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A Study of Educational Leaders` Strategies for Enhancing the Quality of Teaching and Learning in the Public Schools in Madhesh Province, Nepal

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Abstract.

This study examined the strategies employed by educational leaders in public schools in Nepal to enhance the quality of teaching and learning environments and students' outcomes. It also discusses the challenges they face in implementing these strategies. The research design followed the qualitative method and used the semi-structured interview as the data collection tool. Six participants were selected for the interview through snowball sampling, and interviews were conducted individually via Zoom. This study used a transformational and instructional leadership theoretical lens to analyse the data.

Based on the analysis of narratives, the educational leadership strategies employed by the educational leaders appear to be in enhancing the school's academic climate, students' performance, teachers' professional development, and maintaining a harmonious atmosphere of communities. For example, collaborative strategies among school members, parents, and stakeholders have helped develop the school's instructional program. Similarly, student-centred and personalized learning, inclusive and equity-focused intervention, and extracurricular activities strategies have increased students' achievement and livelihood skills. However, educational leaders have faced significant challenges, such as financial and resource constraints, political challenges, technological challenges, lack of parental support, and sociocultural challenges. These challenges have influenced educational leaders to conduct the school activities smoothly, and students have been deprived of a quality education.

Key words: Educational Leaders, public school, transformational leadership, instructional leadership, teaching and learning

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Background and Research Context	4
2.1	Educational Leadership	4
2.2	Characteristics of Educational Leaders	6
2.3	Brief background of Nepal and Madhesh Province	9
3	Theoretical Framework	11
3.1	Transformational Leadership Theory	11
3.1.1	Idealized Influence	12
3.1.2	Inspirational Motivation	12
3.1.3	Intellectual Stimulation	13
3.1.4	Individual Consideration	14
3.2	Instructional Leadership Theory	15
3.2.1	Curriculum and Instruction	16
3.2.2	Professional Development	16
3.2.3	Monitoring and Evaluation	17
3.2.4	Resource Allocation	18
4	Methodology	19
4.1	Research Questions	19
4.2	Research Design	19
4.3	Qualitative Approach	20
4.4	Method and Data Collection Process	20
4.4.1	Sampling	21
4.4.2	Data Collection Tools: Interview	21
4.5	Data Analysis	23
4.6	Quality Standard	24
4.7	Ethical Issues	25
5	Findings	27
5.1	Brief Information of the Participants	27
5.2	Educational Leaders' Pedagogical and Instructional Strategies	29
5.3	Challenges Faced by Educational Leaders Implementing Strategies	45

6 Discussion and Conclusion	52
References	59
Appendices	73
Appendix - 1	73
Interview Guideline	73
Appendix – 2	75
Privacy Notice to Collect the Data	75

List of Figures

Figure 2. Themes from Participants' Interview.....	29
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List of Tables

Table 1. Function, Duties and Power of Headmasters.....	8
Table 2. Strategies to Enhance the Teachers' Competence.....	13

1 Introduction

Education has increasingly established itself as a vital foundation of society, and effective educational leadership has significantly enhanced the teaching and learning environment, students' academic performance, and school culture (Culduz, 2023a; Young et al., 2017). Many studies have consistently highlighted the importance of educational leadership in motivating students, fostering collaboration, and promoting innovation within the institution (Burnett, 2024; Groenewald et al., 2024). By involving parents, teachers, students, and administrators in decision-making, educational leadership develops a democratic environment to achieve institutional and academic goals (Lijun & Te, 2024).

However, despite its acknowledged significance, educational leadership has faced numerous challenges. These include curriculum design, reform, implementation, creating a collaborative atmosphere, overcoming cultural differences, and ensuring equality in all aspects of the organization, which represent significant challenges in education leadership (Pak et al., 2020). Additionally, educational leaders always struggle to translate vision into daily practices, promote trustworthy, transparent communication, and effectively give feedback to underperforming teachers and students to achieve high levels of student success (Duignan, 2007).

These challenges are more pervasive in Nepal's public schools, which aim to provide an equitable education to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Despite this goal, these schools confront multiple challenges, including updating and designing curricula, a shortage of trained teachers, traditional teaching methods (the lecture method), student assessment through paper-and-pencil tests, community participation, and practical implementation of the policy (Wagle et al., 2024).

To solve these challenges, well-trained leaders in educational institutions can bring significant positive change to the school environment through their expertise, competence, and constructive training. The leaders' roles are crucial in solving schools' current and emerging challenges (Moorosi & Bush, 2011). Alyssa and Kami (2018) have mentioned that a new way of thinking called "design-inspired leadership" has emerged as a strong foundation for sustainable change. This method requires the implementation of innovative educational principles that have been successfully employed in private institutions to address institutional necessities effectively (Alyssa & Kami, 2018, p. 5).

This study explores the strategies employed by educational leaders in public schools in Nepal to enhance the quality of teaching and learning environments and students' outcomes. It also examines the challenges they face in implementing these strategies. This research utilizes a qualitative approach by linking with the existing literature on educational leaders' strategies and challenges, with a focus on the multiple experiences and perspectives of school leaders, principals, and head teachers. For this purpose, data were collected via semi-structured interviews, which provide rich insight into Nepal's contemporary educational leadership practices. The data are transcribed and integrated according to thematic analysis procedures and interpreted through the lens of transformational and instructional leadership.

This study explores the challenges faced by educational leaders in the public-school education system, focusing on the Madhesh province of Nepal, and can support policy recommendations that will be helpful to school leaders. By examining the leadership strategies and obstacles educational leaders encounter, this study seeks to contribute to continuing efforts to improve the quality of education in Nepal's public schools.

The purpose of this research is to explore the following questions using data collected through interviews with different public-school leaders. The objectives of the study are also addressed in the following research questions.

- What strategies do educational leaders employ, and how do they see the role of their strategies in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning environments in the public schools of Madhesh province in Nepal?
- What challenges do educational leaders face when implementing these strategies to improve teaching and learning?

In the context of public schools in Nepal, educational leaders encounter significant challenges, including shortages of teaching materials, insufficient training, a lack of support from policymakers, limited human resources, and financial constraints (Pant, 2023). These challenges highlight the significance of comprehending and tackling the complexities of educational leadership in Nepal, rendering this study timely and pertinent.

Additionally, this study is significant because a thorough review of existing literature has uncovered a clear gap in research that focuses on educational leadership strategies, notably enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in public schools (Müller-Bloch & Kranz, 2015). Furthermore, the challenges encountered by educational leaders in public schools in Mahesh Province, Nepal, have not been sufficiently explored. The Mahesh Province is behind

the quality of education compared to other provinces. This province is facing significant challenges in school management, including limitations in infrastructure, teaching materials, funding, a shortage of trained teachers, innovative teaching resources, and gender disparities (Thakur et al., 2023). In this sense, this study would be more insightful in enhancing the quality of education in Mahesh Province, Nepal. By filling these gaps, this study contributes to the general discourse on educational leadership and offers important insights into leaders' distinctive challenges in this context. In the same way, it takes forward pragmatic solutions to improve the quality of education in public schools, a worthwhile contribution to Nepal's education system. Hence, this research is relevant and timely as it attempts to inform knowledge, policy, and practice in a setting where research on this topic is highly needed.

To support this study and enhance conceptual clarity, the following key terms related to the research problem are defined:

Educational leaders: Educational leaders refer to principals, school leaders, and headmasters working in public schools.

Quality Education: Quality education includes students' academic and social skill development, the educational strategies management system that educational leaders implement, the inclusive teaching and learning environment, teacher professional development, the training and work environment for staff, and the monitoring and evaluation processes (Figueiredo, 2025). Furthermore, Figueiredo (2025) has noted that this involves providing feedback to teachers and students, identifying challenges, and addressing issues. Similarly, according to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, the quality of education includes managing trained teachers in developing and less developed countries through international collaboration for teacher training (High-Level Political Forum, 2019). Additionally, the quality of education emphasizes effective institutional administration, the educational competence of staff, and the arrangement of infrastructures that meet academic necessities (Mwila, 2025).

Educational Leaders' Strategies: Educational Leaders' Strategies refer to the activities that school leaders used to address the challenges in the school environment (Fatimah & Syahrani, 2022). It also incorporates sustainability into its practices by enhancing strategic measures to evaluate its progress, staying restless instead of complacent, networking at local, regional, national, and international levels, employing sophisticated multi-faceted planning methods, and designing the schools' strategic framework (Davies, 2004, pp. 22–24).

2 Background and Research Context

2.1 Educational Leadership

Educational leadership has been defined from various perspectives. It refers to a higher position within the academic institution, which includes roles such as the school-headmaster master, principal, and school leader (Connolly et al., 2019). Educational leadership involves meaningful communication inside an educational community to enhance participation in achieving the expected goal (James et al., 2020).

Additionally, educational leadership encompasses dynamic and collaborative relationships among diverse stakeholders who commit to working together in a specific context to achieve their shared goals, especially in enhancing teaching and learning (Genza, 2021). Educational leadership involves taking action to inspire and motivate others to reach institutional goals within the academic setting (Connolly et al., 2019). Furthermore, they noted that inspiring others requires authority, which derives from a higher position within the organization.

Researchers have developed various definitions of academic leadership. The key components of educational leaders include self-control in their attitudes and a commitment to serving others at the school, inspiring others to achieve the school's educational goals, and integrating innovative approaches in teaching and learning that foster an autonomous environment both inside and outside the school (Mazurkiewicz, 2011). Based on these components, educational leaders should consistently enhance their skills and knowledge as lifelong learners to solve the challenges faced by academic institutions and improve the quality of education (Adeoye, 2025). Furthermore, Adeoye (2025) has pointed out that the ongoing education of the educational leader cultivates an inclusive, collaborative, and innovative learning environment that enables teachers and students to succeed in a progressively complex world.

By linking the arguments above, leaders greatly influence employees in the workplace by cultivating cooperative and mutual relationships with staff to achieve the organization's expected goals (Ahmad, 2025). Additionally, Ahmad (2025) stated that leaders focused on building motivation, communication, positive response, and autonomy within staff to develop the relationship. In the same way, school leaders have a significant role in shaping the school culture, which includes fostering a harmonious environment among the staff, aligning with the school's vision and mission, curriculum, teaching methods, student outcomes, and effective administration (Fadila et al., 2024).

Additionally, Fadila et al. (2024) have argued that educational leaders are more responsible for integrating newly invented global innovative teaching and learning methods and tools to address the problems that may arise from these changes. For example, as teaching and learning materials evolve in developed countries, teaching methods, policies, and techniques are changing daily.

In today's world, educational leaders must be more creative in developing a learning environment that motivates learners, teachers, educators, and communities to collaborate and enhance the quality of education that produces a dynamic individual future (Jie & Cheah, 2021). Jie and Cheah (2021) have also argued that a leader's creativity is crucial for the institution to effectively foster the succession of its designed objectives. Furthermore, creative leadership in schools enhances teachers' instructional skills and innovative teaching techniques by utilizing a problem-solving approach in the classroom (Phattanaphong & Lertamornsak, 2025). Similarly, they argue that creative leaders are more mindful of developing a curriculum with practical teaching content better suited for the modern age.

Leithwood et al. (2020) have identified four dimensions of educational leadership through a series of practices. The first is setting direction, which involves setting short- and long-term goals while communicating and sharing with other members with a high level of professionalism in expectations for improvement. The second one involves building positive relationships and empowering others, which develops the positive connections with the institution's internal and external members for the desired outcome. Similarly, the third component involves developing institutions to support the planned activities of the organization's collaborative efforts and management of resources to accomplish the desired objective of schools. The last component consists of designing the instructional activities, which include offering instructional support, monitoring the teacher's performance and student outcomes, and providing feedback.

Fostering equality in education emphasizes an inclusive school leadership approach that incorporates best international practices, diversity-responsive leadership, and evidence-based outcomes (Mustoip et al., 2023). Mustoip et al. (2023) have also found that this leadership approach allows school leaders to foster an inclusive, high-quality learning environment, ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students at the same level. Additionally, mentoring, providing training, collaborating, and using evaluation and feedback strategies can improve teaching and learning outcomes and dynamic learning environments.

Educational leadership is a structured framework of institutional activities encompassing the educational leader's expertise, skills, individuality, and mindset to achieve academic objectives effectively (Dimopoulos, 2020). Furthermore, Dimopoulos (2020) has argued that educational leadership can motivate, encourage, and persuade individual development, which aids in designing leadership strategies and influencing the school environment, activities, mission, and many other essential internal and external issues.

2.2 Characteristics of Educational Leaders

Leadership plays an important role in the education of the institution, and the management skills of educational leaders positively affect students' academic achievement as well as the overall performance of schools (Kilag et al., 2024). Kilag et al. (2024) have outlined four major characteristics of effective educational leaders: “communication skills, emotional intelligence, vision and strategic planning, and a passion for education” (p. 55). The initial component helps to build the relationship between leaders and staff. The second creates an inclusive learning climate. Similarly, the third entails vision and strategic planning to develop improvement and a total school system. The fourth component highlights the passion and educational necessity for encouraging and motivating school members.

In the context of public schools in the United States, school leaders primarily bear the responsibility of incorporating their work's technical, emotional, and ethical dimensions (Lowenhaupt, 2021). Lowenhaupt (2021) also indicated that educational leaders should strive to integrate technology into instructional activities while addressing the increasing issues of social discrimination and diversity within their academic institutions, as seen in the current context.

Furthermore, Olivier Perrenoud and Tulowitzki (2021) have proposed four values for the activities of educational leaders: first, managing fundamental training for regularity in education. Second, providing proper help to the school’s staff and members. Third, foster the necessary educational policies and systems, and fourth, enhance the quality and performance of the organization by promoting innovative ideas.

Likewise, Finnish education policies exhibit three distinct characteristics of ethical educational leadership:

“First, striving for equality based on the Nordic welfare state ideology constitutes the fundamental ethical principle on all levels of our educational and societal system.

Second, taking care of all individuals in their individual educational and life paths in

accordance with their own needs and goals characterizes our system in addition to equality. Third, multi-professional collaboration to support the well-being and development of people of all ages has a long tradition in the Finnish educational system” (Hanhimäki and Risku, 2021, p. 95).

Furthermore, in the Swedish education system, the principal should follow the national curriculum and treat themselves as learners to enhance the students' positive outcomes and achieve the expected goals of the national curriculum (Johansson and Ärlestig, 2021).

Furthermore, Johansson and Ärlestig (2021) have stated that the school leader should be more democratic and reflective in designing the educational system, emphasizing the sharing of discussion and dialogue to operate the program. Democratic and reflective leaders play a significant role as facilitators and supporters through communication.

The great principals emphasized sustainable positive results to improve the school environment and culture (Whitaker, 2020). Whitaker (2029) writes that “the great principals feel free to kiss a pig, enjoy getting duct-taped to the wall, climb on that dunking booth—the students and staff will love it because they know everything you do is for them” (p. 151).

The modern principal has multiple responsibilities to enhance the quality of education in schools (Burstein & Kohn, 2017). Burstein and Kohn (2017) have suggested some features that educational leaders should follow:

First, the educational leaders should be well-equipped with teaching and learning methods that continuously support school achievement. Second, principals should foster a collaborative school environment among staff and students to enhance the effectiveness of the learning process. Third, the principal should manage the essential teaching and learning materials for the school, teachers, and students, and provide proper instructions for their implementation. Similarly, fourthly, the principals should be familiar with communicative and social engagement skills.

Education Rule 2059 (2002) clearly outlines the dynamic role of the headmaster in public schools in Nepal. To understand the headmaster's functions more easily, we can categorize them into five different points. The role of the school headmaster is primarily limited inside the school to academic management, administrative responsibility, discipline and student welfare, managing staff and professional development, and communication of responsibility. Academic management responsibilities refer to the design of school activities based on the curriculum, whereas administrative responsibility focuses on the admission of students and

allocating a proper budget, as well as all economic activities. Similarly, discipline and student welfare responsibility include maintaining student behavior and extracurricular activities, and managing staff and professional development, which focuses on developing collaborative action with the teacher and providing rewards and punishments to the teacher. The communication responsibility emphasized providing a report to the school management committee and district officers.

Table 1. Functions, Duties, and Power of Headmasters

Categories	Duties and power of headmasters
Academic Management responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain academic environment, academic quality and discipline and design programmes for running the classes in the • Prepare monthly, half yearly and annual program related to teaching and learning activities and implement the curriculum and textbook prescribed by government • Conduct the exam in the systematic way, develop the academic report and send to the certified inspectors
Administrative responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operate and control the administrative function of the school and admit a student in high school. • Keep record of significant work and activities of the school And develop the annual program of school and send to the management committee for the approval • Spent the budget of the school Coordinating management committee and maintain the income and expenditure. • prepare salary report of the teachers and send the authority of the government
Managing discipline and student welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop the necessary function of maintaining discipline, good character and politeness in the school • design the provision of sanitary extracurricular and other activities in school. • Avoid any mischievous activities in the premises of school and expel any student from the school violating discipline sorry.
Managing staff and professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create an environment of mutual cooperation among teachers and other Staffs students and guardians. You might want me to check

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the action against the rule violation or misbehavior of Staffs teachers with the coordination of school management committee. • Submit the report relating to corn dog behavior and works performance of the teacher and other employee to the district education officer. • Hold the teacher meeting at least once a month and discuss on the school related to the matter and maintain record. • Design the schedule of the teachers in the other staff Working under him.
Communicating responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abide or cause to abide by the directive issued by management committee and district education office. • Recover losses incurred to the school property from the salary if teacher caused such losses knowingly.

Source: Table 1. Functions, Duties, and Power of Headmasters (Education Rules, 2059 (2002), pp. 96–99).

2.3 Brief background of Nepal and Madhesh Province

Nepal is a developing country covering 147,181 square kilometers. In 2021, the average population density was 198 people per square kilometer, up from 180 in 2011. Nepal is separated into three geographical regions. Among the ecological areas, the Tarai has the topmost population density, at 460 per square kilometer, while the mountain region has the lowest, at 34 people. The Mountain region occupies 15% of the area, whereas the hilly and Terai regions comprise 68% and 17%, respectively. According to the 2021 census, the total population was 29,164,578, with 48.87 percent male and 51.13 percent female. The total literacy rate for the population aged five and above is 76.2 percent, whereas the male literacy rate is 83.6 and 69.4 for women. Culturally, Nepal is heterogeneous, and 126 ethnic groups reside throughout the country. Among these ethnic groups, 59 ethnic communities are known as the Indigenous nationality of Nepal, and the total population of Indigenous people consists of 35.08 percent (National Static Office, 2023).

Nepal is geographically divided into three regions based on its structure: Mountain, Hill, and Terai (also known as the Madhes). The Terai or Madhes region occupies 22 out of 75 districts. After the declaration of the federal democratic republic Constitution of Nepal in September 2015, Nepal developed seven provinces. Province Two is named “Madhesh

Province”, and Janakpur is declared the capital city. The Madhes province comprises eight out of 22 districts (Jha, 2022). According to the national census 2021, the total population aged five years and above was 63.5 percent, whereas the male literacy rate is 72.5 percent, and 54.7 percent is for women (National Static Office, 2023). The data demonstrate that Madhesi women are backward in literacy rate compared to men. This Madhesh province is my research area.

3 Theoretical Framework

This study discovers the innovative strategies implemented by educational leaders to enhance the quality of education. In public schools in Nepal educational leaders have played a significant role to enhance the quality of education by implementing educational policies, improving teaching quality, managing administrative resources, and designing the vision and objectives (Mandal, 2025). To explore how educational leaders design and employ strategies to enhance the quality of education and outcomes for students, this research is grounded in transformational and instructional leadership theories. Transformational leadership emphasizes inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personalized consideration in educational development (Adeoye et al., 2025). Similarly, instructional theory emphasizes students' academic outcomes and teachers' professional development, classroom dynamics, cognitive engagement, and learning support (Wang et al., 2025). These two theories provide an exhaustive perspective on how educational leaders in Madhesh Province, Nepal, deal with institutional problems to enhance academic quality.

3.1 Transformational Leadership Theory

The transformational leadership theory was propounded by James Burns in 1978 and later, Bernard Bass expanded in 1985 to outline the principles of organizational leaders (Reza, 2019). Later, scholars and educational administrators acknowledged the importance of transformational leadership theory in addressing contemporary academic challenges, and currently, educational leaders have embraced it as the ideal framework to enhance the landscape of the school environment (Berkovich, 2016).

Similarly, Bush, (2007) writes that implementing Transformational Leadership significantly highlights how leaders impact school performance rather than focusing on the specific nature or direction of the result. Likewise, according to Hallinger (2010) transformational leadership emphasizes a collaborative approach to teaching and learning, which prioritizes the management of established relationships among all school community members.

Rojak et al. (2024) write that supporting and encouraging employees to foster innovative change within the organization is a primary element of transformational leadership. In addition, Bass & Riggio (2006) emphasize four different components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspiration motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration.

3.1.1 Idealized Influence

The idealized influence is one of transformational leadership's most critical and dynamic elements. The leader emphasizes the collective decision of employees to achieve the organization's goals, and leaders are seen as role models; consequently, transformational leaders earn their employees' respect, admiration, and trust (Afshari, 2022). Likewise, idealized influence refers to a leader's talent to envision, plan, and implement organizational improvement strategies, consistently stimulating the staff to embrace positive organizational transformations (Kariuki, 2021). Researchers at the university found that the idealized influence of transformational leaders has a positive effect on knowledge-sharing and building trust in followers compared to other theories (Suhana et al., 2020). Suhana et al. (2020) have also found that leaders feel more comfortable collaborating with other members. Furthermore, idealized influence is more critical for the school leader to develop an inspirational vision of the institutions and develop the teachers' professional development (Janet et al., 2015). Likewise, Janet et al. (2015) have also argued that idealized influence motivates staff to collective efforts in the organization's activities.

In a case of Nepal, educational leaders of public schools significantly contribute to improving the quality of education through idealized influence, such as fostering collective decision-making among school members.

3.1.2 Inspirational Motivation

Ul Hosna et al., (2021) argue that transformational leaders inspire employees to achieve the organization's expected goals by respecting their performance. Similarly, educational leaders inspire and motivate their followers by addressing their challenges and expectations for a sustainable future (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Likewise, the inspirational motivation of the leader enhances the quality of the school educational system by encouraging teachers to perform extraordinarily (Nyamubi, 2021). Nyamubi (2021) also indicates that young teachers prefer more inspiration and motivation, and teachers perform well after receiving inspirational encouragement from leaders. Furthermore, transformational school leaders are seen as inspirational figures within schools, supporting teachers, students, parents, and the community (Hashim et al., 2021). Hashim et al. (2021) also have highlighted that the leaders encourage students by allowing them to express their feelings to the principal and by enhancing teachers' professionalism through ongoing mentoring and support for their needs.

Furthermore, school leaders can enhance teachers' inspirational motivation by offering in-service training, rewarding them for good performance, and giving ethical trust to the staff

(Ikedimma & Okorji, 2023). This study emphasized inspirational motivation more prominently to discuss educational leaders' experiences, understanding, and practices. Therefore, educational leaders' narratives can significantly impact teachers' professional development and student outcomes in the public schools of Madhesi communities in Nepal.

3.1.3 Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders' intellectual stimulation strategies encourage followers' creativity and promote self-regulated learning (Pawar, 2016). Similarly, intellectual stimulation fosters a collaborative teaching and learning culture within the school, enabling teachers to generate innovative ideas by sharing their experiences to address challenges (Chebet et al., 2024). According to Sholeh (2021, p. 170) educational leaders, enhance teachers' competence in various situations by applying multiple strategies, which are listed in the table below. The table refers to the academic leaders who develop teachers' professional development through intellectual stimulation in three different situations. First, programs in In-service Education foster the educational qualifications of the teacher. Second Program In-service Training develops the teacher's professionalism through other training like workshops, webinars, and monitoring the teachers' work. The third program focuses on service training; in this situation, the leaders provide intellectual stimulation through different collaborative activities to foster the various competencies of the teachers such as collaborative activities and integration of technologies.

Table 2. Strategies to Enhance the Teachers' Competence

Dimension	Activities	Competence
Program In-service Education	Advanced study Qualification Equalization Study Teacher Professional Education	Professional and Pedagogic Competence
Program In-service Training	Webinar Training Workshop Supervision	professional and Pedagogic Competence

	Teacher Working Group (KKG) Actively Compete Writing Papers Featured	
Program On- service Training	Collaboration Programs Social activities Religious activity Job Rotation Curriculum Integration Technology Based Learning	Professional Competence, Pedagogy, Social, Personality, Spiritual, and Leadership

Source: Table 2. Strategies to Enhance the Teachers' Competence (Sholeh, 2021, P 170).

In this study, the same concept of intellectual stimulation is used to interpret strategies for collaborative innovation and creativity empowerment in education leaders in academic institutions. In the context of public schools within Madhesi communities in Nepal, intellectual stimulation strategies can sustainably help teachers solve their problems with innovative ideas. For instance, the leader can motivate the teacher to utilize the newly developed technology to make teaching and learning more dynamic.

3.1.4 Individual Consideration

Individual consideration is one of the most crucial aspects of transformational leadership, encircling development and individualized purposes (Arnold & Loughlin, 2010).

Transformational leaders observe each staff member's issues and support them by considering their needs and increasing staff engagement by providing proper career counseling, guidance, feedback, and appropriate training, addressing staff problems, and facilitating employees' skills development (Alkhatabi et al., 2025). Alkhatabi et al. (2015) emphasized that transformational leaders create an inclusive environment within the institution, considering individual needs and preferences. In public institutions, many faculty, staff, and learners experience various problems with improving the teaching and learning process quality, technology integration, and overall classroom management. The individualized consideration

of academic leaders can diagnose the issues of teachers on an individual basis and provide support, guidance, and training to achieve the expected goals of the school.

3.2 Instructional Leadership Theory

Instructional leadership refers to the roles of school leaders in setting a clear vision for achieving the school's goals and creating an environment conducive to student learning that makes learning at school easy and effective. This instructional leadership theory was developed in the 1980s (Ng Foo Seong, 2019; Townsend, 2019). Moreover, instructional leadership underscores the collaborative efforts between teachers and students, focusing on pedagogical strategies that support academic success (Townsend, 2019).

The leaders guide the teachers in improving the students' study, focusing on the students' results rather than the teaching process (Bush & Glover, 2003). Instructional leadership has become popular in maintaining the school's academic standard, upgrading the students' poor results, and developing the teachers' ethics (Du Plessis, 2013). Instructional leadership is a core part of the school that creates an effective teaching-learning environment, motivates teacher engagement in group work, and promotes collaboration, respecting each other (Khan et al., 2024)

In this theory, principals or headmasters are responsible for designing the educational environment of the school (Du Plessis, 2013). Similarly, instructional leadership is depicted as the principal's power influencing the school's overall vision and mission (Şişman, 2016). Furthermore, instructional leadership theory requires the principal to make an effort to establish a constructive pedagogical environment in the school by providing academic strategies and administrative support and creating a collaborative environment among the teachers and students (Wanzare & Costa, 2001). Since this research focuses on educational leaders' strategies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning through their responsibility, power, vision, understanding, beliefs, and practices and the data were derived from an instructional leadership perspective.

This section presents the key elements of instructional leadership and their connection with the leadership strategies implemented by education leaders in public schools in Nepal.

Establishing the school's goals, creating instructional activities, and promoting a positive learning environment are fundamental measurements of instructional leadership theories (Ng Foo Seong, 2019). These dimensions include curriculum and instruction, professional development, monitoring and evaluation, and resource allocation as the primary components

of instructional leadership theory (Nader et al., 2019). The study focuses on the strategies employed by educational leaders to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning environment and the challenges they face in public schools. These challenges are examined through the leader's narrative of leadership experiences, insights, and practices and interpreted using the instructional leadership theory framework. This framework assists in understanding and exploring how leaders implement leadership strategies and navigate challenges while accomplishing theoretical functions such as curriculum and instruction, professional growth, monitoring and evaluation, and resource management.

3.2.1 Curriculum and Instruction

Instructional leaders are responsible for implementing the curriculum and working with teachers to design, evaluate, and update it to achieve educational objectives and meet students' needs (Okechi Uhuka & Ogbonna, 2025). Similarly, instructional leaders support teachers by motivating, mentoring, supervising, and assessing the teaching and learning process to improve student outcomes (Marshall & Khalifa, 2018). To do these functions well, leaders must have a solid understanding of the academic processes and be dedicated to the school's growth (Hallinger, 2005).

This curriculum and instruction concept guides this study. With this conceptual framework, the study seeks to reflect the strategies of educational leaders regarding curriculum design and instruction implementation aimed at enhancing student achievement in the context of public schools in Nepal. In other words, the experience of educational leaders revealed their sense of belonging to the public-school academic professionals in the Mahdhesi community of Nepal.

3.2.2 Professional Development

Instructional leaders play a vital role in teachers' professional growth and enhance students' outcomes by improving a continuous learning culture, giving necessary support, and providing an equal chance for all individuals to engage in decision-making (Kilag & Sasan, 2023). Similarly, they can enhance teachers' professional development by conducting seminars, offering opportunities for advanced qualifications (bachelor's, master's), and implementing both short-term and long-term training in relevant fields while providing suitable and flexible schedules for teaching (Nguyen et al., 2025). Furthermore, instructional supervisors can act as facilitators rather than controllers or directors for teachers' professional development, respecting national, state, and local education policies (Kim & Lee, 2020). Additionally, Kim and Lee (2020) noted that instructional mentors can empower teachers

professionally through mentoring, peer observation, collaborative learning, and equal opportunities for everyone. Alanoglu (2022) writes that instructional leadership can provide quality education in schools by using modern technology in classrooms. These efforts of technology positively improve students' learning and develop the teacher's teaching system. In Nepal, modern technology such as digital computer learning is essential and assists in career development after school completion.

3.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

Instructional leaders continuously monitor and evaluate teachers' teaching-learning process and students' outcomes, providing appropriate feedback and support to enhance student outcomes (Osagie & Osalumese, 2024). Moreover, Osagie and Osalumese (2024) have also argued that educational leaders help for effective interaction among the members of schools, students, and parents, create a collaborative environment that contributes to academic performance. Similarly, instructional leaders regularly observe teaching methods, provide constructive feedback, and arrange the necessary training and support based on the teachers' challenges(He et al., 2024). Educational leaders enhance the quality of teaching through the evaluation and monitoring process (Lochmiller & Mancinelli, 2019). Lochmiller and Mancinelli (2019) have suggested a framework that the principal should include for evaluating teachers and staff based on the following criteria.

- Designing teaching activities that focus on students' outcomes.
- Presenting dynamic educational activities.
- Providing individual feedback based on the needs of the students and developing policies to solve their problems.
- Develop the course contents and curriculum, focusing on the global educational setting.
- Create a sound and conducive learning atmosphere.
- Integration of innovative digital technologies to modernize teaching methods and enhance the quality of teaching and learning
- Motivate the engagement of the group work with community members and stakeholders and
- Promote the collective decision in designing curricula, activities, and the teaching and learning process (p. 633).

3.2.4 Resource Allocation

According to Culduz (2023), resource allocation refers to funding, staffing, and teaching and learning materials. The educational leaders are responsible for managing the needs of the institution, teachers, and students in accordance with them. The key responsibility of instructional and educational leaders for managing innovative teaching and learning materials for both teachers and students includes education apps, digital tools, and online teaching materials (Culduz, 2023).

4 Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodological procedures chosen for the study. It begins with the research questions that have guided this project study. After that, the research design, including the method of selection of participants, data collection tools and procedures, quality standards, and data analysis process, is discussed. This chapter concludes with the ethical considerations of the present research.

4.1 Research Questions

In this study, I have developed the following two research questions:

- What strategies do educational leaders employ, and how do they see the role of their strategies in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning environments in the public schools of Madhesh province in Nepal?
- What challenges do educational leaders face when implementing these strategies to improve teaching and learning?

4.2 Research Design

Kumar (2024) writes that inductive research begins with data collection or specific observation. A researcher then identifies patterns and themes in the analysed data. From those patterns or themes, the researcher develops theories and explanations. In this study, I adopted a qualitative research approach with an inductive approach.

The theoretical interpretations of the data are highlighted in the data collection and analysis rather than the numerical data. Similarly, different participants' understanding and experiences of educational leaders' strategies for enhancing the quality of teaching in the public schools in Mahesh Province, Nepal, were discussed based on the theories mentioned in the theoretical chapter. The qualitative research focused on the subjective explanation of individual experience rather than the factual numerical data and prioritized interviews to collect the participants' understanding (Silverman, 2021).

The data gathered from the interviews was reviewed and analyzed in relation to the theoretical background and research literature. Qualitative researchers emphasize context and understanding, background, existence, practice, perspective, meaning, and subjectivity, recommending a different perspective to discover and interpret the complications of social phenomena (Lim, 2024). Furthermore, Lim (2024) has stated that qualitative research is designed in a natural setting to address the social challenges faced by policymakers,

stakeholders, and social leaders. This study follows the same principle. It examines educational leaders' leadership strategies and challenges encountered in public schools in Madhesh Province, Nepal.

The qualitative research design and theoretical interpretation perspective of the study were suitable for this research because they exposed the various experiences of educational leaders. The research examined and clarified the knowledge, practices, opinions, systems, and culture shared by the academic leaders in the interviews. Similarly, the semi-structured interview was employed to gather the data, and the thematic data analysis process was implemented to generate the themes and findings.

4.3 Qualitative Approach

This research focuses on the experiences and perspectives of educational leaders. This thesis is guided by qualitative research and designed following the principles of qualitative research for many reasons. Firstly, the theories assume that qualitative studies are social sciences because they have deeply emerged in the studies of social problems. The philosophy of social science is more interpretative, where social phenomena like human behaviors, beliefs, and motivations have been studied systematically (Fay & Moon, 1977). Likewise, qualitative research and the study of social relations have a mutual relationship that studies social inequalities in the new diversity of environments, subcultures, lifestyles and ways of living (Flick, 2018). In this study, I analyse what and how educational leaders implement strategies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and the challenges encountered by them in the public-school Nepal.

4.4 Method and Data Collection Process

In qualitative research, data collection aims to gather subjective experiences of participants (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Being a qualitative researcher, I have integrated my personal experiences with those of the participants to generate findings for this study. I followed the principles of the qualitative approach; however, I employed a semi-structured interview to collect data from the participants and thematic analysis to generate the themes and findings. In the beginning phase of my research, I developed a brief project description, including the research topic, research questions, theoretical framework, and research method.

In the second step, after receiving my supervisor's approval for my research topic, I contacted one district education officer, and he recommended other participants and helped to contact participants by providing their contact information. I contacted each participant by phone and

requested an interview to collect data for my research. Some participants were sceptical, but after I explained the study's purpose, they formally agreed to participate in interviews. Before conducting the interview, I sent them the privacy notice to inform them about the limitations of this research project, including the rules and regulations. After that, I fixed an interview schedule. My respondents were free to choose their available time.

I conducted the interviews online in March 2025, individually, using the Zoom application outside of school hours and during their holiday. I preferred the online Zoom application to the interview because it was challenging for me to travel to my country (Nepal) for the data collection purpose. Before asking the interview questions, I obtained oral consent from each participant. I interviewed each participant for more than half an hour. Furthermore, for safety purposes, I used the Zoom application for the interview and the Turku University Transcribe application to transcribe data from the audio record. The total transcribed data contains about sixty-five pages.

4.4.1 Sampling

Sampling includes research methods about suitable context, location, time limit, activities, people, communication activities, and equipment, which helps develop the data for the study (Mason, 2017). Similarly, sampling is a systematic way of studying a large sample size by studying a smaller portion of it (Berg, 2004). I employed the snowball sampling method to collect the data for this research. In the snowball method, initially, participants are selected based on the specific needs and setting of the study. These participants then recommended other individuals who are more knowledgeable about the research topic and who should be interviewed (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). For this study, I initially selected an educational leader from one school. This individual recommended five other respondents from different public schools who were responsible for the principal.

Six school leaders were selected for the interview using the snowball sampling process. The public schools were selected from the Madhesh province of Nepal. The information about the participants is presented below.

4.4.2 Data Collection Tools: Interview

Structurally, I conducted semi-structured interviews or semi-standardized interviews to acquire data. Semi-standardized method of data collections refers to neither structured nor unstructured interviews and, the researchers designed the interview guide before conducting the interview and asked almost all the participants the same question systematically (Berg,

2004). Moreover, semi-structured interviews help the researchers to explore detailed information about the research topic by developing follow-up questions during the interview to explain and interpret the subjective answer (May, 2011). Furthermore, semi-standardized interviews dig out the reliable and trustworthy subjective experience of the participants (Miller & Glassener, 2021). Semi-structured interviews explore the implicit knowledge of the interviewees to make them more answerable by creating different alternative questions during the interviews (Flick, 2018). The semi-structured interviews are open-ended in nature and prefer the follow-up questions to find out the experience and knowledge of each person and group (Adams, 2010). The interview questions to be asked of the respondents are mentioned in the appendix; however, I raised many follow-up questions during the interview to obtain the in-depth information for my study.

The effective semi-structure interviews include different systematic planes: “selecting and recruiting the respondents, drafting the questions and interview guide, techniques for this type of interviewing, and analyzing the information gathered” (Adams, 2010, p. 368). Following the above-mentioned steps, after developing my research problems I choose my research participant following the snowball sampling which in have mentioned sampling section (4.3). There are no universal rules for determining the number of research participants; however, six to eight (6-8) participants are purposed for interviews (Mears, 2012). Therefore, I chose six participants from my target groups. My target group is educational leaders who work in public schools in Nepal. I identified the participants for the interview, and honestly, I presented my research plan and objective before conducting the interview.

I designed an interview guideline for the interview. A semi-structured question was adopted. I also took permission from the respondent and proceeded with the interview. Mears (2012) writes that when conducting an interview, one should start by introducing both the interviewee and the interviewer. This requires obtaining permission from respondents for the interview. In addition, the interview should be focused on informing the respondents about the purpose of the interview, the possible harms and opportunities for participating in the interview. The interview I conducted lasted 25 to 30 minutes. I recorded audio for the transcription in this interview. I also raised follow-up questions in the interview when I did not gain the answers that I had expected from my respondents related to my interview questions. Similarly, I recorded all the interviews, maintaining my ethical criteria, and transcribed them after collecting them.

4.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process of generating meaning from the collected data through interviews with different participants. Qualitative data analysis describes the subjective experience, phenomena, and conditions and develops new ideas to achieve the study's goal (Flick, 2018). Similarly, gathering data is the first step in qualitative research, which leads to analyzing the information and writing the final report for the researchers (John W, 2014). After collecting the data, all the recorded audio files were transcribed using the transcribe app provided by the university to generate meaning.

Braun and Clarke (2006) have proposed six steps, including the process for thematic data analysis of qualitative research, which researchers employed to generate the meaning of this study.

The first stage, Braun and Clarke (2006) write, familiarizing with the data, where transcribing the data and reading and rereading the data is essential to familiarize in the first phase. In this study, I read and re-read transcriptions to familiarize myself with the data and develop initial ideas. In the second stage, Braun and Clarke (2006) writes generating initial codes which refers to the production of the initial codes. In this study, I developed the initial code by highlighting the interesting narrative of the participants and arranging similar data together.

In the third stage, Braun and Clarke (2006) write about searching for the themes which include the lists of codes and grouping them into potential themes. In this study, I gathered codes to build the themes. Similarly, in the fourth stage, Braun and Clarke (2006) write, reviewing themes, ensuring that the themes are consistent with the coded extracts and the whole data set. In this study, I reviewed the themes to generate the thematic map of the analysis.

In the fifth stage, Braun and Clarke (2006) write about defining and naming themes, which include continuing analysis to enhance the specifics of each theme. In this study, I created a thematic sketch of the themes and named them by ensuring that the themes carry the meaning of the findings. In the final stage, Braun and Clarke, (2006) write producing the report focusing on the final opportunity for analysis, selection of vivid, compelling extracts. In this study, the results were developed following the research questions and connecting the various literature.

4.6 Quality Standard

Lincoln and Guba (1985) have emphasized four key criteria: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability to assess the trustworthiness of the research.

Four criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of a study were suggested: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability and furthermore, Guba and Lincoln (1994) added authenticity to assessing the quality of the research. This study focuses on these mentioned five criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of the result.

Ahmed (2024) argues that reflexivity and triangulation plays essential role to ensure the credibility. This study was carried out to partially fulfil the requirements for the degree of Master of Education and learning. In the initial phase, numerous seminars and meetings were held with different professors to develop the research topic, theories, and methods and enormous time was spent in the beginning phase. Similarly, after acquiring the idea for the research project, I spent a significant amount of time finding participants to collect data, transcribing, and creating the results, discussion, and conclusion of the research.

In the reflexivity activity, discourses were collected from various participants, transcribed, and observed multiple times to develop the theme, while bypassing the personal bias. Only the participant discourses were observed, and the theme was designed for finding.

Dependability refers to the methodological process and the data analysis methodology (Ahmed, 2024). Similarly, it includes consistency, reliability, and stability of findings and interpretations (Guba, 1981). To fulfil the dependability criteria of my study, I focused on achieving a clear explanation of interview questions, where I developed follow-up questions to maintain authenticity. Moreover, I read and re-read the transcript to develop the codes and themes from the interview. The interviews were transcribed after the interview and coded to develop themes. Themes were generated by arranging the similar codes. The meaningful utterances of the respondents were coded from the transcripts to foster their dependability.

Confirmability ensures the data is presented accurately during the data analysis process. Elo et al. (2014) state that confirmability requires the objectivity of participants' information, and it demotivates the subjective influence of the researcher in the data analysis process. This study accurately presented the data concerning the "A study of educational leaders' strategies for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in the public school in Madhesi province, Nepal" during the data analysis. Furthermore, I coded the participant information, which was exactly what they said in an interview. The data interpretation carries the meanings of the

informant's information that I had attempted to gather for this research. The data coding and the themes ensure the confirmability of the study. This is a study that followed an audit trail throughout the research process, which includes the selection of the informants, reviews of the coding, as well as recording of the analyzed data from the interview. These procedures provided the study with transparency, which enhanced the credibility of the qualitative analysis employed in the study.

The data was analyzed, focusing on the transcription of my information. Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a detailed description of the thematic data analysis process. The codes developed in this study were used to address the research questions. The findings from the data analysis offer the real experience related to the strategies and challenges of educational leaders in improving teaching and learning. The findings of the study are helpful in addressing the issues associated with a context similar to this study. However, some limitations of the study cannot be generalised to broader contexts.

Furthermore, authenticity refers to the transparency and fairness of the data processing during transcription and data analysis. Similarly, a systematic thematic data analysis process was established through a well-designed coding scheme to maintain the transparency of this study. Furthermore, the fairness of this study was established through collaborative discussions held in pairs throughout the research process. To maintain the quality of the study, I have clearly conducted the interviews, providing a free environment for my informants to express their opinions and analyse data, providing authentic evidence to address the research questions.

4.7 Ethical Issues

To address the ethical issues, I would follow the guidelines discussed by Hammersley and Atkinson (2019). I applied these guiding principles in my thesis on ethnography principles in practice

Informed consent is a kind of practical agreement between the researchers and research participants regarding the "full information" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019, p. 216) "information as might be needed to make an informed decision" (Bryman, 2016, p. 129) that is mentioned in the research. Based on the above definition, I informed all the participants about my research proposal's proposed plan in detail before conducting my interview. Then, I requested them to provide a consent to ensure they wanted to participate in my study without having any negative aspects in their mind. Only after the participants' permission, I developed my interview process, providing the full right of withdrawal to the participants if they felt uneasy during my pre-process.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity in this study, the participants' real names and their institutions' names were not used, and the informants' data were transcribed and analysed separately without giving their real names.

The research can create stress, pressure, anxiety, and panic in the participants and the reader during the research process or after the publication, directly or indirectly, on their dignity, professional skills, employment, social life, etc (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019).

Similarly, deception in the research can be the leading cause of harm to them (Silverman, 2021). Therefore, I become more conscious of the negative aspects of the study. I assured that my research would not, in any case, harm the research participants and others involved in my research project. I promoted accuracy, honesty, and truthfulness in my findings.

Similarly, I maintained justice by making my social research as beneficial as possible for others. I did not engage in activities that prejudiced my participants or others. Furthermore, all the participants were assured that their information would be used only for my academic purposes.

The research should be valid and reliable so that future researchers can read it as a reference source. The misinterpretation of the research data may create conflict in the future; therefore, it is the researcher's responsibility to maintain ethical considerations (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). Based on the objective of my study, my research was carried out using the different methods, skills, and strategies that can play a vital role in organizational innovation and social implementation by my participants and other researchers in the future.

5 Findings

This chapter demonstrates the results collected from the semi-structured interviews conducted with six educational leaders. The participants have served as head teachers in public schools for over three years, playing a vital role in enhancing their schools' teaching and learning quality and the outcomes of the students. The interviews were transcribed using the UTU transcribe app and categorized into themes from data to seek the answer to research questions presented in the introduction section one and the theoretical framework in chapter three. I have identified several themes that reflect the strategies employed by educational leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the challenges they have faced in the teaching-learning process. The themes are explored in detail below.

5.1 Brief Information of the Participants

The information about the participants is presented briefly. Each participant has been given a pseudonym, and their real identification is not mentioned for ethical purposes.

Participant A

Participant A has been the head teacher for the past three years. Before the head teacher, he worked as a secondary-level teacher for about seven years. He was also employed as a teacher in a private school for more than ten years. He started to work as a headteacher in public school to improve quality of education in their school with a strong desire. Initially, he worked as a teacher which developed his deep understanding of student needs and classroom dynamics. During his teaching period, he took on additional responsibilities such as mentoring new teachers and leading school initiatives. Recognizing his potential, the school management committee appointed him as the school headmaster. He elaborated that teachers only focus on their teaching-learning activities, whereas headteachers are fully connected with society, students, and the educational sectors that are interconnected with the school. Similarly, he said the head teacher should manage everything to develop the whole school environment.

Participant B

Participant B taught English at many community schools for about ten years. After that, he has been working as the head teacher for 5 years. He began his job in educational leadership with a high motivation for improving teaching and learning. He said that his work experience as a teacher developed his confidence to handle the school environment as a Headteacher. He further explained that his responsibility as a teacher was to teach the students to pass the exam and to improve their results. As a principal, he has a whole role from morning to

evening, like an administrative role, managing the school environment and communicating with students.

Participant C

Participant C has been the head teacher for three years. Before becoming the headteacher at the present school, he was an English teacher in five different community schools. He said that taking leadership in the academic sector has been really challenging in Nepal. He has been appointed as the head teacher by the school management committee. He believes there is no difference in role between the teacher and the head teacher. He shared that teachers and headmasters should collaborate, work in teams, share, and practice professionalism. If there is teamwork and collaboration, then it develops professionalism.

Participant D

Participant D has taught in various institutions and at a community school. He has also been the headmaster of a public school for six years. He realized that he could change some scenarios because some students were still lagging behind in their learning. He is interested in educational planning and ELT methods as well. He wanted to put those ideas of theories into practice by changing students' learning outcomes. So, I decided he should be in specific roles, and his fellow staff and the authorities also supported him in becoming the educational leader. They also said the head teacher should think of uplifting the communities rather than the school.

participants E

Participant E has been the head teacher for seven years and has taught for over 20 years in private and public institutions. As a headteacher by profession, he is still working with various institutions' academic personnel serving in the education sector and updating him on the modern innovative changes in the education system. Furthermore, he shared that the teacher's role is limited only to the school. In contrast, educational leaders should control the school environment and continually communicate with parents and stakeholders directly or indirectly connected to the school.

participants F

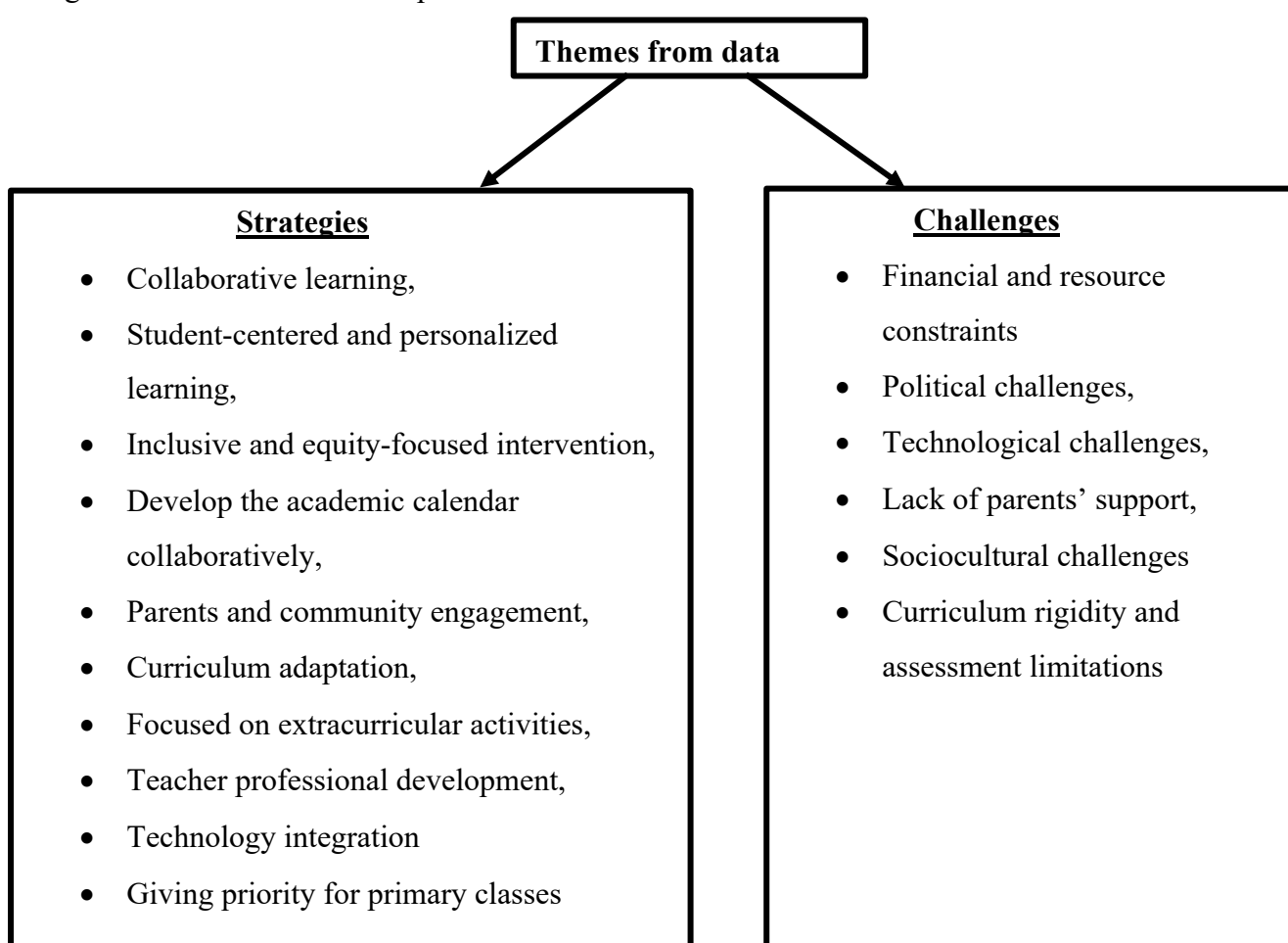
Participant F currently works as a head teacher in a public school, but he has over 20 years of teaching experience in the field. He distinguished that the headteacher should be more dutiful and transparent than the teacher. School leaders should lead not only the schools but also the community. The leaders should mobilize society and stakeholders.

5.2 Educational Leaders' Pedagogical and Instructional Strategies

In the twenty-first century, educational leaders, or school principals, play a crucial role in advancing educational institutions by offering guidance to teachers and fostering their professional development through in-service training and constructive support (Mthanti & Msiza, 2023). Furthermore, Mthanti and Msiza (2023) have noted that education leaders have established a strong foundation for developing the curriculum, integrating innovative technology with practical technological skills, particularly in public schools.

This study has explored innovative strategies implemented by headteachers to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in public schools in Madhesh Province, Nepal. The primary aim of the first research question was to investigate the various educational leadership activities that enhance the quality of education in their institutions. This theme is developed from the responses of the participants. This primary theme encompasses several sub-themes, which could be illustrated as follows.

Figure 1. Themes from Participants' Interviews



Source: Figure 1. Themes from participants ' interviews developed by the author

Collaborative Learning

In the narratives, all participants indicated that they employed collaborative learning to improve the quality of teaching and learning and student outcomes in their school. Regarding the cooperative activities, Participant A, who had been working for three years as an educational leader at the public school, narrated,

We are using collaborative learning in our school, encouraging student teamwork through group projects and peer learning (Participant A).

Likewise, Participant B, who had been serving as a principal of the public school for five years, replied,

We employ collaborative learning through technology integration by using digital tools such as smart boards and online resources to enhance lessons; providing teacher training workshops and conducting regular teachers' professional development sessions; and adopting student-centered approaches through personalized learning plans for students who need extra support (Participant B).

According to Laal and Laal (2012) the collaborative learning is an educational approach that shifts the focus from teacher-centered activities to a student-centered environment, encouraging students to work together to solve problems while sharing their ideas.

Likewise, Guiné (2020) argues that collaborative learning cultivates students' social skills and primarily emphasizes instruction, communication, teamwork, and experiential learning, while seeking sustainable solutions for problems. Furthermore Asad and Qureshi (2025), the innovation of modern technology has promoted technology-oriented collaborative teaching and learning, where the implementation of digital devices supports students and teachers in engaging in learner-oriented collaborative learning methods. The participants' responses indicate that leaders design collaborative activities to enhance the quality of education, promoting a student-centered approach. Additionally, participants observed that they utilized collaborative learning through teacher-student collaboration, group work, training, professional development for teachers, and the integration of various modern technologies (such as smart boards and online resources).

Similarly, participant C, who had been a school leader for three years, said that,

We use a collaborative approach to solve problems. The students find solutions by forming different groups and engaging in discussions. Teachers work merely as facilitators (Participant C).

Likewise, Participant D, who had been holding the post of education leader for seven years, answered that,

We collaborate as a team, learning from one another. We value ongoing professional development opportunities for all educators. Likewise, the challenges faced by the school's students and teachers are gathered and addressed through clinical methods (Participant D).

Van Leeuwen and Janssen (2019) discuss that in collaborative learning, teachers facilitate interactions among students that motivate them to learn and monitor students' activities to support their learning progress without exhibiting controlling behaviours toward them. Similarly, according to Sharratt and Planche (2016), the collaborative learning fosters critical thinking, group work, social interaction, flexibility, and independent skills, while clinical methods, as stated by Gaberson and Oermann (2010), help to increase the critical thinking and problem-solving skills of the students through continuous practice under the guidance of a teacher.

The participants' responses revealed that they utilized a collaborative learning strategy, in which the teacher is seen as a supporter of the students. In contrast, another participant favoured a more clinical method over collaborative learning through continued support for the practices.

Student Center and Personalized Learning

Various participants focused on learner-centered and personalized learning activities to foster the quality of teaching and learning in their school. They, however, focused on different activities based on the school's vision and mission and the students' needs. The learner-centered environment and personalized learning have two different principles; however, these are interconnected in classroom teaching and the learning process, teaching content selection, and community engagement in education (Porath & Hagerman, 2021). Regarding educational leadership strategies, participant A exclaimed,

We are adopting student-centered approaches by implementing personalized learning plans for our students. We are firmly committed to academic excellence and student well-being. One of our greatest strengths is our dedicated faculty and our student-centered approach. Most teachers in our school are using these methods. The personalized learning plans address the diverse needs of students and ensure that no one is left behind. Everyone should have an opportunity to be integrated into the mainstream. This means every student should be allowed to express their unique

qualities, fostering knowledge. Hidden knowledge must be developed so other students can learn by observing them (Participant A).

Likewise, participants B narrated similar ideas,

We employ a student-centered approach and implement personalized learning approach for students who need extra help. To get good results, as I have told my experiences and insights regarding the strategies, we conduct regular assessments: the first terminal examination, the second terminal examination, and the third terminal examination (Participant B).

Similarly, respondent C said,

We frequently engage students in fieldwork, class observations, and various projects. Students who receive poor marks or are ineligible for the examination are provided with feedback. We collaborate with the School Management Committee (SMC) to inform all parents and discuss the issues observed in the students as a group (Participant C).

According to Childress and Benson (2014) Personalized learning incorporates students' learning content, procedures, environment, and duration while providing individual support and opportunities based on their interests, needs, and skills. Furthermore, Childress and Benson (2014) also stated that Personalized learning inspires students to take ownership of their educational journey and become genuine lifelong learners.

Likewise, Personalized learning enhances the teacher's engagement with students and parents, creates scaffolding among students, and develops students' metacognitive, social, and emotional competencies to promote self-regulated learning (Murphy et al., 2016).

The responses from informants show that the leaders adopt a student-centered approach and personalizes learning plans to improve the quality of education in their school and performance the students. Participants have acknowledged that they use different instructional activities to motivate student for the sustainable learning. Respondents further said that they deigned the activities to attain academic excellence of the students. In doing so, they have exhibited transformative leadership approaches that empower academic staff and promote student creativity and performance. Similarly, the respondents also brought out the remedial support provided by the structured evaluation system to enhance student outcomes. They also focused on student engagement strategies, such as fieldwork, classroom observation, and discussion with parents and the school management committee (SMC) to achieve better

student results. All these activities demonstrate that the principles of instructional leadership strategies are highly influential. Similarly, participants D mentioned,

We prioritize the mission of the year. However, we focus on students' achievements, as we initially trained teachers to teach the students using innovative methods and approaches. We work in a team to achieve the vision of the school. conduct both summative and formative assessments after teaching and give individual feedback (Participant D).

In this regard, participant F narrated,

We encourage student to be active in the classroom and offer continuous support to students when needed. Our strategies, such as personalized instruction, technology integration, and regular assessment, help students be familiated with concepts better and stay motivated in learning. Mentorship programs also provide academic and emotional support, contributing to their success (Participant F).

Personalized learning method is widely embraced in higher education, and innovative technology significantly supports this approach (Tetzlaff et al., 2021). According to Porath and Hagerman (2021) personalized learning emphasizes constructive methods; therefore, innovative digital tools and technologies are utilized to offer individualized teaching and learning by enhancing learning content and evaluation, as well as managing the timetable. Technology has transformed the education sector by shifting from traditional teacher-centered to student-centered learning, besides holding learners accountable for their learning process. (Alamri et al., 2021). Correspondingly Lee et al. (2018) explained that technology supports personalized learning in various ways: it facilitates detailed record-keeping of students' academic and non-academic reports, interests, character traits, career goals , and interpersonal skills, creating a comprehensive profile that supports personalizing the learning experience. Lee et al. (2018) stated further that technology supports teachers in designing teaching and learning projects and activities aligned with the interests of each student. During instruction, students complete their projects or tasks independently or with guidance, using technology to access resources. Finally, technology enhances assessment by facilitating formative and summative evaluations, enabling educators to effectively track progress and adjust their teaching strategies. Additionally, technology-supported personalized learning can be implemented through blended learning, offering a readiness assessment and immediate feedback, which helps foster a high level of confidence in students with appropriate scaffolding (Alamri et al., 2021).

The participants' responses also indicated that they conduct their activities based on the mission and vision of the school and with shared knowledge. They also focused on teacher empowerment and technology integration for the good achievement of the students. Similarly, continued support, regular monitoring, and emotional support for the students are the primary activities implemented by the respondents in their school to increase the academic performance of students. Participants also reflected that personalized activities, the use of digital tools, and regular monitoring strategies are motivating factors for the learning of the students. These activities always encourage students in their studies. They also narrated that these activities help students to understand concepts better and remain motivated in learning. Furthermore, Mentorship programs also offer academic and emotional support, contributing to their success. From the implementation of the activities mentioned above, it can be acknowledged that respondents are highly motivated to form transformational leadership theory.

Inclusive and Equity-Focused Intervention

The narrative demonstrated that educational leaders emphasized the equity-focused activity to provide equal opportunities for all students. In the Nepali context, socio-economic context, it might be essential for academic leaders to provide equal learning opportunities to all the students. Shahi (2022) explains that Inclusive education is characterized by equal participation in educational activities for those who are excluded due to social stigmatization from culture, religion, caste, and poor economic background. Furthermore, Shahi (2022) found that public school education practices in Nepal often lack inclusiveness, particularly in teacher actions, student admissions, teaching and participation of classroom interaction and extra-curricular activities, and communication between students and parents.

In this regard, participant A narrated,

The government provides equal education to all students by providing opportunities for free education. We do not charge any fees to the students. We provide equal opportunities. We do not consider whether someone is rich or poor. If any financial need arises for the students, the school supports them through scholarships or other means of economic sources (Participant A).

Similarly, Participant B shared,

We provide opportunities all students equally in extracurricular activities, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or caste (Participant B).

Participant C answered,

We prioritize equal opportunities. For instance, when assigning student leadership roles, one male and one female must be selected. Regarding clubs, we ensure equity related to caste, religion, and social status. We are committed to this principle because it is essential. For example, inclusivity should be a focus when forming a children's club (Participant B).

The Constitution of Nepal 2015, Article 31 and parts 1- 4 state that all citizens have the right to free and compulsory education until the basic level. By law, citizens with disabilities and those who are economically disadvantaged are entitled to free higher education (The Constitution OF Nepal, 2015). According to Roy et al. (2022), many children are out of basic school and facing discrimination related to caste, disability, ethnicity, and gender in Sarlahi district (province-2) in Nepal. Roy et al. (2022) have mentioned that their project (World Vision International) works to change the structure of the school for inclusive education, provides an education awareness program to parents and communities, and helps to design the educational policy in local government to promote inclusive education in Nepal. According to White et al. (2025), the successful inclusive leadership focus on collaboration, respect for equity-based decisions, assurance of professional improvement, community participation, and result-oriented practices, all of which foster teacher competence, create a positive learning environment in the school, and enhance students' leadership abilities. Additionally, White et al. (2025) have also discovered that inclusive leadership promotes social cohesion, community participation, and empowerment of marginalized communities by making school leaders offer equal learning opportunities to all students irrespective of their backgrounds and abilities. Participants' responses emphasize that they assist economically disadvantaged students by providing scholarships from the school fund. Similarly, they have focused to maintain equality in gender, ethnicity, or caste at the school by delivering equal opportunities for all students to participate in extracurricular activities. Additionally, exclusive participation strategies in student leadership are promoted in his school to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Develop the Academic Calendar Collaboratively

The participants' narrative demonstrates that designing the school's academic calendar through the collective participation of internal and external school members is essential for educational leaders. The participant emphasized that they develop the academic calendar with the collective participation of stakeholders, teachers, SMCs, and the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) based on the economic budget and available resources. The participants'

narrative explored how educational leaders design the academic schedule to achieve the expected goal of the school and enhance the quality of teaching and learning and students' outcomes. Participant A stated that,

The study class should last 180 days in an academic year, and we have allocated over 20 days for extracurricular activities. To design an academic calendar, we need to organize ourselves before the session begins. We discuss with the SMC, PTA, and teachers' groups, gathering their suggestions to design the calendar accordingly (Participant A).

Likewise, participant F said,

Next, we present our report to the school management committee and stakeholders. Subsequently, through the collective decision of the staff and community members, we design an academic plan based on the available resources and budget (Participant F).

Lopez and Bauyot (2025) have claimed that many studies have suggested that the cooperation of stakeholders, parents, teachers, community members, and students has positively supported the implementation of academic activities in schools and enhanced the expected results for students. In addition to this Lopez and Bauyot (2025) have also discovered that the collective efforts of stakeholders, school, and community members have effectively addressed the school's challenges sustainably through resource allocation, developing an academic plan, and providing continuous feedback to overcome obstacles.

Responses of participants indicate that they developed their school's academic calendar before starting the educational session, primarily focusing on students' extracurricular activities. Similarly, they designed the academic plan after a rigorous discussion about last year's academic achievements at the school with in-school and out-of-school members. In addition, they develop an academic plan based on their economic conditions and the availability of resources.

Similarly, participant C answered,

We follow an organic leadership structure under the headmaster; we have coordinators, and there are individuals with different responsibilities under the coordinators. Before starting the session, we plan for the year by sharing various innovative ideas. Everyone shares their views and vision before the academic year begins. We create a work plan based on those activities and strategies and adhere to that academic calendar or work plan throughout the year (Participant C).

According to Aery (2010) the organic leadership style chooses the leaders by their career competence, experience, devotion to shared values, and proven dedication to selective self-determination, leading to multiple leaders across the institution's various departments. The participant preferred the organic leadership structure to develop the educational plan, providing opportunities for all staff to share their ideas. He has appointed different leaders in his school in various departments based on their subjective competence.

Parents and Community Involvement

The narrative of respondents emphasized the significance of the involvement of parents and the community in developing the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. The participants' experiences have shown that the participation of parents and community members, among others, stakeholders, contributes to enhancing the school's favorable climate and students' achievement. They have motivated the parents and community members to participate in multiple activities for various reasons. They meet parents regularly, make home visits, and give constructive feedback to create a conducive study environment for students at home. In this strategy, participant A reflected,

We conduct the parents and teacher meetings to discuss the student's progress and school initiatives, such as community involvement programs where local professionals are encouraged to mentor students. Since we cannot meet with guardians during the day or in the morning, we have arranged an evening visit to the village area each evening. During these visits, we collect feedback from guardians about their concerns and provide them with updates on their children's academic progress, learning progress, and behaviours. In this home visit, we discussed the daily routines of the parents and students and helped them to manage daily routines to enhance the quality of students. These strategies are implemented to develop consistent communication between the school and the parents of the students (Participant A).

Similarly, participant E stated

We offer volunteering opportunities for parents, community members, and our former students in school activities (teaching, managing extracurricular activities, and providing economic support to conduct the program). We hold monthly meetings for the PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) and the SMC (School Management Committee). We discuss the current problems, ongoing activities, and school activities

during regular meetings. We also share our strategies and updates with the community members (Participant E).

The involvement of the parents, school, and community is an essential treasure to develop an effective learning environment in the school that meets the various learners' needs (Maqhubela, 2025). Similarly, the parental involvement in community schools plays a very important role in maintaining student discipline, gaining good grades for the students, and managing the school environment (Msacky et al., 2024). Participants' responses indicated that the principals strongly encouraged parents and community members to engage in the school's education system. They highlighted that parents' communication can enhance students' outcomes and improve the school's quality. In Nepal, not all parents can attend school parent-teacher meetings due to household responsibilities and issues. In that situation, leaders and teachers visit the students' home to gather information about the learning environment of the students at home the parents' communication. Likewise, leaders and teachers assist students and parents in managing the study routine at home, this strategy has proven to be very effective in improving students' performance and elevating the quality of education at the school. Respondents have emphasized encouraging parents and community members to volunteer in school initiatives, which is one of the interactive strategies for enhancing the quality of education. Similarly, the leaders consistently engage with community members and maintain the quality of education in their school.

Participate C states that,

We need to negotiate with the community. In the community, some key individuals play a vital role in the school, and we must persuade them to conduct the school programs effectively. As a headmaster, my role involves negotiating, communicating with others, and incorporating their input into the school's operations program (Participant C).

Likewise, Participant F has answered,

We engage with the community to develop consistency and transparency in school activities. Community support is vital for the institution. It's impossible to run the school without the backing of community members (Participant F).

According to Mayger and Provinzano (2022) research, parent and community participation support the principal in designing school goals, while constructive feedback from stakeholders enhances the principal's effectiveness in the school environment. Similarly,

transformational leaders foster a more inclusive school environment by involving staff and parents in collective decision-making and building relationships with community members to develop the learning environment in school (Carrington et al., 2024).

The responses from participants suggest that leaders hold greater responsibility and authority in building relationships with community members and staff. Similarly, participant F's response indicated that community members are the backbone of the school, and their contributions help make school activities more transparent and sustainable.

Curriculum Adaptation

Research indicates that curriculum adaptation is one of the key strategies for education leaders. Most participants follow the national curriculum to design their activities, while others emphasize the local curriculum based on community needs. It was also found that some participants designed educational activities based on students' needs and available resources rather than strictly focusing on curriculum instruction. In the context of Nepal, the educational law has positively supported the implementation of the local curriculum, and it has been more effective in developing the local society (Bhetuwal, 2022). Similarly, the local curriculum is designed by local people and stakeholders, considering local needs, problems, and the environment (Adhikari, 2024). Regarding the curriculum adaptation strategies, Participant A exclaimed that,

We have local subjects in our school at the municipal level. While we cannot modify all the curricula, we can provide feedback to the Curriculum Development Center (CDC). Here, the municipality has implemented the local curriculum. However, some issues require timely changes. We adjust the curriculum according to the context and the situation (Participant A).

Similarly, participant C narrated that,

We have a local curriculum too. One curriculum has been set by the local government that we must apply here. That curriculum is related to social, natural, historical, and cultural aspects. Beyond the local curriculum, we have the national curriculum that we follow. Based on that, we design the programs here in the school (Participant C).

Participants highlighted that their schools have two kinds of curricula: National and local. They must teach students by following the national curriculum, and they cannot modify it. However, they can independently use local curriculum teaching strategies according to the context of the society. Similarly, Participants B said,

We are required to implement the curriculum prepared by the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) in our schools. We conduct our school activities based on the curriculum developed by the government (participant B)

Similarly, Participant D expressed that,

We must use the textbook based on the curriculum and the textbook is taken as the primary teaching material. We cannot teach the student out of the curriculum because the question of the exam design is based on the curriculum textbook (Participant D)

Likewise, participant E Said

“We design instructional planning primarily based on individual needs, but it should also be grounded in the curriculum. While the curriculum is essential, it is not the only factor to consider. Using the curriculum as a guide, we need to assess the learners and identify the available resources. By evaluating these elements, we can develop the instructional planning. We create the annual plan, work plan, lesson plan, unit plan, and so on. These forms of instructional planning are based on the curriculum or syllabus designed for us (Participant E)

Participants responses indicated that they follow to the instructions of the national curriculum. Above-mentioned response showed that they use the instructional activities outlined in the curriculum.

It is also found that participants develop the school's instructional program based on individual needs, following the course curriculum guidelines. This view reflects that the curriculum is meaningful but can control all the teaching-learning activities. From his response, we can assume that the leader should balance the curriculum and local context of the school to develop the instructional activities (annual plan, work plan, lesson plan, unit plan, etc.) of the school.

Focused on Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities are effectively implemented by educational leaders to enhance teaching and learning quality in their schools, however it is not mentioned in the curricula. They have systematized the extracurricular activities based on the number of students and availability of resources to ensure equal opportunities for all students. Lang (2021) argues that extracurricular activities can foster students' social relationships and enhance academic achievement by integrating extracurricular activities into the curriculum; leaders can achieve better results. In this regard, participant A shared

We have established an academic calendar designating Tuesdays and Fridays for extracurricular activities. On Tuesdays, we provide opportunities for students in grades one through five—specifically at the primary level—while Fridays are reserved for secondary level students, which includes grades six through ten, as our schools operate up to grade ten. This approach offers students numerous chances to engage in extracurricular activities and increase essential life skills. Specific skills are crucial, and our teaching and learning activities are closely linked to skill-oriented initiatives. Relying solely on classroom activities does not contribute to the development of a well-rounded individual. Therefore, we expose students to skill development and skill-oriented opportunities in addition to education and classroom activities. Many teams assist us in implementing various initiatives designed for them (Participants A).

Likewise, participant B narrated,

Nowadays, we have focused on extracurricular activities. We have an ECA group, which is responsible for creating extracurricular activities that connect with the curriculum and calendar (Participant B).

Furthermore, participant D said that,

We discuss in a group and develop the annual plan, which includes the extracurricular activities and co-curricular activities. And those extracurricular activities and co-curricular activities go on quite regularly (Participant D).

Extra-curricular activities develop students' confidence in socializing at school, enhance interpersonal skills, create a positive school environment, and promote community engagement (Bartkus et al., 2012). The participants have focused on extracurricular activities to improve their school's teaching and learning quality and well educational and social performance of the students. Extracurricular activities in the annual academic calendar of their school have planed based on their economic condition and available resources.

Teacher Professional Development

The narratives from the participants emphasized teacher professional development as a key strategy for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in the school through various activities. Some participants stressed the importance of continuous teacher training in integrating newly emerging teaching methods and technologies for professional development.

Others emphasized the importance of recognizing teachers and acknowledging their contributions to school outcomes by offering rewards and a special note of thanks. Similarly, some participants explained that they consistently monitor teaching activities and student outcomes and provide adequate emotional support for improvement.

Fischer et al. (2018) stated that the professional development of the teacher is appropriately connected to the classroom practices having a direct impact on students' learning results and enabling them to accomplish their dreams, which can enhance their understanding of professional identity. Furthermore, Fischer et al. (2018) exclaimed that the training provided for teachers' professional development nurtures an autonomy-supportive teaching and learning environment. In this regard participant A shared,

All the teachers are now well-trained. Our municipality provides timely teacher training and refresher courses, with a wealth of training options available, supported by our dedicated team. Teacher trainings ensure that educators stay current with modern teaching methods. We live in an era of science and technology, and integrating science and technology in the classroom leads to significant changes and contributes to curriculum-focused classrooms. Therefore, if teachers are not updated with timely training, they will miss out on modern teaching practices (Participant A).

Likewise, participant D said,

We conduct awareness programs for teachers on new methodologies, introduce incentive programs to boost teacher motivation and implement differentiated instruction to meet diverse learning needs. Usually, we indicate that the duty hours are from 10 AM to 4 PM in Nepal, but my school operates from 6 AM to 6 PM. Teachers are prepared to serve with minimal compensation or sometimes without pay. They are dedicated to contributing to the school's progress and the education system. Additionally, we often thank them with a note of thanks. For any achievement the school attains, we credit the teachers, not the leaders—those who work in the classroom and the field (Participant D).

According to Guskey (2009), professional development training fosters the teachers' knowledge and skills, which improves the quality of classroom teaching by implementing new policies and initiatives that ultimately meet the local community's needs. Guskey (2009) also argued that professional development offers an opportunity to gain new ideas or teaching

and learning methods that enhance the skills necessary for creating learner-centered teaching and learning.

Paudel (2020) reflects that technology improves teachers' professional development through exposure to new digital devices, apps, and teaching and learning resources. In the same way, technology enables instructors to incorporate innovative teaching pedagogies, establish flexible learning goals, monitor students' progression, provide feedback, and adjust instructional practices in accordance with students' needs and achievements (Huang et al., 2024). Participants emphasize their commitment to providing teacher training opportunities that support professional development. They note that the advancement of technology is continuously transforming educational methods and techniques; thus, teachers must remain updated on emerging technologies and teaching strategies to improve the quality of education. They are concentrating on sophisticated new digital technologies in their school to teacher professional development. The respondent said that they taught the teacher the newly teaching methods in the field of education to improve the teacher's professional development. In addition, they offer supplementary income-generating activities to motivate the teacher to improve school performance and the quality of education. Similarly, they offer the school's success fully to the teacher. Likewise, participant E said,

Teachers are primarily encouraged and given opportunities to enhance their instructional methods, refine lesson planning, and improve in their previous activities. We strive to provide these opportunities for teachers' professional development. During discussions, they are encouraged to reflect on their ideas that can be effectively implemented next academic year or in the upcoming session. Teachers can continuously refine their teaching methods by keeping their ideas and drawing on their shared thoughts. Likewise, I give the essential guidance needed to enhance their teaching methods, foster better classroom dynamics, and boost their overall contribution to the school activities (Participant E).

According to Day et al. (2016), the most common strategies that principals use to improve the quality of education in the school are examining students' academic reports or progress, upholding ethical values by collaborating with their colleagues, providing effective feedback, fostering a supportive learning environment for both school members and students, and utilizing digital technology with proper inspection and observation to enhance the quality of tools and support for school improvement. The respondent said that they supplement the teacher's lesson plans with rigorous discussions and exchange of information within a group,

thus enriching the academic standard of the schools and learners' achievement. Participants also indicated that they closely observe teaching activities and methodologies and give feedback and guidance toward attainment of the desired goals of the school.

Technology Integration

The narratives from the participants suggest that they are concentrating on integrating technology in their school to modernize the education system. They are providing teacher training on the innovative development of technology.

Haleem et al. (2022) argue that in modern education, integrating technology into teaching and learning is essential and an integral part of the education system. Likewise, employing technology in school has boosted students' motivation to learn, and teachers can more easily design curricula without extra time commitments (Adiyono et al., 2024). Regarding the technology integration, participant A said,

We plan to manage a sufficient digital tool to modernize our school education system. While our school has access to basic technology, we lack advanced technology. We use computers and projectors, but our smartboards are inadequate. Additionally, many students lack computers or laptops. With only one laptop available, we can teach only one student at a time. We continue to face challenges in ensuring all students to provide equal access to digital learning tools. Not all classrooms are conducive to digitalization or the use of ICT resources (Participant A).

Similarly, participant B answered,

We implement several strategies, including collaborative learning that encourages student teamwork through group projects and peer learning; technology integration that utilizes smart boards and online resources to enhance lessons; and teacher training workshops about digital tools that conduct regular professional development sessions (Participant B).

According to Haleem et al. (2022) the educational technology includes teaching tools like mobile devices, smart boards, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), tablets, simulations, dynamic visualizations, virtual laboratories, and the Internet of Things. Additionally, Haleem et al. (2022) also discussed that integrating technology in education has enhanced accessibility and flexibility, personalized learning, engagement and interactivity, and teacher efficiency. The participants have focused on integrating an innovative tool to ensure equal opportunities for all students to use the digital device. Similarly, they are providing training to the teacher to

be updated on the use and function of innovative technologies in teaching and learning process.

Giving Priority to Root Primary Classes

The participants indicated that nowadays they emphasize early childhood development strategies to enhance the quality of education. They have recognized that the elementary level of education is the foundation for students.

Participants C elaborated,

We focus on the root of the classes, that is, the base of the classes, which is ECD (Early Childhood Development) one, two, three, four, five. There, we gave a lot of focus, and since then, within three or four years, giving a lot of priority to teaching-learning materials, training, and timely observation, we have found quite a lot of improvement in the students regarding educational qualities after the implementation of these strategies (Participant C).

Similarly, participant F said,

The first thing is that we give priority to the elementary level, not to the higher classes. Okay. The foundation should be strong. Once they get into the line, lane, they will learn on their own. So, we focus on an elementary level (Participant B).

Children studying at the primary level in public schools in rural areas of the country cannot perform at the minimum standard after having the class in their school, and the school cannot maintain the basic needs of the children (UNICEF, 2022). Furthermore, UNICEF (2022) explored that most public schools do not have trained teachers who can teach by addressing the children's psychology. Nowadays, the UNICEF has employed many projects to improve children's basic education, collaborating with the Nepal government. The participants have now realized that primary education is the foundation for students. Therefore, they provide extensive care for elementary-level students.

5.3 Challenges Faced by Educational Leaders Implementing Strategies

The theme addresses this question: What challenges do educational leaders face when implementing these strategies to improve teaching and learning? During the interview, the participants shared different perceptions based on their practices. According to Simkhada (2023) the government, educational institutions of Nepal face diverse challenges, including geographical, cultural, poverty-related issues, gender disparity, lack of teachers, language

barriers, political obstacles, insufficient parental support, infrastructure deficits, and integrating technology. Simkhada (2023) also mentioned that financial and resource constraints are significant challenges among these challenges and limitations.

Financial and Resource constraints

The participants' responses indicate that educational leaders encounter numerous challenges as academic leaders within schools. Participant A shares his perspective on the economic condition of school funding limitations.

There are many challenges, such as seeking external funding and forming partnerships for additional resources. Funding remains our biggest obstacle. I want to emphasize the need for external funding. Economically, we are at a disadvantage compared to other secondary schools in our municipality. This is why funding is the most critical issue for our school. We are pursuing external funding and partnerships for additional resources from the Ministry of Education, the municipality, community organizations, NGOs, and INGOs (Participant A).

Furthermore, participant F said that,

The government of Nepal provides us with a limited financial budget for teaching materials, which is insufficient to purchase innovative teaching and learning resources, as they are expensive (Participant F).

According to Mainali (2024), the economic and resource constraints have significantly impacted the achievement of expected school goals and student achievement in public schools in Nepal. All the participants emphasized that they have limited funding and cannot purchase sufficient innovative teaching and learning materials. Participants have also mentioned that the government is not providing enough funds to manage the school properly.

Political Challenges

The respondents' narratives demonstrated that political problems are appeared as influential factors to the role of headmaster within public schools of Nepal. They explicitly stated that the educational leader cannot make decisions without political influence. Democracy Resource Center (2024) highlights, teachers in public schools are selected, promoted, and transferred based on a political leader approach, where party affiliation serves personal benefits rather than those of the school and students. Regarding the political challenges, Informant C noted that,

Political and social barriers make the role very challenging for the headmaster. Many teachers are affiliated with political parties, and some staff are hired based on these political ties even though they are unqualified in the related position. If they aren't convinced, implementing any strategy becomes quite tricky. Furthermore, headmasters lack the authority to hire or fire staff in government schools. Another challenge is effectively coordinating and managing all stakeholders, because they are affiliated with the political parties (Participant C).

Likewise, participant D said,

Political instability is one of the biggest challenges in Nepal. That would be an exceptional case if we say there is no political challenge to the head teacher in a public school. The schools get budgets based on the party in power and their connection to the government. If the headmaster is highly connected with leading political leaders, they will receive funding easily (Participant D).

Similarly, participant F explained,

Some limitations or difficulties within institutions occasionally arise due to political fluctuations that affect school activities, shaped by local politics. In this school, SMC members are chosen from the political party, limiting the headmaster's ability to work independently (Participant F).

Acharya (2021) stated that the central and local governments are not engaged in educational issues to enhance the quality of education; they are focused on the political agenda.

Participants noted that teachers are affiliated with political parties, which means they cannot follow their educational leaders if they engage in activities against their political party's interests. Similarly, they indicated that some teachers and staff are hired through political influence without enough teaching competence. The politically appointed teachers or staff do not follow the rules and regulations set by the education leaders. Participants also argued that many public schools are affected by political activities. The political strategies of educational leaders decide how schools obtain funding. Leaders with substantial influence in the government can more easily secure school financial resources. They also mentioned that SMC is formed in schools based on political parties. They also hinder educational leaders from working independently.

Technological Challenges

The narratives of the participants revealed that they are facing the technological challenges in their schools. To manage adequate technological tools in their school to provide equal opportunities for all students is considered the most important challenge. Respondents from diverse schools emphasized similar technological challenges and limitations, such as unequal distribution of educational resources and a shortage of trained teachers. Similarly, one of the participants focused on the negative challenge of using technology inside the classroom.

Regarding the technology limitations participants A said,

Almost all the teachers are not well-trained or thoroughly familiar with technology. The teachers lack proper teacher training for technology use. (Participant A)

Same as participant B narrated that,

We face many challenges, such as limited access to modern technology and insufficient resources for extracurricular activities. We encounter problems implementing various initiatives, such as unequal student device access (Laptop computer, digital board). With over 40 to 50 students in a single class, we only have five to ten devices available. This situation prevents the equal distribution of devices to all students (Participant B)

Likewise, participant C said that,

Regarding technology, some teachers are excellent at using PowerPoint presentations, searching the web, and incorporating relevant materials. However, other teachers are lagging. We plan to gradually involve them in making progress. Likewise, our school lacks effective operation and proper maintenance. That's why we are facing such difficulties in our school (Participant C).

Furthermore, participant F expressed that,

We have ICP-based challenges, multimedia-based challenges, and a lack of training. And some teachers didn't like to take the training. And some, some teachers would like to take training, but they wouldn't like to implement within the classroom. They totally saw the negligence regarding teaching and learning (Participant F)

Participants highlighted that they do not have sufficient modern trending learning material in their schools. They have collected some materials, but they are not enough based on the number of students. These kinds of problems create an unequal distribution of educational

materials among all students. Furthermore, they also shared that they do not have a trained teacher to operate the latest innovative teaching and learning tools. All the participants face these kinds of challenges. Similarly, they noted that public schools' performance is not satisfactory compared to private schools, primarily due to a lack of modern teaching and learning materials in public schools. Similarly, participant A narrated that,

Managing students' use of technology appropriately is difficult. I have noticed that technology often distracts students from their education. They tend to use technology for entertainment rather than as educational resources (Participant B).

Students often use technological devices for entertainment rather than learning, distracting them from their academic goals and reducing their motivation, interest, and passion for learning (Kulesza et al., 2011). The participant also shared that the use of technology leads the students' teaching and learning process.

Lack of Parents' Support

The educational leaders emphasized that they aimed to foster the academic performance of school and learning and outcomes of the students with extensive support from parents. Consequently, the parents are unable to attend the parent-teacher meeting, which creates a communication gap between the teacher and the parents about the student's achievements. In this regard, participant C narrated that,

Our parents do not give us that much support. We are getting support, but we cannot involve them in the education system. Most of the parents are from the labour class or farmers. They are busy with their household chores. If we announce a PTM (Parents-Teachers Meeting), we hardly get 50% of parents' attendance. We are struggling to make our presence in our meetings and other activities. Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to win the heart of the community wholeheartedly. Yeah. And we want to actively involve our guardians in the school's activities and students' learning (Participant C).

Likewise, participant D said,

And sometimes, if the guardian does not visit the school, we also deprive the student of attending the exam. This creates a compulsion for guardians at the schools. We have some discussion (Participant D).

Poudel et al. (2024) Found that communication between parents and the school or teacher is one of the most critical elements to develop the quality of teaching and learning in Nepal and the students' achievements. Furthermore, Poudel et al. (2024) have also explored that the continuous interaction between the parents and the teachers has enriched the students' academic performance. The participants said fewer parents communicate with the school or teachers, which creates a problem in improving student achievement.

Socio-cultural Challenges

The participants' responses indicate that public school leaders encounter cultural challenges in their schools, particularly regarding gender disparity and socio-cultural issues challenges.

Participant B said that

If you go inside it, we face many challenges because, compared to boys, girls don't have the same access. For example, we provide students with SEE preparation classes. We have 71 students taking part in extra classes, such as coaching classes or remedial classes. We take classes from morning until eight o'clock in the evening. But for girls, after six o'clock in the evening, they start chattering to the teacher, saying, "It's time to go; our mommy or papa says like this." They are very fearful of taking classes after six o'clock. So, it's all about the circumstances of our society because girls are not as free as boys. Another thing is that girls need to do household work and support their parents. So, in comparison to boys, girls have fewer opportunities because of culture or many other things (Participant B).

Similarly, participant E highlighted that,

Socio-cultural challenges persist. Due to these challenges, they struggle to read both the English and Nepali textbooks effectively, as they face challenges related to socio-cultural diversity. Additionally, their mother tongue difficulties hinder their ability to read the books in either language (Participant E).

According to Chompa (2025), women in Madhesi province face various challenges, such as being discouraged from having higher education and encouraged to do household work, being forced to early marriage, and parents are not allocating financial support to girls as they do to boys. The participants have also narrated that gender discrimination exists in their school from the parents' side.

Curriculum Rigidity and Assessment Limitations

The participants have faced the curriculum rigidity and assessment challenges as the major problem in developing the students' knowledge. They cannot teach the student extra knowledge which are more appropriate to enhance the student's creativity and promote rote learning.

Participant D stated that,

We measure the students' outcome in terms of their test scores. We must teach students based on the curriculum. Otherwise, they will fail the exam. We encouraged them to practice the model questioning many times to get a good mark on the final exam. The final exam is taken by the Education board through a paper-and-pencil test. Therefore, we can not teach our students by following their interests. Similarly, we must follow the textbooks that the government prescribes. If we want to provide extra knowledge to the student, we cannot do so due to the limitations of the curriculum (Participant D).

Participant F stated that,

We must follow the government-designed curriculum, which was designed more than 30 years ago. We cannot teach our students outside of the curriculum because students are evaluated based on their exam performance (Participant F).

Achrya and Sigdel (2024) have argued that the curriculum is designed based on the student approach; however, all the activities are dominated by the teacher-centered approach. Furthermore, Achrya and Sigdel (2024) have stated that the curriculum of Nepal is unsuitable for classroom teaching, has forced the use of a traditional exam system, and has promoted rote teaching and learning rather than fostering student knowledge in global contexts. The participants also narrated that the teachers should have taught students following the traditional method, and promoting rote learning dominated by the teacher.

6 Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter examines the report and findings presented in chapter five, comparing them from the perspective of various theories and previous studies discussed in chapter three.

Additionally, the respondents' narratives have revealed multiple themes, and the results and findings have been thoroughly discussed in connection with existing theories and literature.

The strategies employed by educational leaders—including educators, managers, administrators, supervisors, innovators, and motivators—are essential for improving the quality of education (Ismaya et al., 2023). Moreover, Ismaya et al. (2023) also said that the educators motivate the school's internal and external members to take greater responsibility through personal accountability. Managerial responsibility emphasizes developing teamwork to improve the school environment. Administrative plans control the staff and direct their activities. Same as, an innovative action points out the issues of the school and suggests workable solutions. Supervisory activities include implementing programs, monitoring, and evaluating the teaching and learning process. Motivational activities aim to encourage teachers to effectively utilize their skills by creating a dynamic learning environment.

The study's interview data indicate that educational leaders have employed all the strategies mentioned above to improve the quality of education in public schools in Madhesh Province, Nepal. Based on these findings and incorporating the theories mentioned in chapter three, the themes for the discussion were developed and presented, connecting to the existing literature.

The present study found that most educational leaders used collaborative activities to enhance the quality of education through group work, training, professional development, and the promotion of student-centered approaches in the teaching and learning process. This aligns with the idea Culduz (2023) who emphasized that educational leaders employ strategies based on the context and needs of teachers, students, and society; however, one of the essential strategies is promoting a collaborative learning environment through group work and the sharing of ideas. Similarly, participants highlighted that the teacher's collaboration with technology, such as smart boards and online tools, enhances the quality of education in his classroom. This finding is correlates with Sholeh (2021) statement that transformational leaders who provide intellectual stimulation can enhance teacher competence by integrating technology into the teaching and learning process. According to Sholeh (2021) tools such as the internet, LED TVs, and YouTube channels, foster creative learning; therefore, his approach is more effective in teaching and learning strategies.

Participants focused on problem-solving strategies in the student-centered approach, where the teacher appears as a facilitator. The problem-solving approach is one of the instructional strategies for teaching and learning that motivates students to use their brains to solve problems under the instructional supervision of the tutors (Singh et al., 2023).

In contrast, one participant emphasized collaborative teamwork and clinical method strategies to enhance the quality of education. According to Sharratt and Planche (2016) collaborative learning, fosters critical thinking, group work, social interaction, flexibility, and independent skills, while clinical methods, as stated by Gaberson and Oermann (2010) the teacher guide, support, stimulate, and facilitate learning in an appropriate setting, and students learnt in different ways based on the instruction. These contrasting thoughts represent the various approaches to student-centered learning; however, each enhances the quality of education and student results.

Another important finding of this study is that nearly all participants engaged in student-centred and personalized learning strategies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at their school through various activities. This finding is strongly connected with the existing literature and highlights the importance of student-centred approaches in educational activities.

Participants have concentrated on various instructional activities to enhance the overall development of students aimed at promoting academic excellence. In this regard, participants demonstrated transformative leadership strategies that empower academic staff and foster student creativity. This is associated with Overby, (2011) the argument that the student-centered approach encourages students to solve problems in groups and share their ideas, promoting critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Similarly, Froyd and Simpson (2008) mentioned that student-centred learning includes various teaching and learning approaches, such as collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, and inquiry-guided learning, which are related to the participants' leadership strategies.

In the same way, participants concentrated on improving the students' outcomes through remedial support offered by the structured evaluation system. They focused on student engagement strategies, such as fieldwork, classroom observation, and discussion with the parents and SCM, to achieve better student results. These findings reflect Alamri et al. (2021) perceptions on personalized learning, shift traditional teacher-centred education into a student-centered one, and enhance learners' responsibility for their educational activities and outcomes.

Another novel finding of this study is that participants used equity-focused interventions to improve their schools' teaching quality. Participants focused on providing free education and scholarships for disadvantaged students while maintaining equality in gender, ethnicity, and caste at the school by ensuring equal opportunities for all students to participate in extracurricular activities. This is connected with the idea Devecchi and Nevin (2010) that Inclusive school leaders should design their school practices to empower stigmatized, stereotyped, and marginalized individuals, prioritizing personal differences and needs.

It was also found that educational leaders emphasized maintaining gender and religious equality through structural leadership roles and inclusive club formation. Exclusive participation strategies in student leadership are promoted in his school to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. These leadership practices are consistent with Carrington et al. (2024), who found that transformational leadership motivates teachers to cultivate an inclusive learning atmosphere for all students by promoting collective communication, participation, and respecting the value of their work. An essential result of this study found that the headmasters have employed an inclusive participative approach to designing the school's academic calendar, following the principle of transformational leadership theory. The transformational leadership theory promotes a participatory approach to create a supportive learning environment and educational activities in academic institutions (Owusu-Agyeman, 2021). Educational leaders emphasized the inclusive strategies for developing the school's academic routine by collaborating with internal and external members, primarily focused on extracurricular activities. This inclusive participation of leadership strategy represents the intellectual stimulation component of the transformational leadership approach, while participants emphasize on inclusive participation, fostering the individual's needs (Alkhattabi et al., 2025). Furthermore, findings also suggest that an organic leadership approach promotes the inclusive involvement of all school members in the educational planning process. This finding corresponds with Kantabutra and Suriyankietkaew (2011, p. 68) the statement that the organic leadership structure “moves away from leader-centric, less command and control from the top, but rather focuses on collective, team work of multiple members of the organization to achieve common goals.”

Furthermore, this study found that participants employed parents and community involvement strategies to promote inclusive participation to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and students' outcomes with the various activities.

As part of this approach, leaders and teachers visit students' homes to gather information about the students and the school while assisting students and parents in managing the study routine at home. This strategy has proven to be highly effective in enhancing students' performance and improving the quality of education at the school. This concurs with the finding Osagie and Osalumese (2024) that principals regularly monitor teachers' teaching practices and students' performance and provide effective feedback in instructional leadership strategies. Osagie & Osalumese (2024 have also argued that educational leaders continually promote dialogue with teachers, parents, and stakeholders to enhance student performance, academic success, and achieve the school's objectives.

The findings indicate that educational leaders promote extracurricular activities in their schools to cultivate social skills aligned with the course curriculum, and they have included the schedule of extracurricular activities in their annual calendars. Similarly, they have established a group responsible for overseeing academic activities. This result corresponds with Zukarnaen (2025) that extracurricular activities at the school develop students' social, interaction , and creative skills, motivating them to be more dynamic in their daily lives. Similarly, Munir and Zaheer (2021) have argued that extracurricular activities decrease the students' dropout rate, foster closeness with the school, and are suitable for both introverted and extroverted students.

Furthermore, this study found that education leaders implemented professional development strategies for teachers by organizing diverse activities to provide training from various perspectives. The educational leaders offer teacher training on the newly invented teaching methods, innovative digital tools, and technology integration in classroom curriculum design for teacher professional development. Similarly, the education leaders encourage teachers to share their experiences and support them by providing proper rewards, feedback, and guidance. This finding is consistent with Kilag and Sasan (2023) have stated that the instructional leaders always provide consistent constructive feedback, exhibit best practices, increase teachers' collaboration, and offer opportunities for teachers to share their experiences for teacher professional development. Mthanti and Msiza (2023) have proposed that there are several ways to develop the teachers' professional development such as in-service training, technology integration in schools, providing financial support, and improving communication among the teachers.

Additionally, this study revealed that using technology in schools significantly enhances the quality of teaching and learning. Respondents said that they do not have sufficient digital

tools but, they have planned to incorporate innovative teaching and learning devices to ensure equal access for all students. This finding aligns with the transformational leadership theory. In this context, Ruloff and Petko (2025) have explored that transformational leaders quickly adopt and implement technological innovations to achieve educational goals, believing technology integration provides guidelines for systematically managing the school program. Similarly, Sholeh (2021) states that intellectual stimulation leaders enhance teachers' teaching competence, creativity, and knowledge through technology integration.

The findings showed that most participants encountered various challenges in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. The study found that financial and resource constraints are more severe challenges for education leaders. The limitations of the teaching material in school are highly affected by the students' results, teachers' inspiration, and the systematic management of the school, which are becoming more challenging in the present in public schools in Nepal (Mainali, 2024). The participants emphasized that they do not have sufficient funds to maintain the quality of the school. They have financial support from national and international organizations. They have also highlighted that the government of Nepal is providing only a small amount of funds, which is insufficient to run the school activities properly. According to Sustainable Development Goal 4, the government of Nepal should allocate a minimum of 15% of the national budget; however, the government has not prioritized education and allocated less funding in the education field, which is insufficient to maintain the quality of education (Joshi, 2023). This finding indicates that the government should increase the budget for educational institutions to develop the quality of education.

The findings also found that political challenges are affecting education leaders in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. They have mentioned that unqualified teachers are hired using a political approach. The headmaster cannot conduct any activities without permission from political leaders. It was also found that the school budgets are allocated within the school based on the political approach of the educational leaders. Similarly, the political parties design the SMC and work on their parties' affairs. In many government schools in Nepal, the academic leaders' expertise is neglected, and political connections control all educational activities (Mandal, 2025).

Technological challenges were another significant issue emphasized by the participants. The findings identified that the schools do not have enough technological devices to provide equal opportunities for all students. Similarly, they do not have a well-trained teacher to operate digital devices and fix them properly. In this sense, they face the technology's operating and

maintenance challenges. This result is similar with Acharya (2021) has argued, that various teachers are not familiar with modern technology, even though they are not interested in implementing digital tools in the classroom, which has decreased the quality of education in Nepal. It was also found that technology distracts students from real teaching and is used for entertainment rather than study. Regularly implementing digital tools can lead students to lose self-control, becoming habituated to social media, gaming, and messaging instead of focusing on teaching-learning activities (Mariana et al., 2023). The research has also found that with new, innovative exam and assessment systems through technological tools, the teacher cannot monitor students' work, and there is a high possibility of cheating (Heng & Sol, 2021).

Similarly, the present study also reflected that the parents are not serious about their children's studies because of their household challenges. They did not attend the parent-teacher meeting regularly. Due to their absence, some students cannot participate in school without their parents. This result is connected with Katel and Katel (2024) have mentioned that many parents cannot visit the school due to the financial problems they have to manage, including daily expenses.

Another critical finding of this study was sociocultural challenges. The parents don't allow their daughters to attend the evening class. The girls are not as free as the boys to go outside at any time, and the girls are compelled to do housework. The finding parallels with Belbase (2025) has been mentioned that the sociocultural norm has become one of the most complex challenges to empowering girls' education in Nepal. Furthermore, Belbase (2025)) has emphasized that parents have stereotypes about their sons and daughters. They are not providing a learning environment for the daughter compared to the sons.

Similarly, it was also found that students come from diverse cultures. They have different mother tongues; they cannot understand the instructional language of teaching, harming student learning. This finding aligns with Lal (2025) the presentation that Nepal has more than 120 languages, and language diversity has become challenging in designing the school curriculum and implementing the various teaching materials.

Furthermore, this study also found curriculum rigidity and assessment challenges in the teaching and learning process in Nepal's education system. The teacher cannot teach the student using the innovative student-centered approach because of the curriculum's teaching instruction and the student's evaluation system. Similarly, participants have also emphasized that the curriculum is not flexible enough to teach students based on the local context and demotivates the students to develop communicative and interactive skills. A previous study

Yadav et al. (2024) explored the traditional curriculum, exam system, and teaching approaches as the main challenges to improving the quality of education in the context of Madhesh province. Furthermore Yadav et al. (2024) have also highlighted that shortage of trained and qualified teachers and ineffective evaluation and feedback are major challenge in the Madhesh province.

Conclusion

This research examined the strategies and challenges faced by educational leaders in enhancing the quality of teaching in public schools in Madhesh Province, Nepal. The data were collected using the principle of qualitative research with seven participants. The data were elaborated and interpreted through transformational and instructional leadership theories. The study found that educational leaders employed various strategies to enhance the quality of education in their school. These contained collaborative learning, student-centered and personalized learning, inclusive and equity-focused intervention, develop the academic calendar collaboratively, parents and community engagement, curriculum adaptation, focused on extracurricular activities, teacher professional development, technology integration and giving priority for primary classes were the major strategies employed by the educational leaders to enhance the academic quality of their school and student results. These methods have highly contributed to achieving the expected goal of schools and improved the students' outcomes.

This research also revealed many potential challenges encountered by the educational leaders in improving the quality of teaching and learning in their school. These challenges include financial and resource constraints, political challenges, technological challenges, lack of parents' support, sociocultural challenges and curriculum rigidity and assessment limitations. These factors have affected the educational qualities of the schools, students' outcomes, and teachers' professional development in the Mahdesh province in Nepal.

The data interpretation findings show that the educational leaders' activities significantly contributed to enhancing the sound environment in school, promoting a teacher-centered method to a student-cantered approach for the holistic development of the students.

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Appendices

Appendix - 1

Interview Guideline

Introduction and leaders' background

1. Could you briefly introduce yourself?
2. How did you begin your journey in education leadership, and how long have you been in this role?
3. As a school leader by profession, what distinguishes you from the other teachers in your school and society? Do you have any experience to share?

Understanding the school context

4. Could you describe your school's current situation, including its strengths, weaknesses, and other essential things?

Leadership strategies for teaching and learning

5. Do you use some strategies or programs to enhance teaching and learning education in your school? What are these strategies, and how have they been implemented?
6. Why do you implement these kinds of strategies?
7. How do the students achieve good results in your school, and what role do your strategies play in their success?

Mission and leadership approaches

8. How do you design the mission and instructional program that effectively promotes student achievement?
9. How would you implement your leadership approaches in fostering effective teaching and learning within your school?

Challenges

10. What are the most significant challenges you have faced in implementing strategies for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning environment in the school? Why?
11. How do you deal with these challenges?
12. What strategies have you used to gain community support to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in your school?

Implementation of Technology

- 13. what about the access to technology in teaching and learning in your school?
- 14. Could you provide some examples of successful implementations or difficulties encountered?

Evaluation

- 15. How do you evaluate the consequence of your implemented strategies or initiatives to enhance teaching and learning?

Future vision

- 16. In your perception, what role should educational leaders perform in shaping the future of education in your school or public school in Nepal?
- 17. I appreciate you sharing your knowledge. Would you like to share anything further or talk about your experience that did not get in the conversation?

Appendix – 2

Privacy Notice to Collect the Data

Information for participants of the research project “*A Study of Educational Leaders` Strategies for Enhancing the Quality of Teaching and Learning in the Public Schools in Madhesh Province, Nepal.*”

You are participating in a scientific study at the University of Turku. This notice describes how your personal data will be processed in the study.

1. Data Controller

University of Turku

FI-20014 University of Turku, Finland

Telephone +358 29 450 5000

University of Turku’s controller for the personal data collected and processed in the university’s activities- internally and externally – in teaching, guidance, research, administration, and cooperation.

2. Description of the study and the purposes of processing personal data

The data are proceeds for the master thesis. The primary objective is to find educational leaders` strategies for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in the public schools in Madhesh province, Nepal.

3. Principal investigator

Name: Bigyan Bahadur karki

Address: Yo-kylä 19 A 18

Tel.: 04087370477

E-mail: karki.bigyan@2037gmail.com

4. Contact details of the Data Protection Officer

The Data Protection Officer of the University of Turku is available at the contact address: dpo@utu.fi.

5. Persons processing personal data in the study

The main aim is to explore the opinions and experiences of educational leaders related to my research questions through individual interviews. Therefore, six school leaders from different public schools have been selected for the interview schools. The study will involve a personal digital interview conducted via Zoom meeting, using qualitative research and semi-structural

questions. The information will be recorded through a Zoom recorder and later transcribed. The questions include related research questions and topics.

6. Name, nature and duration of the study

Name of the study: “*Educational Leaders` Strategies for Enhancing the Quality of Teaching and Learning in the Public Schools in Mahesh Province, Nepal.*” This is the research process for the Masters research.

Duration of the processing of personal data: The planned end date of the project is 30.08.2025. After completing my study project, I will destroy all my collected data

7. Lawful basis of processing

Personal data is processed on the following basis, which is based on Article 6(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation:

- ☒ data subject’s consent;
- ☒ processing is based for the performance of a contract;
- ☒ compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject;
- ☒ processing is necessary in order to protect the vital interest of the data subject;
- ☒ performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller:

8. Personal data included in the research materials

We will only use your data for the purpose(s) specified here and will process your personal data according to the University of Turku's data protection legislation. My supervisor will access my data. Personal data is protected by pseudonymizing the interview transcripts, storing the interview recordings and transcripts separately from the interviewee's name and contact details, and avoiding using indirect identifiers in research publications and reports. The data is stored on password-protected servers that meet the University of Turku’s information storage standards. The plane is scheduled to end in May 2025. The interview recording and transcript will be kept secure. The data will be retained until my Master’s thesis is completed; after the publication of the thesis results, all that data will be deleted.

9. Sensitive personal data

There is no sensitive personal data will be processed in the study.

10. Sources of personal data

The personal data includes participants' full names, email addresses, and voice recordings collected

during interviews.

The data will be collected and processed by researcher Bigyan Bhadur karki.

11. Transfer and disclosure of the personal data to third parties

The personal data will not be transferred to other recipients outside the University of Turku/research group/researcher.

12. Transfer or disclosure of personal data to countries outside the EU/European Economic Area

Personal data will not be transferred outside the EU/ European Economic Area.

13. Automated decisions

No automated decisions are made.

14. Processing of personal data after the completion of the study

The research material will be deleted.

15. Your rights as a data subject, and exceptions to these rights

You can contact the responsible contact person (see above) or The Data Protection Officer of the University of Turku (contact address: dpo@utu.fi).

Exceptions to data subject rights

Under the General Data Protection Regulation and the Finnish Data Protection Act, certain exceptions to the rights of data subjects can be made when personal data is processed in scientific research and fulfilling the rights would render impossible or seriously impair the achievement of the objectives of the processing (in this case, scientific research).

The need to make exceptions to the rights of data subjects will always be assessed on a case by case basis. It is likely that exceptions to the following rights will be necessary in this study:

- ☒ Right of access (GDPR Article 15)
- ☒ Right to rectification (GDPR Article 16)
- ☒ Right to erasure (GDPR Article 17)
- ☒ Right to restriction of processing (GDPR Article 18)
- ☒ Right to data portability (GDPR Article 20)
- ☒ Right to object (GDPR Article 21)

Reasons and the extend for the exceptions:

AParticipation in the project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw your consent without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous.

You will have no negative consequences if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Right to lodge a complaint

You have the right to lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Ombudsman if you think your personal data has been processed in violation of applicable data protection laws.

Contact details of Data Protection Ombudsman:

Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman

Visiting address: Lintulahdenkuja 4, 00530 Helsinki

Postal address: P.O. Box 800, 00531 Helsinki, Finland

E-mail: tietosuoja(at)om.fi

Switchboard: +358 (0)29 566 6700