodating students' religious beliefs and practices necessitated flexibility and an empathetic understanding of various faiths. This approach was reflected in the school's celebration of festivals from different religious traditions and the acknowledgment of the foundational principles of these religions. Such practices demonstrated a commitment to religious inclusivity.

The students themselves voiced their appreciation for the inclusive approach taken by the school. One student aptly summarized this sentiment by stating, "*We celebrate festivals of different faiths and recognize the foundations of the religions*." This comment highlights the active engagement of students in embracing religious diversity and fostering a sense of unity through shared celebrations.

Similar to high-end schools, by experiencing and respecting different religious traditions, students were not only learning about diverse faiths but also cultivating a broader perspective on the world.

4.4.6 Emotional and Behavioral Inclusiveness

High-end school

Teachers highlighted the need for social-emotional learning programs and behavior intervention strategies as they mentioned, "*Emotional and behavioral inclusiveness means providing support*

and resources for students facing challenges. We implement social-emotional learning programs and offer individualized interventions to help them thrive academically and emotionally." It was found that most teachers believed that emotions and behavioral differences and including it in the education brought about major help in the improvement of the students studies and learning performance.

   The students with emotional and behavioral differences reported improved coping skills and a sense of belonging within the school community. Although the students mentioned that there were no formal channels of counseling for them the teachers and parents would often foster an environment which was conducive and inclusive for their emotional and behavioral needs. Students with emotional and behavioral differences felt more accepted and less stigmatized, allowing them to focus on their studies and social interactions with confidence.

Teachers furthermore stressed the importance of addressing students' emotional and behavioral challenges with empathy and support. This included implementing social-emotional learning programs and individualized interventions. Parents expressed gratitude for the school's holistic approach to emotional and behavioral well-being, which they believed contributed to their children's overall development which they recognized is an important factor in the education of a child and made a huge impact on their learning. One of the students from the high-end school was quoted saying "*I used to have a hard time in school because of my emotions. But now, I have support and strategies to manage them better, and it's made a big difference in my grades and my happiness.*"

Low-end schools

In the low-end school, teachers noted the challenges of accommodating emotional and behavioral inclusiveness in a classroom with diverse backgrounds. They acknowledged the difficulties but

expressed a commitment to addressing individual student needs. One teacher highlighted their practice of engaging with students when they seemed to be facing difficulties, demonstrating a personalized approach to support.

Parents in the low-end school expressed concerns about their children's emotional and behavioral well-being but did not have clear solutions. Their concerns highlighted the need for more comprehensive support systems within the education system to address emotional and behavioral inclusiveness effectively.

Students in the low-end school felt that the education system did not adequately cater to their emotional and behavioral needs. One student pointed out that education often failed to consider the emotional toll it could take on them. Another student highlighted the impact of challenging behaviors of some peers, which they believed was sometimes overlooked by the school.

These insights shed light on the challenges faced by low-end schools in providing emotional and behavioral inclusiveness. While teachers demonstrated individual efforts to support students, there appears to be a need for more systematic approaches to address the emotional and behavioral well-being of students, especially in diverse classrooms. Parents and students expressed their concerns, underlining the importance of recognizing and addressing these challenges within the education system.

4.4.7 Ability Inclusiveness

Teachers in both high-end and low-end schools emphasized the importance of individualized support for students with disabilities, noting the effectiveness of assistive technologies and specialized services. A teacher mentioned how "*In our school, we emphasize not just accommodating students with disabilities but also creating a culture of inclusion. We want all our students to feel valued and respected, regardless of their abilities.*" but it was found that there were

no children with disabilities currently studying in the schools. It was however found that there was only one student who had a disability in the low-end school, the rest of the five schools did not have any children with disabilities in the school. The child as one of the teachers mentioned "The child comes to the school in a wheelchair but to our knowledge there has been no sort of discrimination. They

4.5 Effectiveness

In conclusion, these findings underscore the significance of inclusiveness in education at in the 6 schools which were surveyed for the purpose of this research. The implementation of inclusive practices positively impacts students' learning experiences and fosters a more diverse, respectful, and supportive educational environment. Teachers, parents, and students alike recognize the value of inclusiveness in promoting academic achievement, social growth, and overall well-being.

Inclusive education refers to providing all students, regardless of ability, disability or background, an equal opportunity to learn and participate in the educational environment. Bloom's Taxonomy is a hierarchical framework that classifies different levels of cognitive learning and thinking skills. Combining inclusive education principles with Bloom's Taxonomy can improve learning outcomes for all students by promoting diverse and personalized learning experiences. It is discussed in the following how inclusive education can improve learning outcomes through Bloom's taxonomy:

Remember (Knowledge): Inclusive education encouraged the use of a variety of instructional strategies, materials, and resources to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities. Teachers can present information through a variety of modalities, such as visual and audio activities, making it easier for all students to remember and recall the information. It bridged gaps between the diverse backgrounds the students came from. It aided in creating a knowledge base which instead helped them to address their learning needs.

Understanding (understanding): Inclusive classes value peer interaction and cooperative learning. This led to more understanding as students discuss concepts, explaining ideas to each other, and engage in meaningful discussions. The different perspectives brought by students from different backgrounds enrich the overall understanding of the subject.

Applying: Inclusive education promoted practical and experiential learning. Students engaged in real-life situations and hands-on activities tailored to their personal experience and background. Applying this knowledge improved their problem solving and critical thinking skills.

Analysis: Inclusive classrooms promoted a safe environment where students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and interpretations. This encourages deeper analysis of concepts, as students from different backgrounds offer unique perspectives that can lead to a more complete understanding of complex topics. With their narratives the research drew that the students were well able to analyze many topics because of their diverse and inclusive education.

Evaluate: Within a comprehensive framework, assessment methods were adapted to different learning styles and abilities. These involved other forms of assessment, such as projects, presentations, or portfolios, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding in a way that is appropriate to their strengths.

 Creation: Inclusive education values creativity and encourages students to come up with original ideas and solutions. Group projects that incorporate diverse perspectives can lead to the creation of creative solutions, based on each student's strengths and talents. The students were able to create new knowledge and were able to adapt to different situations based upon their entire understanding of the topic.

Inclusive education also promotes the use of a Universal Design for Learning (UDL), consistent with Bloom's taxonomy. UDL is concerned with the design of programs, materials, and

assessments that are flexible and accessible to all learners. This approach takes into account different learning styles, interests and abilities, ensuring that each student has the opportunity to engage with the content at his or her own level.

Inclusive education encourages the use of a variety of instructional strategies, materials, and resources to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities. Teachers present information through a variety of modalities, such as visual and audio activities, making it easier for all students to remember and recall the information. With teacher promoting inclusive education as both them and the parents through the interviews believed that inclusive environments fostered better learning outcomes, the findings of the effectiveness of an inclusive environment are discussed in the following:

Students consistently demonstrated a strong sense of belonging and acceptance in inclusive classrooms. The inclusive environment fostered feelings of being valued for who they are, regardless of their differences. Peer interactions were found to be more positive and rewarding in inclusive classes. The students emphasized the benefits of connecting with peers from different backgrounds, citing increased empathy, understanding and openness. Exposure to diverse perspectives and life experiences in inclusive classrooms broadens students' perspectives. They appreciate the opportunity to learn from and about cultures, abilities, and perspectives different from their own.

In particular, collaborative skills have been enhanced by working alongside colleagues of diverse strengths and challenges. Students learn to communicate effectively, negotiate, compromise, and work in teams. Inclusive education challenges students to adapt to different learning styles and manage diverse learning needs. This experience fosters personal growth, adaptability, and resilience. Empowerment and self-advocacy. Students reported increased empowerment and

autonomy. They have learned to communicate their needs, ask for help, and actively contribute to their learning.

Inclusive classes provide tailored academic support. Instructors are tailored to individual learning styles, ensuring that students with diverse needs receive appropriate support.. Visible inclusion challenged stereotypes and misconceptions, fostering greater acceptance. Interacting with peers with different communication styles encouraged students to develop adaptive communication skills, including oral, nonverbal, and alternative forms of expression.

 to navigate global societies because they had access to a wide range of perspectives and abilities. Inclusive classes value peer interaction and cooperative learning. This leads to more understanding as students discuss concepts, explain ideas to each other, and engage in meaningful discussions. The different perspectives offered by students from different backgrounds have enriched the overall understanding of the subject. Inclusive education promotes practical and experiential learning. Students engage in real-life situations and hands-on activities tailored to their personal experience and background. Applying this knowledge has improved their problem solving and critical thinking abilities.

Inclusive classrooms foster a safe environment where students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and interpretations. This encourages deeper analysis of concepts, as students from different backgrounds offer unique perspectives that lead to a more comprehensive understanding of complex topics. Within a global framework, assessment methods have been adapted to different learning styles and abilities. This involves other forms of assessment, such as projects, presentations, or portfolios, that allow students to demonstrate their understanding in a way that is relevant to their strengths.

4.6 An enquiry into leaving inclusive education behind

Upon closer examination in the research. With the interaction between the respondents it was found that leaving inclusive education behind can resemble the following for students in turn hampering their learning outcomes:

Alienation: Students from underrepresented backgrounds feel alienated and invisible in the classroom. They find it difficult to connect with the material and thus leave the learning process.

Reinforce patterns: Students internalize stereotypes that exist in classroom discussions, leading to misinterpretations of different cultures.

Missed learning opportunities: By not exploring a variety of perspectives, students are missing out on opportunities to develop empathy, critical thinking, and a broader understanding of the world.

Reduced commitment: Failure to participate in class discussions and assignments can lead to disengagement and lower academic achievement in students who feel left out. Cultural blind spot Lack of exposure to a diversity of literature and perspectives contributes to a lack of cultural awareness and the development of a holistic worldview. Addressing this lack of inclusivity would require the teacher to diversify the curriculum, incorporate literature from various cultures, and create an environment that values and respects the experiences of all students.

Inclusive teaching practices can foster a sense of belonging, encourage open dialogue, and provide opportunities for all students to contribute and learn from one another.

4.7 Learning outcomes

Through research it was found in regard to the practice of inclusive education although it shares many challenges, but it is quintessentially important for progressing together as a society and to improve upon the learning outcomes.

4.7.1 Boosting Cultural Cohesiveness

Through inclusive education, children are exposed to a range of perspectives, cultures, and abilities. Greater comprehension, empathy, and appreciation for the diversity of human variations are fostered as a result. In an inclusive classroom, all children are treated with respect and value. This welcoming environment enables students to work together, communicate openly, and support one another.

When students with different learning styles and abilities are taught together, they can benefit from one another's experiences and receive individualized support. All pupils' academic outcomes be enhanced as a result of this. Through the use of inclusive education, teachers are better able to identify and meet the requirements of each student. Students can advance at their own rate and in their own way with differentiated training. In inclusive classrooms, students with disabilities feel more a part of the community. This aids them to perform better in their studies and as a measure it helps the learning.

4.7.2 Improvement in learning

Inclusive teaching strategies accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities, helping students better grasp and retain content. By tailoring instruction to individual needs, students are more likely to achieve higher academic achievement.

They promote active participation by engaging students in a variety of interactive activities and discussions. When students feel valued and connected to the learning process, they are more motivated to engage and learn, which leads to increased engagement and better outcomes.

By offering diverse perspectives and encouraging collaborative activities, inclusive teaching promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students are exposed to different perspectives, leading to deeper analysis and broader understanding of complex concepts. Inclusive

teaching recognizes the diversity of students' abilities and backgrounds, leading to increased self-esteem and self-efficacy. When students succeed in an inclusive environment, their confidence in their own abilities increases, which positively affects their overall academic performance. Inclusive instructional practices can help reduce achievement gaps between students with diverse learning abilities, backgrounds, and needs. By providing targeted support to students who be struggling, these practices ensure that every student has a chance to succeed. Stakeholders point out that inclusive education changes the dynamics of the classroom by promoting solidarity among students from different backgrounds. Various interactions facilitate empathy, leading to a more harmonious environment conducive to learning.

4.7.3 Improvement in the self-image of a child

Students with disabilities or disadvantaged backgrounds have shared experiences of recognition and empowerment in inclusive classrooms. This recognition boosted their self-esteem and confidence, positively affecting their engagement and learning outcomes.

Stakeholders recognize that inclusive education facilitates cross-cultural interactions, promoting a better understanding of diverse perspectives. This broader social understanding has extended beyond the academic context. Educators say they have changed teaching strategies to accommodate different learning styles and abilities. Personalized attention and diverse teaching techniques have helped improve understanding and engagement.

Inclusive education is considered a balancing tool, enabling disadvantaged students to access quality education. This inclusiveness compensated for the disparity and had a positive impact on school performance. The interviews emphasized the development of life skills, such as teamwork, communication and empathy, through inclusive education. These skills are considered essential for well-rounded development beyond academic fields. Inclusive education has strongly promoted

cultural sensitivity in students. Understanding different perspectives has enriched their learning experience and prepared them for a diverse society.

In conclusion, educators share that implementing inclusive approaches has changed their teaching philosophy. They become more attentive to the needs of each individual student and develop a deeper sense of accomplishment in their role. The findings suggest that inclusion in a classroom aid in improving the learning outcomes of students.

Inclusive education brings together students from diverse backgrounds, abilities, and experiences. This diversity enriches the learning environment, exposing students to a variety of perspectives and ideas. Social constructivism holds that knowledge is not objective but is shaped by these different perspectives. As students from different backgrounds interact with each other, they build together a more holistic understanding of the world.

Inclusive education emphasizes cooperation between students of different abilities. This collaborative learning process reflects the social constructivist idea that knowledge is co-created through interaction. Students work together to solve problems, share ideas, and build on each other's contributions, promoting a deeper and more holistic understanding of the subject.

Inclusive education challenges social stereotypes and norms by breaking down barriers that lead to exclusion and discrimination. By interacting with different peers, students confront their own preconceived notions and engage in dialogue to challenge those biases. This process is consistent with the social constructivist belief that understanding is mediated through social interactions and can lead to more tolerant and tolerant attitudes.

Inclusive education promotes social cohesion by breaking down barriers and promoting interaction between people from different backgrounds. This can help reduce social divisions and conflicts that can arise from exclusion and marginalization. A cohesive society is more likely to support

stable economic and political structures. Inclusive education represents an investment in the future of society.

4.8 Implications

Lessons learned from systems theory can influence the development of inclusive education policies. Policies can be designed to address not only the individual elements of the education system but also their interactions, promoting more inclusive and effective change. Creating inclusive education systems can lead to a more inclusive society where diversity is valued and celebrated. In this regard the research touches upon what the policymakers and educators can adopt to further inclusion:

4.8.1 Policymakers

Policymakers must prioritize allocating adequate resources for inclusive education. This includes funding assistive technology, specialized equipment, accessible infrastructure, and professional development for educators. Policymakers should invest in comprehensive training programs for educators that focus on inclusive teaching methods. Training should include understanding diverse learning needs, tailoring curriculum, and making effective use of assistive technologies.

4.8.2 Educators

Educators should actively seek opportunities for continued professional development in the area of inclusive education. Keeping up to date with the latest strategies and methods is essential for effective implementation.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

The final chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the study's key findings, implications, and contributions to the field of inclusive education. It revisits the research objectives and answers the research questions posed in Chapter 1. The chapter concludes with reflections on the broader significance of the study's findings and potential areas for further research.

By organizing the study into these interconnected chapters, the research aimed to provide a systematic and rigorous examination of inclusive teaching practices and their impact on learning outcomes for vulnerable student groups in Kathmandu. The research contributes to the overall understanding of inclusive education, offering valuable insights and evidence-based recommendations to promote a more inclusive and equitable educational system.

In high-end schools, there are many resources to support inclusion activities. The most advanced technologies, well-equipped classrooms and specialized equipment are ready. In contrast, low-level schools struggle with limited resources, hindering their ability to provide essential tools and accommodation to students with diverse needs.

High -end schools have emphasized comprehensive teacher training programs and professional development initiatives. This allows educators to hone their skills in addressing diverse learners. In contrast, low-end schools have difficulty providing effective training opportunities, which is likely to limit teachers' ability to effectively implement inclusion strategies.

High -end schools have effectively integrated technology into their inclusion practices. Digital tools have been used to tailor instruction, provide supplemental materials, and accommodate individual learning styles. In contrast, low-end schools face barriers to taking advantage of technology due to limited access and inadequate technical infrastructure.

High-end schools have demonstrated skill in using differentiated teaching strategies. Appropriate methodology, small group work, and individual support are integral to their inclusive classroom. In lower-end schools, resource constraints have sometimes hindered the implementation of such appropriate approaches. Collaboration between teachers, professionals, and support staff is a feature of inclusive education in high -end schools. Multidisciplinary teams have worked collectively to meet the diverse needs of students. Low-end schools struggle to provide specialist support services, which affects the all-round development of students.

The differences which were found between the practices in the two schools the research derived is similar to the situation faced globally as the many of the lived experiences the teachers, students and parents had correlate with the global scenario of how inclusive education is better practiced in high-end schools.

The research formed through a consensus of analysis of the information collected, denotes that students who are part of an inclusive environment not only improve their learning outcomes but are also faced with future real-world scenarios from the school themselves. This helps them to form an understanding of society from a very young age while also helping them to improve their learning. It is suggested from this research that future researchers delve into the topics of the improvement of inclusive practices in lower-end schools, model practices of inclusive education practiced in Nepal, comparative study on the understanding of inclusive education and non-inclusive education. A few limitations of the study are also enlisted in the following:

5.1 Limitations of the Study

This research, while striving to provide valuable insights into the impact of inclusive teaching practices on learning outcomes for vulnerable student groups in Kathmandu, must acknowledge

certain inherent limitations. These limitations influence the interpretation of findings and should be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions from the study.

Firstly, the sample size and selection be constrained due to resource limitations and the complexities involved in working with vulnerable student groups. As a result, the findings not fully represent the entire population of students with disabilities, those from poor economic backgrounds, children from minority castes like Dalits, and those affected by HIV/AIDS in Kathmandu. It is essential to exercise caution when generalizing the results beyond the scope of the study.

Secondly, contextual specificity must be considered. The study is focused on the educational context of Kathmandu, and the findings not directly apply to other regions or countries with different socio-cultural, economic, and educational circumstances. As such, one should be cautious when extrapolating the results to contexts outside Kathmandu.

Thirdly, data collection for qualitative aspects, such as perceptions and experiences of stakeholders, be influenced by subjective biases or limited self-disclosure. The study attempts to address these limitations by ensuring participant anonymity and utilizing multiple data collection methods to triangulate the findings.

Fourthly, time constraints be encountered during the research process, especially when working with students with disabilities and vulnerable backgrounds. As a result, certain aspects of the study, such as longitudinal data collection, not be feasible within the given time frame.

Fifthly, external factors beyond the scope of the study, such as changes in educational policies or socio-economic conditions, influenced the effectiveness of inclusive teaching practices during the research period. These external influences introduced confounding variables and affect the interpretation of the study's results.

Furthermore, researchers are aware of the potential for bias and reflexivity in their perspectives, which impact the study's design, data collection, and interpretation. Efforts have been made to maintain objectivity and reflexivity throughout the research process.

Moreover, access to specific information, such as educational records or sensitive data, be restricted, limiting the depth of analysis in certain aspects of the study.

Finally, participant availability also pose a challenge. The participation of students, parents, and teachers in the study could be influenced by factors such as their availability, willingness to participate, and time constraints.

Despite these limitations, this research aims to contribute valuable insights to the field of inclusive education and its impact on learning outcomes for vulnerable student groups in Kathmandu. By acknowledging these limitations, the study seeks to enhance the credibility and validity of its findings while also inspiring future research endeavors to address these challenges and expand our understanding of inclusive education further.

CHAPTER VI: REFERENCES

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CHAPTER VII: ANNEXURE I

7.1 Details of the Participants

7.1.1 Total number of participants

Category	Area	No of schools	Students	Parents	Teachers	Total Participants
High-end School	Basbari Mandikatar Dhapasi	3	3	3	3	9
Low-end School	Basantapur Hatigauda Dhapasi	3	3	3	3	9
		Total no. of schools: 6				Total: 18 participants

7.1.2 Parents Profile

High-end School				
School	Caste	Occupation	Total Monthly Income (approx.)	Types of house and Land
School 1	Brahmin	Father: Engineer Mother: Doctor	4,50,000/-	House in Baluwater
School 2	Brahmin	Father: Contractor Mother: Teacher	5,75,000/-	House in Dillibazar
School 3	Indigenous	Father; Businessman Mother: works in INGO	6,20,000/-	House in Maharajgunj

Low-end School				
School	Caste	Occupation	Total Monthly Income (approx.)	Types of house and Land
Parent 1	Dalit	Father: Taxi Driver Mother: wage worker	45,000/-	Rented house
Parent 2	Indigenous	Father: Police constable Mother: helper in private school	40,000/-	Rented house
Parent 3	Indigenous	Father: Migrant worker Mother: runs a small tea shop	80,000/-	Rented house

7.2 Research Questionnaire Outline

Teachers

- Are you familiar with inclusive education? If so, describe your understanding.

- Practices which you may know about and how do you think they help children learn?

- What are the best practices you can incorporate and its description?

- How have you viewed inclusive education in respect to the impacts it has upon the learning of a student? Explain in terms of whether it is beneficial or not in terms of learning outcomes?

Students

- Are you familiar with inclusive education? If so, describe your understanding.

- Practices which you may know about and how do you think they help you learn?

- Should inclusiveness be increased and if so, how?

- Is your classroom diverse? Elucidate along with whether it has helped you in your learning.

Parents

- Are you familiar with inclusive education? If so, describe your understanding.

- Practices which you may know about and how do you think they help you learn?

- Describe how you would want your children to learn in inclusiveness.

- What might be the impacts of having an inclusive classroom for your child?

7.3 Research checklist

Heading	Activity	Yes	No
Research Planning	Define the research objectives and scope of the study.		
	Clearly state the research questions or hypotheses. .		
	Identify the target population or participants		
	Determine the research methodology		
	Select appropriate research tools (surveys, interviews, observations, etc.).		
	Obtain necessary approvals, such as ethical considerations and institutional permissions.		
Literature Review	Conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature on inclusive education.		
	Identify key concepts, theories, and models related to inclusive education practices.		
	Examine the historical development and policy frameworks in inclusive education.		
	Understand the benefits, challenges, and best practices of inclusive classrooms.		
	Identify gaps in the current research and areas that require further exploration.		
	Conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature on inclusive education.		
Data Collection	Select a suitable sampling method to capture a diverse range of perspectives.		
	Develop or adapt research instruments (questionnaires, interview guides, observation protocols, etc.).		
	Pilot-test the instruments to ensure clarity and validity.		
	Recruit participants based on the chosen sampling method.		
	Collect data through interviews		
Data Analysis	Transcribe interviews		
	Utilize appropriate software for qualitative data analysis.		
	Analyze the data for emerging themes, patterns, and trends.		
	Use coding or categorization to organize qualitative data.		
	Interpret the findings in relation to the research questions.		

Findings	Present the research findings clearly and concisely.		
	Discuss how the findings align with existing literature.		
	Address the implications of the results for inclusive education practices.		
	Organize the research paper or report with a logical structure.		
	Use clear and concise language to communicate the findings.		
	Include relevant visuals (tables, graphs, charts) to support data presentation.		
Review	Cite sources appropriately and consistently.		
	Follow the preferred citation style (APA, MLA, etc.).		
	Proofread and edit the document for clarity and coherence.		
	Share the research with colleagues, mentors, or advisors for feedback.		
	Incorporate constructive criticism and suggestions.		
	Ensure the research aligns with ethical and methodological standards.		
	Dissemination and Presentation:		
Dissemination and Presentation:	Consider presenting the research at conferences, seminars, or workshops.		
	Publish the research in academic journals or other relevant platforms.		
	Share the findings with educational practitioners, policymakers, and the public.		
	Share the research with colleagues, mentors, or advisors for feedback.		
	Incorporate constructive criticism and suggestions.		
	Ensure the research aligns with ethical and methodological standards.		