

Exploring Indigenous Knowledge: A Narrative Inquiry of English Teachers

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Abstract

The locally originated and transferred across generations with day-to-day life activities is indigenous knowledge and skills. This article aims to investigate the knowledge and experiences of indigenous knowledge of teachers teaching English at secondary-level schools in Simta Rural Municipality, Surkhet, Nepal. This narrative inquiry was based on the focused interview of two teachers who were born and raised in the study area. Based on the objectives, the information was transcribed, coded, and categorized, and a conclusion: massive implementation of indigenous knowledge with terminological variations, and high familiarity with the indigenous knowledge, especially among the impoverished, confident about the usefulness of the indigenous knowledge but reluctant to share it in formal classes because of various reasons. Moreover, educationists already started keeping local knowledge in the social subject curriculum. Further, the participant teachers raised issues with the local authority to make the local curriculum with the local content as a dawn mark for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and skills in formal education. Indigenous knowledge and skills not only make learning practical but also play a vital role in the sustainable development of the economy, ecology, and society. Thus, recommended to implement local knowledge and skills as the form of school curriculum.

Keywords: *Indigenous Knowledge; Narrative Inquiry; Implementation; Confident.*

INTRODUCTION

Indigenous knowledge is a diverse concept with multiple interpretations. However, it is generally understood as an alternative to mainstream, Western, or modern knowledge systems (Ezeanya-Esiobu 2019). Indigenous knowledge refers to the distinctive and collective understanding of a community, shaped by cultural and environmental contexts (Ellen & Harris, 2000). It emerges as a means of survival and adaptation, deeply embedded in local traditions. Sillitoe (2002) describes it as culturally transmitted knowledge that individuals acquire from birth, influencing their interactions with the environment. However, it is not centralized, as no single authority possesses complete knowledge. Greiner (1998) emphasizes its uniqueness to specific local conditions, while Kiggundu (2007) highlights its foundation in community-environment interactions, spanning diverse fields such as agriculture, health, trade, and governance.

Indigenous knowledge has historically been marginalized and labeled as “primitive,” “unscientific,” and “backward” due to its perceived lack of universality, a trait often attributed exclusively to Western science (Kiggundu, 2007). While indigenous knowledge is culture-

specific, Western scientific knowledge is seen as “de-cultured” and objective (Brush & Stabinsky, 1996). Academic and research institutions have often dismissed indigenous knowledge as outdated and irrelevant to modern technological advancements (Knudston & Suzuki, 1992). A dichotomy persists between indigenous and Western knowledge, with the latter being positioned as superior. However, Oguamanam (2006) argues that Western science itself evolved from European folk traditions and that science is merely a variation of knowledge rather than its ultimate form. The assumption that Western knowledge is the standard by which others must be measured reinforces its dominance. In reality, universal reasoning exists across all knowledge traditions, shaped by cultural contexts and shared human needs (Oguamanam, 2006).

Among many childhood memoirs, I (principal author) especially remember 'wheat harvesting time' because my mother often used to tell me, *hera kanchha! yee thulaa thulaa raamro sanga paakeka tauka chhutai raaknu hai, raamro sanga sukaayar arko saal biu banaunu parchha* ('Look! the youngest son these wheat heads are bigger and well-matured than others so these should be dried separately as the seed bank for the next season') She also added, *timi nabirsa hai, ma ta birsinchhu, yo tin baali hunchha yo biu lagayako, aba ta chaautho barsama arko biu khojnu parch ki aru sanga saatnu parch, yo lagaunu hunna* ('Do not forget you, I may forget this is the third time we are saving this generation of wheat and we should search or exchange for the next year'). Moreover, she informed me that 'the fourth generation seeds' of any crop will not produce better grains. Thus, this seed needs to change after the third year of harvest. Furthermore, she warned, *tyo badaam baarima arko saal badaam nalagaunu hai, tin choti vaissakyo tyo baarima badaam lagaako, aba raamro faldaina tyo baarma dherai chhoti, arko baarimaa lagaayobhane raamro falchha khyal garnuu* ('not to plant the groundnut in that plot next year because it was third season we harvested from that plot, now plot needs to be changed for a better groundnut').

On the one hand, like the above, we have many more experiences mostly associated with farming as we grew up in a peasant family undergoing life in nature. On the other hand, when we were in formal school and university classes, we did not know how but we developed negativity about that information as the name of a traditional idea only. We started to suspect the usefulness of those skills and knowledge in our lives as my colleagues did. Specifically, as we passed my Master's Degree in English Education and became a teacher, we started to blame those types of experiential knowledge in the name of *andhabiswas* (blind beliefs). We thought those were not found in written form so might have been just the traditional sayings, not worthy of exploring.

But, we heard and observed more concrete and many unwritten but implemented information not only related to crops but also about herbal medicines, education, and other interesting day-to-day life-related knowledge and skills. For example, when we had a wound, our parents used to bring a kind of herbs which could cure it. Likewise, they also used to interpret meanings of the dreams in our lives (dream eating sweet leads common cold, falling teeth brings misfortune). Moreover, the elder citizen had the skills of making baskets from the bamboo, and they had special kinds of mills for grinding grains and making oil from mustard.

Thus, we started to realize, indigenous knowledge is not blind beliefs rather they are tested with time and action from the early past to the present and are linked to the specific contexts, issues, and ways of life challenges (Abdullah & Stringer, 1999). Similarly, we came to be convinced that the knowledge is constructed and developed from day-to-day life experiments and involvement in the work, for example, in agriculture what kinds of grains are

produced in what types of soil in which time (Reynar, 1999). In this regard, we understood that indigenous information is deeply rooted in wisdom in the specific community and generated from the local heritage interaction between individuals and nature in livelihood activities (Viergever, 1999; Johnson & Nelson-Barber, 2019; Cajete, 2019). Likewise, indigenous knowledge has wide coverage which is related to experiences with nature in intellectual, moral, spiritual, holistic, spiritual, and relational aspects of lifetime learning (Mosha, 1999; Restoule 2019). Moreover, it is the body of knowledge which is originated locally and is transferred orally as the living, dynamic, complex, active, and connected to life (Mercier & Leonard, 2019). However, this early experienced working in the farm and negativity at some level of during formal education and some awareness at later stages higher education about the generation-transferred knowledge and skills made me question when we came across some literature related to indigenous knowledge and skills in the courses of our MPhil and PhD level. We understood it was an interesting area to explore.

Now, we realize our mothers and fathers had transferred heritage information as the synonyms for indigenous knowledge are termed traditional or aboriginal experiences and practices. It is based on contextual scientific information originated locally and transferred from generation to generation through day-to-day life activities mostly in oral practices and rituals (Bruchac, 2014; McKinley, et al., 2019). Moreover, our eyes were opened, this systematic information is mostly unwritten, informal, and embedded in various sectors of life agriculture, medicine, education, economics, and politics (Quiroz, 1999). Furthermore, we knew, indigenous knowledge is produced as the cognition and legacy because of the interaction and experience of human beings with nature during the long period in common geography relating to the soil, water, mountains, forests, streams, and other aspects of nature (Maurial, 1999).

In recent time, we are aware of that there are many environmental problems in our contemporary society, for example, deforestation, drying of water resources, and others which are the gift of nature. It is a wise notion that a lack of heritage knowledge may bring problems to human life and ecology. As George (1999) mentioned, my concern is growing about indigenous knowledge. The fact is, in the name of modernization, the concept of heritage knowledge has been influenced by Western research, philosophy, policy, and planners. Therefore, there is a lack of recognition of locally born, experientially grown, time tested, and successively transferred information, especially in developing countries, facing problems of development and environment (Quiroz, 1999). So it should be understood what indigenous knowledge is and how it can be used for the better future generation legitimately (Rains, 1999). Not only academically but also practically, the knowledge of heritage can make it possible for the utilization of locally originated resources wisely simultaneously open the door to sustainable development (Viergever, 1999; Smith & Smith, 2019). As Johnson and Nelson-Barber (2019) explain educational institutions can play a role in sustainable development by offering and arousing awareness about the prior generation-based experiences among the teachers who can transmit the tradition of knowledge to the learners directly, it needs to explore how the teachers have experienced the indigenous knowledge and skills.

Regarding this, Shizha (2007) conducted a qualitative study in Zimbabwe by interviewing the primary level school teachers who were teaching science subjects. The study was purposeful to explore the problems regarding the use of indigenous knowledge in science subjects. It was concluded that three main factors, attitudes of the teachers, institutional, and systemic barriers, which hindered the implementation of local knowledge and skills in science

subjects. The teachers had negative attitudes about the local knowledge and they believed in Western knowledge. Likewise, institutionally and systemically, the local knowledge and skills were discouraged in the policy and curriculum. Further, Shizha, (2008) conducted qualitative research among the primary level teachers in Zimbabwe. It was explored by observing the science classroom and interviewing the teachers. It was concluded that the science teachers were reluctant to integrate indigenous knowledge and skills in their pedagogy because of the educational and institutional expectations of teachers. They were believed to practice what had been in the curriculum.

Likewise, Austin and Hickey (2011) carried out a mini study as a part of a big project in Australia regarding the implementation of indigenous knowledge and skills in the school-level curriculum of Australia, specifically in science education. In this mini-exploration, they collected science teacher educators' perspectives about the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and skills in the science curriculum. They concluded the state-based curriculum should be rethought and a lot of preparation is a prerequisite for the purposeful implementation of indigenous knowledge and skills. Similarly, Cronje et al. (2015) carried out a qualitative study in South Africa among science teachers. It was in the background that the science teachers' views were unsupportive of the successful implementation of indigenous knowledge in the science curriculum. Thus, they reported that teachers' views of expansion or teacher development are prerequisites for the better inclusion of indigenous knowledge and skills in the science curriculum in South Africa.

Moreover, Tsindoli (2018) conducted a study in Kenya among sixth-grade mathematics teaching teachers to explore those teachers' perspectives on integrating indigenous knowledge in mathematics teaching in the classroom. It was concluded that there was a low level of correlation between the teachers' indigenous knowledge and the inclusion of that knowledge in the school curriculum. The teachers know the concept of indigenous knowledge but it was not included in the curriculum. Likewise, only 10% of teachers were implementing the concept of indigenous knowledge in teaching mathematics in their real classroom linking with the course. Further, Deer (2013) carried out a study in Canada to explore the prospective teachers' attitudes towards implementing their theoretical knowledge regarding the Aboriginal idea in the formal education system. It was concluded that the pre-service teachers had positive hopes of using Aboriginal knowledge in the education system though there are various other influencing factors in it.

Furthermore, Govender et al. (2016) carried out qualitative research in South Africa taking preservice science teachers as the sample of the study. They concluded that the preservice teachers expressed that there must be a complementary correlation between science as the subject and indigenous knowledge in the school curriculum for the better exploration of practical information. In a similar line, Baynes (2016) carried out an initial exploration of participatory action research on Australian secondary-level teachers. It was to understand their attitudes toward including indigenous knowledge in science curricula. In this research, the teachers had positive attitudes toward implementing indigenous knowledge. They opined there must be teachers' decision-making roles to make the science content practical, and effective.

Moreover, Pidgeon (2016) concluded in the Canadian context, to empower Aboriginals, it needed to include indigeneity institutionally. Academic institutions should take the initiative in bringing change in the structure, curriculum, and policy of the education system. As discussed by Leepreecha and Meixi (2019) it is time to carry out our study in this area which helps to bring positive change and expansion of peoples' perspectives about indigenous

knowledge and skills. Khadka and Shahi (2025) investigated English teachers' knowledge and application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Nepal. However, it is commonly blamed that there is a lack of indigenous content in English courses at the school level and no research has been done on the selected study site Simta Rural Municipality relating to this issue and English teachers who are teaching at the secondary level.

Regarding this, it needs to explore and fill the gap in indigenous knowledge and skills. Thus, the main objective of this study was to explore the indigenous knowledge experienced by secondary-level English teachers who are working in Simta Rural Municipality. To reach the outcomes of the study, the questions were tried to be answered: to what extent do the teachers who are teaching English in secondary schools of Simta Rural Municipality have the concept of indigenous knowledge? To what extent do they have indigenous knowledge? To what extent do they observe indigenous knowledge in the prescribed texts? How do they feel about having indigenous knowledge and skills? So this article can contribute to making English teachers' awareness of indigenous knowledge, and head toward the exploration as well as transformation of such knowledge and skills to the new generation.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the worldview that knowledge is socially constructed as the constant interaction and experiences between humans and non-humans with the change of time. As Taylor et al. (2012) discussed, it generates a context-based understanding of people's thoughts, beliefs, values, and associated social norms. This tries to investigate how the teachers teaching English at the secondary level are experiencing indigenous knowledge in the locality where they were born and raised.

It was a qualitative approach as Creswell (2014) suggests to explore and describe the experiences of the participants in textual form. Likewise, the collection of narratives is the study of the ways how human beings experience the world (Connelly & Clandinin, 2016). It was based on the assumption that participants are the storytellers and we, as the researcher wanted to collect and retell the participants' stories and experiences about indigenous knowledge. It was followed in a systematic way to make meaning and interpretation without changing the participants' narratives.

The study site was Simta Rural Municipality, which belongs to the eastern part of Surkhet district, Karnali Province, Nepal. The location of this particular area is surrounded by Salyan, and Jajarkot districts in the east and north respectively. The other two sides: the west is bordered by the Chingad Rural Municipality, and the south is by the Gurvakot Municipality of the same district. Among whole secondary level teachers teaching English in the schools of Simta Rural Municipality, Creswell (2014) suggests that we selected two teachers by the use of purposeful sampling. Those chosen teachers were born and lived their lives in the study area as the inhabitants of this area. We easily made a good rapport with those selected teachers because one of them was my relative and was in touch regularly on my cellphone. The next was my student while he was taking a college education. As usual, we were in contact more frequently for some months and online sometimes for the specific purpose of the study.

Teacher A was 44 years 44-year-old secondary level teacher teaching English. He was born and raised in the local farm family Simta Rural Municipality. He grew up working with his family members on farms of small land and working to feed domestic animals morning and

evening and used to go to school during the daytime. He took all his education from government-aided schools and colleges. Before and after passing a Master's degree in English education, he had been teaching English courses at the secondary level for two decades and was involved in domestic tasks as well. Similarly, teacher B was 34 years 34-year-old secondary-level teacher teaching English. He was also born and raised in Simta Rural Municipality. Likewise, he grew up working with family members on the farmland and grazing cattle during the holidays. He has completed his school and college education at government-aided institutions. After passing a Master's degree in English education, he has been teaching English for a decade at the secondary level.

To collect the required narratives, an in-depth interview guideline was used that produced open-ended information (Creswell, 2014). Although we gathered their views from the informal talking, the focused interview was used to record the informants' stories related to indigenous knowledge. As we were often in touch with the selected informants for decades, it was easy for me to explore their experiences. So it was a usual meeting with them and was convenient to involve them informally in the conversation about indigenous knowledge for the collection of detailed information (Creswell, 2014). To maintain a good relationship in the study, we shared my study purpose specifically with the participants. At the same time, we requested them to manage a little time for me. When they had agreed to give time, we time and again, visited face to face and sometimes online, have taken in-depth focused interviews on the basis of interview guidelines. Before starting the formal interview, we informally talked about our teaching and learning activities in those days. We also added my experiences about my childhood days, and about today's life activities. During the conversation, we initiated a talk about learning local knowledge and skills too. Our curiosity involved the selected teachers A and B (Pseudonyms for ethical consideration) about the concept of indigenous knowledge. We gradually involved the participants in an in-depth discussion about the local knowledge. During the interview, we made an audio recording of our interview and informal kind of talking too. Before every next interview, we read the information from the earlier discussion which made to confirm the meaning of what they mean by indigenous experiences.

After collecting the information, generally, analysis was carried out with the notion of a general inductive approach, deriving the findings from the evaluation objectives (Thomas, 2006). The collected information was transcribed, coded, and generated themes. We specifically used Braun and Clarke's (2006) suggested thematic analysis, we read the data to be familiar with it, then generated initial codes, based on those codes, we looked for the themes, and the themes were reviewed, in line with the revision, names were given with clear definition, and at the end, the report was made with the help of those pieces of evidence. We used debriefing technique among the participants meeting in an informal discussion and before every next interview to ensure the right understanding of their experiences. Further, we were also careful in each of the activities to read, reread, record, and revise the data as an iterative process (Murray & Moore 2006).

To ensure the trustworthiness or quality standard, we was aware of telling the purpose of the study and the process applied for it. With this, we took oral consent too. Although all the tactics were impossible to follow in one research, we tried to make the study with reference to Lincoln and Guba (1985) as cited in (Thomas, 2006) who presented the four strategies: credibility (by means of peer debriefing, and stakeholders' check), transferability (to what extent the result is generalizable in another similar context), dependability (conducting the research audit: compare the data, with findings, interpretations), and confirmability (could be

confirmed by the other researchers). So we have made the recording of their stories and supported them with the note-making to non-linguistic means of communication. After making transcription and interpreting the information, we sat with participants informally and before every next interview for validation. We read the products if they wanted to say the same thing or different. As they agreed about the sense, we confirmed that the transcription and interpretation of the stories were not wrong.

To manage the ethical issue, we told the purpose of the study and the activities to be done to complete it. Likewise, we openly told them to engage voluntarily and then take oral consent especially to make note of their narratives and audio recording them. We used pseudonyms/symbolic names as Participants A and Participant B in place of the real names of the selected participants. We assured them that the information would not be used in other fields and would be used only in this research. Likewise, we did not ask them about other information except related to my research objectives. We were careful in every step of the activities not to harm them personally and professionally. Furthermore, as Vanassche and Kelchtermans (2016) suggested every interpretation was reconfirmed by presenting to them at informal meetings and before every next interview.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

We are convinced by the idea of Johnson and Nelson-Barber (2019) who explained educational institutions can play a role in sustainable development by offering and arousing awareness about the prior generation-based experiences among the teachers who can transmit the tradition of knowledge to the learners directly, and we felt need to explore how the teachers have experienced the indigenous knowledge and skills.

In Nepal, English language has been playing a dominant role in the Nepali education system from school to university level in terms of the medium of teaching and learning, curricula, testing and certification (Khadka, 2024). Thus to explore the secondary-level English teachers' experiences with indigenous knowledge, we engaged in informal talks, and a focused interview with the two selected participants. Based on the purposeful engagement in the exploration. It shows that the teachers did not know the English term for this local knowledge but they were well acquainted and convinced about traditional knowledge in their practical life. Their experience was not different than that of Reynar (1999) who explained that knowledge is constructed and developed from day-to-day life experiments and involvement in the work, for example, in agriculture what kinds of grains are produced in what types of soil in which time is learned as the tradition from the elders. The main outcomes of their experiences regarding indigenous knowledge can be presented in the following themes:

Massive Implementation of Indigenous Knowledge with Terminological Variations

The secondary level teachers who are teaching English experienced a lot of use of indigenous knowledge in their society continuously although they did not know the English terms. It was found that indigenous knowledge was understood terminologically *paramparaagat* (traditional) idea. At this point, teacher B narrated:

I did not know the English term for the knowledge that is transferred from parents and grandparents to generation. Our area is rich in this kind of knowledge and skill as well. Yes, people are taking traditional knowledge as the paramparaagat (traditional) professional and do not want to discuss it. But they are heavily using it in day-to-day life.

The teacher agreed that not only knowledge but also skills are being transferred from their elder people to the new generation in the day-to-day work heavily. Alike to the literature locally originated, proven experiences and time that are transferred mostly in oral practices and rituals across generations (Bruchac, 2014; McKinley, et al., 2019).

This particular geographical area (Simata Rural Municipality) has many such indigenous skills and knowledge so that life is being made easier. Their narrations were similar to Maurial's (1999) indigenous knowledge is produced as the cognition and legacy because of the interaction and experience of human beings with nature during the long period in common geography relating to the soil, water, mountains, forests, streams, and other aspects of nature.

The teachers observed another term for indigenous knowledge *purono padati* (traditional method) in their practical life. Although the people called it an old tradition, they are using it in their lives naturally without being confused. Regarding this, teacher A said:

First of all, we should know the meaning of indigenous knowledge. I have to search for the meaning of indigenous knowledge. Yes, if the meaning of this indigenous knowledge is as you said, people in my area called it purano padati (traditional method). I can explain now. When we talk about this kind of knowledge in our society, people especially young people do not take it positively, they say it is a traditional belief. Although they say it is paramparagat (traditional), it has maximum use in our society. I also learn this from my seniors in my family and society. There are many such proofs in our day-to-day life. People even in my life also use this knowledge in our day-to-day work. I learn a kind of herbs to use for eye problems. During the time of corona also, we used herbs as our elders said. There is a massive use of that knowledge in our lives. For some people, for example, when a hand or leg is broken, there is a kind of herb that can be used in the wound, and also eaten and as a result, there will be better as well as they found varieties of other things that can solve the problems in our day to day life.

The selected English teachers in this study also have indigenous knowledge and skills from their elderly people in the work. This reflected the activities proven knowledge and skills are mostly unwritten, informal, and embedded in various sectors of life agriculture, medicine, education, economics, and politics (Quiroz, 1999). Moreover, they accepted indigenous information as the body of knowledge which is originated locally and is transferred orally as the living, dynamic, complex, active, and connected to life (Mercier & Leonard, 2019).

They are using it, especially for medication purposes maybe because of facing problems of sickness in their life more than other aspects. As mentioned by Cajete (2019) when indigenous education is explored, it helps both the learners and the teachers to participate in the transformative dialogue with the feeling of equality and mutual reciprocity. It is a natural and better way of learning and teaching when they have access to the source of knowledge. Consequently, there will be ownership of knowledge in their locality.

High Familiarity of Indigenous Information as the Impoverished

The use of indigenous knowledge is higher among economically weak people in society. As they cannot pay expenses for access to modern hospitals in the cities, they are dependent on the use of local ways of treating health-related problems. The users find the indigenous medication is cheaper as teacher A said:

It is useful as well as cheap to use. The people who cannot afford are using more of this knowledge than the people who can pay for modern medicine and other farm-related activities.

It is not expensive so all people can make use of it in their practical life for the betterment of their work because it is deeply rooted in wisdom in the specific community and generated from the local heritage interaction between individuals and nature in livelihood activities (Viergever, 1999; Johnson & Nelson-Barber, 2019; Cajete, 2019). Consequently, indigenous knowledge can play a vital role in better sustainable development in the progress of society.

The use of local knowledge and skills is found one of the good sources of making money in society. Some people are collecting the knowledge of medication and life skills and earning money as teacher B expressed:

It is knowledge and a good resource for earning money. The people who cannot go to the city hospital are at a higher level using this kind of knowledge for their treatment.

There are very few modern facilities in the village area as a result the people who can identify the indigenous knowledge, are using local knowledge to make money. They are also selling their skills to make peoples' lives better consequently they are making this not only a social service but also a source of earning too. As discussed by Abrokwa (1999) the indigenous people have a lot of skills to make their lives better, for example, music-making is acquired by a particular group of people in a specific society, and living their lives selling these skills. The indigenous people can make use of their indigenous knowledge and skills for the fulfillment of their day-to-day necessities.

Confident but Reluctant

The teachers were confident that the indigenous knowledge is fully proven from the early past to present-day life. They are sure the knowledge is useful and being implemented in daily life but as Shizha, (2008), they feel uneasy integrating it into their pedagogy. One was the institution's expectation on teachers that they should teach the textbooks, another is it formally in their classroom among the students because of the fear of being said as the traditional teacher. At this point, teacher A narrated:

Being an English teacher, I am using this knowledge confidently in my day-to-day life. I am confident the knowledge is useful. I have no question about it, I have a 100 percent agreement on it. But to transfer this knowledge is difficult, if I tell as a teacher in the classroom, this is useful in our life, today's generation degrades my values, and may complain the teacher also says such traditional things. So it is a kind of fear to talk in the classroom, but in day-to-day life, I am helping my juniors, as my elders did transfer knowledge in our life. I can identify the special kinds of herbs that can be found in our area for the treatment of various illnesses. Although people say it is the traditional belief, I say it has been experimented with in nature and implemented in our lives and is being used from generation to generation.

Being English subject teachers, they were not overwhelmed by the English content designed concerning the Western world, they were convinced with the local knowledge to be used. They did not have any doubt about making use of it in practical life but were reluctant to give the knowledge to a new generation in the classroom. It was because of the fear of being criticized by the nickname of 'old-style teachers'.

Moreover, the teacher experienced that they have never had a negative feeling about the indigenous knowledge being used in day-to-day life because it has been proven among the users for a long time. They were still reluctant to share this knowledge and skills among the learners in the formal classroom because the learners as a new generation have no positive eyes toward this local knowledge as teacher B said:

I have confidence and a completely positive attitude and want to keep in the course and school also, we tried to raise these local issues among the learners. In day-to-day life, we are aware, that we should promote it for further development. But if we talk about these things in the classroom, the students accused me of being a rudhibaadi (old-style) teacher.

Although they have full confidence in the use of indigenous knowledge for a better life, they felt uneasy sharing among the learners in the formal classes. Gradually, they have collected the courage to bring it into the formal discussion. So they sometimes raised the local knowledge and skill-related content among the Municipality authorities.

They have started to bring the issues within formal settings for the development of a positive attitude among the new generation. They realized that the grand generation people who have been transferring the knowledge to successive generations are doing a praiseworthy practice. The elders should not be reluctant to shed light on the new age group by handing over their nature-proven knowledge and skills.

It is a kind of rewarding mentoring endeavor when we spend time passing over the acquired knowledge to the newer generation (Maaka, et al., 2019). It should be taken as a source of knowledge positively by successive people. Moreover, they were with the view of George (1999) who explained there are many environmental problems in our contemporary society, for example, deforestation, drying of water resources, and others which are the gift of nature. It is a wise notion that a lack of heritage knowledge may bring problems to human life and ecology. As a result, concern is growing about indigenous knowledge.

Local Curriculum as a Dawn Mark

The English teachers did not experience any indigenous knowledge-related content in the courses they are teaching in the schools. They observed some indigeneity in the social subject course which was also based on the general Nepali context that might not reflect specialty to Simta area-related local indigenous knowledge and skills. For this, teacher B said:

I rarely find this kind of knowledge in English courses, actually, I have not found it. But we find some amount in social subjects. They are related to general overall skills and knowledge of the Nepali context. We have to make more local that reflect the special characteristics of the Simta area. We are trying to work with the local government and make this kind of curriculum at the formal level of education. We have raised the issue and talked to the local authority

As the local government is responsible for making a local curriculum at the school level, the teachers are trying to incorporate the local Simtali indigenous knowledge and skills into the curriculum. Alike to Austin and Hickey (2011) preparedness is a prerequisite for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and skills in the curriculum.

The teachers are found to play a crucial role in the inclusion of local knowledge and skills in the content of the new courses. They agreed the local curriculum with indigenous knowledge can be useful for the holistic development of an individual because this is related to experiences

with nature in intellectual, moral, spiritual, holistic, spiritual, and relational aspects of lifetime learning (Mosha, 1999; Restoule 2019).

Moreover, Rains (1999) suggested understanding and using it for the better future generation legitimately which is possible by keeping it in the curriculum and encouraging to explore further. They expect that when the content is kept in the curriculum, a new generation can have positive feelings about the local knowledge and skills. As a consequence, the teachers also can confidently transfer indigenous knowledge as teacher B expressed:

In English courses, this kind of knowledge is not given but we find it in social study books. We can work with the local government and manage it in our curriculum. As a result, the learners can be convinced to be positive about this local and valued knowledge.

Making the local content the course requirement in a formal curriculum can develop positive attitudes as well as the confidence to discuss the subject matter in formal classes. As a result, the knowledge and skills related to locality can be expanded. As explained by Shizha (2019), local teachers are more likely to have knowledge and skills about indigenous cultures, they can transfer this knowledge as well as skills to their students.

They can broaden the local identity of the schools, and curriculum contents, and develop a sense of practicality. They can make a good expansion of local knowledge by creating progressive relationships with the parents and the surrounding nature. Further, they accepted the idea of Leepreecha and Meixi (2019) that carrying out a study on indigenous information bring positive change in people's perspectives about indigenous knowledge and skills. It also helps the expansion of the verified experienced and transferred information across the generations.

The information is interpreted in line with Quiroz's (1999) expression, in the name of modernization, the concept of heritage knowledge has been influenced by Western research, philosophy, policy, and planners. Therefore, there is a lack of recognition of locally born, experientially grown, time tested, and successively transferred information, especially in developing countries, facing problems of development and environment.

Thus, because of the overwhelming implication of Western knowledge in the courses at the school level in this particular study area, the inclusion of indigenous knowledge cannot be without controversy (Bruchac, 2014). Regarding this, heritage knowledge needs to be included in the local curriculum as academically and practically, it is necessary for the utilization of locally originated resources wisely and simultaneously open the door to sustainable development (Viergever, 1999; Smith & Smith, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion from the selected English teachers' narratives is similar to Abdullah and Stringer's (1999) indigenous knowledge is not blind beliefs rather they are tested with time and action from the early past to the present and are linked to the specific contexts, issues, and ways of life challenges. Although the participants were secondary-level teachers who were teaching English, they were born and raised in the study area. It showed how they are experiencing indigenous knowledge in their day-to-day life and how they are looking at being English teachers. It was concluded that the teachers were taking the local knowledge and skills as a part of the natural source of knowledge. They also were using the knowledge and skills that they

got from their grand generation in their way of life. Since the teachers did not know the English term, they were using it in their daily practical work.

Moreover, the English teachers were strongly playing a role in making local knowledge and skills a formal way of study. For this, they raised their voices formally with the local authority to keep the local contents in the school curriculum. They believed that the implementation of indigenous knowledge and skills contributes not only to the development of human society but also to making the development sustained (Viergever, 1999). The contemporary reality of the importation of foreign knowledge, especially Western, in the local context, maybe as the form of language giving focus on English or teaching materials or medicines or food, can threaten the local resources. So there should be an emphasis on the expansion of localized knowledge and skills. As a result, there can be sustainable development of the knowledge system, cultural aspects, and overall economic condition as well (Vaioleti, & Morrison, 2019).

In a nutshell, indigenous knowledge, and skills should be included in the local formal curriculum for the preservation of naturally proven knowledge. As Mercier and Leonard (2019) suggested, better to include localized knowledge in formal education for the preservation of its original meaning. Thus, the removal of local knowledge from its broader context can be a loss of the original meaning of indigenous knowledge and skills. So it should be formalized in the curriculum which opens the door for reclaiming and restoring indigenous knowledge and skills.

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