

**Research Dissemination Workshop Report for
IMPROVING LEARNING: DEVELOPING MEASURES OF
ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATING THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH
STUDENTS' GAINS IN ACHIEVEMENT IN NEPAL**

Workshop Report



**Prepared by:
Salina Maharjan**

Institute for Social and Environmental Research-Nepal



**Economic
and Social
Research Council**

Research jointly supported by the ESRC and FCDO



Fulbari, Chitwan, Nepal

September 2, 2021

Contents

- 1. INTRODUCTION 3
- 2. THE PROGRAMME 3
 - 2.1 BACKGROUND 3
 - 2.2 OBJECTIVE 4
 - 2.3 WORKSHOP OVERVIEW 4
- 3. INAUGURAL SESSION..... 4
 - 3.1 WELCOME REMARKS AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW 4
- 4. THE PARTICIPANTS..... 4
- 5. TECHNICAL SESSION..... 5
- 6. DISCUSSION SESSION 9
- 7. HEARING FROM STAKEHOLDERS 10
- 8. CLOSING REMARKS 12
- ANNEXES..... 13
 - ANNEX A: Collaborating Partners..... 13
 - ANNEX B. Virtual Workshop on Research Dissemination Schedule (September 02, 2021) 14
 - ANNEX C. List of Participants 15
 - ANNEX D. List of Presentations 15

1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of a Research Dissemination Workshop that was held on September 2, 2021 for the project *Improving Learning: Developing Measures of Accountability and Evaluating their Association with Students' Gains in Achievement in Nepal*. The workshop was jointly organized by the Institute for Social and Environmental Research-Nepal (ISER-N), and the Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan, U.S.A. (Annex A). This project is funded by the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), U.K. under Award No. ES/L012065/1. The workshop was held virtually via Zoom.

The purpose of this report is to summarize workshop activities. The report consists of two parts: the Program and the Annexes. The Program section describes the background and objectives of the workshop. It also provides a brief overview of each portion of the workshop program. The Annexes provide detailed information about collaborating partners, the workshop schedule, a list of participants, and a list of presentations.

2. THE PROGRAM

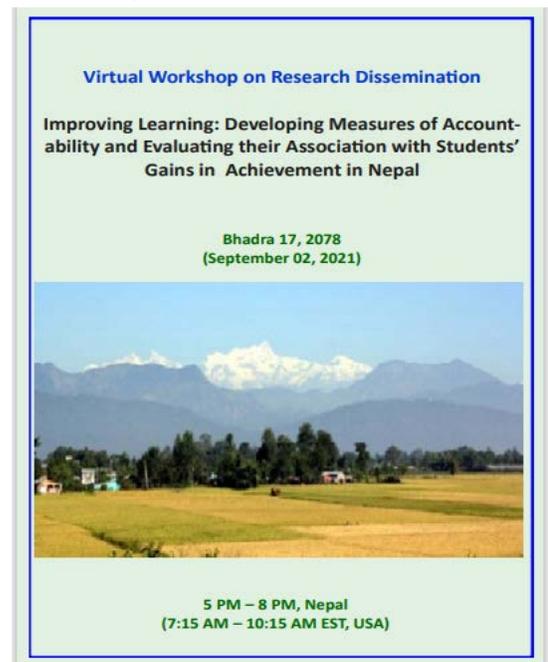
2.1 BACKGROUND

In recent decades, Nepal's education sector has made tremendous efforts to increase student learning by increasing the number of schools, student enrollment, and teacher training. Expanding access to education was not limited to community schools; it also included the proliferation of institutional schools. Unfortunately, these improvements in school accessibility, school enrollment, and teacher training and licensing did not translate into improvements in student learning. Consequently, the Nepali education system continues to face what UNESCO has called a "learning crisis." Additionally, education in Nepal continues to be marked by pervasive inequalities by gender, ethnicity, urban/rural residence, and public/private schools.

Nepal's government has taken multiple steps to improve education quality in the country, including increasing annual education budgets almost twofold in the last two decades, as well as decentralizing school management and expanding private/institutional schools. With the relatively new shift towards a locally empowered community school system, understanding the local-level accountability process is crucial to gaining insight into its effectiveness. Although the government continues to monitor accountability through identifying funding management and record keeping issues, there is an urgent need for new, systematic indicators of local-level accountability dynamics. To enhance our understanding of these crucial issues, the Institute for Social and Environmental Research in Nepal and the University of Michigan, with the technical support from the Education Review Office of the Ministry of Education, launched this research study in Western Chitwan.

The study involves investigating three main research questions:

- Are accountability processes systematically related to socioeconomic disparities among



communities, schools within communities, and families within schools?

- In school and community settings where accountability processes are more intensive, is the quality of instructional service delivery higher?
- After controlling for socioeconomic disparities related to student achievement, is student learning higher in schools and communities where accountability processes are more intensive?

2.2 OBJECTIVE

The goals of the workshop were twofold: 1) to share research findings and experiences from the study to foster intellectual debate and interactions among key stakeholders and potential consumers of the empirical evidence generated from this project, and 2) to enhance the scientific and analytical capacity of Nepali students, faculty, and scientists and promote future research collaboration to address important policy issues related to education achievement in Nepal.

There are two aims of the study:

- To develop and pretest a suite of Nepali Accountability Assessment Tools (NAAT) for use by the Nepal Ministry of Education (MoE) and to pilot these tools within the Chitwan, Nepal.
- To investigate how accountability processes and various student learning environments (schools, families, and communities) are related to student achievement.

2.3 WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

A workshop entitled *Virtual Workshop on Research Dissemination [for] Improving Learning: Developing Measures of Accountability and Evaluating their Association with Students' Gains in Achievement in Nepal* was held on September 2, 2021 (Bhadra 17, 2078) from 5-8 PM in Nepal (7:15-10:15 AM EST in the U.S.) via Zoom.

3. INAUGURAL SESSION

Mr. Prem Prakash Pandit, Senior Research Officer at ISER-N, began the workshop with a general introduction and outlined etiquette for the virtual workshop, such as muting oneself in times other than discussion sessions, raising hands turn-wise, or submitting queries using the chat feature, etc. Participants were also informed about recording of the workshop.

3.1 WELCOME REMARKS AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Dr. Dharma Raj Dangol, Chair of ISER-N, was scheduled to welcome participants at the beginning of the workshop. However, due to initial technical issues, Dr. Dirgha Ghimire, Executive Director of ISER-N and Principal Investigator of the study, extended welcome remarks to participants and thanked them for sharing their valuable time.

Dr. Ghimire then introduced the study and elaborated on the objectives of the workshop (see Section 2.2). He also presented the program overview, including the timing, sequencing, and structural format of the virtual workshop. Dr. Ghimire informed participants that the first part of the workshop was designed to cover the preliminary findings of the research, the second part was designed to facilitate a general discussion among participants, and the third part was designed to hear from key stakeholders regarding the relevance of the study to the National School Education Policy.

4. THE PARTICIPANTS

In total, 184 individuals were invited to participate in the dissemination workshop. Individuals involved in social science, education research and extension, policy formulation, and program implementation representing government and non-governmental development and research organizations participated in

the workshop. Altogether, 64 individuals attended the workshop (Annex C).

5. TECHNICAL SESSION

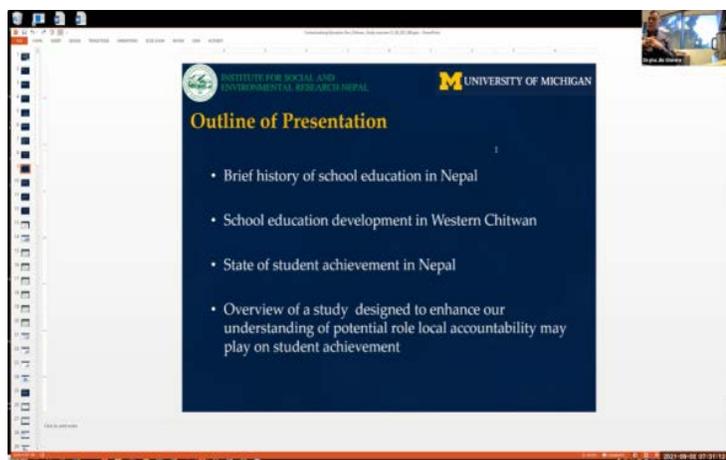
The opening session was followed by a technical session, during which four papers were presented. A brief overview of each presentation is as follows.

5.1 Presentation 1: Contextualizing school education in Chitwan and study overview

Dr. Dirgha Ghimire, Executive Director, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan and Research Professor, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, U.S.A.

Dr. Ghimire began his presentation with an overview of school education in Nepal, outlining relevant historic events. He noted that Nepal was a center of teaching and learning since pre-historic periods, with the first Western model of school education taking place in 1853. After roughly 100 years, in 1954, the first national education plan came into existence. Then, in 1971, the National Education System Plan (NESP) was introduced, which emphasized vocational education. Similarly, privatization in the National Educational Policy was introduced in 1986. Dr. Ghimire summarized the four phases of educational development in Nepal. The first phase focused entirely on access to school education, initially through provision of the public education system and later through private schools. The second phase focused on decentralization of school education, and the third phase centered on instructional quality. Finally, inequality has been the focus of the fourth phase

Dr. Ghimire presented a case study of School Education Development in Western Chitwan. The first implementation of National Education System Plan took place Chitwan and Kaski districts. He discussed the distribution of private and public schools including total number of schools by school type, total number of students by gender, total number of teachers by school type, and total number of students per teacher from 1954 to 2016). Dr.



Ghimire noted that although tremendous progress was observed in school access, student achievement (student learning) remains unsatisfactory. One example is the percent of students passing the Secondary Education Examination (S.E.E.). Pass percent of students in S.E.E. increased after 2015 both nationally and locally in Western Chitwan, as a result of changes in the education system (how we conduct the test) not improvements in the learning system. He also gave an example of the study conducted by the World Bank in 2017, which demonstrated that Grade 2 students in Nepal were unable to read a single word of a short text. This study revealed that almost 40% of Nepali Grade 2 students could not read. Dr. Ghimire concluded, "Education continues to be marked by pervasive inequalities of gender, ethnicity, urban/rural residence, public/private schools. With the aim to keep track of the extent to which students are learning in classroom, the Education Review Office, Ministry of Education, and Science and Technology is regularly involved in conducting student assessments."

Dr. Ghimire noted that the current DFID-ESRC-funded study was implemented to begin addressing the learning crisis in Nepal. He further clarified, "Developing and piloting a suite of Nepali Accountability Assessment Tools (NAAT) that can be used by the Nepalese education sector is the major goal of the study. The three research questions aim to investigate school-level accountability processes related to

socio-economic disparities, quality of instructional service delivery in schools with differences in accountability processes, and student learning in relation to accountability processes and instructional quality.”

All schools in Western Chitwan offering Grade 8 participated in the study. A total of 114 schools (57 community, 57 institutional), 114 school management committees, 114 parent teacher associations, 114 head teachers (i.e. principals), 949 Grade 8 teachers, 4885 Grade 8 students, and 4886 parents of the students were surveyed during the study. One of the key project activities involved stakeholder engagement, which was crucial for developing the accountability tools. Several consultative meetings, small group meetings, stakeholder workshops, etc. were held. Another key project activity was the development, testing, and refinement of student assessment with ERO under which the design of the project was done entirely under the leadership of ERO. For the development, testing, and refinement of the NAAT, various instruments were developed, such as the Unannounced School Observation questionnaire, Unannounced Classroom Observation questionnaire, School History Calendar survey, etc. Various school-level, student-level, and parent-level measures were administered during the study. Additionally, student assessments were conducted in three subjects (Math, Science, and Nepali) twice during the study: once at the start of the Grade 8 session (baseline assessment) and again at end of the session (endline assessment).

5.2 Presentation 2: Socioeconomic disparities, school attendance, and achievement

Dr. Uttam Sharma, Senior Research Scientist, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan

Dr. Sharma’s presentation focused on the distribution of boys and girls in school enrollment and assessment scores, in relation to student socio-economic status and student achievement. Dr. Sharma noted some of the findings of the Chitwan Valley Family Study (CVFS), discussing factors related to school attendance, including socio-economic status, age, and ethnicity.



Dr. Sharma mentioned that the study was a census of all the private and public schools in Western Chitwan teaching at least up to Grade 8. Student enrollment was higher in private schools (52%) compared to public schools. School enrollment was largely affected by the ethnicity, gender, and wealth quintile. The majority of students enrolled in private schools were from Brahmin/Chhetri/Newar ethnic groups (65%) followed by Janajati other than Newar (43%) and Dalit (23%). Similarly,

57% of male students were enrolled in private schools while more female students were enrolled in public schools. Further, Dr. Sharma added that the probability of student enrollment in private school increases with the increase in household wealth. He mentioned that nearly 20%, 33%, 50%, 70%, and 80% enrollment in private schools were observed from the poorest quintile, second poorest quintile, middle quintile, second richest quintile, and richest quintile, respectively. In terms of the amount of male and female children enrolled in private schools by wealth quintiles, male children are more likely to be enrolled in private schools in all quintiles except the richest quintile, in which the disparity is slightly narrower.

Disparities in unadjusted assessment score by ethnicity, wealth quintile, and gender were also presented. Students from Brahmin/Chhetri/Newar scored higher than Janajati and Dalit in Math and Science, in both baseline and endline assessments. However, no significant difference was found in the subject of Nepali. Regarding the wealth quintile, those students in the richest quintile scored higher. These differences were more apparent in Math and Science than Nepali. Regarding gender and school achievement, male students scored higher in Math and Science and female students scored higher in Nepali in public schools. Again, no significant difference was found in private schools. Dr. Sharma further stated that Brahmin/Chhetri/Newar scored higher than Janajati and Dalit in both private and public schools. Assessment scores did not vary significantly with respect to the wealth quintile in private schools. However, in public schools, it was slightly varied for the richest quintile.

Dr. Sharma concluded his presentation by noting, “We see that not much variation is present on different components within the same type of school.”

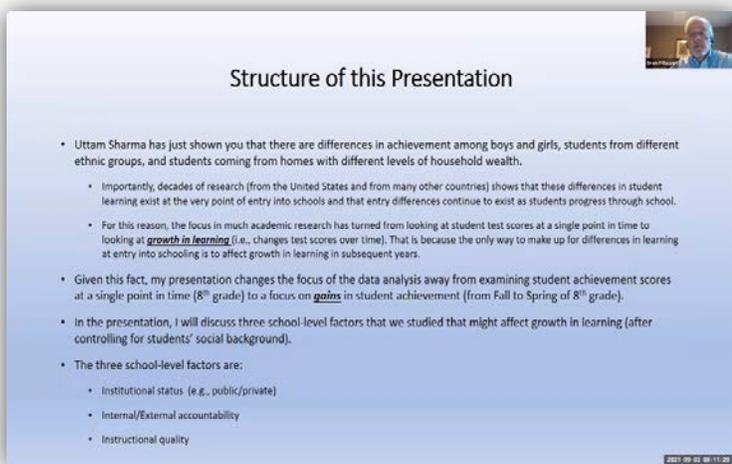
5.3 Presentation 3: Variation in school quality: School type, social accountability, and instructional quality

Dr. Brian Rowan, Professor Emeritus of Education, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Research Professor Emeritus (Institute for Social Research), University of Michigan

Dr. Rowan discussed an interesting finding related to student learning from decades of researches in the U.S. and other countries. Studies show that the difference in student learning exists from the point of entry into schools and that those entry-level differences continue as students progress through school. He added that he will be focusing on gains in student achievement from fall to spring of Grade 8 in 2018 and 2019 rather than at a single point in time.

Dr. Rowan also explained the statistical model used to predict gains in the percent correct on achievement tests over the school year. Gain score was modeled as a function of student characteristics and the basic regression model. Effect of student characteristic on school achievement was modeled using a propensity score. Propensity scores allowed controlling for student background.

Dr. Rowan discussed the three school-level factors that were the focus of the study and which might affect growth in student learning after controlling for students’ social background (i.e. institutional status [public vs. private], internal vs. external accountability, and instructional quality). Dr. Rowan also discussed ways the measurement of independent variables was approached. Internal accountability was measured by combining responses from teachers, parents, head teacher, SMC chair, and PTA chair to questions about the their participation in a variety of school functions and the amount of communication between home and school, as well as community and school. Similarly, external accountability was measured by combining responses from all those respondents used in internal accounting to questions about the extent to which the school was visited by a wide range of



external authorities including members of political parties, community members, etc. Instructional Quality was evaluated in a variety of ways, including the student survey, developed in the U.S. and translated into Nepali to measure students' understanding of teachers' instruction; and unannounced classroom observations which measured the presence of teacher, teacher's engagement in direct instruction, and student's engagement in justifying ideas.

Dr. Rowan noted that internal and external accountability was much higher in public schools compared to private schools. The data show that most of the teachers were present in most schools and were quite active in the classrooms after adjusting for socio-economic composition and status of students, private schools showed an advantage in learning gains in Math.

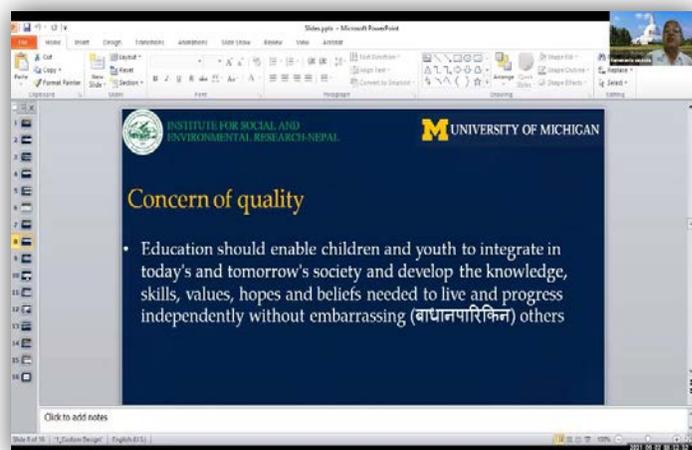
Dr. Rowan suggested that the policy makers should shift their concerns from institutional control and accountability to improving instructional quality in classrooms. The education practice community should have useful insights into the issues and play a role in designing thoughtfully planned efforts to develop instructional improvement programs for broad dissemination. The research community should engage in research that develops and tests instructional improvement programs for use in schools.

5.4 Presentation 4: Research participant perspective on reducing inequality and improving school quality

Mr. Rama Kanta Sapkota, Former Advisor Ministry of Education, Policy Advisor, Bharatpur Metropolitan City Education Committee

Mr. Sapkota's presentation was based on the general perspective of the education of the nation, including some points based on theories. The session was mainly focused on equity and inequality between caste, culture, and gender.

Mr. Sapkota explained that thoughts such as positive discrimination, reservations, and priority measures are examples of equity. The Existence of unequal opportunities and rewards for different social positions or status within a group or society is termed an inequality. Currently Nepal has 41%, 34.3%, and 39.6% representation of women at the local level, state assembly, and federal parliament respectively, which is the result of equity. According to S.E.E. results of the last three years, there are 10% fewer girls who earned an A grade than boys; 66% boys and 54% girls were enrolled in the Grades 11 and 12 science group; 89% boys and 11% girls were enrolled in engineering; and 19% girls were enrolled in higher education.



Inequality in student enrollment exists in Chitwan as well. Altogether 39,677 girls are enrolled in community schools while the number decreases to 24,465 in private schools. Enrollment for boys is 37,662 in community schools and 32,998 in private schools. Similarly, the number of Dalit students and tribal students are quite lower in private schools as compared to community based schools.

Mr. Sapkota proposed that quality education should be free and compulsory so that everybody may

improve the quality of their life. 'Quality refers to better than yesterday, better tomorrow than today, and evolves with respect to time and the environment. The four pillars of education presented by UNESCO of the 21st century in 1996 are still relevant: the first pillar believes that knowledge acquisition should be done for a lifetime, the second pillar seeks professional skills and abilities, and third pillar inspires self-esteem and the skill to live with self-respect. The fourth pillar inspires one to do something for the family, community, and for the nation.'

The minimum quality of education should be such that it promotes national development, assists in national learning achievements, and promotes nationalism from a distinct national perspective. From a social perspective, there should be social tolerance, community harmony, ethics, and etiquette. Culture and traditions should be preserved, there should be more employment opportunities and family harmony should be given more priority when it comes to family. From a personal point of view, one should be able to stay employed on the basis of learned knowledge and skills.

Mr. Sapkota highlighted some key points to reduce inequalities and improve qualities. The public education system must be committed to inclusion. Students in schools and children at home should have access to information technology. Likewise, the government should focus on increasing funding for the professional development of teachers. Professional, self-motivated, and accountable teachers should be prioritized for hiring.

6. DISCUSSION SESSION

Workshop participants raised various issues on the presentations and discussed many suggestions and comments. Drs. Ghimire and Rowan led the discussion session, aiming to answer the queries of the participants related to the study. Dr. Ghimire also expressed his sincere thanks to all of the participants for their active participation and valuable feedback.

A synopsis of the major discussion, with identified queries in brackets, is as follows:

- Dr. Rowan, in response to a query by Ian Attfeld, clarified that the research study was carried out before COVID-19 and the study wasn't impacted. However, inequalities may have resulted in students' learning quality in terms of technology due to economic differences. [*Question: I'm curious how/if the last 18 months of COVID-19 is impacting this research, given the huge switch to remote /self-instruction and technology use, in contrast to the traditional classroom model. Any reflections from the research, to suggest how remote instruction could be improved, especially where technology/bandwidth is not feasible/affordable?*]
- In response to a query by Mr. Shyam Acharya, Dr. Rowan shared that instructional quality, socio-economic background, policy, home circumstances and societal discriminatory practices matter most in learning besides the types of school. [*Question: Based on the result, what matters the most in learning except type of school?*]
- Mr. Ganga Gautam expressed his interest about gender segregated data of the S.E.E. pass rate. Dr. Ghimire added that the gender distributed pass rate data of students were also available. The School History Calendar could be helpful in further analysis of the gender based data. [*Question: Do you also have gender segregated data of the pass rate?*]
- Drs. Ghimire, Rowan, and Sharma responded to Mr. Durga Adhikari that the research findings couldn't be interrupted as a representation of Nepal. [*Question: Can we generalize this research findings/results in overall educational scenario of Nepal?*]

- Mr. Hridaya Devkota was eager to know if the research analyzed learning differences of children with disabilities. The presenters answered that the research study wasn't focused on the learning differences of children with disabilities. But the study did have such samples. [*Question: Hello Namaste! My curiosity is whether this research collected and analyzed the data about learning differences of children with disabilities?*]
- Dr. Rowan addressed the query of Mrs. Meeta Pradhan about the policy messages from the research. The top three policy messages coming from research were concluded as follows:
 - ❖ Clear socio-economic and gender differences are observed in school enrollment. This fact should be realized by policy makers and efforts should be taken to equalize school enrollment;
 - ❖ Changing the governance structure of private schools away from a purely for profit enterprise to a social service oriented non-profit organization could lead to greater equality in access to quality education,
 - ❖ Organizational governance of schools doesn't determine learning quality; rather instructional quality influences the quality of learning.

[Question: What would be the top three policy messages coming from this research, as a synopsis? What would you want to investigate further to add to this knowledge?]

- Dr. Rowan answered a query put forward by Mr. Janak Rai related to interaction effects. Dr. Rowan elaborated that the effect that was given was indeed an average effect of instructional quality across all the propensity strata. So, whether a particular form of instruction was better or worse for particular kinds of students couldn't be estimated. The data was taken in average across all the students. The interaction effects hadn't yet been studied. Same forms of instruction probably work in the same way in public and private schools. [*Question: If instructional quality in the classroom positively impacts students' learning and gains in exams, what kinds of differences in the instructional quality your study observed between community and private schools? In other words, what kinds of classroom instructional quality seems to have worked more in private schools than in community schools?*]

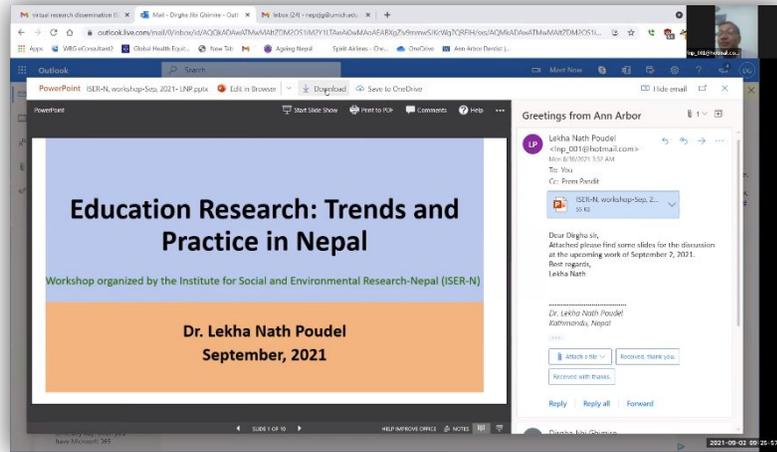
7. HEARING FROM STAKEHOLDERS: NEPAL SCHOOL EDUCATION RESEARCH AND POLICY

7.1 Presentation 1: Education research: Need and practice in Nepal

Dr. Lekha Nath Poudel, Former Director General, Education Review Office, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Dr. Poudel expressed an intense interest in the study's findings, noting that the study's general objective was to identify ways in which knowledge can be applied to solve the problem and improve practices. He presented on the research scenario of the Education System in Nepal.

According to Dr. Poudel there are mainly two basic trends (i.e. conventional research and transformative research). Conventional research is a neutral type mainly focusing on an experimental approach and transformative research is a participatory type focusing on qualitative explanation. He also discussed the emerging trends on educational research in Nepal, concluding that subjective interpretation and multi-dimensional trends are the most important ones.



Research in educational fields in Nepal is primarily conducted by academic institutions, government agencies, international research agencies, and development agencies. Dr. Poudel is not encouraged by the implications of research for universities. Although there is various researches happening in Nepal, classroom delivery studies are still lacking. The studies related to program component have very limited scopes. Contextual classroom-based research is important to frame the educational research in Nepal as our country is much diversified.

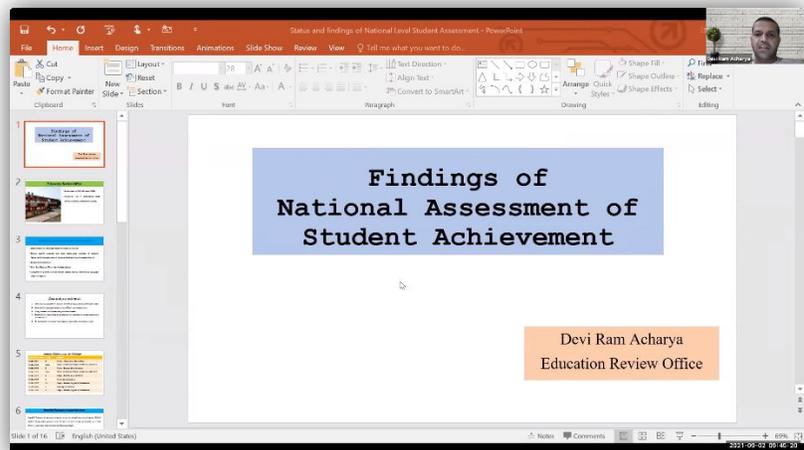
Research in educational fields in Nepal is primarily conducted by academic institutions, government agencies, international research agencies, and development agencies. Dr. Poudel is not encouraged by the implications of research for universities. Although there is various researches happening in Nepal, classroom delivery studies are still lacking. The studies related to program component have very limited scopes. Contextual classroom-based research is important to frame the educational research in Nepal as our country is much diversified.

Although there is various researches happening in Nepal, classroom delivery studies are still lacking. The studies related to program component have very limited scopes. Contextual classroom-based research is important to frame the educational research in Nepal as our country is much diversified.

7.2 Presentation 2: Status and findings of national-level student assessment

Mr. Devi Ram Acharya, Section Officer, Education Review Office Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Mr. Acharya presented findings of the National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) conducted by the Education Review Office (ERO) among the students, teachers, and head teachers of Grades 3, 5, 8 and 10 of Science, Mathematics, Nepali and English subjects from 2011 to 2020. In introducing the ERO, he explained the assessment, which is sample-based, was developed using the national curriculum, had subject-specific questions and background questions, and used the item response theory of data analysis to determine the item difficulty and discrimination index. The student ability score also termed as latent ability was transformed into a scale score mean (average) of, 500 and a standard deviation (SD) of 50. The learning achievement of students was decreased from phase 1 to 2. The students were weak in Science followed by Mathematics, English and Nepali in a most recent Grade 10 student's assessment. The ERO had also conducted a study to know the fluency of speaking among Grade



The learning achievement of students was decreased from phase 1 to 2. The students were weak in Science followed by Mathematics, English and Nepali in a most recent Grade 10 student's assessment. The ERO had also conducted a study to know the fluency of speaking among Grade

3 students.

As per Mr. Acharya, if assessment is to be used as a tool, one must know where the students are now, where they are going, and how to close the gap. He suggested that revisions are needed in accountability for student learning, right to learning, and training system of teachers.

8. CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Dharma Raj Dangol, Chair of ISER-N, concluded the workshop. Dr. Dangol congratulated the organizers in successfully coordinating the workshop. He expressed his sincere gratitude to all participants for their engagement in making the program a success. Dr. Dangol reiterated his commitment to the workshop's goals and applauded the participants' effort to foster intellectual interaction among potential consumers of evidence generated through rigorous scientific investigation. He closed, noting that this will be the foundation for interdisciplinary research, education, and public policy.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: Collaborating Partners

Institute for Social and Environmental Research – Nepal

The Institute for Social and Environmental Research (ISER-N) (<http://isernepal.org.np/>) specializes in large-scale survey administration. It is a premier research and development organization dedicated to high quality research, scientific capacity building, and evidence-based policy formulation. ISER-N possesses world class data collection expertise, research infrastructure, and an extensive collaborative network of both national and international experts.



Working with leading research organizations and universities around the globe, ISER-N has completed over three dozen social and ecological studies resulting in the highest quality multilevel (communities, organizations, households, and individual level) panel data. This work includes topics regarding social change, family dynamics, population mobility, health and wellbeing, household structure, finances

and household consumption, and environment dynamics and quality. ISER-N uses multimode mixed method approaches to design and validate survey measures, including specialized procedures to assure independent measurements from co-residing husbands, wives, and children. Our multimode mixed method data collection utilizes state-of-the-art, cutting-edge technologies including Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) with a centrally controlled sample management system capable of delivering real time data. This also includes para-data (data on data collection activities), text message surveys using mobile phones, telephone surveys, biomarker specimens, air, water and soil quality, GPS/GIS, and camera trapping and remote sensing (satellite images). ISER-N staffs have conducted more than 23,000 household survey interviews, 76,000 individual interviews, 239,000 household demographic and event registration interviews, 380,000 contraceptive use interviews, and 5,800 community and institutional interviews. All data are digitized and released to the scientific community for analysis with appropriate protection of respondents' confidentiality. The results of these surveys have been published in over 100 research articles in leading peer-reviewed journals. These include several substantive and methodological papers on survey research and data collection methods co-authored by ISER-N researchers and staff.

Society, Population and Environment Program, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan

The program in Society, Population, and Environment (SPE) (<http://spe.psc.isr.umich.edu/>) focuses on social change and social issues worldwide, with long-term programs of research in both the U.S. and South Asia.

The SPE program is organized around four themes:

- Social Organization, Social Relationships, and Social Psychology
- Population Dynamics, and Family Change
- Environmental Change
- New Methods for Social Research



SPE also involves substantial educational activities at the post-doctoral, doctoral, and undergraduate

levels. This program is part of both ISR's Population Studies Center and ISR's Survey Research Center.

ANNEX B: Virtual Workshop on Research Dissemination Schedule (September 02, 2021)

Time	Particulars
05:00-05:05	Getting Started ~ Mr. Prem Pandit, Senior Research Officer, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan
05:00-05:10	Welcome remarks ~ Prof. Dr. Dharma Raj Dangol, Chair, Institute for Social and Environmental Research-Nepal (ISER-N), Fulbari, Chitwan (scheduled, however Dr. Dirgha Ghimire covered the welcome remarks due to technical difficulties experienced by Dr. Dangol)
05:10-05:35	Contextualizing school education in Chitwan and study overview ~ Dr. Dirgha Jibi Ghimire, Executive Director, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan Research Professor, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, U.S.A.
05:35-06:00	Socioeconomic disparities, school attendance, and achievement ~ Dr. Uttam Sharma, Senior Research Scientist, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan
06:00-06:25	Variation in school quality: School type, social accountability, and instructional quality ~ Dr. Brian Rowan, Professor Emeritus of Education, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Research Professor Emeritus (Institute for Social Research), University of Michigan, U.S.A.
06:25-06:35	Research participant perspective on reducing inequality and improving school quality ~ Mr. Rama Kanta Sapkota, Former Advisor Ministry of Education, Policy Advisor, Bharatpur Metropolitan City Education Committee
06:35-07:15	Discussion ~ Dr. Dirgha Jibi Ghimire, Executive Director, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan Research Professor, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, U.S.A.
07:15-07:45	Nepal school education research and policy Education research: Need and practice in Nepal ~ Dr. Lekha Nath Poudel, Former Director General, Education Review Office Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
07:15-07:45	National-level policy on school education ~ Dr. Bhoj Raj Sharma, Under Secretary, Development Assistance Coordination Section Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
07:15-07:45	Status and findings of national-level student assessment ~ Mr. Devi Ram Acharya, Section Officer, Education Review Office Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
07:45-07:55	Presentation: Overview of data, other resources, and access ~ Dr. Dirgha Jibi Ghimire, Executive Director, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan ~ Mr. Prem Pandit, Senior Research Officer, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan
12:50-13:00	Closing Remarks ~ Prof. Dr. Naba Raj Devkota, Vice Chancellor, Gandaki University, Pokhara (scheduled, however Dr. Dharma Raj Dangol covered the closing remarks in absence of Dr. Devkota)

ANNEX C: List of Participants

S.N.	Name	Affiliation and Organization
UNIVERSITIES		
1	Prof. Dr. Ishwari P. Dhakal	Former Vice Chancellor, AFU, Rampur, Chitwan
2	Prof. Dr. Medani Bhandari	Adviser of Chancellor, Gandaki University, Pokhara
3	Prof. Dr. Chaitanya Mishra	University of Nepal
4	Prof. Dr. Janak Rai	Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University
5	Prof. Dr. Meenakshi Dahal	Department of Development Education, School Education, Kathmandu University
6	Prof. Dr. Ganga Ram Gautam	Central Department of Education, Tribhuvan University
7	Prof. Dr. Peshal Khanal	Central Department of Education, Tribhuvan University
8	Dr. Deb Prasad Pandey	Executive Director, Research Center at Gandaki University Pokhara
9	Mr. Pradip Maharjan	Campus Chief, Mangal Multiple Campus, Kirtipur
DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATION		
1	Mr. Ruzel Shrestha	Institute for Integrated Development Studies
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS		
1	Dr. Bhojraj Sharma Kafle	Under Secretary, Development Assistance Coordination Section, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
2	Mr. Mahendra Poudel	Chief of Education, Bharatpur Metropolitan City
3	Mr. Devi Ram Acharya	Education Review Office, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
4	Mr. Lava Dev Bhatta	Education Review Office, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
5	Mr. Shyam Prasad Acharya	Education Review Office, Ministry of Education
6	Juju Maharjan	Education Officer, Kirtipur Municipality
EDUCATION EXPERT		
1	Dr. Lekha Nath Poudel	Former Director General, Education Review Office
2	Mrs. Nanda Kumari Maharjan	Member, Teachers Service Commission
3	Mr. Rama Kanta Sapkota	Former Advisor MOE, Policy Advisor, Bharatpur Metropolitan City
4	Mr. Loknath Paudel	Former District Education Officer
5	Mr. Babu Ram Dawadi	Former Education Officer, Bharatpur Metropolitan City
POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE		
1	Mrs. Rija Manandhar	Policy Research Institute
RESEARCH SCHOLARS		
1	Dr. Bimala Rai Poudel	Member of Upper House Parliament, Nepal
2	Dr. Meeta Pradhan	Research Scientist, ISER-N
3	Dr. Hridaya Devekota	Research Associate, ISER-N
4	Dr. Neeti Aryal Khanal	Martin Chautari
5	Dr. Pratik Adhikary	Postdoctoral Fellow

6	Dr. Emily Treleavan	Research Scientist, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
7	Frank Kaelin	Technical Support, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
8	Paul Chapin Schulz	Consulting Statistician and Data Scientist, Population Dynamics and Health Program, Population Studies Center, Institute for Social Research
DEVELOPMENT PARTNER		
1	Mr. Ian Attfield	DFID-Nepal
2	Ms. Karthika Radhakrishnan	World Bank
3	Dr. Mohan Aryal	World Bank
ISER-N BOARD MEMBERS		
1	Prof. Dr. Dharma Raj Dangol	Chairperson, ISER-Nepal, Fulbari, Chitwan
2	Prof. Dr. Keshav Lall Maharjan	Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor, Hiroshima University, Japan/ISERN Vice chairperson
3	Mrs. Yasoda Nakarmi Shrestha	Board Member, ISER-N
4	Mr. Durga P. Adhikari	Board Member, ISER-N
5	Mr. Ananta Ghimire	Board Member, ISER-N
6	Mrs. Grishma Khanal Adhikari	Board Member, ISER-N
PROJECT TEAM		
1	Prof. Dr. Dirgha Jibi Ghimire	Executive Director, ISER-Nepal, Fulbari, Chitwan Research Professor, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan
2	Prof. Dr. Brian Rowan	Professor Emeritus of Education, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Research Professor Emeritus (Institute for Social Research), University of Michigan
3	Prof. Dr. William G. Axinn	Society, Population and Environment, Institute for Social Research; Research Professor, Survey Research Center and Population Studies Center Professor of Sociology and Public Policy, University of Michigan
4	Dr. Uttam Sharma	Senior Research Scientist, ISER-N
5	Mrs. Adina Gurung	Research Officer, ISER-N
6	Mr. Prem P. Pandit	Senior Research Officer, ISER-N
7	Mr. Krishna Shrestha	Research Officer, ISER-N
8	Mrs. Indra Chaudhary	Study Manager, ISERN
9	Mr. Rajendra Ghimire	Research Officer, ISERN
10	Mrs. Gita Subedi	Finance Officer, ISERN
11	Ms. Salina Maharjan	Research Officer, ISERN
STUDENT/RESEARCH SCHOLAR		
1	Pradhuma Poudel	School of Education, Kathmandu University
OTHER SCHOLARS		
1	Aadarsha Joshi	

2	Bidur Devkota	
3	Deepak Dulal	
4	Deepika Shrestha	
5	Durga Bahadur Oli	
6	Madhusudan Subedi	
7	Netra Dahal	
8	Pradip Subedi	
9	Pranjya Shakya	
10	Sunil Poudel	
11	Sushil Babu Khanal	
NGOs		
1	Shikshyala Nepal	

ANNEX D: List of Presentations

Contextualizing school education in Chitwan and study overview

Dr. Dirgha Ghimire, Executive Director, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan
 Research Professor, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, U.S.A.

Socioeconomic disparities, school attendance, and achievement

Dr. Uttam Sharma, Senior Research Scientist, ISER-N, Fulbari, Chitwan

Variation in school quality: School type, social accountability, and instructional quality

Dr. Brian Rowan, Professor Emeritus of Education, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Research Professor Emeritus (Institute for Social Research), University of Michigan

Research participant perspective on reducing inequality and improving school quality

Mr. Rama Kanta Sapkota, Former Advisor Ministry of Education, Policy Advisor, Bharatpur Metropolitan City Education Committee

Education research: Need and practice in Nepal

Dr. Lekha NathPoudel, Former Director General, Education Review Office
 Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Status and findings of national-level student assessment

Mr. Devi Ram Acharya, Section Officer, Education Review Office Ministry of Education, Science and Technology