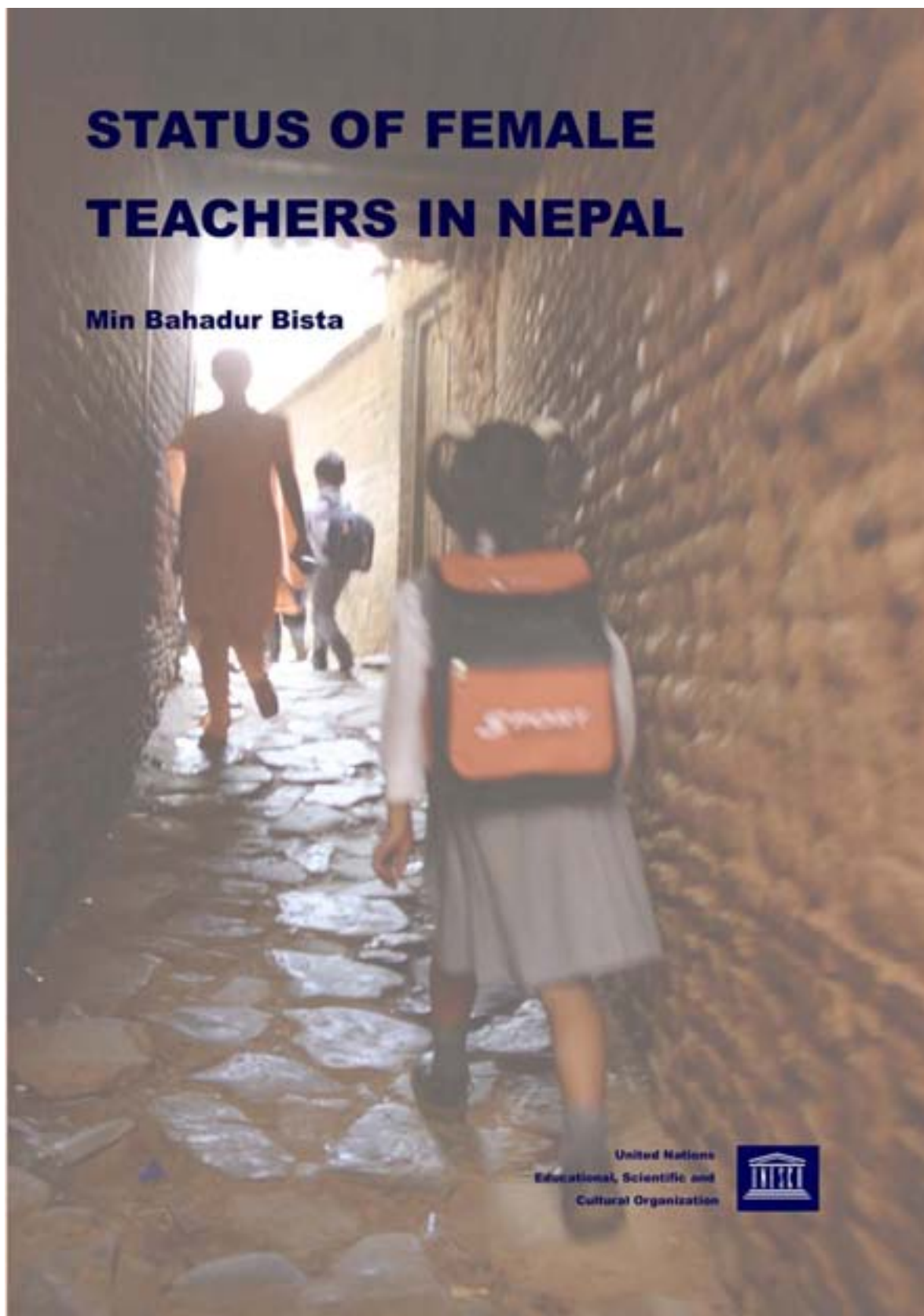


# STATUS OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN NEPAL

Min Bahadur Bista



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization





UNITED NATIONS  
EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND  
CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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# **STATUS OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN NEPAL**

**Professor Min Bahadur Bista, Ph.D.**





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The lack of female teachers, and hence the absence of female role models in schools, is considered to be one of the contributing factors to lesser participation of girls and gender-based discrimination in education. It is widely recognized that, the fewer the female teachers, the wider the enrolment, retention and promotion gaps are between female and male students. In addition to gender parity in primary and secondary schools, EFA Goal 5 also includes a target to achieve by 2015 gender “equality” in the education system at large. It includes, among other items, equality in the teaching profession. In Nepal, teaching is still largely a male domain and even at primary school level the male-female teacher ratio is 2.3 to 1 in favour of men (DOE, 2004: 35). As part of its endeavour to increase girls participation in school education, the Nepalese government has been trying to increase the number of female teachers with the policy of “two female teachers per school”. However, the policy implementation met with serious challenges and the gap remains wide, especially in remote and rural areas.

Against this background, and in recognition of the broad social benefits that can be harvested from a reduction in gender inequality, UNESCO office in Kathmandu initiated a project in 2004/5 researching into the status of Female Teachers in Nepal. The study, presented in this publication, gathered both qualitative and quantitative information on different aspects of personal and professional lives of female teachers. It includes certain information on male counterparts for comparison. The study also covers the values and perceptions shared by male teachers, school masters, parents and students of female teachers. The findings of the study were discussed at a workshop with the participation of government officials, teachers’ unions, NGOs, researchers and experts, who contributed to finalise the section on recommendations for future policy reinforcement.

On behalf of UNESCO, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the lead researcher, Dr. Min Bahadur Bista for his intellectual leadership and excellent research work including the field survey design, guidance and analysis. He was assisted by a research team consisting of two lecturers and several students of Faculty of Education, Tribhuban University in the field survey. I would like to congratulate them for their remarkable field work with many interesting findings and outcomes. I would also thank Ms Bandana Shrestha who assisted UNESCO Office in preparing the workshop recommendations and report. Allow me also to take this opportunity to appreciate the work of my colleagues, Ms Sohae Lee and Mr Sergio Hoyos Ramos who closely followed up the various stages of the project and took every effort to ensure smooth project implementation and complete this publication.

Though the survey is based on a sample survey limited in ten districts, I do hope that this publication will constitute an important stepping stone for the improvement of the status and conditions of female teachers in Nepal, thus contributing eventually to gender parity and equality in school systems in the country.

Koto Kanno  
UNESCO Representative to Nepal.



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ARNEC	All Round National Education Committee
BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Project
CDR	Central Development Region
CERID	Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development
CRs	Critical Ratios
DEO	District Education Office
DEOs	District Education Officer(s)
EAWEP	Equal Access Women to Education Project
EDR	Eastern Development Region
EFA	Education for All
EGWN	Education for Girls and Women in Nepal
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FHP	Feeder Hostel Program
FOE	Faculty of Education
FWDR	Far-Western Development Region
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
HLNEC	High Level National Education Commission
HMG/N	His Majesty's Government of Nepal
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
INSET	In-services Training
MITRA	Management Innovation, Training and Research Academy
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MWDR	Mid-Western Development Region
NDS	National Development Service
NEC	National Education Commission
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NESP	National Education System Plan

NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NLSS	National Living Standard Survey
NMIS	Nepal Multiple Indicator Surveillance
NNEPC	Nepal National Education Planning Commission
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development
NPC	National Planning Commission
NTSC	National Teacher Service Commission
PCL	Proficiency Certificate Level
PEDP	Primary Education Development Project
PTTC	Primary Teacher Training Center
RCs	Resource Centers
SEDU	Secondary Education Development Unit
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee
SPSS	Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universalization of Primary Education
VDC	Village Development Committee
WDR	Western Development Region



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Background and Methodology**

This study originated from a desire to know the status of female teachers in Nepal. The primary objective of the study is to describe and analyze the existing status of female teachers. It was undertaken in the backdrop of a situation where there was lack of information on the status of female teachers. Being an exploratory study, it covers a wide range of issues involving female teachers: demographic and professional characteristics, household dynamics and household characteristics, attitudes toward teaching profession, work and the working environment, gender environment in schools, perceptions of different stakeholders about female teachers, barriers that prevent women from joining teaching and from serving in rural and remote locations, teacher attitudes toward boys and girls as learners, etc. As the government of Nepal is striving to increase the number of female teachers in schools, it is hoped that the information gathered from the study will provide inputs to formulate and implement policies, plans and programs to enhance the status of female teachers. The study was funded by UNESCO Kathmandu Office.

The study is based mainly on primary data collected through an extensive field survey. The study is limited to the public schools, now officially defined as community schools. The sample consisted of 10 districts representing the various regions. It comprises samples of 106 schools, 335 female teachers, 318 male teachers, 106 head teachers and 653 students. The study gathered and used both qualitative and quantitative information. To this end, six different sets of instruments were developed and used. As such, this is not a comparative study between male and female teachers. But, where data is available, the status of female teachers is examined and analyzed in relation to the male teachers. Focus group discussions were held with various groups of respondents to gather qualitative information.

### **Major Findings and Conclusions**

The survey brought forth several facts that are highly enlightening and equally shocking at the same time.

#### *Demographic and professional profile of teachers*

Demographic data gathered suggests that the female teaching force is uniform rather than diverse in terms of ethnic composition. Brahmins form the largest majority in the female teaching force followed by Chhetris and Newars. Indigenous groups and linguistic minorities appear to be seriously under-represented. The average age for the current sample of female teachers is 36 years, implying that the female teaching force of the country is predominantly in the productive years of career. Those who are in teaching profession are likely to be married; only 9% of the total female teachers reported having been unmarried. Many joined teaching at the age of about 23, while their average age at marriage was 21. That means that most women joined teaching after marriage. Women perhaps enjoy some degree of freedom after their marriage. Arranged marriage was found to be common. The incidence of child marriage and late marriage is found to be minimal. Nepali is the mother tongue for the

majority of the female teachers. A large majority (84%) of women are currently serving in their own place of residence.

Teaching was the first job for a large majority of the female teachers. Proportionally, more men were found to have joined teaching after few years of work elsewhere as compared to women. Most female teachers are in the early or middle stage of their career. The average year of teaching is 14. In terms of teaching experience, male and female teachers appear to be more or less identical. The teachers are fairly stable as defined by their average duration of work at the current school. Female teachers are slightly more stable than the males.

By and large, female teachers meet the general qualifications specified by the government. However, if past academic performance is any measure of quality, the academic quality of teachers must be considered poor. There is serious under-representation of female teachers in the so-called 'hard' subjects such as Science and Math. More men studied English, Math and Science than women.

Many female teachers were found to have temporary status despite several years of service. Being temporary would mean being insecure and excluded from getting financial and other benefits. Prolonged temporary status can lower teachers' morale, which can finally hamper their classroom performance. Men have higher chances of obtaining tenure than women.

Most female teachers were either untrained or partially trained, which does not appear to be the case with men. The picture is more or less the same with regard to their participation in INSET. Many professional, institutional and family reasons prevent women from participating in training courses.

#### *Household characteristics and household dynamics*

The nuclear family structure is found to dominate the household composition of female teachers. Female teachers belonged to nuclear families than did their male counterparts. They were likely to come from educated family background than men. Literate or educated parents could be more supportive in their daughters' choice of teaching or paid employment outside the home than the illiterate or uneducated parents. Most female teachers were found to have spouses with formal education of SLC or beyond. On the other hand, most male teachers had spouses who were either illiterate or had low level of educational attainment. A higher proportion of female teachers' fathers were found engaged in salaried work (service) as compared to the male teachers' fathers. Parents who work outside the home perhaps encourage and inspire their girls for paid employment. More proportion of male teachers came from farming background than did female teachers. As regards the occupations of spouses, a large majority of the female teachers' spouses are engaged in salaried work, followed by those involved in business and farming. Employed husbands are probably more conducive to their wives' employment. On the other hand, male teachers' spouses are more often engaged in farming. Data shows that more male teachers have only one source of income as compared with the female teachers. Ironically, many women do not have control over their own income. Further, those living in the joint households have less control than the others.

Women experience gender-based discrimination at an early age, and this begins at home. A large majority of female teachers (63%) stated that their parents provided unequal schooling opportunity to boys and girls, suggesting that the former enjoyed greater opportunity than the latter in their families. Many female teachers had to quit their schooling despite their desire to continue. The data seems to suggest that fathers are more supportive in girls' schooling, while mothers are more supportive in the schooling of boys.

Women must bear heavy work burden as compared to the men. The employment outside the home does not necessarily reduce their work burden at home. To choose to work outside the home is to be prepared to assume the 'double' responsibility of home and the school. The average number of hours spent by female teachers on a day-to-day basis on household chores was 6 hours as opposed to 4 hours for male teachers. Cooking takes much of their time. The overwhelming majority of the female teachers stated that preparing food was their day-to-day responsibility. Aside from cooking, they must bear a number of domestic tasks, which does not appear to be the case with the male teachers. Some female teachers did not have any proper arrangements to look after their children, suggesting that they themselves had to take care of children while at work.

#### *Teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession*

Female teachers joined the teaching profession for various reasons. Obviously, the financial motive appears to be strongest for joining teaching. Long holidays, need to stay close to home, job security, opportunity that teaching provided to run family life in parallel, short working hours, and desire to work with children were frequently mentioned by female teachers. On the other hand, interest in the subject matter and desire to remain in academic environment were important to male teachers compared to the female teachers.

Several indicators were used to assess female teachers' attitudes. The results are so mixed that it is difficult to draw any definite conclusion about their attitudes toward teaching. Many landed in teaching after their search for something 'attractive' did not bring any results. This was more so for male teachers. The overwhelming majority of the female teachers (94%) do not regret becoming a teacher, suggesting that there is faith in the profession. On the other hand, if they had an opportunity of choosing their profession all over again, a clear majority of them will not choose teaching, suggesting the lack of faith. There were some who were (14%) actively involved in changing their job. Nearly one-third of the teachers are undecided (33%) about their future career. Most teachers do not find the teaching profession to be appropriate for sons (66%). They would have objection if their sons chose teaching. On the other hand, many find teaching to be appropriate for their daughters. Most teachers believed that the social status of teaching has either declined badly or it remains the same as compared to the past. Their economic condition has either remained the same or has declined since they joined teaching. Surprisingly, many reported the loss of intellectual ability since joining teaching.

### *Teachers' work and working environment*

Data revealed that it was not easy for many women (64%) to be employed as a teacher. A number of reasons such as the lack of connections, favoritism and nepotism, lack of command in Nepali language, fierce competition, few openings, selection based on political considerations, lack of time for preparation, lack of understanding of the criteria and procedure for teacher selection, lack of quotas devoted to females, etc. made the journey a difficult one. In some cases, the invariably all-male composition of the teacher selection committee resulted in fear, tension and apprehension on some female candidates leading to poor performance in interviews. It is encouraging to note that majority of them (75%) are placed in the school of their choice.

Female teachers are found to have a weekly teaching load of 30 periods. Many (42%) described the current load as being 'unreasonable' and 'too heavy.' As a result, for many (64%) there is no leisure time at work. Male and female teachers do not differ in terms of their workload. Female teachers were frequently asked to teach subjects outside their choice, experience, training and academic background. Many find the subjects they are currently teaching to be difficult.

Aside from teaching, teachers are often expected to perform non-teaching tasks (46%). Male teachers are less likely to be engaged in such assignments than the females. Heavy teaching load combined with frequent involvement in non-teaching tasks does not allow sufficient time for preparation for teaching. Very few female teachers (8%) stated that their head teachers were considerate of their needs and problems while giving assignments.

Although most teachers reported the availability of physical facilities in their schools; however, the condition and adequacy was less than satisfactory. It is to be noted that many schools have not been able to arrange separate toilet facilities for girls and female teachers. Teachers' access to guides, reference books and teaching materials was found to be limited.

Although a few instances of supervisory visits are found to have taken place, supervision of teachers' work for the most part is a rare activity. The head teacher is found to be the principal source of teacher supervision. It is surprising to note that substantial proportions of teachers were either never supervised or supervised once or two times by the resource persons and school supervisors, whose primary responsibility is to provide teacher support and supervision. By and large, teachers work in isolation.

The study revealed that men have higher chances to upgrade their qualifications, receive promotion, be appointed at a higher level, receive awards, and enjoy opportunity for professional growth than the women. Data shows that female teachers are neither considered for leadership positions nor they aspire to occupy such positions. Often women deselect themselves from serious consideration for appointments in leadership roles either by not actively seeking positions or by turning down positions when offered. For the most part, resistance, prejudiced attitudes and/or stereotypical beliefs about women block the consideration of women for such positions.

Female teachers find the current financial and other benefits to be inadequate. It is sad to note that most teachers do not get paid on a monthly basis, which they find it to be 'unacceptable' and 'humiliating.'

It was reported that the schools were facing a number of problems. The ones identified to be very serious were: 'student irregularity,' 'students leaving the school' 'students not having textbooks and stationery,' 'lack of supervision,' 'shortage of physical facilities,' 'shortage of instructional aids,' 'lack of funds,' and 'poor ability of students.'

### *Gender environment in schools*

Most female teachers were found to be familiar with the concepts of 'gender discrimination' and 'gender equality.' Some however expressed their lack of understanding. The concept of gender equality was understood in multiple ways. Some teachers were reluctant to admit that gender discrimination existed in their schools. Others, however, did not share this view. For the most part, gender inequalities and discrimination are accepted as 'natural' or 'normal.' A few female teachers had participated in gender training courses.

In terms of getting respect, female teachers perceived that male teachers received greater respect from students, parents and community members. Some of them however felt that mothers and girl children prefer to be taught by women than by men. Female teachers often felt lonely or isolated in schools. Many mentioned that at times they are ignored or neglected at work. Some found themselves either on their own or with the students during their leisure time. Clearly, female teachers found themselves lonely in situations where males dominated the staff. On being asked how safe they felt at work, many answered in the positive. But, for others the school was not a safe place. Again, young and unmarried female teachers and those working in the crowds of men experienced the feeling of insecurity. The study also uncovered the incidence of sexual harassment; some 7% of the total female teachers admitted that they were subjected to the different acts of sexual harassment at some point of their teaching career. The figure should not be interpreted to mean that the incidence of sexual harassment is minimal. The topic of sexual harassment is not openly discussed with others in eastern cultures. As such, the victims do not want to make such incidence public for fear of negative impact on their careers or bad name. The fact that the topic is a sensitive and complex matter, a more qualitative methodology may need to be employed to investigate the problem.

Female teachers hold a number of expectations from people around them. The first and foremost they expect to be treated with respect and dignity by their male colleagues. They expect that their ability to teach and do other things be recognized. They want to be accepted as a team member. Many also expect to be involved in all aspects of school management. Support for professional growth, equal opportunity for career advancement, frequent communication and interaction, use of decent language, etc. were also desired by them.

Negative attitudes held by people about pregnancy and menstruation also caused stress. The belief that pregnant woman should not touch others was still alive in some communities.

There were instances where parents refused their children to be taught by pregnant women. The belief that women should remain in isolation was also found to be rampant. Many felt that such beliefs make it difficult to live and work in the community as a teacher.

The study found that male teachers hold both negative and positive attitudes toward females. On the negative side, male teachers characterized their female colleagues as being 'lazy,' 'talkative,' 'more concerned with household work,' 'less capable of organizing extra-curricular activities,' 'less regular and punctual in class,' 'less competent,' 'more appropriate for smaller grades as teachers,' 'less sincere and hardworking,' 'less prepared to take on difficult assignments,' 'less able to work as strong administrators,' and 'less competent to teach Science and Math' in comparison to men. On the positive side, male teachers believed that both parents and girls feel safer in schools when female teachers are present in schools. They rejected the widely held belief that female teachers' presence boosts girls' enrollment and retention. However, they do strongly support the view that women are good at giving care to younger children. On the whole, the data goes to suggest that men do not have positive attitudes toward women. The views of parents, head teachers, district officials and children are no different from those of the male teachers. Nevertheless, it is commonly held by all that women are good at giving care to children and that children, especially girls feel much safer. It was stressed by many that women would make better teachers in primary grades. In particular, they are perceived to be incompetent in teaching hard subjects. Such perceptions do harm than good. Such perceptions can confine women to junior levels and tasks believed to be easy.

The students were asked between men and women who they would choose to be their teacher. More boys showed their preference for men, while more girls did the same for women.

The study's findings on teachers' attitudes toward boys and girls as learners are revealing. For the most part, girls are perceived to be quiet, calm and submissive in comparison to boys (91%), therefore, easily controllable than the latter (75%). Not surprising, teachers find girls more obedient than boys (91%). Girls are reported to be shy and nervous to ask questions in the classroom, which could be one reason for poor performance of girls as compared to that of the boys. This belief on the part of teachers combined with the lack of action to correct the so-called 'shyness' and 'nervousness' found among girls can contribute to poor learning. Girls are also believed to be (a) less able to learn math and science (45%), (b) less aggressive in their study (41%), (c) less interested in studies (43%), and (d) less able to learn (42%) in comparison to the boys. On the other hand, teachers find boys to be working much harder than the girls. Teachers often overlook the fact that girls are subjected to longer hours of household work, which gives them little or no time for study. This very fact puts them behind in studies. It is not surprising that some still believe that boys need more education in comparison to the girls.

### *Increasing the supply of female teachers in rural and remote locations*

The survey revealed that not many female teachers have considered working in rural and remote locations of the country. A large majority of them reported having never thought of being deployed in difficult locations. Under conditions if they were forced to go to difficult locations, the majority of them (70%) mentioned that they would quit teaching rather than continue. Many factors were identified as major barriers: conflict, family and/or personal reasons, limited financial and non-financial incentives, extreme hardship, limited or no opportunity to upgrade one's academic qualifications, lack of services and opportunities, and social and cultural practices that restrict women's free movement and independence. It was stressed that the following actions could encourage women to work in remote and rural areas: a secured place to live, provision of free housing and food, higher salary, hardship allowance, presence of at least two or more female teachers in the school, longer vacations, giving extra value for the service done in difficult location in promotion, provision of child care, transport costs, etc. They believed that targeted scholarships for higher education, recruitment of local women, and greater incentive for schools to appoint females as teachers would also contribute to increase the supply of female teachers.

### **Major Recommendations**

On the basis of the above findings, the following recommendations have been made:

#### *Formulating and enforcing policies to bring more women into the teaching profession*

Enforce the two female teacher policy. The one female teacher policy subjects women to the crowd of men, where they cannot function effectively. Being a small minority in the male world can cause loneliness and isolation that can undermine the sense of comfort, confidence and belonging. Therefore, the government must enforce the two female teacher policy.

Consider employing women of diverse origins. Women should not be seen as a homogenous entity. Recruitment practices in the past have not considered women's ethnicity, language, and place of residence. Such a policy does not favor women belonging to indigenous groups and linguistic minorities, leading to further exclusion of these groups. Therefore, it is essential that the female teacher policy is crafted recognizing the diversity among women.

Develop a complete package to attract female teachers to serve in rural and remote locations. Isolated actions will never address the shortage of female teachers in schooling operating in rural areas. Efforts in the past did not yield much in terms of attracting women to work in difficult circumstances. Therefore, a complete incentive package is in order.

### *Formulating policies to improve the status of the teaching profession*

Adopt measures to make teaching an attractive profession. The academic profile of teachers was found to be poor. Therefore, serious efforts are needed to attract academically strong students into teaching.

Increase teachers' access to resources. Both male and female teachers reported that their economic status has either declined or remained the same since becoming a teacher. Where teachers' salary and allowance cannot be increased due to the current economic crisis in the country, however, it should be possible to increase teachers' access to financial resources through cooperatives and rural banks so that teachers' family could be engaged in income-generating activities.

Take necessary steps urgently to make temporarily serving teachers permanent. The service status of several female teachers was found to be temporary. Being temporary would mean being insecure and excluded from getting financial and other benefits. Prolonged temporary status is not healthy in many ways. Some concrete actions are in order.

Prepare a teacher redeployment plan in order to meet the shortage of teachers in schools. Both male and female teachers are found to be taking a heavy teaching load. Many described their current teaching load as being unacceptable, unbearable, and in some cases impossible. Among others, heavy teaching load is the result of insufficient number of teachers. Much of the teacher shortage has occurred due to inequitable distribution of available human resources. Therefore, it is advisable to develop a teacher redeployment plan in order to ease the shortage of teachers and utilize the scarce human resources.

### *Raising general awareness about the role of female teachers and about gender issues*

Raise general awareness about the importance of female teachers. There is no shortage of negative attitudes toward female teachers. Such negative attitudes held by colleagues, parents, students, community members and administrators could have adverse effects on woman's performance. It is therefore imperative to raise general awareness among the public.

Develop and offer courses about gender. There is lack of gender awareness at all levels. It is therefore recommended that academic and other training institutions should offer programs about gender and cultural issues to potential and serving teachers, administrators, curriculum experts, trainers, and planners. It is important that people are sensitized about harmful stereotypes and biases and that they are able to work to prevent discrimination.

### *Formulating and implementing measures for professional development and career advancement*

Introduce multiple measures to increase women's participation in training courses. It is clear that many barriers remain in women's participation in training courses. Their



participation can be enhanced through measures such as mobile training courses, 'female only' courses, child care, recruitment of female trainers, provision of physical facilities suited to women's needs, etc.

Promote mentorship in teaching for women's career advancement. Without role models and good mentorship, women will be less likely to gain access to the positions of power that could in turn allow them to serve as mentors and role models for other women. It should be recognized that women's advancement can be facilitated and accelerated by the help of a mentor.

Take necessary steps to end current gender disparity in career advancement. The findings show that women have fewer chances of achieving career advancement compared with males. They are less likely to receive promotion, take part in training courses, and receive awards and medals than the male teachers. These practices must end. It is necessary to consider career-building strategies for women such as networking, career tracking and mentoring.

Encourage women to utilize available networks and create new networks. Collegial relationships provide the opportunity for the exchange of information about their personal and professional lives. Often excluded from these informal networks, women can be disadvantaged in a number of ways. Through training courses, female teachers must be encouraged to use the existing networks or create new ones where such networks do not exist.

Encourage female teachers to establish their own association. Female teachers will not be empowered unless they are organized and unless they take the responsibility of protecting their rights in their own hands.

Organize counseling and self-assertion training. Some female teachers seemed to have a negative self-concept. They are socialized to become docile and obedient. Counseling and leadership training courses could help build up their self-confidence and assertiveness.

Increase the number of women in leadership positions. There is massive under-representation of women in leadership positions. Fewer women in leadership positions means limited or no major role in decision-making and fewer prospects of women for their career advancement. It is essential to take concrete steps to increase the number of women in leadership positions.

#### *Improving the condition of schooling in rural and remote areas*

Develop and implement appropriate educational strategies for the rural and remote districts. All available indicators suggest that the status of rural schools is poor. While the supply of female teachers might contribute to address some of the problems facing these schools, this alone will not be enough to lift the status of

schooling in these areas. Therefore, the government must devise a comprehensive strategy that is particularly designed to address the educational needs of these areas.

Reintroduce the National Development Service (NDS) to meet the immediate shortage of qualified male and female teachers in rural and remote districts. The NDS program launched during the 1970s, among many other things, played an instrumental role in meeting the shortage of teachers in the country. The government might consider reintroducing the program.

#### *Improving the overall status of girls' education*

Encourage girls to study English, Science and Mathematics. The high concentration of women on so-called easy subjects makes them less important as teachers. There exists a common perception that female teachers cannot teach the so-called hard subjects. They themselves are found to believe that girls are much weaker in English, Math and Science. Therefore, changing the presuppositions, attitudes and expectations of parents, teachers and girls might be the key to improving attainments of girls in these important subjects.

Introduce attractive scholarships. Scholarship schemes should be redesigned making it possible for girls from rural areas to complete secondary education and continue further.

#### *Changing school policies and practices*

Integrate gender into all school policies and practices. Serious efforts must be made to change school policies, programs and practices to make schools gender friendly and gender inclusive. Therefore, it is imperative to integrate gender into all aspects of school life. To this end, issues of gender should form an integral part of school life.

Promote collegial culture in schools in order to promote teacher support and supervision. Clearly, schools lack a professional culture where teachers and others gather and collaborate to improve teaching and learning. It is recommended that the instructional and supervisory role of the head teacher be strengthened so that teachers are constantly supervised, monitored and supervised. Collegiality must be promoted so that teachers can support each other.

Arrange for teacher assignment based on their training, qualification, experience, interest and ability. There were a number of cases where both male and female teachers were assigned to teach outside their area of expertise, interest, academic background, training and experience, which can have detrimental effect on the quality of teaching. There is a need to revisit the existing assignment practices. Teacher assignment should take into account of their training, academic qualification, experience, interest and ability.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Context

Gender disparity has been a chronic problem in education ever since Nepal launched planned efforts for the development of formal schooling. All available educational indicators suggest that girls are far behind than boys in terms of enrollment, retention, grade promotion and learning achievement. More girls are still outside the formal system of education. The likelihood of children dropping out of schools without completing the full cycle of primary education is more common among girls than among boys. Girls are likely to repeat grades more often than boys. Girls' academic performance has remained much lower as compared to that of boys as reflected in the passing rates and average test scores in public examinations and national assessments. Girls' chances of making to the top of the educational ladder are much slimmer than those of the boys. That the schooling profile of girls is dismal in Nepal is no accident. These disparities are deeply rooted in the socio-economic, cultural and political system of the country.

While improving the status of girls' schooling calls for a response that addresses the root causes of gender disparity, much of it can also be tackled by devising appropriate educational strategy. In this context, the government of Nepal has for a long time adopted the strategy of deploying female teachers in schools in order to reduce gender disparity in education, but most particularly to increase girls' participation and retention in primary education. Policymakers and planners in Nepal have been consistently guided by the assumption that the presence of female teachers would attract parents to send their girls to schools and retain them in schools until they complete primary schooling. Some research tends to support the above view. Studies both in Nepal and elsewhere have shown that female teachers provide better role models for girls and are better placed to respond to problems faced by girls in schools. It has been frequently reported that both parents and girls feel safe and comfortable when female teachers are present in schools. The likelihood of girls leaving the school early without completing full cycle of primary education decreases with female teachers' presence. And, girls are more likely to learn well when they are taught by female teachers. These research findings give further impetus to the policymakers and planners to choose the option of increasing the number of female teachers as a strategy for promoting girls' education in the country.

The recognition of the role of female teachers in promoting the status of girls' education has led to the development and implementation of a number of initiatives and policies in the country since the early 1970s. In 1971, the government launched the Equal Access of Women to Education Project (EAWEP) with the purpose of increasing girls' participation in education through the production and recruitment of female teachers. While there were not many qualified or educated women, the program tried to recruit women with reduced experience or qualifications to be educated and trained as teachers and be deployed to work

in rural areas upon completion of their education and training. Later in 1983, this program was renamed as the Education for Girls and Women in Nepal (EGWN). By 1988, some 2,500 females were trained as primary teachers. In 1975, as part of the Fifth Five Year Plan (1975 -1980), the government launched the academic upgrading program with the main objective of upgrading the academic level of girls of remote districts. The government constructed 14 feeder hostels (currently 18) in different locations of the country with the support of UNESCO and NORAD to provide residential facility to the girls. The feeder hostels provided meals and residential facilities to the girls, who then attended a local secondary school to upgrade their academic qualifications. The idea was to provide secondary education and ten-month long teacher training to these girls who were expected to go back to their villages to serve as teachers upon completion of their education and training.

Government effort to increase the number of female teachers continued through the 1980s and 1990s. In 1993, the government launched another nationwide drive to recruit the female teachers under the first phase of the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP I). By the end of the Project in 1998, the government was able to recruit some 4,200 female teachers as targeted in the Project Document. The addition of these women certainly increased the presence of female teachers in the teaching force, but it did not change the status of schools operating in remote and rural locations due to faulty recruitment and deployment practice. Many of the newly recruited female teachers happened to be jobless women from urban or sub-urban areas of the country, who were not prepared to work in rural and remote locations. The mass recruitment and deployment of female teachers through centralized, non-competitive and non-transparent procedures can be blamed for the unfair distribution of teachers. Consequently, the BPEP efforts of recruiting female teachers resulted in the over-supply of female teachers in the schools of district headquarters and under-supply of the same in rural areas.

During the mid-1990s, there was a shift in the government's approach toward female teachers. It was recognized that the shortage of female teachers cannot be tackled without a firm policy. In this regard, the government announced a female teacher policy requiring schools to recruit at least one female teacher in each primary school of the country. Although the policy brought new awareness about the importance of female teachers, the policy remained mostly on paper due to a number of reasons. First, rural and remote areas of the country continuously suffered from the shortage of female teachers due to the very poor status of girls' schooling. Second, urban or urban-based qualified female teachers did not seem to be prepared to go to rural and remote locations due to little or no incentives and lack of security. Third, there were hardly any teaching posts left because most of the available teacher posts were already occupied by male teachers. Fourth, the policy could not be implemented due to the lack of dissemination, proper follow-up and monitoring in the districts and schools. In brevity, the policy has remained mostly on paper.

The one female teacher policy has undergone through some criticism and review in recent years. Many have argued that the presence of one female teacher is symbolic of a tokenism. The policy or practice of tokenism may increase higher visibility of women, but it subjects them to professional isolation, potential sexual harassment, more stereotypical responses

from colleagues, and strong pressure to perform on the same level as men (Adler, 1994). One female teacher in a male dominated environment is tantamount to not being at all because she can be so lonely and insecure that much cannot be expected from her. Against this reality, it is increasingly being recognized that one female teacher cannot make much of a difference in the enrollment and retention of girls. The donors have been particularly critical of the one female teacher policy. Most recently, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) has adopted a policy of recruiting two female teachers in each primary school. In a directive issued by the MOES, districts and schools have been instructed to give priority to females in the recruitment of teachers as teacher posts remain vacant.

As a result of the consistent government efforts and drive, the proportion of female teachers increased from less than 1% in 1975 to 19% in 1998 and 30% in 2003. However, these gains have been less than desirable. Educational statistics of 2001 suggests that of the total primary schools (24,704) operating in the country some 10,902 (44%) schools are without the female teachers (Annex 1.1). The situation could be even worst at the lower-secondary and secondary levels. The schools in the rural and remote locations continue to face the acute shortage of female teachers.

Educational planners and policymakers in Nepal have recurrently recognized the fact that deploying female teachers can be an appropriate educational strategy to address gender disparity in education. While there is so much policy ‘talk’ about increasing the number of female teachers, little is known about the condition of those who have already joined the teaching profession. This study, therefore, originated from a desire to know the status of females who are in the teaching profession. Women’s experiences as teachers are largely under-researched or not researched at all. What is the profile of females who are in teaching? What led these women choose teaching as a profession? What attitudes do they have towards the teaching profession? What are the school conditions under which female teachers have to perform? What constraints and barriers women have to face while taking up the teaching career? What do male teachers, students, parents, community members and educational managers think of female teachers and their performance? What needs to be done to increase the number of female teachers in schools? This study is being undertaken to answer these and many other questions. Originally designed to develop understanding about the status of female teachers, the scope of the study was later extended when there was an additional interest in knowing what distinguishes female teachers from their male colleagues.

## **1.2 Rationale of the Study**

The rationale of this study can be justified in many ways:

First, the government of Nepal is committed to achieving Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015. Most particularly, the government is committed to achieving Goal 5 of the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Framework of Action and Goal 3 of the Millennium Declaration, both of which are concerned with reducing gender disparity in education. Most recent statistics coming from the National Living Standard Survey (NLSS) suggests that more than 30% of

the total primary age girls are still outside the formal schooling system. The MOES statistics also suggests that the incidence of grade repetition, dropping out of schools and under-achievement is common among girls. These problems are acute in rural and remote locations of the country. Past experience of Nepal and other developing countries has been that female teachers' presence in schools can be instrumental to address some of these problems in many ways. As mentioned earlier, despite some gains in the number of female teachers in the country, many schools operating in rural and remote areas are still without female teachers. A great challenge for educational policymakers and planners in Nepal and elsewhere is how to supply female teachers in the schools operating in rural and remote areas. Very few studies in Nepal have examined the barriers and constraints that hinder women's deployment in rural and remote locations. The findings of this study may help devise proper strategies that might be useful to encourage women to be deployed in schools operating in rural and remote locations.

Second, bringing more women into teaching means making the teaching profession friendly to women, that has traditionally been a male's profession. Teaching profession will fail to attract qualified women in the absence of policies that do not support women's need to make a balance between career and family roles and between household responsibilities and public responsibilities. The study's findings may provide insights into the formulation of appropriate policies in favor of female teachers.

Third, current understanding about teaching profession is limited. Understanding of the teaching profession from female perspectives is particularly lacking. Male and female teachers experience the profession differently. Educational managers who are to manage the teaching force must be fully aware of the joys and pains, satisfactions and dissatisfactions, ease and difficulties that women do experience in teaching. Gender research reveals that women's ways of thinking and behaving are not the same as men's. While more and more women will be seeking teaching positions in future, it is necessary to extend our understanding about the teaching profession from the female teachers' perspective. In the wake of continued pro-female policy intervention and the increasing number of women also looking out for jobs outside home, more and more women will be into teaching. The findings of the study may provide insights into identifying proper measures that might be needed for entry and retention of women in the teaching profession. It is vital for educational managers and male teachers to be prepared to face the new reality that women's entry into teaching profession is certain to bring. The reality is how to work with women as colleagues in the same environment who have been traditionally subordinated to men.

Fourth, the attainment of the gender-related goal of the EFA Dakar Framework of Action and the Millennium Declaration calls for adequate understanding on the part of administrators, policymakers, educators and planners of the concepts of gender parity and gender equality. The findings of the study may serve as a basis to raise awareness among policymakers, school administrations, and serving and prospective teachers about gender parity and equality.

Finally, it is not enough for women to become teachers. Ultimately, women should rise to the leadership and managerial positions. Currently, less than 5% of the total primary schools are headed by females. It is essential to know the attitudes and traditions that prevent women from rising to the top jobs. The study may provide insights into what it takes for women to reach senior leadership and managerial positions.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of the study is to describe and analyze the existing status of female teachers in Nepal. More specifically, the study intends to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To prepare a demographic and professional profile of female teachers working in primary, lower secondary and secondary schools of Nepal and see how their demographic and professional characteristics might interact with the women's ability to function as teachers;
2. To analyze household characteristics and household dynamics of female teachers and examine how they relate to their performance in schools;
3. To investigate female teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession;
4. To analyze the work of female teachers and working environment that exists in schools in order to identify problems and difficulties that female teachers face in classrooms and schools;
5. To examine gender environment existing in schools to see if schools as workplaces provide favorable environment for women;
6. To analyze the perceptions of male teachers, learners, parents and community members about female teachers and their ability to perform in schools;
7. To identify barriers and constraints that discourage women from joining teaching profession and from serving in rural and remote schools of Nepal; and
8. To identify specific policy options and actions that might contribute to increasing the supply of female teachers in schools, especially in rural and remote locations.

### **1.4 Key Research Questions**

Drawing from the above objectives, the study seeks to answer a number of research questions. Specifically, the following research questions are of particular interest to this study:

1. What policies are in place to increase the presence of female teachers in Nepal and to encourage them to serve in rural schools?
2. What is the distribution of the existing stock of female teachers across the different regions, zones and districts of the country?

3. How has the number of female teachers increased over the years?
4. What is the overall profile of female teachers?
5. What incentives are there for females to join teaching?
6. What are the barriers/constraints that prevent females from joining teaching?
7. What factors prevent women from functioning effectively as teachers?
8. What are the working conditions under which female teachers must perform?
9. What problems do female teachers face in their jobs?
10. Are male and female teachers seen and perceived differently by their administrators, colleagues, students, parents and community members?
11. What can be done to increase the supply of female teachers and improve their overall status?

## **1.5 Methodology and Design of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to gain a deeper understanding about the status of female teachers serving in primary, lower secondary and secondary schools of Nepal. The study is based mainly on primary data collected through an extensive field survey. Both qualitative and quantitative information was gathered from a sample of female teachers. While the primary interest is in the status of female teachers, the study gathers information from the male teachers as well. As such, this is not a comparative study between male and female teachers. Where necessary and appropriate, the data obtained from the male teachers have also been presented so that it would be possible to develop understanding about female teachers vis-à-vis male teachers. The study also gathers information from the head teachers, children and parents. Mostly, their perceptions about female teachers were sought. Structured and semi-structured questionnaires were developed and used to gather information. Also, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with various types of respondents to gather qualitative information.

In order to answer the research questions, data had to be collected from a sample of female teachers working in different parts of the country. Hence, a survey of female teachers was designed and undertaken that involved contacting the female teachers in person and interviewing them using a structured questionnaire. Two reasons prevented the task of obtaining a random sample of schools and female teachers that would be representative of the entire country. First, the study was undertaken at a time when the country was going through difficult political circumstances. Most schools and districts were inaccessible due to the Maoists' frequent call for closures, popularly known as *Bandhs*. Secondly, female teachers in Nepal are thinly distributed across the country's schools due to their serious shortage and the so-called 'one female teacher per school' policy of the government. Thus, the sample design of this study had to be partly random and partly purposive (accessibility of respondents). Details on the sampling method are described below.



### 1.5.1 Sampling method and sample size

At the outset, it was decided that the study would limit to the public schools (government supported and financed schools, now officially defined as community schools) and the number of total schools in the sample would be 100. It was also decided that the study would include a sample of 300 female teachers of 10 districts representing the various development regions and ecological zones. This was necessary in view of the heterogeneity in school conditions based on the development region and the ecological zone. The five development regions and three ecological zones offer a good basis for selecting the districts that provide a fair representation of the country. Based on this stratification, the country consists of 15 strata (5 development regions X 3 ecological belts). An ideal scenario would be to represent each stratum. That was however not possible for political as well as financial reasons.

For the purpose of the present study, the three ecological regions remained intact, but the five development regions were regrouped to make only three regions. Region 1 comprised Eastern Development Region (EDR), Region 2 comprised the Central Development Region (CDR) and the Western Development Region (WDR), and Region 3 comprised the Far Western Development Region (FWDR) and the Mid Western Development Region (MWDR). This stratification scheme yielded a total of 9 strata, consisting of 3 Mountain, 3 Hill and 3 Tarai districts. Under this scheme, the Kathmandu Valley, which consists of three districts, falls under Region 2. Given the fact that the Kathmandu Valley presents a unique situation in terms of development, including education, it was decided to treat the Kathmandu Valley as a separate region. That gave us 10 strata.

In the first stage of sampling, 10 districts had to be selected representing each of the 10 strata. Since the distribution of female teachers was uneven across the districts (from a low of 5% in some districts to a high of 50% in a few others), it was essential that the sampling procedure takes into account of the distribution of female teachers in order to enhance the likelihood of finding female teachers. It was therefore decided that from each of the 10 strata a district with the highest number of female teachers would be selected. Using the number counts of female teachers as sampling parameter, the following districts were qualified to be selected as sample districts.

**Table 1.1: Sample districts**

Region	Tarai	Hill	Mountain	No. of districts
Region 1 (EDR)	Morang	Ilam	Okhaldhunga	3
Region 2 (CDR and WDR)	Rupandehi	Kaski	Sindhupalchok	3
Region 3 (FWDR and MWDR)	Banke	Surkhet	Jumla	3
Region 4 (Kathmandu Valley)		Lalitpur		1
<b>Total</b>				<b>10</b>

The number of female teachers to be selected from each ecological region and each level of school education (primary, lower secondary and secondary) was proportionate to the actual distribution of female teachers across the 3 ecological regions and the school level. According to the most recent statistics of MOES, of the total female teachers, 32% were in

the Tarai, 36% in the Hills, and 27% in the Kathmandu Valley. In the Mountains, female teachers account for only 5% of the total female teaching force. Likewise, a large majority of the female teachers teach in primary schools (82%), while 12% of them serve as lower secondary and 5% as secondary teachers. It meant that the sample of the study had to have a higher representation of female teachers from primary schools as compared to the others. Likewise, female teachers had to be selected from the three zones proportionate to their actual distribution. The proposed sample framework of the study is shown in Table 1.2.

**Table 1.2: Sample framework**

Region	Primary	Lower secondary	Secondary	Total
Tarai	79	12	6	<b>97</b>
Hills	89	13	7	<b>108</b>
Mountains	13	2	1	<b>17</b>
Kathmandu Valley	66	10	5	<b>81</b>
	<b>247</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>303</b>
	<b>246</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>300</b>

The second stage in the sampling was to select schools. It was decided that 10 schools would be selected from each sample district to meet the planned target of 100 schools. Again, the number of female teachers had to be made the basis of school selection in order to increase the likelihood of finding female teachers easily. Where there were equal numbers of female teachers, school location (rural/urban) was also considered in selecting the school.

In the third stage of sampling procedure, female teachers had to be selected for the survey. At this stage, the selection of female teachers was based on their availability. It meant that every female teacher of the selected school who was presented in the school during the survey period was included in the study automatically. In the case of male teachers, at least two male teachers were to be invited for participation in the survey based on their availability. The effective sample distribution is shown in Table 1.3. The number of both male and female teachers actually interviewed is much higher than the planned number. Although the targeted number of schools to be covered was 100, the actual number turned out to be 106.

**Table 1.3: Distribution of respondents by district**

District	Number of schools	Primary		Lower Secondary		Secondary		Total		Overall
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Ilam	11	14	27	8	5	6	2	29	36	65
Morang	11	16	44	2	1	7	0	25	47	71
Sankhuwasabha	12	22	30	7	7	8	3	37	40	77
Sindhupalchok	14	21	29	10	5	7	1	38	36	74
Kathmandu	7	6	18	3	3	4	4	13	27	40
Kaski	9	16	38	9	8	10	5	35	53	88
Rupandehi	9	14	47	6	4	13	3	33	54	87
Banke	13	10	30	9	3	14	7	34	41	75
Surkhet	11	34	43	12	4	5	3	51	50	101
Jumla	9	23	31	3	0	3	1	29	32	61
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>740</b>

Assuming that our aim to understand about female teachers would not be complete without actually examining how students think of their female teachers, we planned to interview a group of students from each sample school. So, it was decided that from every school five students would be selected and interviewed. The selection of students was made on the basis of their availability. The number of students actually interviewed is shown in Table 1.4. As can be seen in the table, the sample consisted of 318 male and 335 female students. The numbers of Grade 5, 8 and 10 students were 313, 184, and 156 respectively.

**Table 1.4: Number of students in the sample by grade and sex**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Grade 5	155 (48.7)	158 (47.2)	313 (47.9)
Grade 8	90 (28.3)	94 (28.0)	184 (28.2)
Grade 10	73 (23.0)	83 (24.8)	156 (23.9)
<b>Total</b>	<b>318 (100.0)</b>	<b>335 (100.0)</b>	<b>653 (100.0)</b>

Note: Figures in parentheses represent percentages.

The head teacher of the sample school was also interviewed to know about their perceptions and views about the female teachers. The sample of head teachers comprised 84 (79%) males and 22 (21%) females. Schools headed by females were deliberately chosen so that it would be possible to examine if the status of female teachers differs based on the head teacher's gender.

### **1.5.2 Sources of information**

Data for the study was gathered from a number of sources:

Documents analysis. The availability and quality of female teachers rely heavily on the policy. A good teacher management policy can attract academically and professionally qualified, committed and well-motivated teachers. Whether or not female teachers will be prepared to serve in rural and remote schools depends on the policy and supportive incentives. Therefore, one major task of this study has been to review and analyze the policy documents of the government. These include Education Act and Regulations, project documents, periodic plans, and government circulars and decisions. The aim was to examine whether educational policy encourages or discourages women to join teaching and to serve in rural communities where girls' enrollment is low.

Analysis of EMIS data. In order to assess the presence of female teachers at the system level (macro level), EMIS data collected by MOES were analyzed. A trend analysis was carried out to find out how the number of female teachers has increased over the years, especially after 1990. The distribution of female teachers was examined in terms of development region, ecological zone, school location, and school type.

Literature review. Available literature on female teachers was reviewed. All research conducted in Nepal on the issue of female teachers was reviewed. Where available, findings of studies undertaken elsewhere have also been reviewed. But, more particularly, research

conducted in the developing world has been of much interest. Nepal shares with many other countries that are suffering from low enrollment and retention of girls in schools.

Survey questionnaires. To gather information required for the survey, six different sets of instruments were developed and used. A short description of each of these instruments follows:

- a. School survey form. This instrument was designed to collect background information of the sampled schools covering aspects such as school location, school type, student enrollment, number and characteristics of teachers, availability of physical facilities, etc.
- b. Survey questionnaire for female teachers. A structured questionnaire was developed to gather information from female teachers. It gathered demographic information as well as their opinions and perceptions on a number of issues relating to their work. More specifically, the questionnaire sought perceptions of female teachers pertaining to the following: incentives for joining the teaching profession, barriers/constraints that discourage women to join teaching, barriers/constraints that prevent women from functioning effectively, working conditions, problems that female teachers face, balance between home and school work, female participation in teacher development activities, etc.
- c. Survey questionnaire for male teachers. The purpose of this instrument was to find out male teachers' attitudes and perceptions about their female counterparts.
- d. Survey questionnaire for head teachers. This instrument sought head teacher' opinions and perceptions about female teachers. The head teachers assessed the performance of female teachers vis-à-vis the performance of the male teachers.
- e. Students' perception survey. This questionnaire was developed to gather students' perceptions about male and female teachers.
- f. Focus group interviews. Focus group discussions were conducted with different groups of respondents such as parents, community members and School Management Committee (SMC) members. The data gathered from the focus group discussions have been used to supplement information from the structured questionnaires.

### **1.5.3 Pre-testing of instruments**

The instruments were pre-tested prior to their administration with the purpose of validating the clarity of the wording and checking for possible ambiguities on the terminology used in the questionnaire. A survey manual was prepared that contained specific instructions to the enumerators on filling up each item of the six instruments. The purpose of preparing the manual was to maintain uniformity in fieldwork by providing structured guidelines for undertaking data collection activities, and more importantly, to give a common interpretation of what was asked in the instrument.

#### **1.5.4 Data collection**

As part of UNESCO Kathmandu's plan to promote research on gender issues, develop research capacity and build gender awareness among the university students and faculty members, this study was led, managed and undertaken by the faculty members and students of the Faculty of Education (FOE) at Tribhuvan University. A group of 20 Master's degree students enrolled in the Central Department of Education of FOE were chosen to give them hands-on-experience of designing and conducting research on gender issues. The students were involved actively in preparing, testing and administering the instruments. A gender balance was maintained on the team by ensuring representation of female students (50%). The presence of female members was essential for the purpose of data accuracy because often female respondents cannot share their inner feelings and beliefs with the male interviewers. Having female members on the team facilitated interviews with female interviewees.

Prior to dispatching the research assistants to the field, an intensive orientation program was organized to train them in the administration of survey questionnaire, research interview, school observation, preparation of field notes, focus group discussions, etc. The assistants found the training to be very beneficial in many ways. Fieldwork was undertaken during the months of November and December 2004 and January 2005.

Maintaining the quality of data has been an important part of the study. A number of measures were adopted to maintain the data quality right from the very beginning. First, data collection instruments were made as simple and clear as possible. They were initially developed in English and later translated into Nepali. Second, the training was thorough and it was intense to capture every aspect of the study. Third, the assistants were engaged in pilot testing of the instruments, which was an opportunity to experience the possible reality of the field. Fourth, the assistants checked and re-checked the completed questionnaires after the interviews were over before leaving the interview site. Likewise, after completing the day's work the assistants rechecked each others' completed forms by exchanging them. Fourth, the forms were checked again for any missing responses and inconsistencies prior to entering the data into the computer.

#### **1.5.5 Data processing and analysis**

All completed questionnaires were thoroughly checked for their usability and completeness. Open-ended questions were post-coded and categories developed based on the themes that emerged in the data. Data were then entered into the computer and analyzed using the statistical package of SPSS. Data analysis took place on two levels. First, aggregate tables were prepared for all items in the questionnaire; in the second round, cross-tables were prepared for major variables of interest. A major aim of this study was to allow individual voices to be heard and for this reason, where it seemed appropriate, individual testimony had been accorded space. The respondents made numerous informal comments and suggestions during the interviews. We believe these comments and suggestions to be valuable in contributing to gaining a deeper understanding of the different aspects of the female

teachers' lives. Therefore, where appropriate, these comments and suggestions have been presented as they were told by the respondents.

### **1.5.6 Limitations of the study**

This is an exploratory study seeking to gain understanding about the status of female teachers in Nepal. The study is not meant for making broad generalizations for the country as a whole. The sample size of some 106 schools and 416 female teachers is too small to represent the wide world of schools of Nepal. The sampling procedure was primarily purposive and convenience based, which does not allow broader generalizations. The findings of the study should be considered initial, subject to further investigation and verification.

## **1.6 Report Organization**

This report consists of 10 chapters. Chapter 1 presents the background, objectives and key research questions. It also describes the methodology adopted in the study. Chapter 2 presents a review of research literature on female teachers. Chapter 3 presents and analyzes the trends and status of female teachers in Nepal. The chapter provides macro level of understanding involving female teachers. It uses the secondary information collected by the MOES as part of its Education Management Information System (EMIS). Subsequently, Chapter 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 present and analyze the field data. These six chapters basically follow the research objectives and are organized around the key themes of the research objectives. The last chapter is devoted to present the study's key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## CHAPTER II

# REVIEW OF LITEATURE

### 2.1 Context

The main purpose of this literature review is to document and summarize research and other information on the female teachers. The review covers more than one body of literature. The chapter at first provides a historical perspective on educational policies and programs concerning female teachers. It may help us enhance our understanding of both programmatic and policy responses to the issue of female teachers. Secondly, another body of literature that is reviewed here concerns empirical work on issues of female teachers and girls' education. This body of literature limits itself to research studies undertaken in Nepal. But, where appropriate and available, studies undertaken elsewhere are also presented and discussed. Finally, issues that need to be examined further have been identified.

### 2.2 Review of Educational Policies and Programs

In retrospect, the Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) recognized the need for recruiting women in teaching profession as early as 1956. The Commission in its report entitled *Education in Nepal* stated 'women are better adapted to working with children of primary school age than men' (p. 173). The Commission recommended the government that it consider planning 'definite procedures that will bring qualified men and women into teaching profession' (p. 173). It dreamt of making teaching a 'woman's profession' like in many western countries. However, no concrete programs were developed and implemented to put these policy intentions into actions. As such, a national system of education was yet to be developed. The phenomenon of schooling was new. There were only a handful of educational institutions in the country. No surprise those institutions were only for men coming from affluent families. Although the new political atmosphere that was created after the overthrow of the Rana regime gave impetus to educational development, there existed a number of socio-cultural, economic, political and institutional barriers for the promotion of education in general and the promotion of girls' education in particular. Evidently, girls were seen not worthy of being made literate and educated.

The search for a national system of education that was in consonance with the new political order led to the establishment of the All Round National Education Committee (ARNEC) in 1961. The Commission recommended the government to adopt a policy of free and compulsory primary education. It reaffirmed the need for hiring female teachers to realize this policy objective. It stated, '...women rather than men should be engaged in teaching' (p. 10). The Committee also recommended establishing residential schools for both boys and girls for the expansion of education. Evidently, these reports of both educational bodies had tall educational agendas, but corresponding efforts to implement these policy intentions

were seriously lacking. Consequently, these two national education plans did not make any impact in terms of increasing the number of female teachers in the schools of Nepal.

In the quest for an education system that was able to bring the various economic and social interests and harmonize diverse multi-lingual traditions into a single nationhood, consolidate the loyalty to and faith in the Crown, and accelerate socio-economic progress, the government of Nepal introduced the National Education System Plan (NESP) in 1971 (NESP, p. 3). The rulers were confident that the achievement of the political goals of national unity, social unification and homogenization of the Nepalese society could only be achieved through one 'single' and 'uniform' system of education. The NESP made the point that the education system and the political system were not separable. Although the NESP introduced sweeping changes in teaching profession (e.g., mandatory teacher training, fixed pay-scale for teachers, teacher appointment through a district-based Education Service Commission), it didn't call for the appointment of female teachers in schools. The NESP document was also silent about the issue of girls' education.

However, the year of 1971 marked the beginning of the expansion of girls' education in Nepal. In this year, the government launched the Equal Access of Women to Education Project (EAWEP) with the purpose of increasing girls' participation in education through the production and recruitment of female teachers. It was assumed that the deployment of female teachers in rural primary schools would inspire parents to send their children to schools. While there were not many qualified or educated women in rural communities, the program tried to recruit female teachers with reduced experience or qualifications to work in rural areas to encourage girls' enrollment. Under EAWEP, potential female teachers had to be recruited from rural areas because urban women with more education would not move to the rural areas to work. As part of the program, girls from rural areas were recruited to be trained as teachers in the various teacher training colleges of Nepal. Two types of teacher training courses were developed where girls with SLC and Grade qualifications could join A and B level courses respectively. The girls were provided with stipend that covered their living and educational expenses. Later in 1983, this program was renamed as the Education for Girls and Women in Nepal (EGWN). By 1988, some 2,500 females were trained as primary teachers. A study reported that about 68 percent of the total female teachers trained under EGWN were employed as teachers (CERID, 1991).

Between 1975 and 1990, various national development plans reaffirmed the need to produce and recruit female teachers at the primary level in order to achieve universalization of primary education (UPE). The Fifth Five Year Plan (1975 -1980) stated that women should be recruited as teachers in primary schools in order to expand girls' enrollment. In realization of the serious shortage of women who could potentially be trained and recruited as teachers, the government launched the academic upgrading program in 1975 with the main objective of upgrading the academic level of girls of remote districts. The government constructed 14 feeder hostels (currently 18) in different locations of the country with the support of UNESCO and NORAD to provide residential facility to the girls. The feeder hostels provided meals and residential facilities to the girls, who then attended a local secondary school to upgrade their academic qualifications. The idea was to provide



secondary education and ten month of teacher training to these girls who were expected to go back to their villages to serve as teachers upon completion of their education and training.

These feeder hostels are functioning even today. Studies (e.g., CERID, 1996; MITRA, 2001) conducted to assess the effectiveness of the feeder hostel program (FHP) have reported that the feeder hostels have made a positive contribution to promoting girls' education by providing educational opportunity and access to girls. However, a number of problems remained unsolved. First, the selection of girls was not carried out in an equitable and transparent manner due to the absence of clear guidelines and instructions. Second, girls were deprived of academic support at feeder hostels due to the lack of qualified tutors and relevant learning materials. Third, hostel supervisors/tutors who were supposed to manage the hostels, organize curricular and extra-curricular activities, run skill-based training, provide tutorial support and counseling, and motivate girls were not doing so. Fourth, the amount of the stipends given to girls was very small, and hostels did not have sufficient physical facilities and funds. Fifth, many girls were not prepared to go back to rural areas to serve as teachers after the completion of their education. The studies concluded that the FHP as a means of producing and supplying female teachers to rural and remote primary schools has not been very effective, although it has been instrumental in increasing rural girls' access to secondary education, benefiting many who would otherwise never have been educated (Bista, 2004).

The Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-85) did also emphasize the need for recruitment of female teachers to promote girls' education in the country. Likewise, this priority was also given continuity in the Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90). The Seventh Five-Year Plan had programs for improving girls' admission into feeder hostels and attracting more women into teaching.

Following the restoration of democracy in 1990, the government initiated a number of reform efforts and initiatives in line with the new political system and the declarations of the World Conference on Education for All held in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand. Many of these initiatives aimed at improving the basic and primary education sub-sector. In 1991, a Basic and Primary Education Master Plan was prepared. In 1992, the government constituted the National Education Commission (NEC) to devise appropriate educational policy and programs in the changed political context. In its report, the Commission advised the government to give urgent priority to basic and primary education. The Commission recommended several measures in order to improve the access of girls and women to basic and primary education. In recognition of the potential role of female teachers in increasing the number of girls in school, the Commission recommended a policy of appointing at least one female teacher in primary level. This policy recommendation of the Commission was later adopted by the government. The Education Regulations of 1992 stated that it will be mandatory to appoint at least one female teacher in each primary school.

The Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-97) adopted many of the recommendations and policy measures suggested by the National Education Commission and the Basic and Primary Education Master Plan of 1991. The plan targeted to achieve a net enrolment ratio (NER) of

90 percent for children in the age group of 6 to 10. Contrary to earlier five-year plans that didn't have any concrete program or target to hire female teachers, this plan set a definite target for hiring female teachers. The plan targeted to hire some 5,100 female teachers during the five year period. At the end of the plan period, a total of 4,150 female teachers were recruited. During the Eighth Plan period, the government launched two projects in the basic and primary education sub-sector: Basic and Primary Education Project Phase I (BPEP I) and the Primary Education Development Project (PEDP). The former was supported by the World Bank, Denmark, UNICEF, while the latter was supported by the loan assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) saw 'education as a fundamental means for alleviating poverty' (p. 613). The plan gave emphasis to increase equal participation of the deprived, remote and backward communities in basic and primary education. The Ninth Plan had a target of employing additional 15,000 teachers, of which 2,000 were women. During the plan period, the second phase of the Basic and Primary Education Program (BPEP II) was implemented, which aimed at improving the access to and quality of basic and primary education. The Ninth Plan reaffirmed the need to implement the policy of appointing at least one female teacher in every school. Further, the plan stated that preference should be given to women in the recruitment of teachers for lower secondary and secondary schools. A number of other scholarship schemes were implemented during the Ninth Plan period with the aim of promoting girls' education and attracting women into teaching.

The Report of the High Level National Education Commission (HLNEC, 1999) made the recommendation that there must be female teachers in each pre-primary, primary and secondary school. The Commission advised the government to extend this policy to higher secondary schools and universities as well. It also emphasized that females should be appointed in positions of educational leadership.

The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) has laid emphasis on gender mainstreaming and social inclusion. It seeks to ensure equal access to quality basic education irrespective of gender, caste or ethnicity. The plan targets to increase the proportion of female teachers to 30 percent at the primary level. Many programs and activities launched earlier to enhance girls' and women's participation in basic and primary education will be continued.

Very recently, the government has launched the Education for All (EFA) 2004 -2009 Program as a successor of the Basic and Primary Education Program II. The Program has adopted the six Dakar goals of expanding and improving early childhood development, ensuring access to education for all children, meeting the learning needs of children including indigenous peoples and linguistic minorities, reducing adult illiteracy, eliminating gender disparity, and improving all aspects of quality education (MOES, 2003). The EFA 2004-2009 Program has made provisions for improving the number and status of female teachers. Some of them include: (a) introduction of appropriate affirmative action for the recruitment of female teachers, (b) adoption of gender sensitive policies in order to promote the role of women in the management of education, (c) integration of gender issues in teacher training packages and programs, (d) development of gender sensitive curriculum and

text materials, (e) appointment of female teachers through localized and transparent teacher selection procedure, (f) provision of incentives for women to study the field of education to attract them into teaching, and (g) linking graduates of feeder hostels with teacher training programs with the provision of scholarship (MOES, p. 29).

To conclude, the availability of female teacher has been a major area of concern since the early 1970s, with each national development plan making some policy statements about increasing the number of female teachers. These plans have almost invariably considered the recruitment of female teachers as a powerful strategy for improving girls' education. A number of observations can be made from the review. First, there are huge gaps between policy goals on one hand and the actual programs and interventions on the other. Big policy statements or goals are not matched with concrete programs or interventions to realize the goals. Second, there are also gaps between policy and programmatic goals and financial allocations. The achievement of any policy goal requires sufficient financial allocation. Although there were plenty of instances where the role of female teachers was recognized, but the program suffered due to either non-allocation or insufficient allocation of funds. Third, the review reveals that both the education and national development plans in Nepal have a rather simplistic assumption about gender disparity in education. It is assumed that the presence of female teachers alone will boost girls' enrollment in schools. The fact that social and gender disparity in Nepal is deeply rooted in the socio-cultural, religious, political, and economic system is almost ignored and that achieving gender equality and equity in education will require the elimination of different forms of social, political, legal, institutional, economic and cultural disparities. Much of the work on the promotion of female teachers has been seen as a number game, i.e., increasing the proportion of female teachers. Fourth, serious gaps can be noted between plans and their implementation. Not all programs and activities proposed in the plans are found implemented. A CERID study (1996) has concluded that government programs on female teachers could not be effective due to faulty or poor implementation practices.

On the whole, the review reveals that the dream of making teaching a women's profession, which was held by the NNEPC, has remained unfulfilled. In the following section, we will examine the research literature on female teachers. Most particularly, we will examine what impact the female teacher policy of the government is making in the schooling of girls and how the various policies are being implemented.

### **2.3 Review of Research Literature on Female Teachers**

As was reported in the previous section, both educational policymakers and the donors supporting education reform in Nepal are operating on the assumption that the problem of girls' poor enrollment, low retention and poor learning achievement can be tackled by putting more female teachers into schools and classrooms (Bista, 2004). The empirical evidence on the impact of female teachers on girls' enrollment, retention and learning achievement largely supports the above assumption.

Few studies have reported that enrollment rates do improve and dropout rates decline with the presence of female teachers (CERID, 1990; CERID, 2000; MITRA, 2001). These studies have found a high promotion rate for girls in comparison to that of boys in schools with female teachers. The Nepal Multiple Indicator Surveillance (NMIS) conducted in 1995 examined if there were any associations between teacher characteristics and class attendance, repetition and dropout (NPC, 1996). The only teacher characteristic that was found to have an important effect on student attendance, repetition and dropout was teacher's gender. Female teachers' were found to be associated with higher attendance and lower repetition and dropout rates. These findings were true for both boys and girls. These findings suggest that female teachers' presence in schools contributes to increase student attendance and lower grade repetition and dropout rates. However, one study reported that the presence or absence of female teachers does not make any difference in regard to whether girls repeat grades or not (CERID, 1990). This is probably due to the fact that the problem of repetition has to do with the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in the classroom and the ability of children to learn, rather than the gender of the teacher (Bista, 2004). Few other studies have reported that female teachers' presence does not automatically bring girls into schools. Evidence from South Asia and Africa indicates that in 'cultures where girls' enrollment rates are relatively low, far more girls will enroll if they can be taught by female teachers (Herz and Sperling, 2004, p. 66)

Whatever the impact of female teachers, educational administrators, parents, community members, and students themselves saw numerous benefits of having female teachers in schools (CERID, 1990; CERID, 2000). Parents seemed to feel that the presence of at least one teacher who is female makes both parents and girls feel secure and confident. Some argue that 'addressing the safety and comfort factor is essential, particularly in environments where sexual harassment and gross misconduct by male teachers is no uncommon' (Vanbelle-Prouty and Miske, 1997, p. 27). Parents found it more comfortable to relate to female teachers rather than men. These women provide role models for girl students. These studies have also demonstrated that female teachers are better prepared to provide the care, love and affection that children need in their formative years. Studies have confirmed the above finding (Herz and Sperling, 2004). It is reported that female teachers perform better in classrooms, especially in Grades 1 and 2 where building teacher-child relationship is more critical. The study noted that children are generally comfortable with female teachers, and this was true for both boys and girls. The children in the study frequently cited that female teachers were 'more sympathetic' and 'more affectionate' compared to the male teacher. Children mentioned that female teachers understand well and do not snub when they are asked questions.

A few studies have examined the implementation status of the government's policy on female teachers that states that there shall be at least one woman teacher in each primary school (MITRA, 2001; CERID, 2000). For the most part, the implementation of that policy was found to be ineffective due to inadequate teacher quotas, the lack of clear policy guidelines, the unavailability of female teachers in the local community, the lack of proper coordination among different local actors such as District Education Officers (DEOs), school principals and SMC members, poor implementation guidelines, preference for men teachers

and the reluctance of women candidates to go and live in rural areas. The evidence tends to suggest that rural schools are finding it extremely difficult to recruit female teachers. This is evident in the rural-urban gap in the proportion of female teachers. The shortage of qualified women candidates from rural areas and the lack of motivation on the part of female teachers to work in rural or remote areas have been reported as major constraints. In some cases, despite the availability of qualified women, rural schools were still without female teachers due to the community or school principal's preference to male teachers, family reluctance to permit women to join the teaching profession, the lack of incentives for schools to hire women, and the absence of follow-up and monitoring. Another study (Koirala, Basnet and McCaffery, 2002) noted that the main constraint of female teachers was the low status and position of women in a patriarchal society. This study found that political interference and negative attitudes toward females were major constraints on appointing females as teachers.

While the government is preparing to implement its policy of recruiting a female teacher in each school, one study has demonstrated that having a single female teacher in school is tantamount to not having one because one single woman cannot make any impact in a male only school environment (Bhatia and Turin, 2004). Being alone in an all male school environment is a difficult and painful experience for many women, especially if they come from a different community. In Nepal, it is sometimes not acceptable both socially and culturally for a young married or unmarried woman to go to a village and live by herself and work as a school teacher. Bhatia and Turin's study has recommended that the government should consider hiring a minimum of two female teachers per primary school. The study goes further to recommend that at least one of these female teachers should speak the local language.

A study has blamed female teachers for not being prepared to work in rural schools (Yamashita and Yamashita, 2000). It was reported that female teachers tend to move to towns soon after they are hired to teach in rural schools. This ultimately creates a situation where there is over supply of female teachers in urban areas and serious shortage in remote areas. The study reports that the female teachers in Nepal have negative reputations due to highly politicized and centralized recruitment procedure. It is claimed that posts of female primary school teachers are hijacked by the wives, daughters or daughters-in law of prominent politicians or bureaucrats. Elsewhere, it is mentioned that initially those most likely to be able to take advantage of any opportunity will be those who have political and other kinds of access (Anderson, 1997).

Unlike many other countries in the West where female teachers are paid less compared to their male counterparts, there is no discrimination in the salary of teachers in Nepal. A CERID study (1997) found 'no discrimination in the salary of teachers teaching at the same level on the basis of gender' (p. 56). This could be due to the fact that teachers' salary is centrally fixed by the government. But, the same study reported that chances for females for being appointed in lower levels are higher than for males. There were instances when female teachers were appointed as primary or lower secondary teachers although they had higher (Intermediate or Bachelor degree) qualifications. Female teachers' chances of getting

promotion or being asked to teach so-called difficult subjects such as mathematics, science and English were found less as compared to that of male teachers.

The extent to which one can perform effectively or produce good results depends on the extent to which the physical conditions are conducive. One study reported that the physical conditions in schools were not very convenient for females (CERID, 1997). The study found that the school environment was not gender friendly. Schools generally lacked physical facilities such as classroom environment, drinking water, toilet facilities, and boundary walls. The schools did not allow for space for female teachers to prepare lessons or instructional materials. The absence of suitable physical facilities is thus reported to be one of the reasons for female teachers' low presence in rural primary schools. Another study has reported that the school environment is gender segregated and male dominated (Joshi and Anderson, 1994). Female teachers are excluded during lunchtime and breaks when the staffroom turns into a meeting place for male teachers. Their study reported that there were numerous occasions when female teachers could not take part in such discussions and had to go to a classroom or a shady tree in the playground.

One study examined the extent to which female teachers had the opportunity to participate in teacher training and professional development activities (CERID, 1997). The study found a very low participation rate for female teachers in teacher training as a whole, most particularly in the PTTC or SEDU based residential teacher training courses. The study reported that teacher training centers did not provide for residential facilities, kitchen facilities, childcare, toilet facility, and security arrangements appropriate for female teachers. Consequently, women were generally found to be reluctant to participate in residential training programs. Family expectations and responsibilities, fewer teachers in schools, the lack of day care facilities at the training centers, insecurity and a male-dominated training environment were among the reasons cited for the inability of most women to participate (Bista, 2004). Elsewhere, studies have reported much lower participation of female teachers in the in-service training courses (Stacki, 2002). Often, there is a 'blame' game between administrators and female teachers about low participation of female teachers in training courses. While administrators and teacher trainers blame women for their reluctance to participate in the training courses, the female teachers, on the other hand, blame the administrators and trainers for failing to create an enabling environment.

How do head teachers and male colleagues perceive their female colleagues? The study conducted by CERID (1997) attempted to examine the perceptions of male teachers and school heads toward female teachers. It was reported that female teachers were not serious about their teaching, were more likely to take leaves than males, and would be mostly engaged in knitting and talking together about their own household matters. Female teachers were portrayed as being lazy, irresponsible, disobedient, and talkative. Many saw female teachers as being appropriate for teaching at primary level, not at the higher level. On the other hand, the same study also reported that there were positive remarks about female teachers as well. Some perceived them to be as competent as their male counterparts in terms of teaching ability and ability to organize extracurricular activities. Some head teachers favored male teachers over females. It was pointed out that male teachers, compared to their

female counterparts, are highly likely to take part in politics, avoid class, arrive to school late and leave school early. Interestingly, female teachers did not have negative feelings about their male counterparts. They found their male colleagues to be supportive, helpful and cooperative.

Elsewhere, in another study male teachers are reported to perceive their female counterparts as someone who cannot contribute much to school activities; instead, they bring a negative and divisive attitude to the workplace (Miske and VanBelle-Prouty, 1997). In another study conducted in Africa, a significant number of men had perceptions that women came late to school, they were lazy and engaged in unhelpful conversation during school hours (Stephens, 1998). The study reported that with the exception of four out of 446 teachers surveyed, teachers categorically said that they would hire a man over a woman in spite of parity of qualifications for reasons that men are more resourceful, they quarrel less, are more helpful, are more energetic, have more leadership qualities, and are smarter than women. Surprisingly, many respondents in the above study believed that women would make better head teachers because they were patient, strict, less biased and more trustworthy particularly in terms of school financial matters.

One study of interest here could be the one conducted by Bista and Carney (2004). This study examined the women's representation in leadership positions within the education sector. The study showed that of the total head teachers in primary, lower secondary and secondary schools, females constituted 3.4 percent, 1.3 percent and 3.7 percent respectively. In the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), the overwhelming majority of officials were male (95%). Women not only formed a small minority, but also were overwhelmingly concentrated in the lower levels of hierarchy. The study reported women's chances of obtaining leadership and decision-making roles were fewer. The study confirmed that men have markedly higher advancement rates than women. The average time taken to get promotion for men was 12 years as opposed to 17 years for women. The study has asserted that it is almost impossible for women to occupy leadership or managerial positions because male administrators see women as being 'too emotional,' 'too sensitive,' 'not bold enough to make tough decisions,' 'less dashing,' 'less willing to take on challenging roles and responsibilities,' 'less available to undertake additional assignments,' 'less decisive,' 'less assertive,' and 'less prepared to take risks' (p. 102). The study concluded that 'there is no significant constituency within the MOES prepared to promote the view that women are as competent as male colleagues' (p. 103). For the most part, women are seen lacking administrative qualities. So long these glass ceilings do exist; it can be difficult for women to climb up the administrative ladder. Glass ceiling is often defined as the invisible barriers, created by attitudinal and organizational prejudices, to block women from senior executive positions (Wirth, 2001).

One study attempted to examine how boys and girls relate to male and female teachers in classrooms and how teacher's gender relates to student performance (Sibbons, 1998). The study demonstrated that girls are excluded from participating in classroom activities because male teachers often favor boys rather than girls, direct questions to boys or those sitting at the front, do not encourage reluctant students (who are likely to be girls) to take part in

classroom activities, or do not teach assertiveness skills that are often required to benefit from classroom teaching. The study concluded that this situation ultimately lowers girls' academic performance. In a study of classroom practices in secondary schools of Nepal, Bista (2001) reported that the boys are more likely to benefit from classroom teaching than the girls because teachers interacted more often with boys than girls and the opportunity to learn in classrooms was more often available for boys than for girls. Boys were more likely to seek and obtain help from their teachers, be they male or female. Both the silence of girls and dominating behavior of boys are simply taken for granted and teachers reinforced these behaviors. Girls' reluctance to ask questions, seek help or answer promptly put them at a disadvantage. Very often teachers, both male and female, were unaware of the biased behaviors they exhibited through their verbal behaviors, eye contact, and body language.

Some research tends to suggest that the 'mere presence of female teachers does not contribute to a girl-friendly learning environment' (Miske and VanBelle-Prouty, 1997, p. 9). Female teachers can have gender bias in favor of boys just as men teachers. Or, male teachers can create more gender friendly classroom environment than female teachers. Having female teachers can be reassuring to parents who are not certain about sending their girls to schools that have male teachers, but simply hiring female teachers does not solve the problem. What is important is whether or not teachers, whether male or female, have attitudes that are not harmful to girls.

## **2.4 Summary**

In recognition of the need of female teachers to promote girls' enrollment and retention in schools, His Majesty's Government of Nepal has long been implementing a number of programs to produce, train and deploy female teachers in the schools. Often these programs intended to specifically address the shortage of female teachers in rural areas. The research and literature reviewed in this chapter clearly indicates that addressing the shortage of female teachers requires a holistic, multifaceted approach. It is not something that can be achieved by issuing a directive or revising an educational regulation. The implementation of the female teacher policy has been less than satisfactory due to a number of reasons such as lack of incentives, proper follow-up and monitoring, poor enforcement of existing laws and regulations, biases among administrators, parents, and community members against female teachers, discriminatory social and cultural practices, etc. Evidently, educational policies and programs tend to emphasize the supply side of female teachers. The review suggests that policy and program designers must address the quality aspect of female teachers.

There is inherent assumption in all policies and programs that the deployment of female teachers will promote the enrollment and retention of girls in schools. Research to date about female teachers presents a mixed bag of results and implications. There is some information that suggests that the presence of female teachers in schools encourages parents to send their daughters to schools and retain them in schools. The findings of some studies do suggest that the incidence of girls' enrollment and retention is higher in schools with female teachers as compared to those without female teachers. A few other studies however fail to show this



association. It is interesting to note that female teachers are preferred for psychological reasons rather than academic or pedagogical reasons.

There is some evidence that female teachers have tougher time at work than their male colleagues. Very few studies have looked into the lives of female teachers. Most studies have concentrated on the supply of female teachers (Bista, 2004). Their actual experiences have been very much neglected and under-represented in research documents. There has been no attempt to understand the concerns, anxieties, hopes and aspirations of female teachers as distinct human identities. On the whole, present research outputs regarding female teachers are limited in scope. There is a need to clarify the nature of problems faced by female teachers in schools, classrooms, and communities.

It is important to note that much of what is currently available was generated through small scale studies with very small sample sizes drawn through purposive methods. Although existing research on female teachers may have covered many areas, it suffers from the lack of adequate evidence. The research evidence gathered so far is not convincing and solid enough to categorically confirm what stands as a barrier to implementing the government's female teacher policy, what encourages or discourages women to take up teaching positions in rural schools of Nepal, what difficulties female teachers face in schools and classrooms, and how the presence of female teachers is linked to girls' enrollment, retention and learning achievement. On the whole, there has been over-reliance on anecdotal evidence in the existing research. Finally, there is much to be gained from quantitative studies that use large samples. Also, more grounded research in different geographic locations is necessary in order to understand the issue of female teachers. It should also be noted that improving the knowledge base concerning female teachers is a necessary condition in order to ensure the design and implementation of well conceived policies on female teachers.

## CHAPTER III

# GROWTH TRENDS AND CURRENT STATUS OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN NEPAL

### 3.1 Context

This chapter presents and analyzes secondary information in order to (a) document past trends in the employment of female teachers in Nepal; (b) describe the existing status of female teachers in terms of their service status, teaching experience, and academic qualifications, and (c) examine if there is any evidence of association between the availability of female teachers and girls' enrollment. The chapter is organized around these three objectives of the study. Prior to entering into the subject matter, the chapter will provide a growth profile of the schools and student enrollment. This is important because any analysis of the trends in the employment of female teachers can be understood better in the context of the growth of schools and student enrollment.

In analyzing the past trends and the existing status of female teachers in Nepal, the study uses the educational statistics published by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES). The analysis covers the period 1975-2003. At the time of preparing this report, 2003 was the year for which the latest school data was available. School data of the pre-1975 period is either unavailable or not reliable.

The assessment was beset by a major difficulty created by the changing structure of the school system. During the period 1951-2003, it was changed three times (see Annex 3.1). For instance, primary level comprised grades 1 to 3 during the period 1971-1980, but in 1981 the structure of primary education was changed to include grades 1 to 5. Likewise, lower secondary and secondary levels also have no common denominations in terms of grades. The lack of a uniform definition of schooling poses problem in the analysis because the primary school system of grades 1-3 cannot at all be compared with the primary school system of grades 1-5. In order to solve this problem, a standard definition of the school level has been adopted in this study for facilitating the presentation and analysis of school-related aspects on a longitudinal dimension. Thus, for the purpose of analyzing the student data, primary level is defined to include grades 1-5, and secondary level to include grades 6-10. While student data could be converted into the above format, this was not possible with the teacher data. For estimating the growth rates for the various aspects of the school system, the entire period of 1975-2003 is divided into three periods: 1975-1990, 1991-1996, and 1997-2003. This division is random rather than systematic.

## 3.2 Growth Profile of Schools and Student Enrollment

### 3.2.1 Growth profile of schools

As mentioned earlier, prior to analyzing the growth trends of female teachers, it makes some sense to examine how the school system of Nepal has grown over the years. One simple indicator of the size of the school system is the number of schools. Therefore, an attempt is made to examine the growth profile of schools (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Growth profile of schools, 1975-2003**

Period	Level	Po	Pn	Growth Rate
1975-1990	Primary	8302	17840	5.23
	Secondary	2352	5906	6.33
	Overall	10654	23746	5.49
1991-1996	Primary	18694	22218	3.51
	Secondary	6124	8409	6.55
	Overall	24818	30627	4.30
1997-2003	Primary	23284	27268	2.67
	Secondary	9384	12990	5.57
	Overall	32668	40258	3.54
1975-2003	Primary	8302	27268	4.34
	Secondary	2352	12990	6.29
	Overall	10654	40258	4.86

**Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1975 to 2003.**

Note: Po represents initial year and Pn the terminal year of counting.

As can be seen in Table 3.1 above, the number of primary schools has increased more than 3 times in 28 years. The growth rate for the period is 4.34 percent annually. The growth rate at the secondary level has far surpassed that of the primary level, attaining more than 5 times increase during the period 1975-2003. In the overall, the number of schools has increased 3.78 times during the same period. The impressive increase in the number of new secondary schools in comparison to that at the primary level could be due to at least three reasons. First, there has been massive increase in student enrollment at the primary level. As more and more children complete primary schools, naturally it creates pressure for the expansion of secondary education. Secondly, there has been a general trend among local communities to gradually upgrade their primary and lower level schools into secondary or higher secondary schools both as a status symbol and for reason of local demand to let younger children study further around their homes. Thirdly, new school establishment or upgrading had been also due to the election promises made by local leaders during local and national elections.

### 3.2.2 Growth profile of student enrollment

Table 3.2 presents the profile of student enrollment for the period 1975-2003 broken down into four periods. The per annum growth rate of enrollment at the primary level for both sexes has been declining over the succeeding decades—from 11.23 percent to 3.63 percent during 1991-1996 and to 2.55 percent during 1997-2003. Compared to the primary level, the secondary level has attained growth rate at a higher level, although it too has been declining over the succeeding decades – to 7.70 percent during 1991-1996 and to 6.60 percent during 1997-2003. Declining growth rates at both levels characterize the post-1990 periods, more so at the primary level than at the secondary level. One may wonder why growth rates are lower during the post-1990 period as compared to the pre-1990 period despite several government and donor efforts to reform both primary and secondary education in Nepal. Analysts often argue that growth rates are alarmingly high at the time of system expansion but tend to slow down after they have reached a certain stage. The period of 1975 -1990 in the Nepalese case could be considered a period of system expansion, especially with reference to primary education. The expansion period is often followed by a sluggish period where growth rates are rather slow. This occurs because the education system at this stage is working to bring the so-called hardcore groups into the educational mainstream.

**Table 3.2: Growth profile of student enrollment, 1975-2003**

Period	Level	Total Enrollment			Percentage of Girls		
		Po	Pn	Growth Rate	Po	Pn	Growth Rate
1975-1990	Primary	454326	2788644	11.23	18.04	36.00	4.71
	Secondary	135174	708899	11.68	16.71	28.96	3.73
	Overall	589500	3497543	11.32	17.78	34.57	4.53
1991-1996	Primary	2884275	3447607	3.63	37.21	40.65	1.78
	Secondary	773808	1121335	7.70	30.08	37.45	4.48
	Overall	3658083	4568942	4.55	35.70	39.86	2.23
1997-2003	Primary	3460756	4025692	2.55	41.60	44.30	1.05
	Secondary	1172801	1721151	6.60	38.30	43.67	2.21
	Overall	4633557	5746843	3.65	40.76	44.11	1.33
1975-2003	Primary	564699	4025692	7.27	18.04	44.30	3.26
	Secondary	134174	1721151	9.51	16.71	43.67	3.49
	Overall	698873	5746843	7.81	17.78	44.11	3.30

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1975 to 2003.

The case of girls' enrollment is very encouraging. The share of girls' enrollment in the total enrollment saw dramatic increase during the period 1975-1990 at both levels. For instance, girls' comprised some 18 percent of the total student population in 1975 at the primary level. This rose to 36 percent in 1990. No such pattern can be observed during the subsequent periods. A different picture emerges when the per annum growth rates for girls are compared with those of the boys. Growth rates for girls are much lower than that for boys. At the primary level, the growth rate went on falling down the 1975-1991 level; at the secondary level, it improved during 1991-1996 but declined again.

The best criterion to assess growth in school enrollment is to tie up the level of enrollment with the proportion of children of the proper age group, i.e., to exclude the proportion of children that are over-aged or under-aged and to include only those that are of proper age. In Nepal, the 6-10 age bracket is considered to be the proper ages for the primary level schooling. The Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) thus represents the proportion of the 6-10 age bracket children attending primary school. In the table below the profile of NER at the primary level is presented covering the period 1997-2004.

**Table 3.3: Net Enrollment Rates for boys and girls at primary level 1997-2004 (%)**

Sex	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average growth rate (1999-2004)
Boys	79.4	86.0	86.9	88.7	89.4	90.1	1.03
Girls	64.4	74.6	75.1	76.8	77.5	78.0	1.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.1</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>81.1</b>	<b>82.3</b>	<b>83.5</b>	<b>84.2</b>	<b>1.03</b>

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1999 to 2004.

The profile looks indeed impressive. By 2004, Nepal has been able to enroll 90.1% of the boys' population and 78.0% of the girls' population, and 84.20% in the overall. The data indicates that universal primary education is perhaps not a too-distant prospect. For putting the rest of the children (16%), it may not take too long a period to attain universal primary education. However, one should remember that this level of achievement in primary school enrollment is the result over five decades of (1951-2004) efforts and resources in the education of children. More critical is the fact that social affairs such as the schooling of children do not go progressively upward in linear and predictable ways. The problems of attaining UPE in Nepal is precisely embroiled with Nepal's own societal problems, several of which are yet unaddressed or even the scale and intensity of the harms caused by these problems cut down to some acceptable measures. The hardcore reality is that schooling of children is basically a societal issue, and not an issue that can be resolved through some 'strategic' ways of educational planning as some hardliner educational planners and educationists would assert. At the center of Nepal's multiple problems is the widespread poverty as well as the neglect of the ethnic and linguistic minorities and the socially, economically and politically exploited and excluded groups, including the Dalits. It may take several decades to resolve these national problems. To conclude, the last ascent to UPE will definitely be the most difficult, the most demanding, the most challenging, and the most fatiguing.

### **3.2.3 Growth of schools versus growth of enrollments**

It is important to assess the extent of participation of children in school in response to the access made available for them. The school opened represents the 'access' factor, and enrollment represents the 'participation' event. In Table 3.4, both aspects, the school as a 'factor' providing access and enrollment as a response to the access made available are put together for assessing whether and to what extent the access provided had been responded by participation, the growth rates being as an instrument used for the assessment

**Table 3.4: Growth of schools versus growth in enrollments**

Period	Level	A Growth of Schools	B Growth of Enrollment	C B as % of A
1975-1990	Primary	5.23	4.71	90.06
	Secondary	6.33	3.73	58.93
	Total	5.49	4.53	82.51
1991-1996	Primary	3.51	1.78	50.71
	Secondary	6.55	4.48	68.40
	Total	4.30	2.23	51.86
1997-2003	Primary	2.67	1.05	39.33
	Secondary	5.57	2.21	48.36
	Total	3.54	1.33	37.57
1975-2003	Primary	4.34	3.26	75.16
	Secondary	6.29	3.49	55.48
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>67.90</b>

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1975 to 2003.

A simple device is adopted to obtain what may be called the 'enrollment efficiency indicator' by converting the enrollment growth rate as a percentage of schools' growth rate. The indicator values are put in the last column of the table.

In terms of the defined indicator, it is seen that the highest value had occurred at the primary level during the period 1975-1990. In other words, progress in enrollment at the primary level in relation to the school places made available was phenomenally highest (90.06% response) during the 1975-1990 period. In contrast, the progress at this level was lowest during 1997-2003 (39.33% response). The fluctuations observed in the case of primary school level can be observed also at the upper level (the secondary level). At least, four observations can be made on the basis of the information presented in Table 3.4. Firstly, primary education expanded mostly during the pre-1990 period, with sluggish progress afterwards. Secondly, the upper level expanded mostly after 1990 (1991-1996). Thirdly, there had been no adequate enrollments in response to the school places made available during the 28 years' period (1975-2003) in the school system as a whole. The overall achievement in this regard was 67.90 percent. Finally, the problem in Nepal's school level education system is precisely associated with the 'participation' aspect, and not with the 'access' aspect. For example, in 2003 there were 3954 units of VDC and Municipalities and the total number of primary schools was 27268, thus making 6.56 primary schools available for every VDC/Municipality unit on a national average. The Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) of 127% at the primary level (MOES, 2003) suggests that it is not the lack of places in schools but the social, cultural, economic and institutional barriers that hinder participation of girls and children coming from difficult circumstances. A high GER would mean that the education system has the capacity to absorb the children of the defined age group (6 to 10 years in this particular case).

### 3.3 Trends in the Employment of Female Teachers

Chapter II presented and analyzed a body of research literature that demonstrated the comparative advantages accrued from the employment of female teachers in schools, especially at the primary level. Nepal has long recognized the need for recruiting female teachers. In this regard, a profile of female teachers employed in the school system for the period 1980-2003 has been prepared. It is interesting to note that the number of female teachers was just 12 at the primary level in 1975, and none at the upper levels. So the profile is prepared for the period 1980-2003, and not for the period 1975-2003 as in other aspects. Annex 3.2 presents the number and proportion of female teachers at work in schools for the entire period 1975-2003 (year-wise). In this section the periodic growth rates in the employment of female teachers at the primary and upper level are presented and analyzed.

#### 3.3.1 Growth profile of female teachers

Table 3.5 displays that the teaching force in Nepal has been composed of male in an overwhelming majority throughout the period of 1980-2003.

**Table 3.5: Proportion of female teachers employed in schools, 1980-2003**

Period	Level	Po	Pn	Growth Rate
1980-1990	Primary	9.67	12.89	2.92
	Secondary	8.96	10.06	1.16
	Overall	7.53	12.20	4.94
1991-1996	Primary	13.70	20.64	8.54
	Secondary	9.84	11.69	3.51
	Overall	12.74	18.06	7.23
1997-2003	Primary	22.46	29.14	4.44
	Secondary	10.62	13.35	3.89
	Overall	19.04	24.06	3.98
1980-2003	Primary	9.67	29.14	4.91
	Secondary	8.96	13.35	1.75
	Overall	7.53	24.06	5.18

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1980 to 2003.

As can be seen in Table 3.5, female teachers constituted a bare 7.53 percent of the teaching force in the entire school education system in 1980; the situation gradually improved; and by 2003 the females constituted about a quarter of the entire teaching force (24.06%). This is indeed a significant progress made. At the primary level, female teachers occupied 9.67 percent of the teaching posts in 1980 and gradually 29.14 percent of the same by 2003 (an average annual growth of 4.91%). At the upper level the progress was not that much impressive, a rise from the base of 8.96 percent in 1980 to 13.35 percent by 2003. The period 1991-1996, with a growth rate of 8.54 percent, was a 'boom' period in the recruitment of female teachers at the primary level. This was the direct contribution of the first phase of the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP I), which had a female teacher recruitment program under World Bank loan. Over 4,000 female teachers were recruited under BPEP I.

Sadly enough, the growth rate declined to 4.44 percent during 1997-2003, despite the government's mandate of employing at least one female teacher by every primary school. On the contrary, the growth rate in the employment of female teachers had been consistently rising at the secondary level.

### 3.3.2 Growth profile of trained female teachers

The government policy emphasizes the employment of trained teachers. Teacher training credential is made a requisite both for entry into the teaching profession and for teacher upgrading during service. There is also a policy incentive in giving a little more salary to the trained teachers. Table 3.6 presents the periodic growth rates in the employment of trained female teachers in schools. The table shows the proportions of both trained male and female teachers.

**Table 3.6: Proportion of trained teachers employed by schools, 1980-2003: a growth profile**

Period	Level	Male			Female			Total		
		Po	Pn	G. Rate	Po	Pn	G. Rate	Po	Pn	G. Rate
1980-1990	Primary	36.72	37.80	0.29	25.51	36.26	3.58	35.63	37.60	0.54
	Secondary	82.16	38.98	-7.19	37.49	46.86	2.26	78.16	39.74	-6.54
	Overall	53.68	38.04	-3.39	29.75	38.38	2.58	51.43	38.12	-2.95
1991-1996	Primary	43.78	47.15	1.49	36.82	29.97	-4.03	42.83	43.61	0.36
	Secondary	38.05	37.85	-0.11	45.27	34.51	-5.28	38.76	37.46	-0.68
	Overall	42.31	44.27	0.91	38.44	30.82	-4.32	41.82	41.84	0.01
1997-2003	Primary	49.99	18.46	-15.30	32.04	14.79	-12.09	45.96	17.39	-14.95
	Secondary	36.89	33.42	-1.63	52.35	26.14	-10.87	38.11	32.46	-2.64
	Overall	47.53	23.95	-10.79	34.59	16.83	-11.31	43.70	22.23	-10.65
1980-2003	Primary	36.72	18.46	-2.95	25.51	14.79	-2.34	35.63	17.39	-3.07
	Secondary	82.16	33.42	-3.84	37.49	26.14	-1.54	78.16	32.46	-3.75
	Overall	53.68	23.94	-3.45	29.75	16.83	-2.45	51.43	22.23	-3.58

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1980 to 2003.

In 1980, some 37 percent of the total male and 26 percent of the total female teachers were trained at the primary level. At the secondary level, the proportions of trained male and female teachers were 82 percent and 37 percent respectively. In 1990, one can observe some improvement, particularly in the status of female teachers. Sadly enough, the situation in 2003 is quite the opposite. The proportions of trained teachers saw dramatic decline in 2003 as compared to the earlier periods.

In general, more proportion of secondary level teachers got training opportunities than primary level teachers. The employment rate of trained male teachers at the primary level was low but still positive until 1996, but took the negative path since then. Similar was the situation with regard to the employment rate of trained female teachers at this level. The period 1980-1990 (and even up to 1997) was characterized as the 'heydays' for the female teachers to get training and employed in the primary schools. From 1997 onwards, the employment rate started falling down. Table 3.6 statistics provides evidence of the existence



of three different situations: (1) that there was a sheer lack of consistent policy on teacher training and teacher training on the part of the government, (2) that there was widespread indifference to employ trained teachers on the part of the schools, (3) and that teacher training activities were low on the part of the institutions charged with the responsibility of training teachers. It is possible that all three situations prevailed.

### 3.4 Status of Female Teachers

This section analyzes the existing status of female teachers in terms of their service conditions, teaching experience, academic qualifications, and distribution. The analysis uses the 2003 teacher statistics published by the MOES. In doing this, data relating to both male and female teachers have been presented and analyzed where available and necessary. Longitudinal data on this aspect being not easily available, the observations made on the basis of just one year's data may not carry much validity.

#### 3.4.1 Service conditions of female teachers

All levels combined together, 54 percent of the total teachers have temporary status, while 46 percent of them have permanent status. More proportions of teachers have temporary status at lower secondary (59%) and secondary (71%) levels, compared to the primary level (50%). Sex difference is seen to prevail in the service conditions of teachers. For example, at the primary school level more proportion of male teachers got the service status as permanent teachers than their female counterparts (60% versus 27%). Interestingly, no such difference can be seen at the lower secondary and secondary levels. However, on the whole (taking all levels together), a significantly higher proportion of all male teachers were found to enjoy permanent status (51% versus 29%).

**Table 3.7: Teachers by type of service, 2003 (In rounded percentages)**

Level	Permanent			Temporary/Contract			N		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Primary	60	27	50	40	73	50	79621	32739	112360
Lower Secondary	41	42	41	59	58	59	24990	4905	29895
Secondary	29	28	29	71	72	71	21103	2194	23297
<b>All Levels</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>125714</b>	<b>39838</b>	<b>165552</b>

Source: MOES (2000), School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal, 2003 (2060).

At present, the teachers are facing the problem of being treated as temporary. Teachers in thousands all over the country have raised massive agitations for the permanent status. Because of agitations, the school calendar has been severely affected, leading to the school closure, non-teaching, and other forms of protest. It is strange that thousand of teachers have been working under a too humiliating condition, being treated as temporary teachers since several years, in some cases even two decades. Their agitations seem well justified against the fact that there is simply no transparency in the recruitment and upgrading of teachers.

### 3.4.2 Academic qualifications of teachers

Table 3.8 presents the profile of teachers by level academic qualifications in three different years, 1991, 1997 and 2001. The year 2001 is selected for reason of the availability of latest teacher data on this aspect. The years 1991 and 1997 are just random selection. The research interest for presenting this profile is twofold: (1) to see the extent of academic upgrading of teachers overtime by using the data sets of all the three years, and (2) to see whether sex disparity prevailed by using the data sets of 1991 and 1997.

**Table 3.8: Academic qualifications of teachers, 1991 and 1997 (%)**

Level	Year	UnderSLC			SLC			PCL			BA			MA			N		
		Male	Fem	Total	Male	Fem	Total	Male	Fem	Total	Male	Fem	Total	Male	Fem	Total	Male	Fem	Total
Primary	1991	6	8	6	77	67	76	15	18	15	2	6	3	<1	1	<1	64289	10206	74495
	1997	4	3	4	70	66	69	21	24	22	5	7	5	<1	<1	<1	70920	20544	91464
	2001			3			64			26			7			<1			94382
Lower Secondary	1991	1	2	1	9	10	9	72	50	70	17	36	19	1	2	1	11520	1485	13005
	1997	<1	<1	<1	3	5	3	67	50	65	28	41	30	2	4	2	18046	2595	20641
	2001			<1			4			58			34			4			25633
Secondary	1991	<1	2	<1	2	3	2	9	4	9	80	77	80	9	14	9	10689	938	11627
	1997	<1	<1	<1	1	3	1	3	9	4	84	71	83	12	17	12	15147	1347	16494
	2001			<1			1			7			76		16				18234
Secondary (LS+S)	1991	<1	2	<1	6	7	8	42	32	41	47	52	48	5	7	5	22209	2423	24632
	1997	<1	1	<1	2	4	2	38	36	38	54	51	54	6	8	6	33193	3942	37135
	2001			<1			3			36			52		9				43867
All Level	1991	4	7	5	59	55	58	22	21	22	14	15	14	1	2	1	86498	12629	99127
	1997	3	2	3	48	56	50	26	26	26	21	14	19	2	2	2	104113	24486	128599
	2001			2			45			29			21		3				138249

- Sources: 1. MOEC (1991), Educational Statistics of Nepal, 1991 (2048), Tables 9-11.  
 2. MOE (1997), Educational Statistics of Nepal, 1997 (2054), Tables 10-12.  
 3. MOES (2001), School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal, 2000 (2058 B. S.)

The category "Not mentioned" given in the 1991 source document is dropped in calculating the percentages.

Data by sex is not given in the source document of 1991.

For entering into the teaching profession at the primary level, a SLC is a least requirement according to government regulations. To qualify for teaching the lower secondary level, the least requirement is a Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) of a university (the IA or equivalent of the olden time). For occupying the teaching position at the secondary level, the least requirement is a Bachelor Degree. As seen in Table 3.8, teachers had upgraded themselves over time with higher level of academic backgrounds. A few primary level teachers are found to have even Master's level academic background; at the lower secondary the number is more and much higher at the secondary level. This situation of 1991 was changed by 1997 and much changed by 2000, with more proportions of teachers at each level possessing qualifications well above the required minimum. Summarizing the above data a new picture turns up (Table 3.9).

**Table 3.9: Academic qualifications of teachers, 1991-2000 (%)**

Level	Year	Under Qualified			Qualified			Over Qualified		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Primary	1991	6	8	6	77	67	76	17	25	18
	1997	4	3	4	70	66	69	26	31	37
	2000			3			64			33
Lower Secondary	1991	10	12	10	72	50	70	18	38	20
	1997	<1	<1	<1	70	55	68	30	45	32
	2000			4			58			38
Secondary	1991	11	9	11	80	77	80	9	14	9
	1997	4	12	5	84	71	83	12	17	12
	2000			8			76			16
Secondary (combined)	1991	11	10	11	76	61	74	13	29	15
	1997	3	8	4	75	57	73	22	35	23
	2000			6			65			29
All Levels	1991	7	8	7	77	66	76	16	26	17
	1997	4	4	4	71	64	70	25	32	26
	2000			4			64			32

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1991 to 2000.

A number of observations emerge from the above table. Firstly, teachers in general tend to upgrade themselves academically either at times of job entry or while in service. Secondly, the proportion of under qualified teachers as residuals of the past was cut much down at each level. Thirdly, the proportion of just qualified also was cut down as a result of more proportion of teachers taking higher-level degrees. Fourthly, only at the minimum level (just qualified level); sex difference existed at all levels in favor of the males but the female teachers commanded superior status at the higher level (over qualified level). That is, female teachers had higher level of academic backgrounds, in proportion, than their male teachers. Data suggests that women are likely to be appointed in positions lower than their academic qualifications. Finally, the teacher profile on academic backgrounds has been consistently improving. It may be a positive sign. But, the possession of formal academic degrees cannot be accepted as a measure of teacher competence.

### 3.4.3 Length of teaching experience

The information on the length of teachers' teaching experience is unavailable most of the times since the installation of the EMIS in Nepal. Data sets showing the periods of teachers' teaching experience are available only for the year 2002. So on this aspect, only the profile of 2002 is presented, and for lack of information of earlier times, the analysis on this aspect goes without the benefit of longitudinal perspectives. The 2002 data sets are presented in Table 3.10 below:

**Table 3.10: Teachers by length of teaching experience**

Level	Male				Female				Total			
	<5Year	5-15 Year	>15 Years	Total (N)	<5 Years	5-15 Years	>15 Years	Total (N)	<5 Years	5-15 Years	5-15 Years	Total (N)
Primary	26	51	23	73109	36	54	10	24770	26	51	23	97879
Lower Secondary	35	47	18	22324	38	48	14	3051	26	51	23	25375
Secondary	33	47	20	18003	30	56	14	1490	26	51	23	19498
New Secondary	34	47	19	40332	35	51	14	4541	35	47	18	44873
All Levels	29	50	21	113441	36	54	10	29311	31	50	19	142752

Source: MOEC (2002), School Level Educational Statistics, 2002 (2059 B. S.)

As shown in Table 3.10, more proportion of male teachers stayed in the teaching profession for longer period (> 15 years) than female teachers at all levels, suggesting that male teachers joined the teaching ranks ahead of the female teachers. Among new entrants at the primary level, the female teachers were numerous (36% vs. 26%). Nearly half of the numbers of persons entering the teaching job tended to work for 5-15 years, if at all they continued to work. Level-wise, the proportions of new entrants in the teaching job are the same (about a quarter) in the three levels. A large proportion of teachers at all levels has a teaching experience of 15 years or less.

### 3.4.4 Training status

In terms of training status, there are three categories of teachers working at the three levels of the education system: (1) Fully trained teachers, (2) Partially trained teachers, and (3) Untrained teachers. The EMIS Report of 2003 has incorporated teacher data on the above stated categories. Table 3.11 presents data sets on the training status of teachers.

**Table 3.11: Teachers classified by type of training received, 2003**

Level	Male				Female				Total			
	Fully Trained	Partially Trained	Un-trained	Total (N)	Fully Trained	Partially Trained	Un-trained	Total (N)	Fully Trained	Partially Trained	Un-trained	Total (N)
Primary	18	28	54	79621	15	20	65	32739	17	26	57	112360
Lower Secondary	27	9	64	24990	23	4	73	4905	27	7	66	29895
Secondary	40	8	52	21103	34	2	64	2194	40	7	53	23297
All Levels	24	20	56	125714	17	17	66	39838	22	20	58	165552

Source: MOES (2002), School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal, 2003 (2060 B.S.).

Several observations emerge from the data presented in Table 3.11. The highest proportion of fully trained teachers working in schools was at the secondary level (40%). The lower secondary level occupied the second position in this regard (27%). The primary level teachers were disadvantaged on matter of getting opportunities for full-course training (17%). The same order is found in the distribution of training opportunities between male and female teachers, with the male teachers getting more opportunities than their female counterparts at each, a situation of the resultant gender discrimination, possibly not intended. The highest proportion of the backlog of untrained teachers was at the lower secondary level

(64%). Equally serious is the problem of the training at the primary and secondary level (over 50%). More proportion of the primary level teachers was getting partial training, which eventually would terminate in full-fledged training (28%). Teacher of other levels were at a disadvantage in this regard. Though possibly unintended, sex discrimination appeared structured in the delivery of opportunities for partial types of training. The female teachers seemed to be deprived, more so at the primary level.

### 3.4.5 Teachers and students per school

Up till now, the school aspects such as the schools, students and teachers have been treated compartment-wise. It is time now to treat them in a holistic frame by placing all these in a single landscape, and to see and assess the scenarios that turn up. Table 3.12 is prepared for this purpose. The indicators on the scenarios are five: (1) the number of teachers per school, (2) the number of female teachers per school, (3) the number of students per school, (4) the number of female students per school, and (5) and the number of girls per female teacher. The years selected are the same as adopted for the study – 1975, 1990, 1991, 1996, and 2003.

**Table 3.12: Teachers and students per school, 1975-2003**

Year	Level	Total Teachers Per School	Female Teachers per School	Total Students Per School	Total Girls Per School	Girls per Female Teacher
1975	Primary	2.32	0.0014*	55	10	7004
	Lower Secondary	3.54		91	17	
	Secondary	7.46		140	24	
	All Levels	2.76	0.0011*	65	12	10585
1990	Primary	3.99	0.51	156	56	109
	Lower Secondary	3.13	0.35	87	25	74
	Secondary	5.36	0.46	188	52	114
	All Levels	3.96	0.48	147	51	105
1996	Primary	4.02	0.83	155	63	76
	Lower Secondary	3.58	0.46	144	55	119
	Secondary	5.66	0.58	114	41	70
	All Levels	4.10	0.74	149	59	80
2003	Primary	4.12	1.20	148	65	54
	Lower Secondary	3.62	0.59	147	64	108
	Secondary	4.91	0.46	108	47	102
	All Levels	4.11	0.99	143	63	64

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES from 1975 to 2003.

Notes: The definitions of the "levels" are kept intact as prevalent at the different times.

In 1975 there were only 12 female teachers at primary level; hence the indicator value is less than 0.01.

As can be seen in the above table, from 1990 to 2003 the primary level was defined to consist of 5 grades. The teacher-staffing pattern at this level during this period was more or less constant, 4 or nearly 4 teachers per school. This quota of teachers per school is evidently

low, giving not even one teacher to teach each grade. The teacher quota per school at the lower secondary and secondary level is seen to fluctuate, but hovering around the number 4. This quota of teachers (4) is indeed low and still lower because the schools have to teach varied kinds of subjects including the optional subjects. When all levels are taken into consideration, the magic number of 4 teachers per school again prevails.

The scenario on the aspect of female teachers per school is very much disappointing. Throughout the 1975-2003 period, not even one female teacher was available per school at any level except in a solitary case of 2003: a little more than one teacher (1.20) was available at the primary level (not at the other two levels). Heavy investments made in education for over 5 decades (1951-2003) have indeed given a really poorest return in terms of female teachers' recruitment in the teaching positions – not even one female teacher per school at any level.

During the 1990-2003 period, the highest number of students per school was at the primary level (156 students in 1990), giving 31 students on average per grade). Over the years, the per-school student population at the primary level has been swinging between 148 and 156, giving a low per-grade per school student number of 30-31. This size of student population at the primary level is an indication of under-utilization of the school places: the primary schools had been under populated in terms of student enrollment throughout the period of observation. Similarly, the per-school student number at the secondary level ranged from 108 students to 188 students, the highest being in 1990. This gives a per-grade quota of students ranging from 36 students to 63 students. On this count too, the upper level schools had been running under their optimum capability. Overall (all levels combined), the size of student population in the schools ranged from 147 students to 143 students during the period 1990-2003 – a size not adequate enough to do justice to the huge investments being made in school level education.

One test to assess the progress made in education is to count the number of girls in a school. This test gets increased validity in modern development thinking which gives prominence to the gender phenomenon. Table 3.12 shows that the number of girls per school at the primary level increased from the low level of 10 in 1975 to the high of 65 by 2003. During 1990-2003, the per-school number of girls at the primary level ranged from 56 to 65, giving a 1.15 percent growth rate per annum. The 1990-2003 per annum growth in this ratio was 4.27 percent. In the overall (all levels combined), this ratio increased by 6.10 percent during 1990-2003. This level of achievement in girls' education though laudable cannot be considered as adequate. According to the estimates made in the EMIS Report of 2003, 22.5 percent of primary school age girls are still out of schools, and the proportions for the lower secondary level and secondary level are 61.3 percent and 73.7 percent respectively. With a low number of 65 girls per school (2003) universal primary education for girls as a national goal seems to be a distant probability, if attained at all. The per-school number of girls at all levels is too low.

In 1975, there were just 12 female teachers at the primary level, and none at the upper levels. So, a female teacher was available for every 7004 girls at the primary level, a staggering

ratio indeed. With ups and downs, the ratio of 54 girls per female teacher eventually got established by 2003 at the primary level, 108 at the lower secondary level and 102 at the secondary level. Since the primary level is considered to be a critical stage for attracting more girls in schools through the presence of female teachers, the low level of availability of female teachers for a group of girls as big as 54 poses an immense hurdle in the promotion of girls' education in the country. A blunt but still a logical question is: How can a female teacher give attention to the girls numbering as high as 54 (the ratio established by 2003)?

### **3.5 Distribution of Female Teachers**

In this part, micro level analysis is carried out showing the status of the 75 districts on two aspects: (1) the percentage of female teachers on the teaching staff of all primary schools in the district, and (2) the percentage of trained female teachers out of the total number of female teachers employed in these schools. Annex 3.3 presents the data for the 75 districts; here the same sets of data are summarized in Table 3.13 and Table 3.14. The figures given within cells represent the number of districts falling in the stated intervals (extreme right in the tables). The purpose of this analysis is twofold: (1) to identify the districts which have low status in terms of employing female teachers in 2003, and (2) to identify the districts which have low status of trained females on the teaching staff in the same year. These low-status districts may be treated as the 'problem' district. The 1997 data is presented for describing the trends on both aspects.

Table 3.13 shows that the number of districts employing female teachers in higher proportions had increased within a short span of 6 years (1993-2003). Annex 3.3 shows that the highest increment rate was 17.62 percent point (Myagdi) and the lowest increment rate was 0.41 percent point (Saptari). In 13 out of 75 districts, there was 10 or more percent point increment. In 5 districts, there was cut in the proportions. Overall, the increment at the national level was 6.68 percent point, that is, roughly 1.11 percent point annually.

**Table 3.13: Distribution of female teachers employed in the schools, 1997 and 2003**

Interval	Year	EDR	CDR	WDR	MWDR	FWDR	NEPAL	MT	HL	TR	KT M V
<10%	1997	-	-	-	-	3	<b>3</b>	1	2	-	-
	2003	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10-14%	1997	4	5	1	6	4	<b>20</b>	4	12	4	-
	2003	1	2	-	-	3	<b>6</b>	3	2	1	-
15-19%	1997	6	8	6	6	1	<b>27</b>	6	12	9	-
	1993	6	5	-	8	4	<b>23</b>	7	14	2	-
20-24%	1997	2	1	6	3	1	<b>13</b>	3	8	2	-
	2003	1	4	2	5	-	<b>12</b>	3	5	4	-
25-29%	1997	3	2	1	-	-	<b>6</b>	1	1	4	-
	2003	3	3	7	1	2	<b>16</b>	2	8	6	-
30-34%	1997	1	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>	-	-	1	-
	2003	4	1	5	-	-	<b>10</b>	1	6	3	-
35-39%	1997	-	1	2	-	-	<b>3</b>	1	1	-	1
	2003	1	1	1	1	-	<b>4</b>	-	-	4	-
40-44%	1997	-	1	-	-	-	<b>1</b>	-	-	-	1
	2003	-	2	-	-	-	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	2
45-49%	1997	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2003	-	-	1	-	-	<b>1</b>	-	1	-	-
50% & Over	1997	-	1	-	-	-	<b>1</b>	-	-	-	1
	2003	-	1	-	-	-	<b>1</b>	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>2003</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES in 1997 and 2003.

Table 3.14 presents the distribution of trained female teachers out of the employed numbers in the 75 districts. Negative trends are observed in most cases on this aspect. The number of districts having trained female teachers in 1997 had dropped to lower levels by 2003. Annex 3.3 shows that there was increment just in 12 out of the 75 districts; in 62 districts there were severe cuts in the proportions of trained female teachers; and in one district (Humla) there was a single trained female teacher in both years. The highest increment was in Rasuwa (16.00 percent point) and the lowest increment was in Mugu (0.83 percent points). The highest cut in the proportion was in Bajhang (87.50 percent point), and the lowest cut was in Jhapa (0.83 percent points).



**Table 3.14: District-wise distribution of trained female teachers, 1997 and 2003**

Interval	Year	EDR	CDR	WDR	MWDR	FWDR	NEPAL	MT	TR	KTM V	HL
							<b>L</b>				
<10%	1997	1	-	-	1	2	<b>4</b>	2	-	-	2
	2003	1	2	5	6	1	<b>15</b>	2	6	1	7
10-14%	1997	3	1	2	1	-	<b>7</b>	3	3	1	1
	2003	9	6	4	4	3	<b>26</b>	5	6	1	15
15-19%	1997	4	1	-	1	-	<b>6</b>	3	1	-	2
	1993	2	4	4	3	2	<b>15</b>	4	1	1	10
20-24%	1997	2	1	-	-	-	<b>3</b>	-	1	-	2
	2003	1	1	2	1	1	<b>6</b>	-	2	-	4
25-29%	1997	2	2	-	1	-	<b>5</b>	1	-	-	4
	2003	1	2	-	-	1	<b>4</b>	2	2	-	-
30-34%	1997	3	2	3	1	1	<b>10</b>	1	2	1	7
	2003	-	2	-	1	1	<b>4</b>	2	-	-	2
35-39%	1997	-	4	1	5	1	<b>11</b>	3	4	-	4
	2003	2	-	1	-	-	<b>3</b>	-	2	-	1
40-44%	1997	-	2	-	3	-	<b>5</b>	1	-	-	4
	2003	-	2	-	-	-	<b>2</b>	1	1	-	-
45-49%	1997	1	4	2	1	1	<b>9</b>	-	4	1	5
	2003	-	-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>	-	-	-	-
50% & Over	1997	-	2	8	1	4	<b>15</b>	2	5	-	8
	2003	-	-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>39</b>
	<b>2003</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>39</b>

Source: Educational Statistics published by MOES in 1997 and 2003.

One can observe a number of flaws in the statistics. In Bajhang district, only 7.62 percent of all teachers were female in 1997 but all of them trained. The ratio of female teachers rose to 10.95 percent in 2003. However, the ratio of trained female teachers surprisingly dropped to just 12.50 percent in 2003. Where had the huge number of trained female teachers gone in a short time (1997-2003), marking a cut as high as 87.50 percent? The statistics is unbelievable. The case of the Gorkha district also catches attention. Here, the rate of trained female teachers dropped from 81.25 percent in 1997 to 35.68 percent by 2003. Oddly enough, the Kathmandu district had trained female teachers at a low rate of just 12.64 percent in 1997 (increased to 15.25% by 2003). There are no plausible explanations for these flaws.

### 3.6 Impact of Female Teachers on Girls' Enrollment

There is a very popular assumption that the more the number of female teachers employed in school the more the increment in girls' enrollment. Making use of the national and regional level data, the scenarios on this aspect is prepared by computing correlation coefficients (Pearson) between these two variables. The proportion of female teachers working in schools is treated as one variable and the proportion of girls enrolled in schools is treated as the other variable (Table 3.15).

**Table 3.15: Correlation (Pearson) between proportions of female teachers employed and proportions of girls enrolled in schools, 1980-2003**

Primary Level							
Level defined as		(1-3)	(1-5)	(1-5)	(1-5)	(1-5)	(1-5)
Region	N	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003
Nepal	75	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.38</b>
EDR	16	<b>0.60</b>	0.36	0.18	0.29	0.27	0.42
CDR	19	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.49</b>	0.27
WDR	16	0.05	0.19	-0.11	0.21	0.12	-0.01
MWDR	15	0.32	<b>0.64</b>	0.50	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.25</b>
FWDR	9	0.39	<b>0.72</b>	0.47	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.78</b>
Mountains	16	0.42	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.58</b>
Tarai	20	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>0.63</b>
KTM Valley	3	0.78	0.96	<b>-1.00</b>	-0.70	<b>-0.99</b>	<b>-1.00</b>
Hills	39	<b>0.64</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.45</b>
Lower Secondary Level							
Level defined as		(4-7)	(6-7)	(6-7)	(6-8)	(6-8)	(6-8)
Region	N	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003
Nepal	75	<b>0.84</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.63</b>
EDR	16	<b>0.83</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.61</b>	0.36	0.40	<b>0.51</b>
CDR	19	<b>0.76</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>0.64</b>	0.38	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.56</b>
WDR	16	<b>0.81</b>	0.27	<b>0.61</b>	0.42	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.55</b>
MWDR	15	<b>0.81</b>	0.29	<b>0.61</b>	0.42	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.56</b>
FWDR	9	<b>0.82</b>	0.32	<b>0.63</b>	0.46	0.54	<b>0.63</b>
Mountains	16	<.01	0.34	0.20	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.59</b>
Tarai	20	<b>0.81</b>	0.19	<b>0.59</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.69</b>
KTM Valley	3	0.97	0.87	0.98	-0.49	-0.65	-0.06
Hills	39	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.42</b>
Secondary Level							
Level defined as		(8-10)	(8-10)	(8-10)	(9-10)	(9-10)	(9-10)
Region	N	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003
Nepal	75	<b>0.53</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.32</b>
EDR	16	<b>0.58</b>	0.23	<b>0.61</b>	0.35	0.19	<b>0.56</b>
CDR	19	<b>0.64</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>0.48</b>
WDR	16	-0.11	<b>0.53</b>	0.40	-0.06	-0.31	-0.12
MWDR	15	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.44</b>	0.42	0.10	0.13	<b>0.51</b>
FWDR	9	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>0.75</b>
Mountains	16	0.20	0.28	0.11	-0.30	-0.32	0.13
Tarai	20	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.47</b>

KTM Valley	3	-0.36	0.95	0.85	0.69	0.12	0.45
Hills	39	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>0.33</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.34</b>
<b>All Three Levels Combined</b>							
<b>Level defined as</b>		<b>(1-10)</b>	<b>(1-10)</b>	<b>(1-10)</b>	<b>(1-10)</b>	<b>(1-10)</b>	<b>(1-10)</b>
<b>Region</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>
Nepal	75	<b>0.57</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.43</b>
EDR	16	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.43</b>	0.32	0.31	0.33	<b>0.46</b>
CDR	19	<b>0.82</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.50</b>	0.33
WDR	16	0.00	0.20	-0.17	-0.03	0.06	-0.07
MWDR	15	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>0.45</b>	0.38	0.33
FWDR	9	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.80</b>	0.52	<b>0.77</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.82</b>
Mountains	16	<b>0.49</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.61</b>
Tarai	20	<b>0.58</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.64</b>
KTM Valley	3	0.94	0.80	-1.00	-0.95	-0.77	-1.00
Hills	39	<b>0.64</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.17</b>

Notes:

1. The levels are as defined by MOES. Figures within parentheses indicate the grades covered for the levels.
2. N represents the number of districts under the region concerned.
3. Bold-faced correlation coefficients are significant, light-faced ones are not significant.
4. Test used: One-tailed test, Alpha level: 0.05.
5. The Critical Ratios (CRs) for rejection of the Null Hypothesis (an hypothesis of no relationship) for different sizes are as follows:

<u>Region</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>CR</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>CR</u>
Nepal	73	.195	Mountains	14	.426
EDR	14	.426	CDR	17	.389
Tarai	18	.378	KTM Valley	1	.988
WDR	14	.426	Hills	37	.275
MWDR	13	.441			
FWDR	7	.582			

Note: df stands for degree of freedom.

At the national level (N = 75), all correlation coefficients are high and significant at any school level throughout the period. However, the degree of the correlations varies from year to year. The scenarios at the regional level look irregular, depicting breaks even within a short period. The correlation matrices look like "pork-marked" faces, which normally occurs when correlations do not have a regular pattern. The frequency of irregularities increases at each upper level of the school education system. Some correlation coefficients are found to be extremely low. The case of Kathmandu Valley, which is educationally the most developed part of the country, arrests attention. Here throughout the period, not a single case of significant correlation appeared at any level. Rather, even negatively significant correlations appeared two times (Primary level and Overall in 1990 and 2003). When all education levels are combined, all correlations for the Mountains, Hills and Tarai are high and significant, suggesting positive association between the supply of female teachers and girls' enrollment.

The finding is that at the aggregate level (national level), relationship is observed between the proportion of female teachers in the teaching force and the proportion of girls enrolled in schools. But, at the disaggregate level there are several exceptions. National aggregates show only the central tendency but conceal facts at other points of the distribution of the phenomenon, more critically of facts below the center. The finding has simply reinforced the hypothesis that female teachers' presence in schools can attract increased enrollment of girls.

## CHAPTER IV

### PROFILE OF FEMALE TEACHERS

One of the objectives of the study is to prepare a profile of teachers in Nepal. To this end, the survey gathered data pertaining to demographic and professional characteristics of both male and female teachers. This chapter presents and analyzes selected demographic and professional characteristics of teachers in the sample. The distribution of teachers across the schools of the country is not uniform. Teachers' demographic and professional characteristics can vary in terms of the location and type of school. In view of this, the analysis takes into account these two factors.

#### 4.1 Demographic Profile of Teachers

##### 4.1.1 Current age

Most of the teachers in the sample fall in the age group of 31-40, followed by those in the age groups of 21-30 and 41-50 (Table 4.1). The proportion of teachers aged 20 years or below is almost non-existent. The near absence of young teachers means that a large majority of the school teachers in Nepal are mature in terms of their age. A significant proportion of the teachers is thus in the prime working age. The average age for the sample as a whole is 36 years, the same being 35, 37, and 42 for primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers respectively. The secondary teachers thus appear to be mature in terms of age compared to the primary and lower secondary teachers. There is no immediate explanation for this variation in average ages of teachers based on sex and grade level. Overall, the data suggests that the female teaching force of the country is predominantly in the productive years of career. The retirement age for teachers in Nepal is 60. It implies that the existing stock of teachers will remain around for several years in the school system provided other conditions remain the same. Cross-tabulation of the same data in terms of teachers' gender revealed that the female teachers with their 36 years of average age are slightly younger than the male teachers (37).

**Table 4.1: Current age distribution of female teachers by school level (%)**

Age Group (Years)	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
<=20	1.5	2.6	0.0	1.7
21-30	25.7	25.6	13.8	26.0
31-40	49.4	41.0	31.0	46.4
41-50	20.1	20.5	34.5	20.9
>50	3.3	10.3	20.7	5.1
All Ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average Age	35.4	36.7	42.1	36.0
Median Age	34.0	36.0	44.0	35.0
<b>N</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>402</b>

### 4.1.2 Ethnicity

Nepal's ethnic diversity is well known. The teaching force appears to be uniform rather than diverse in terms of ethnic composition (Table 4.2). Brahmins (50%) form the largest majority in the female teaching force followed by Chhetris (28%). Janjati and other ethnic/caste groups are seriously under-represented. Newars constitute the third largest category. It should be noted that Brahmins are heavily represented at the primary and lower secondary levels as compared to the secondary levels. On the other hand, Newars and Chhetris do have heavy presence at the primary and secondary levels in comparison to the lower secondary level. The ethnic distribution of male teachers shows the following pattern (Brahmin, 48%; Chhetris, 34%; Newars, 4%; Janjatis and others, 14%). Although the ethnic profile presented here might not reflect the actual situation for reason of lack of randomness in the selection of teachers, yet the data is indicative of the fact that the teaching force of Nepal is predominantly occupied by the so-called high caste groups.

The ethnic distribution of female teachers in terms of ecological zone reveals that Newars' presence is heavy in Kathmandu Valley, Janjati's presence in the Hills and Mountains, and other groups' presence in the Tarai. Chhetris are more frequently found in the Mountains and Hills, while Brahmins are systematically distributed across the different ecological zones.

**Table 4.2: Ethnic composition of female teachers (%)**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Brahmin	48.6	70.0	34.5	50.2
Chhetri	29.0	20.0	37.9	28.2
Newar	15.6	7.5	20.7	15.0
Janjati	6.5	2.5	6.9	6.3
Others	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>402</b>

### 4.1.3 Marital status and age at marriage

Marriage practices in Nepal may vary across the caste and ethnic groups. But, there is one thing in common: all marriage practices are patrilocal, that is, the bride marries into and goes to live with the bridegroom's family. Marriage is virtually universal in Nepal. This is also true for teachers, regardless of school level (Table 4.3). This is also true for the male teachers (90%) reporting having been married. It is usually the case that marriages are arranged by the parents or the elder family members. In recent years, arranged marriages are being replaced by love marriages. In response to the question regarding the type of marriage, nearly 19 percent of the respondents described their marriage as being 'love marriage.' The corresponding figure in the case of male teachers is found to be 25%. This kind of marriage was found among the Chhetris, Newars and Janjatis. Among conservative group such as the Brahmin, the practice of arranged marriage remains to be the norm.

**Table 4.3: Marital status of female teachers (%)**

Marital status	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Married	92.2	90.0	90.0	91.0
Unmarried	7.8	10.0	10.0	9.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>409</b>

The legal age for marriage is 16 years for the female and 18 years for the male if the marriage is taking place with the consent of parents. In the case of marriage done without the consent of parents, the legal age for female is 18 years and for the male 21 years. As regards the age at first marriage (Table 4.4), a large proportion of the female teachers reported having been married between the age of 16 and 20 (46%), followed by those who got married between the age of 21 to 25 (41%). The incidence of child marriage is present, although the proportion is minimal (3%). Late marriage among the female teachers in the current sample is almost non-existent (1.3%). As can be seen in the table, more proportions of lower secondary (53%) and secondary teachers (69%) reported having been married at a later age than did their primary counterparts (49%).

Cross-tabulation of the data in terms of gender and ethnicity reveals interesting results. While most female teachers (46%) were married between the age of 16 to 20, most male teachers (46%) were married between the age of 21 to 25. The average age of marriage for male teachers was 23, while for female teachers it was 22 years. Like many other countries in the world, Nepalese men generally marry at a later age than women. Teachers belonging to Newars (23) and Janjatis (23) were married at a later age as compared to the Brahimins (22) and Chhetris (22).

**Table 4.4: Age of female teachers at marriage (%)**

Age (Years)	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
<16	4.2	0.0	0.0	3.5
16 to 20	49.6	27.8	23.2	45.8
21 to 25	37.1	52.8	69.2	40.8
26 to 30	7.8	19.4	3.8	8.6
>31	1.3	0.0	3.8	1.3
<b>N</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>373</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.1.4 Age at the time of joining teaching

A large majority of the female teachers, regardless of their level of appointment (primary, lower secondary or secondary), are found to have joined their teaching career at or before the age of 25 (Table 4.5). Those who joined teaching after 30 are very few (5%). It is interesting to note that substantial proportions of primary (33%), lower secondary (36%) and secondary (28%) teachers were quite young at the time of joining teaching (20 or before). It appears that some choose to join teaching right after their SLC or Intermediate level of education.

The average ages of primary, lower secondary and secondary female teachers at the time of joining teaching are more or less the same.

The average ages of entry into teaching for male (22.9) and female teachers (22.6) do not differ from each other, suggesting that most teachers, whoever they are, start their teaching career about the same period in their life. There are minor differences in the ages of entry between teachers serving in the Mountains and other regions of the country. Those serving in the Mountains started their teaching career slightly earlier than those serving in other regions (21 versus 23).

**Table 4.5: Age of female teachers at the time of joining teaching (%)**

Age at entry into teaching	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
<=20	33.3	35.9	27.6	32.8
21-25	49.3	35.9	48.3	48.7
26-30	12.3	17.9	24.1	13.4
>30	5.1	10.3	0.0	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average age	22.5	23.5	23.3	22.6
<b>N</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>411</b>

#### 4.1.5 Origin of teachers

The survey asked the teachers whether they were working in their own place of residence. Those working in their own area of residence are defined as local and others as non-local. For the most part, female teachers are found to be working in their own place of residence (Table 4.6). Of the total teachers, 84% are serving in their own place of origin. Interestingly, a higher proportion of secondary female teachers (93%) are found to work in their own community as compared to their primary (84%) and lower secondary counterparts (80%).

The data was cross-tabulated in terms of sex and ecological zone. As expected, more female teachers work in their own community than men (84% as opposed to 77%). possible women should be posted in their own area of residence or in places where their husbands are posted in the case of married women. In the case of males, more proportion of primary grade teachers work in their own community (83%) as compared to the lower secondary (71%) and secondary grade teachers (77%). In the Mountains and Kathmandu Valley, there are more non-locals than locals serving as teachers. This is however not the case in other regions. Most mountain districts due to their low level of educational development rely on teachers coming from other areas. Most job seekers from all over the country throng in Kathmandu due to the fact that most educational and economic opportunities are concentrated in the Kathmandu Valley.



**Table 4.6: Origin of female teachers (%)**

Origin of teachers	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Local	84.3	80.0	93.1	84.1
Non-local	15.7	20.0	6.9	15.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

#### 4.1.6 Language spoken at home

What language do teachers speak at home? The survey has revealed that Nepali is spoken in the homes of the overwhelming majority of the teachers (Table 4.7). The proportion of Non-Nepali speakers is very small (7%). It is not surprising that the Nepali speakers form the majority given the fact that the present sample of teachers is heavily dominated by the Brahmins and Chhertis. The proportion of Nepali speaking female teachers is slightly higher at the lower secondary level as compared to those at the primary and secondary levels. In terms of gender, Nepali speaking male teachers constituted 90% of the total male teachers. There are more proportions of Nepali speaking teachers in the Mountains (male 95%; female 95%) and Hills (male 97%; female 93%) as compared to the Tarai (male 75%; female 91%) and Kathmandu Valley (male 92%; female 85%). As the government is committed to achieving EFA goals by 2015, primary schools in Nepal will be filled with children coming from non-Nepali speaking families. The task of providing quality education to the linguistic minorities calls for teachers who can communicate with and understand such children. Teachers' language background should be considered in future recruitment of teachers.

**Table 4.7: Language spoken at home by female teachers (%)**

Language spoken at home	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Nepali	92.9	97.5	93.1	92.8
Non-Nepali	7.1	2.5	6.9	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

## 4.2 Professional Profile

### 4.2.1 Prior job

Teaching was the first job for a large majority of the female teachers (Table 4.8). On being asked if they had any job prior to joining teaching, 87% of the respondents mentioned that teaching was their first job. Some 12%, however, joined teaching after some experience in non-teaching jobs. Proportionally, more lower secondary female teachers (22%) had prior job elsewhere as compared to their primary (12%) and secondary (10%) colleagues. Cross-tabulation of the data by gender shows that men are likely to join teaching after some work experience elsewhere as compared to women. Nearly 23% of the male teachers joined

teaching with prior work experience elsewhere as opposed to 12% of the female teachers who did so.

**Table 4.8: Prior job of female teachers (%)**

Prior job	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	11.9	22.5	10.3	12.5
No	88.1	77.5	89.7	87.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

#### 4.2.2 Teaching experience

Table 4.9 displays the distribution of female teachers according to their range of teaching experience. There is more or less fair representation of teachers in the sample with varying range of teaching experience. But, a substantial proportion of the teachers (31%) belongs in the range of 11-15, followed by those in the range of more than 20 years of teaching experience (21%). Those who have joined teaching during the last 5 years constitute 15%. The average years of teaching experience for the sample as a whole is 14 years, corresponding figures for primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers are 14, 13 and 20 years, respectively. Apparently, secondary female teachers do have much longer teaching experience as compared to the others. The mean years of teaching experience for the male teachers is 15 years, and 14 years for the female teachers. In terms of teaching experience, male and female teachers appear to be identical. If teaching experience is any measure of teachers' quality, there is some room for satisfaction. Teachers do have considerable amount of teaching experience.

**Table 4.9: Years of teaching of female teachers (%)**

Years of Teaching	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
<=5	12.3	32.5	10.3	15.1
6-10	16.8	20.0	10.3	16.7
11-15	35.4	10.0	24.1	31.4
16-20	16.8	15.0	6.9	15.6
>20	18.7	22.5	48.4	21.2
Average experience	13.9	12.7	20.2	14.3
<b>N</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>411</b>

#### 4.2.3 Duration of service at the current school

How mobile or stable is the teaching force in the public sector? One way of answering this question is to examine the duration of service of teachers at the current school. As shown in Table 4.10, little over one-third of the total female teachers have served in the current school for five years or less, while nearly one-fourth of them are found to have served at the current school between 6 to 10 years. The proportion of teachers serving more than 20 years in the same school is only 14%. A substantial proportion of secondary level female teachers (41%)

reported having served in the same school for more than 20 years as opposed to 10% and 19% of the primary and lower secondary teachers respectively.

The average duration of work for male teachers is 9.4 years and for female it is 10.5 years. The data seems to suggest that female teachers are more stable than their male counterparts. Likewise, teachers at primary and lower secondary level are less stable than their secondary counterparts.

**Table 4.10: Years of work of female teachers at current school (%)**

Years of teaching	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
<=5	33.0	43.2	27.6	33.9
6-10	24.3	27.0	13.8	23.9
11-15	20.4	8.2	13.8	18.3
16-20	12.2	2.7	3.4	10.3
>20	10.1	18.9	41.4	13.6
Average experience	10.2	9.7	15.3	10.5
<b>N</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>360</b>

#### 4.2.4 Academic qualifications of teachers

The minimum academic qualification to become a primary, lower secondary and secondary teacher is SLC (10 years of schooling), Intermediate (12 years of schooling) and Bachelor degree (earlier 14 but currently 15 years of schooling) respectively. By and large, the teachers in the present sample meet the government specified minimum academic qualifications (Table 4.11). The proportion of female teachers who do not meet the official requirement is insignificant (2% at the primary level; 3% at the lower secondary level; and 7% at the secondary level). Such teachers are found to be working mostly in the Mountains and Hills rather than other parts of the country. Interestingly, the proportion of teachers possessing academic qualifications higher than what is prescribed is substantial. This is true for teachers across all levels. The average years of schooling for primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers are 10.4, 11.9 and 12.7 respectively. The academic profile of male and female teachers does not differ much at all levels. The average years of schooling for male primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers are 10.6, 11.5 and 12.6 respectively.

**Table 4.11: Academic qualifications of female teachers**

Academic qualifications	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Below SLC	1.8	0.0	0.0	1.5
SLC	49.4	2.6	0.0	41.4
Intermediate	35.5	30.7	6.9	33.1
Bachelor	12.4	56.4	75.9	21.1
Master	0.9	10.3	17.2	2.9
<b>Average years of schooling</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>410</b>

#### 4.2.5 Academic quality of teachers

Often educational researchers use the average years of schooling or the academic degrees completed by the teachers to assess the academic profile of the teaching force. This indicator, however, does not tell much about the academic quality of the teachers. One way of measuring the academic quality is to assess the academic performance of the teachers during their school or college years. Although the ability of public examinations to measure the academic achievement of students can be questioned, it is however one easily available means of knowing the academic quality of teachers. In Nepal, one's academic performance is reported in terms of division. Normally, universities and school boards award first division to those who obtain more than 60% marks, second division to those who score marks between 41 to 59% and third division to those who perform at the minimum acceptable performance level. In this context, teachers were asked to provide the division in which they passed different levels of terminal examinations.

Table 4.12 displays the distribution of teachers according to their performance in the SLC. As the data suggests, most teachers have passed SLC either in the second division (46%) or the third division (52%). A very small percentage of the total teachers passed SLC in the first division (2%). It is clear that teaching is never the choice of academically smart students. There are more first division holders among secondary teachers (7%) as compared to the lower secondary (3%) and primary teachers (1%). In fact, first division holders do not exist at the primary level. As can be seen in the table, the proportion of the third division holders is slightly larger (54%) among the primary teachers, while the proportions of second division holders are larger among the lower secondary (58%) and secondary grade teachers (50%). Teacher quality measured in terms of academic performance in SLC appears to be better in higher grades than in the lower grades.

Cross-tabulation of the same data in terms of gender suggests that those who have passed SLC in the first division are most likely to be men rather than women (6% versus 2%). Proportionally, more male teachers passed SLC in the second division than did the female teachers (54% versus 46%). The proportions of third division holders are lower for male primary (50%), lower secondary (29%) and secondary (26%) teachers compared to their female counterparts in corresponding levels. Apparently, male teachers do have a better academic profile judged on the basis of their passed division in SLC.

**Table 4.12: Female teachers' performance in SLC (%)**

Passed Division	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
First	1.4	2.8	7.1	1.9
Second	44.4	58.3	50.0	46.3
Third	54.2	38.9	42.9	51.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>359</b>

#### 4.2.6 Academic quality of teachers in higher education

In the preceding paragraph, it was demonstrated that teaching profession is heavily dominated by under-performers at the school level. What is the academic quality of teachers in terms of their performance in higher education? The distribution of female teachers based on their academic performance in the various levels of higher education is presented below: Intermediate (Table 4.13) and Bachelor (Table 4.14).

The academic performance of female teachers in the Intermediate level is not very different from their performance in the SLC examinations. The proportion of teachers with good performance (first division) in the Intermediate level is as low as 1%. Those passing in the second and third divisions constitute 43% and 56% respectively. There are some variations in the performance level across the different grade levels. When the female teachers' performance is compared with the performance of their male colleagues, some differences can be noted. The distribution of the first (5%), second (55%) and third (40%) division holder male teachers (n=216) shows that male teachers have relatively better academic profile than do their female colleagues.

**Table 4.13: Female teachers' performance in Intermediate Level (%)**

Passed Division	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
First	0.0	3.0	3.7	1.0
Second	41.7	45.5	51.9	43.5
Third	58.3	51.5	44.4	55.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>209</b>

Of those who have completed Bachelor degree, none reported having passed it in the first division. Those passing in the second and third division constitute 37% and 63% respectively. The proportion of third division holder female teachers is slightly higher in the middle level of education as compared to the others.

Differences in terms of gender are noteworthy. Proportionally, more males passed their Bachelor level examination in the second division as compared to the females (63% versus 37%), while more women passed the same degree in the third division (63% versus 31%). Some 5% of the total male teachers passed their Bachelor degree in the first division as opposed to none from among the female teachers. Again, male teachers do have a better academic profile as compared to the female teachers.

**Table 4.14: Female teachers' performance in Bachelor Level (%)**

Passed Division	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
First	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Second	39.3	31.6	40.0	37.5
Third	60.7	68.4	60.0	62.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>72</b>

Twenty eight of the total teachers (23 male and 5 female) have provided information related to their performance in the Master's degree. Most of these teachers happen to be lower secondary or secondary grade teachers. Again, the performance in the Master's degree examinations follows the pattern reported earlier: that large majority of the teachers passed their Master's degree either in the second (50%) or in the third division (33%).

#### 4.2.7 Area of specialization

Those who had academic qualification beyond SLC were asked to mention their major area of specialization in different levels of higher education. Teachers could mention only one subject as their major area of specialization. Data concerning teachers' area of specialization is presented in Table 4.15. The responses obtained have been grouped into six categories: Nepali, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, and Others. In the Social Science, subjects such as Political Science, Geography, History, and Economics are included, while in the 'others' category Health and Physical education, Environmental Education, Early Childhood Education, Population Education are included. Only 202 female teachers chose to answer this question. Of those who responded, most teachers reported Nepali (42%) as being their area of specialization, followed by Social Science (28%) and others (14%). Those majoring in English (10%), Mathematics (4%), and Science (3%) are less represented compared to those majoring in other subject areas.

Cross-tabulation of the data by gender reveals interesting findings. Women are found to study Nepali and social science more often compared to men. As reported earlier, about 42% women have their specialization in Nepali as opposed to only 20% men. Likewise, more female teachers do have their specialization in social science than men (28% versus 23%). The proportions of male teachers reporting English (17%), Mathematics (15%) and Science (8%) as being their subject areas are larger as compared to the corresponding figures for female teachers. Historically, women are known to study so-called 'soft' subjects and avoid the so-called 'hard' fields such as Science and Mathematics. This pattern is more or less visible in the data presented in the table below.

**Table 4.15: Female teachers' area of specialization (%)**

Area of specialization	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Nepali	44.9	41.3	28.6	42.1
English	8.7	17.6	7.1	9.8
Mathematics	2.9	0.0	10.7	3.5
Science	0.0	2.9	17.9	3.0
Social science	29.7	23.5	21.4	27.7
Others	13.8	14.7	14.3	13.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>202</b>

#### 4.2.8 Status of employment

In the public schooling system, teachers' employment status normally falls into two major categories: permanent and temporary. Permanent teachers can serve in teaching until the

retirement age of 62, and are entitled for different kinds of perks and benefits. Temporary teachers, as the name suggests, are appointed locally to meet the immediate shortage of teachers in schools. Such teachers are not entitled for many perks and benefits given to the permanent teachers. To be a permanent teacher, one must go through the recruitment procedure (usually written examination and interview) administered by the appropriate teacher selection authority. Currently, the National Teacher Service Commission (NTSC) has the authority to select teachers for tenure. Earlier, it was handled directly by the Teacher Selection Committee formed in each district. Most recently, teachers are required to obtain teaching license from the NTSC prior to their appointment as a teacher.

The survey gathered data relating to the employment status of teachers (Table 4.16). As shown in the table, most female teachers (71%) are found to have permanent status in their job. The proportion of temporary teachers is also substantial (29%). Proportionally, more primary teachers are permanent as compared to other types of teachers. But, more secondary teachers are permanent as compared to the lower secondary teachers. The proportion of permanent teachers is marginally lower for male teachers (69%) as compared to the female teachers.

**Table 4.16: Status of employment of female teachers (%)**

Status of employment	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Permanent	74.1	62.5	69.0	71.1
Temporary	25.9	37.5	31.0	28.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>415</b>

#### 4.2.9 Training

In terms of training, there can be three types of teachers: fully trained, partially trained, and untrained. Fully trained teachers are those who have either completed required pre-service education or obtained ten-month of professional training from the teacher training centers. Partially trained teachers are those who are on the way to finish the ten month training course. Untrained teachers do not have any kind of training that leads to certification. Government policy on teacher training has not remained consistent over the years. Therefore, persons without any training are often recruited as teachers to meet the immediate shortage and then sent for training while they are on the job. The training status of the teachers in the sample is mixed: 36% fully trained; 36% partially trained; and 28% untrained (Table 4.17). More proportion of primary teachers is untrained as compared to the lower secondary and secondary teachers. But, more proportions of untrained teachers are present at the lower secondary and secondary levels. Teacher's sex seems to have some association with the status of training. For instance, more proportion of male teachers is trained (53%) as compared to the female teachers (36%). Female teachers are not able to take part in training for several reasons. Likewise, the proportion of untrained teachers is lower for males than for females (21% versus 28%).

**Table 4.17: Status of teacher training of female teachers (%)**

Status of employment	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Fully trained	34.4	47.5	44.8	35.8
Partially trained	39.5	20.0	20.7	36.3
Untrained	26.1	32.5	34.5	27.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

**4.2.10 Participation in in-service teacher training**

In-service training courses (INSET) are organized through the Resource Centers (RCs) and Secondary Education Development Units (SEDUs) to update teachers continuously with the new curriculum materials, teaching methods and other developments in education. Under BPEP, it was planned that every teacher will attend a training course of at least 10 days every year. In this context, the survey asked the teachers to provide the number of INSET courses they had attended in the last five years. The results are displayed in Table 4.18. The results show that more than one-third of the total female teachers have not attended any INSET in the last five years. Most teachers attended INSET within the range of 1 to 3 training courses. Those who are frequently called in training courses are not many (1%). Apparently, lower secondary teachers had less opportunity for INSET as compared to the other categories of teachers. A substantial proportion of the lower secondary grade teachers reported having been deprived of the training opportunity.

There are noticeable differences between male and female teachers in terms of their participation in INSET. Proportionally, more female teachers were deprived of the training opportunity as compared to the male teachers (37% versus 29%). The proportion of male teachers attending INSET between 1 to 3 times is 51% as opposed to 45% for females. Some 6% of the total male teachers attended INSET more than 7 times as opposed to 1% of the total female teachers. The average numbers of training courses attended by primary, lower secondary and secondary male teachers are 2.59, 2.49 and 2.01 respectively; the corresponding figures for female teachers being 1.99, 0.75 and 1.59 respectively. Data suggests that the chances of attending INSET for male teachers are higher in comparison to female teachers.

**Table 4.18: Number of in-service training courses attended by female teachers (%)**

Number of INSET attended	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Never	33.5	57.5	31.0	36.6
1 to 3	45.1	42.5	58.6	45.4
4 to 6	19.9	0.0	10.4	16.8
7 to 10	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.2
> 10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average training courses attended	1.99	0.75	1.59	1.84
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>



The reasons for not participating in INSET are multiple: temporary status, recent employment, preference given for male teachers, training venue too far from home, lack of criteria for selecting teachers for INSET courses, favoritism, poor health, too few or no quotas for training, children too young, training not useful, too few teachers in the school, etc.

#### 4.2.11 Membership in teacher union

The Seventh Amendment of the Education Act allows school teachers of Nepal to establish one single teacher union for the protection of their professional rights and welfare. Although, officially one single union is believed to represent the entire teaching force of the country, in fact there are multiple teacher unions, often established along the political lines. Normally, teacher unions function as the sister organizations of the political parties. Currently, five major teacher unions are in existence. Some research tends to suggest that the public school teachers in Nepal are highly divided along the political lines and teachers tend to take part in political activities at the cost of classroom teaching. It is often said that male teachers do take active part in political activities than do female teachers. In this regard, the present study asked the teachers if they belonged to any teacher union. The results are shown in Table 4.19. It is not surprising that most female teachers (61%) in the sample replied in the positive, while the rest of them did so in the negative. These findings do confirm the general observation that most teachers in Nepal are unionized. It is interesting to note that proportionally more secondary grade teachers are members of teacher unions in comparison to the lower secondary and secondary teachers.

**Table 4.19: Female teachers' membership in teacher union (%)**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Member	60.1	57.5	75.9	61.0
Non-member	39.9	42.5	24.1	39.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>406</b>

Cross-tabulation of the data in terms of gender, school location, and ecological zone shows the following patterns. Male teachers (70%) are members of teacher unions in greater proportion compared to the female teachers (61%). Teachers serving in urban areas (69%) are found to become members more often than their counterparts serving in rural areas (49%). In terms of ecological region, the distribution of teachers who have obtained membership of teacher unions looks like this: Mountains (37%); Hills (63%), Tarai (74%), and Kathmandu Valley (59%). Clearly, teachers in the Tarai and the Hills in comparison to other areas are members of teacher unions.

## CHAPTER V

# HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS AND DYNAMICS

Recent literature on teacher professionalism tends to suggest that teachers' household and/or family characteristics do play a major role in their professional life. What is the family background of teachers? What is the educational profile of their household members? What is the occupational status of their family members? What is the role of different members in decision-making? What are the household responsibilities of teachers? How do male and female teachers maintain a balance between their family life and professional life? These and many other questions have important ramifications on how teachers will function as a professional. This chapter is built around these and other related questions. An understanding of teachers' household conditions is important for policymakers and program planners who are working to improve teachers' professional capacity.

### 5.1 Household Composition

#### 5.1.1 Family type

Households in Nepal have traditionally consisted of joint families. In recent years, however, household composition has begun to change in the process of development and increasing trend of urbanization. The traditional joint family system is now increasingly being replaced by the nuclear family system. This may be a phenomenon occurring both in rural and urban parts of Nepal. Table 5.1 displays the distribution of female teachers according to their family type. Overall, the nuclear family structure seems to dominate the household composition of female teachers, with 63% of the total female teachers saying that they do live in nuclear families.

**Demographic Profile of Nepal**

<b>Total population</b>	23, 151,423
Male	11,563,921 (49.95%)
Female	11,587,502 (50.05%)
Growth rate per annum (exponential) (1991-2001)	2.25%
Sex ratio (Number of males per 100 females)	0.998
<b>Percentage distribution of total population in terms of ecological regions (%)</b>	
Mountain	7.3
Hill	44.3
Tarai	48.4
<b>Population density (per square kilometer)</b>	
Mountain (16 districts) (Min-Max)	4-93
Hill (39 districts) (Min-Max)	50-2739
Tarai (20 districts) (Min-Max)	156 – 569
Nepal (Min-Max)	4-2739
Fertility rate	4.1
Total households	4,253,220
Average household size (persons)	5.4
Urban population (%)	14.2
<b>Population distribution according to ecological zone</b>	
Mountains (%)	7.3
Hills (%)	44.3
Tarai (%)	48.4

Source: CBS, 2003.

Data seems to indicate that female teachers, more than their male counterparts, do come from nuclear families (63% as opposed to 52%). This is valid for teachers across all levels. Household composition often varies according to ethnic group. The joint family system is more common among certain ethnic groups than others. When the household composition was analyzed in terms of ethnicity, it was found that teachers belonging to Janjatis (52%) and other caste/ethnic groups (80%) reported having been living in joint families compared to those belonging to Brahmins (38%), Chhetris (45%), and Newars (31%). Likewise, teachers in rural areas do have slightly higher family size (6.8) than do teachers in urban areas (6.2).

**Table 5.1: Type of family of female teachers (%)**

Family type	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Joint	36.2	45.0	34.5	37.0
Nuclear	63.8	55.0	65.5	63.0
<b>N</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>408</b>

### 5.1.2 Family size

It is well known that much of the household burden remains with the woman in the family. Woman's household burden does increase with the increase in the number of family members. In this context, we inquired about the family size of female teachers. Table 5.2 shows the distribution of female teachers according to the family size. Most teachers seem to have small families with members five or less (61%). Nearly 30% of them have a family size of 6 to 10 persons. Seven percent of teachers have 11 family members or more. The average family size is found to be 6 members per family. The 2001 census reported the average household size of 5.4 (CBS, 2003) for the country as a whole. Naturally, those living in joint families have higher number of family members as compared to those living in nuclear families (9.2 as opposed to 4.6). Average family size of teachers is highest in the Kathmandu Valley (7.8) in comparison to those living in other regions (Mountains, 7.0; Hills, 6.1; Tarai, 6.2).

**Table 5.2: Family size of female teachers (%)**

Number of family members	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
<=5 persons	62.9	57.5	55.2	61.2
6 to 10 persons	26.7	37.5	41.4	29.6
11 to 15 persons	8.3	0.0	3.4	7.0
>16	2.1	5.0	0.0	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average size	6.0	6.0	5.5	6.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

## 5.2 Educational Attainment of Household Members

### 5.2.1 Educational attainment of fathers

Both empirical research and anecdotal evidence tend to suggest that parents' educational attainment is associated with the schooling of children, meaning that parents who have undergone through formal schooling are more likely to educate their children than those who have not gone through that experience. In this regard, the study made an attempt to examine the level of educational attainment of fathers and mothers of female teachers. Table 5.3 presents the distribution of teachers according to the father's attainment level. A substantial proportion of the teachers' fathers are literate (38%), followed by those who have academic qualifications of SLC or more (34%). Only 15% of the teachers reported their fathers as being illiterate. Proportionally, more secondary teachers' (21%) fathers are illiterate as compared to those of the lower secondary (10%) and primary (14%) teachers.

**Educational Profile of Nepal**

	Total	Male	Female
<b>Literacy (%)</b>			
All ages (6+)	54.1	65.5	42.8
Adults (15+)	48.6	62.7	34.9
<b>Rural literacy</b>			
All ages (6+)	51.0	62.6	39.6
Adults (15+)	45.0	59.4	31.2
<b>Urban literacy</b>			
All ages (6+)	71.9	81.2	61.9
Adults (15+)	68.3	80.0	55.8
<b>Educational attainment (%)</b>			
Literate but no schooling	4.7	5.5	3.9
Primary education	22.7	25.7	19.6
Secondary education	16.5	20.1	12.9
SLC/Intermediate	7.7	10.3	5.16
Graduate/post-graduate	1.8	3.0	0.7
Level not stated	0.7	0.8	0.5

Source: CBS, 2003

Female teachers more than their male counterparts have fathers who are either literate or have some formal schooling, regardless of grade levels they teach. Proportionally, more female teachers' fathers have academic qualifications of SLC or more than do the fathers of male teachers (34% versus 13%). At all levels, more female (primary, 34%; lower secondary, 45%; and secondary, 31%) teachers' fathers have higher qualifications than do the fathers of male teachers (primary, 8%; lower secondary, 23%; and secondary, 13%). The data seems to indicate that female teachers are most likely to come from educated family background.

**Table 5.3: Educational attainment of female teachers' fathers (%)**

Level of education	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Illiterate	14.5	10.0	20.7	15.2
Literate only	38.9	30.0	34.5	37.7
Under SLC	12.8	15.0	13.8	12.7
SLC or more	33.8	45.0	31.0	34.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

### 5.2.2 Educational attainment of mothers

As can be seen in Table 5.4, some 42% of the total female teachers have mothers who are illiterate, followed by about the same proportion of the female teachers whose mothers are literate. Only a small proportion of female teachers reported their mothers having some kind of formal education. This finding is not surprising given that the female literacy rate is as low as 40% in the country as a whole. Mothers' educational attainment of female teachers can be compared with that of the male teachers. More proportion of female teachers' mothers are literate compared to the mothers of the male teachers (42% versus 35%). Proportionally, more female teachers' mothers have formal education (under SLC or SLC and above) than do the mothers of male teachers (16% versus of 9%). Again, it is safe to conclude that female teachers are likely to have mothers who are either literate or have some formal education. This association between mother's literacy and women choosing to become teachers is particularly meaningful. Literate or educated mothers will encourage their daughters to acquire formal education. Women's literacy will need to be further promoted in the country especially in those areas where female literacy is low.

**Table 5.4: Educational attainment of female teachers' mothers (%)**

Level of education	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Illiterate	42.7	37.5	31.0	41.6
Literate only	40.9	42.5	48.3	41.8
Under SLC	12.2	12.5	17.3	12.3
SLC or more	4.2	7.5	3.4	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

### 5.2.3 Educational attainment of spouses

Table 5.5 displays the distribution of female teachers based on the level of educational attainment of their spouses. At the outset, one will observe that most female teachers do have spouses who have formal education of SLC or beyond. Collectively, the proportion of such teachers constitutes 87% of the total sample. Some 10% of the total teachers in the sample reported that their spouses have formal education up to primary level. Proportionally, more secondary and lower secondary teachers' spouses do have Bachelor or Master's degrees as compared to the primary teachers. It is not surprising that most female teachers are married

to educated men. It is customary in Nepal to look for an educated man for a woman who has some formal education.

There are remarkable differences between the male and female teachers in terms of the level of educational attainment of their spouses. On the other hand, a large majority of the male teachers' spouses have education up to primary level (40%), followed by those who have formal education of SLC (24%) or below SLC (19%). Those having Intermediate level of education and Bachelor degree constitute 12% and 6% respectively. These data seem to suggest that female teachers are likely to have educated spouses, while that might not be true in the case of male teachers.

**Table 5.5 Educational attainment of female teachers' spouses (%)**

Level of education	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Up to primary level	8.6	12.5	10.3	10.4
Below SLC	3.0	0.0	0.0	2.7
SLC	14.3	2.5	0.0	11.7
IA	22.0	5.0	10.4	19.3
BA	35.4	57.5	51.7	38.3
MA	16.7	22.5	27.6	17.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>368</b>

## 5.3 Work Status of Household Members

### 5.3.1 Occupation of fathers

Table 5.6 presents the distribution of teachers according to their fathers' occupation, separately for primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers. The data illustrates that the fathers of most teachers have farming as their main occupation (58%). Some 42% of the total teachers have fathers who are engaged in service. Proportionally, more secondary teachers' fathers are engaged in service as compared to the others. Female teachers do differ from the male teachers in respect of father's occupation. More proportion of male teachers comes from farming background than do female teachers (82% versus 58%). Likewise, higher proportion of female teachers' fathers is engaged in salaried work (service) as compared to the male teachers' fathers (42% versus 17%).

**Table 5.6: Occupation of female teachers' fathers (%)**

Father's occupation	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Farming	59.8	52.6	35.7	57.8
Wage earning	0.0	2.7	0.0	0.3
Service	40.2	44.7	64.3	41.9
Business	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

### 5.3.2 Occupation of mothers

Farming and/or household work constitutes to be the predominant occupation of mothers of female teachers (Table 5.7). This is true for all levels of teachers. Those involved in salaried work and business are minimal, and those engaged in wage earning do not exist at all. Interestingly, slightly higher proportion of male teachers does have mothers engaged in farming and/or household work in contrast to those of the male teachers (98% versus 94%).

**Table 5.7: Occupation of female teachers' mothers (%)**

<b>Mother's occupation</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Farming and/or household work	94.4	94.9	92.6	94.2
Wage earning	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Service	2.8	0.0	3.7	2.5
Business	2.8	5.1	3.7	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>393</b>

### 5.3.3 Occupation of spouses

The data presented in Table 5.8 shows that a large majority of the female teachers' spouses are engaged in salaried work (73%), followed by those involved in business (15%) and farming (11%). Proportionally, more secondary teachers' spouses are in service as compared to the spouses of the primary and lower secondary teachers. Male and female teachers are found to differ in respect to the occupation of their spouses. For the most part, male teachers' spouses are found to be engaged in farming (75%), followed by those engaged in service (19%). Female teachers are thus likely to have spouses who work outside home. That is however not true for male teachers. Where females are not educated in the family, males are likely to be the principal income-earners, but where women are educated in the family, the family has a chance to benefit financially from women's direct engagement in paid employment. It is believed that if both husbands and wives work outside home, it will have some impact on their professional work. This will be examined later.

**Table 5.8: Occupation of female teachers' spouses (%)**

<b>Occupation of spouse</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Farming	11.0	11.4	12.0	11.0
Wage earning	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.5
Service	71.4	77.2	88.0	73.2
Business	16.9	11.4	0.0	15.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>365</b>

## 5.4 Schooling Environment of Teachers

The study made an attempt to understand the environment and support that was available to the male and female teachers at home for their own schooling. Basically, four questions were asked related to their schooling: What type of schools did you attend? Whether boys and girls were given equal opportunity for education in your family? Did you have to quit schooling against your interest? What were the reasons for not being able to continue education? Between father and mother, who was more supportive in your education?

### 5.4.1 Type of school attended

As expected, almost every female teacher in the sample reported having attended public schools for their schooling. Private schooling in Nepal is a recent phenomenon. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most people who attend private schools or complete their schooling from private schools either continue their education or join professions other than teaching. If they join teaching, it is likely that they will join private rather than public schools. Five percent of the total male teachers reported that they had attended private schools during their first few years of schooling.

### 5.4.2 Opportunity for schooling

Many say that discrimination against the girl child starts at home. Parents, knowingly or unknowingly, signal that boys are more important than girls. It is often the case that parents give greater care and opportunity to boys in comparison to girls. When asked if their parents had given equal opportunity to their sons and daughters for schooling, a large majority (63%) of the female teachers stated that their parents provided unequal schooling opportunity to boys and girls, suggesting that the former enjoyed greater opportunity than the latter in their families (Table 5.9). Experiences of different levels of teachers differ. More secondary teachers reported that the opportunity for schooling was equal for boys and girls in their families in comparison to the primary and lower secondary teachers. The experience of male teachers, however, is different: a higher proportion of them (59%) stating that the opportunity for schooling given to boys and girls was equal. About 41% of the male teachers admitted that their families did not provide equal opportunity to boys and girls, meaning that boys had more advantage than girls. These data are not surprising given that the society as a whole values the boys more than the girls. In cases where a decision has to be made which children to send to school, parents decide to send their son's education rather than daughter's.

**Table 5.9: Opportunity for schooling for boys and girls as experienced by female teachers (%)**

Opportunity for schooling	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Equal	36.2	40.0	51.7	37.0
Not equal	63.8	60.0	48.3	63.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>365</b>



### 5.4.3 Opportunity to continue education

The study further probed whether the respondents had to quit schooling despite their desire to continue their schooling. The data presented in Table 5.10 illustrates that many teachers in the sample (73%) had to quit their schooling despite their desire to continue. Little over one-fourth of the teachers, however, did not go through such an experience. Apparently, gender has played a major role whether or not one has to quit schooling against one's desire. Proportionally, more women (73%) had to discontinue their education as compared to the men (53%). This is true for male and female teachers across all grade levels. Fewer female teachers from Kathmandu Valley had to quit schooling (63%) as compared to their counterparts in the Mountains (76%), Hills (71%) and Tarai (73%). It could be due to the fact that more institutions of higher education are available in the Kathmandu Valley as compared to other regions. Mother's educational attainment is found to influence whether or not girls have a chance to continue their schooling. Female teachers whose mothers are either illiterate or only literate quit schooling in greater proportions as opposed to those whose mothers have some formal education. Literacy, thus, appears to have a role in the availability of potential female candidates for the teaching profession.

**Table 5.10: Opportunity to complete schooling as experienced by female teachers (%)**

<b>Opportunity to complete schooling</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Had to quit schooling	73.3	65.0	72.4	72.6
Didn't have to quit schooling	26.7	35.0	27.6	27.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

### 5.4.4 Reasons for quitting study

On being asked to mention the reasons for quitting study, the respondents provided several reasons. Reasons frequently mentioned by female teachers include the following: household responsibility, marriage, children too young to be left alone, husband's employment abroad or husband being away from home, responsibility toward the sick and old parents, responsibility toward younger brothers and sisters, lack of financial means to pay for higher education, family reluctance to send away from home, girls' education seen as a taboo, the need to take up a job due to poor economic status of the family, etc. Other reasons mentioned are: lack of colleges in the area, attraction to be employed rather than continue education, poor health, lack of educational awareness among parents or guardians, parents not supporting English education, being parentless, divorce between father and mother, being eldest in the family, etc.

### 5.4.5 Parental support for schooling

Needless to say, parental support is indispensable for children's schooling. Anecdotal evidence suggests that when both father and mother are equally supportive, then children are likely to do well in their studies. The teachers gave interesting response when asked who

between the father and mother was more supportive in their schooling. Many found this to be a difficult question to answer. The data indicates that fathers are more supportive in their daughters' schooling than the mothers (Table 5.11). Some 59% of the total female teachers reported their fathers being more supportive than their mothers in their schooling. The remaining (41%) however found mothers to be supportive in their schooling than their fathers. Interestingly, slightly higher proportion of primary and lower secondary teachers found their fathers to be more supportive than their mothers, while marginally higher proportion of secondary teachers found their mothers to be more supportive than their fathers.

### Social Profile of Nepal

<b>Religion (%)</b>	
Hindu	80.6
Buddhist	10.7
Islam	4.2
Kirat	3.6
Others	1.0
<b>Languages</b>	
Number of languages spoken as mother tongues	92
Population speaking Nepali as mother tongue (%)	48.9
Nepali speaking population (%)	80.0
<b>Ethnic composition</b>	
Number of ethnic/caste groups	103
Hill Hindu groups (including Dalit)	9
Tarai Hindu groups	43
Newar	1
Janjati (both Hill and Tarai)	41
Muslim	2
Others	4
<b>Average at first marriage (years)</b>	
Male	22.9
Female	19.5
<b>Life expectancy at birth (years)</b>	
Male	60.4
Male	60.1
Female	60.7

Source: CBS, 2003

When the responses of female teachers are compared with those of the male teachers, it becomes visible that more male teachers found their mothers to be more supportive than their fathers, while female teachers perceived their fathers (67%) to be more supportive than their mothers (33%). The data is consistent to suggest that fathers are more supportive in girls' schooling, while mothers are more supportive in the schooling of boys. During interviews female teachers reported that their mothers frequently asked them to lend support in household chores, not their brothers. If something had to be done, it was most likely that the girls will be called than the boys. One might thus conclude that the promotion of girls' education will require full cooperation and support of their mothers.

**Table 5.11: Parental support in the schooling of female teachers (%)**

Parental support	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Father more supportive than mother	59.6	57.5	55.2	59.1
Mother more supportive than father	40.4	42.5	44.8	40.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

**5.4.6 Sources of income**

It is often difficult to obtain accurate income-related data from any group of respondents because there is a general tendency among people to under-report their income and over-report their expenditure. In view of this difficulty, it was decided that teachers' income level would be examined by asking an indirect question. Therefore, the study asked the teachers how far the income from teaching contributed to their living. Data obtained from the teachers are presented in Table 5.12. The present sample of teachers is divided in terms of the status of income: 37% living on income coming mainly from teaching, 26% living on income coming from teaching partially, and 37% living on income coming mainly from other sources. The distribution of primary and lower secondary teachers is more or less even across the three sources, that is not the case with the secondary teachers. Proportionally, more lower secondary teachers live on incomes mainly coming from teaching as compared to the others. Similarly, more secondary teachers rely on sources other than teaching.

**Economic profile**

<b>Dependency ratio</b>	89
Urban	63
Rural	95
Economically active population (%)	63.4
Usually economically active population (%)	58.2
GDP per capita (USD)	269

Source: CBS, 2003.

There are slight differences in the responses obtained from male and female teachers. Data suggests that more male teachers live on income coming from teaching as compared to the female teachers (49% versus 37%). Further, more female teachers do have more than one source of income compared to the male teachers (37% versus 25%). This is natural in view of the fact that most female teachers have spouses who are engaged in salaried work.

**Table 5.12: Source of income of female teachers (%)**

Source of income	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Living on income mainly from teaching	36.6	29.4	44.8	36.7
Living on income from teaching partially	27.5	29.4	10.4	26.0
Living on income mainly from other sources	35.9	41.2	44.8	37.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>357</b>

## 5.5 Decision Making

### 5.5.1 Role in decision-making

Traditionally, men and/or elderly people were pre-dominant in decision-making in the family. While more women are entering or seeking to enter into the world of work in recent years, it can be expected that traditional practices of decision-making will eventually be replaced by newer forms of decision-making where decisions are made collectively rather than by one individual of the family. Of particular interest to this study was whether female teachers have control over their own income. In response to our query ‘who decides how the money you earn is to be spent,’ about 55% revealed that they themselves, not others, decide how the money is to be spent (Table 5.13). It suggests that in a majority of cases those who earn do have control over their own income. However, it should be noted that a substantial proportion of female teachers (45%) do not have control over their own incomes. Teachers teaching upper grade levels do seem to have greater control in decision-making as compared to their counterparts teaching lower grades. Proportionally, large proportion of secondary female teachers (69%) reported having a say in decision-making, corresponding figures for lower secondary and primary teachers being 45% and 55% respectively.

Some differences are observed between the responses obtained from male and female teachers. As expected, male teachers tend to have greater control over their income as compared to their female colleagues (73% versus 55%).

**Table 5.13: Female teachers’ role in decision-making (%)**

Role in decision-making	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
I decide	54.6	45.0	69.0	54.6
Somebody else decides	45.4	55.0	31.0	45.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

## 5.6 Division of Labor

Studies conducted both in Nepal and elsewhere have documented that women must bear heavy work burden as compared to men. Normally, women’s work is confined to household chores. If they choose to work outside the home, they must be prepared to assume the ‘double’ responsibility of home and their work. It is more or less understood that women will do the household chores of cooking, cleaning, providing care to young children and elderly people, fetching water and firewood, etc. As in most households worldwide in both developed and developing countries, reproduction is not regarded as work and household work is not considered productive. Men normally remain away from such household chores. The engendered division of labor in Nepalese households has been adequately documented and analyzed. Whether this is true for school teachers? This was an area of interest to the study. This section presents and analyzes data relating to the division of labor that operates in the households of female teachers in the sample.

### 5.6.1 Hours spent in household chores

Table 5.14 displays the time female teachers spend in performing household chores on a daily basis. The data illustrates that teachers remain engaged in household tasks outside the school hours. The number of hours however varies. Some 26% of the total teachers have to spend between 1 to 4 hours in household tasks, while a large majority of the teachers (63%) must spend between 5 to 8 hours everyday. Those who must work for over 8 hours everyday are not many in the sample (11%). Proportionally, more secondary teachers (39%) and lower secondary teachers (37%) work few hours (1 to 4 hours) as compared to their primary counterparts (23%). The average number of hours spent by different levels of teachers slightly varies: primary, 6.3; lower secondary, 5.3; and secondary, 4.9. One study has reported that the work burden of women in Nepal (16 hours per day) is much higher than the global average (UNDP, 2004).

Further examination of the same data reveals that the household burden of women is much heavier than that of men. A much larger proportion of female teachers (74%) remain engaged in household work for longer hours (5 hours and more) as compared to the male teachers (27%). The number of hours spent by male and female teachers averages 5 hours per day. Again, the gendered division of labor is evident in the data. The data is loud and clear: men's time involvement in household work is far less (4 hours) than that of their women colleagues (6 hours). This would mean many things.

**Table 5.14: Hours spent in household chores by female teachers (%)**

Hours spent	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
1 to 4 hours	22.6	37.5	39.3	26.5
5 to 8 hours	64.7	57.5	60.7	62.7
9 and more	12.7	5.0	0.0	10.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average hours	6.3	5.3	4.9	6.1
<b>N</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>399</b>

### 5.6.2 Cooking food

In Nepal, cooking is the primary responsibility of women or female members of the family. Normally, male members of the household do not usually help in preparing food, which is a time consuming act. The female teachers in the sample were specifically asked to mention who in their households had the responsibility of cooking food. Data obtained from them is presented in Table 5.15. The data clearly illustrates that cooking food is mainly a woman's responsibility. An overwhelming majority of the female teachers (87%), regardless of their grade levels, stated that preparing food was their day-to-day responsibility. Only in a few cases, this responsibility is shared with other family members. The same question was also asked to the male teachers. Of the total male teachers who answered this question (N=323), a large majority (71%) said that this responsibility went to their spouses. Male teachers in no case were found to have been taken the responsibility for cooking. These data suggest that cooking food is essentially a woman's function whether employed or unemployed. It needs to be examined how it will affect female teachers' performance in schools.

**Table 5.15: Person responsible for cooking food in female teachers' families (%)**

Person responsible for cooking in the family	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Myself	88.4	87.5	82.1	87.2
My husband (spouse)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other family members	9.8	10.0	17.9	10.9
Jointly	1.8	2.5	0.0	1.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>413</b>

### 5.6.3 Childcare

What arrangements are in place for looking after younger children while the female teachers are at work? In a majority of cases, female teachers or their husbands' parents are found to provide childcare while they are at work (57%). Proportionally, more secondary (82%) female teachers relied on their parents compared to their primary (56%) or lower secondary colleagues (5.16). One-fifth of the female teachers have not had any permanent arrangements to look after their children. That meant that they themselves had to take care of children while they are at work. In a few cases, other family members or relatives provided childcare (17%).

No surprise that most male teachers (58%) mentioned that their young children are looked after by their own spouses. In the case of female teachers, spouses were not of any help. A very small proportion of the female teachers reported having been childcare provided by their spouses. Since the spouses of many female teachers are reported to be employed in salaried work, these spouses could not provide childcare while their wives (female teachers) were at work. Nearly one-third of the total male teachers also said that their parents were the providers of childcare.

**Table 5.16: Person responsible for looking after young children in female teachers' families (%)**

Person responsible for childcare	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Parents	55.9	48.2	81.8	57.2
My husband (spouse)	4.6	3.7	4.5	4.5
Other family members/relatives	17.5	22.2	4.5	16.9
Neighbors	1.1	3.7	0.0	1.3
None	20.9	22.2	9.2	20.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>313</b>

#### 5.6.4 Availability of time for preparing teaching

Data presented in the preceding paragraphs all point to the fact that female teachers must carry the burden of two full-time jobs: ‘teaching’ and ‘household work.’ In order to confirm this, the survey asked them if there was any time left with them for preparing teaching at home (Table 5.17). Overall, teachers seemed firm to say that there was no time available for preparation (55%), although little less than half of the teachers said the opposite (45%). Proportionally, more secondary grade teachers mentioned in the positive than did primary and lower secondary teachers. Again, gender appears to be an influencing factor. Fewer women admitted having time for preparation at home as compared to men (45% versus 61%). This pattern holds across all grade levels. Excerpts from in-depth interviews and focus groups discussions also reveal that time is a scarce resource, particularly for female teachers.

**Table 5.17: Availability of time for preparing teaching for female teachers (%)**

Time availability for preparation	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Available	43.9	45.0	55.2	45.0
Not available	56.1	55.0	44.8	55.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

#### 5.6.5 Household roles and responsibilities of teachers

During in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, both male and female teachers were asked to list the activities they were involved outside the school hours, especially in the morning or evening. Responses obtained from the teachers are consistent with our expectations. Data suggests that the male and female teachers live in two entirely different worlds.

The activities frequently mentioned by male and female teachers are shown separately in the boxes below.

- Female Roles and Responsibilities**
- Cooking food
  - Washing dishes
  - Ironing clothes
  - Cleaning house
  - Fetching water, fuel wood, or fodder
  - Caring young children
  - Taking care of elderly people or sick family members
  - Working on the farm or kitchen garden
  - Shopping
  - Tending animals
  - Attending college
  - Preparing for university and/or college exam

- Male Roles and Responsibilities**
- Nothing
  - Marketing and buying food
  - Visiting friends, relatives and others
  - Attending local meetings
  - Working on the farm or kitchen garden
  - Tending animals
  - Private tutoring
  - Attending college
  - Preparing for university and/or college exam
  - Doing social work

It is obvious from the data shown in above boxes that the division of work between male and female is typically traditional. Much of what roles and responsibilities male and female teachers must perform at home is socially defined. One might notice that males are frequently engaged in activities that are carried out outside home, while female have responsibilities that are performed inside the house. Apparently, age-old practices do exist even today and there has not been much change in the traditionally defined roles and responsibilities for men and women. It is striking to note that men, in reply to our question of “what do you do before and after school hours,” mentioned that they do ‘nothing.’ This response did not appear among female teachers.



## CHAPTER VI

# ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHING PROFESSION

This chapter presents and analyzes data relating to female teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession. The chapter begins with the exploration of reasons as to what led female teachers to choose teaching as a career. It was assumed that male and female teachers have different reasons for choosing teaching as a career. To test this assumption, female teachers' responses have been compared with those of the male teachers. Secondly, their attitudes toward teaching have been examined using a number of indicators. Finally, female teachers' perceptions about the status of teaching profession are analyzed.

## 6.1 Reasons for deciding to become a teacher

### 6.1.1 Reasons for female teachers to become a teacher

Reasons for joining teaching are numerous. When asked to state their reasons for deciding to become a teacher, 416 female teachers gave 1,016 responses. On average, one respondent gave a little more than two responses (2.4). These 1,016 responses were grouped into 24 categories as shown in Table 6.1. As can be seen in the table, many joined teaching as a way of making living. For 30% of the total respondents (12% of the total responses), joining teaching was an economic compulsion. On the other hand, nearly 20% of the respondents (8% of the total responses) stated that teaching gave them a forum for doing social service. It is often said that many come to teaching when there are no options for them elsewhere. Some 18% of the female teachers happened to become teachers after they were rejected in their effort to find jobs outside the teaching line.

Long holidays, need to stay close to home, job security, opportunity that teaching provided to run family life, short working hours were also equally important for many female teachers when they decided to become teachers. A number of reasons such as 'desire to work with children,' 'value of education in the community,' 'respect for the teaching profession,' 'desire to share knowledge,' 'interest in the subject matter,' 'higher social status,' 'influence of former teacher,' 'opportunity for self-advancement' also encouraged some women to choose teaching as a profession. A few women chose teaching because their parents wanted them to become teachers. Some believed that teaching was an 'easy job', which became a reason for choosing to become a teacher. Still others chose teaching because of less hardship involved in job search (easy to find) as compared to other jobs. Some women believed that they had natural inclination to become a teacher. In similar fashion, some entered into teaching for reasons of their inherent desire to remain in an academic environment. A negligible number of women were attracted to teaching because they believed that this profession offered a sense of freedom and independence.

**Table 6.1: Reasons for deciding to become a teacher as stated by female teachers (N=416)**

Reasons	No of responses	% of responses	% of cases
1. Way of earning living	125	12.4	30.0
2. Social service	82	8.1	19.7
3. Failure to get another job	74	7.3	17.8
4. Long vacations	72	7.1	17.3
5. Need to stay close to home	71	7.0	17.1
6. Safe employment (job security)	70	6.9	16.8
7. Ideal profession for women	65	6.4	15.6
8. Short working hours	53	5.2	12.7
9. Value of education in the community	48	4.7	11.5
10. Desire to work with children	47	4.6	11.3
11. Respect for teaching profession	36	3.5	8.6
12. Influence of a former teacher	35	3.4	8.4
13. Easy job	35	3.4	8.4
14. Desire to share knowledge	33	3.2	7.9
15. Interest in the subject matter	32	3.1	7.7
16. Higher social status	32	3.1	7.7
17. Father's advice to join teaching	26	2.6	6.2
18. Easy to find	20	2.0	4.8
19. Opportunity for self-advancement	16	1.6	3.8
20. Mother's advice to join teaching	15	1.5	3.6
21. Attractive salary and benefits	13	1.3	3.1
22. Born to be a teacher	7	0.7	1.7
23. Desire to work in an academic environment	7	0.7	1.7
24. Autonomy and independence	2	0.2	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

A second level of analysis was carried out with a view to identify major motivations and/or reasons for the female teachers to enter into teaching. This level of analysis involved further grouping of individual responses into major categories by combining similar responses around key themes. The thematic classification of responses yielded four principal motivations and/or reasons for joining teaching (Table 6.2). As can be seen in the table, majority of the female teachers joined teaching for material and/or personal gains (53%). At the other extreme, there were teachers who joined teaching for social reasons. The feeling of social service and the value of education in the community prompted them to take up teaching. Almost one fourth of the total respondents had a purposeful entry into teaching, what is termed as 'entry by design.' They saw in teaching certain virtues which inspired them to become a teacher. On the other hand, for some teachers entry into teaching was just an accident (an unintended happening).

**Table 6.2: Principal reasons for becoming a teacher**

<b>Principal motivation</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage of responses</b>
Entry by accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to get another job</li> <li>• Easy to find</li> </ul>	94	9.2
Entry by design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to work with children</li> <li>• Respect for teaching profession</li> <li>• Influence of a former teacher</li> <li>• Desire to share knowledge</li> <li>• Interest in the subject matter</li> <li>• Opportunity for self-advancement</li> <li>• Born to be a teacher</li> <li>• Desire to work in an academic environment</li> <li>• Autonomy and independence</li> <li>• Father’s advice to join teaching</li> <li>• Mother’s advice to join teaching</li> </ul>	256	25.2
Entry for material or other personal gains/reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Way of earning living</li> <li>• Ideal for women</li> <li>• Easy job</li> <li>• Safe employment</li> <li>• Need to stay close to home</li> <li>• Long vacations</li> <li>• Short working hours</li> <li>• Higher social status</li> <li>• Attractive salary and benefits</li> </ul>	536	52.8
Entry for a social cause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social service</li> <li>• Value of education in the community</li> </ul>	130	12.8

**6.1.2 Differences between men and female teachers**

Did male and female teachers choose teaching for the same reasons? In answering this question, a comparison was made between male and female teachers’ responses. The three reasons cited by most male respondents are: (a) way of earning living, (b) failure to get another job, and (c) as a way of doing social service (Table 6.3). These three reasons were also frequently mentioned by most female teachers. However, there are some differences between male and female teachers in their choice of teaching as a profession. More male teachers joined teaching after their bid to find jobs other than teaching failed as compared to the female teachers (23% versus 18%). Long vacations, safe employment, ideal profession for the sex, short working hours were more frequently mentioned by the female teachers than the male teachers. On the other hand, interest in the subject matter and desire to work in an academic environment were important to male teachers compared to the female teachers. The need to stay close to home and the value of education in the community was equally emphasized by both male and female teachers. But, more female teachers mentioned the

need to stay close to home as one of their reasons for joining teaching than did men (17% versus 11%). Similarly, the desire to work with children was more prominent among women than among men (11.3% versus 4.3%).

**Table 6.3: Reasons for joining teaching for male teachers (N = 316)**

Reasons	No of responses	Percentage of responses	Percentage of cases
1. Way of earning living	93	18.2	28.7
2. Social service	46	9.0	14.2
3. Failure to get another job	75	14.6	23.1
4. Need to stay close to home	35	6.8	10.8
5. Interest in the subject matter	35	6.8	10.8
6. Value of education in the community	28	5.5	8.6
7. Desire to work in an academic environment	27	5.3	8.3
8. Influence of a former teacher	21	4.1	6.5
9. Father's advice to join teaching	19	3.7	5.9
10. Easy to find	19	3.7	5.9
11. Desire to share knowledge	16	3.1	4.9
12. Higher social status	16	3.1	4.9
13. Desire to work with children	14	2.7	4.3
14. Easy job	14	2.7	4.3
15. Opportunity for self-advancement	13	2.5	4.0
16. Respect for teaching profession	10	2.0	3.1
17. Born to be a teacher	8	1.6	2.5
18. Autonomy and independence	7	1.4	2.2
19. Short working hours	6	1.2	1.8
20. Long vacations	6	1.2	1.8
21. Attractive salary and benefits	3	0.6	0.9
22. Safe employment (job security)	1	0.2	0.3
23. Ideal profession for women	0	0.0	0.0
24. Mother's advice to join teaching	0	0.0	0.0
	<b>512</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Male teachers' responses were also subjected to thematic analysis for comparing their responses with those of the female teachers (Table 6.4). Some differences are discernible in the male and female teachers' responses. Firstly, more male teachers happened to be in teaching accidentally than the female teachers (18% versus 9%). Secondly, more female teachers seemed to be motivated by a desire to achieve material or other personal gains as compared to the male teachers. Thirdly, more male teachers had purposeful entry into teaching. Entry by design was a reality for a higher proportion of male teachers as compared to the female teachers. Finally, male and female teachers in almost equal proportions chose teaching for a social cause.

**Table 6.4: Motivation for joining teaching for male and female teachers**

Principal motivation	Percentage of male teachers	Percentage of female teachers
Entry by accident	18.3	9.2
Entry by design	33.2	25.2
Entry for material or other personal gains	34.1	52.8
Entry for a social cause	14.4	12.8

## 6.2 Teacher Attitudes toward Teaching Profession

It was obvious from the data presented in the preceding section that the respondents in the sample chose teaching for various reasons. It would be of interest to find out whether female teachers have positive attitudes toward teaching. In this regard, attempts have been made to assess teachers' attitudes toward teaching by asking them multiple questions, even cross-questions.

### 6.2.1 Plan to go into teaching while studying

One way of knowing whether people are positive toward a career is to find out whether they considered joining the career during their formative stage, i.e., while they were studying. For the purpose of the present study, if someone considered becoming a teacher while still a student, it would mean that the person has positive attitude toward teaching. Some research tends to suggest that great teachers have the desire to become teachers from an early age. It is not to suggest that people's views or opinions remain unchanged forever. In response to our question "Did you consider to go into teaching while still in school," only one third of the total number of female teachers answered in the positive, while the majority of them replied in the negative (Table 6.5). It would mean that teaching is a career which many do not consider during their student life. It is normal for people to be attracted to high profile careers such as pilot, doctor, engineer, or scientist.

The data reveals that those who teach lower secondary or secondary grades considered becoming a teacher in higher proportions as compared to the primary grade teachers. Slightly higher proportions of teachers teaching in schools located in the Mountains (34%) and Hills (35%) thought of becoming a teacher during their student years as compared to those who are teaching in schools located in the Tarai (30%) and Kathmandu Valley (30%). These variations are marginal.

**Table 6.5: Early consideration by female teachers to go into teaching (%)**

Plan to go into teaching	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	30.9	37.5	41.4	32.3
No	69.1	62.5	58.6	67.7
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>406</b>

### 6.2.2 Source of decision to join teaching profession

Whose decision was it when the female teachers decided to join teaching? Was it their own decision or someone else's? Those who act on the basis of their own decision are probably more committed toward their decision than those who act on somebody else's decision. With this assumption, the teachers were requested to state who actually had prompted them to take the decision of joining teaching. The findings are displayed in Table 6.6. As can be seen in the table, three sources of decision have been identified: the person himself or herself, family members, and others (teachers, friends, relatives, community members). For the most part, family members (61%) are reported to have prompted the female teachers to join teaching. Those who acted on the basis of their own decision are also substantial (34%). The role of other actors is found to be minimal. Further examination of the data reveals that more proportion of secondary school female teachers acted on the basis of their own decision in comparison to their counterparts teaching at lower levels.

**Table 6.6: Source of decision to join teaching as stated by female teachers (%)**

Source of decision	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
It was my own decision.	32.6	35.0	44.8	33.7
Family members' promoted me to consider joining teaching.	63.2	60.0	37.9	61.1
Others prompted me to consider joining teaching.	4.2	5.0	17.3	5.2
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>406</b>

### 6.2.3 Regret becoming a teacher

A teacher who is committed to and has positive attitudes toward the teaching profession would not regret becoming a teacher. With this assumption in mind, teachers were asked if they ever regretted becoming a teacher. An overwhelming majority of the female teachers (94%) in the present sample stated to have no regrets becoming a teacher (Table 6.7). A small portion of the teachers however admitted being regretful. It seems that there is no immediate threat to the teaching profession as the overwhelming majority of the teachers do not have any regrets. Who are then the ones to regret becoming a teacher? Those who regret the most are the secondary grade teachers, while those regretting the least are the primary school teachers. Interestingly, teachers teaching in urban areas regretted about becoming teachers in higher proportions as compared to those who are teaching in rural areas (8% versus 4%). Even more interesting is the fact that those who have worked longer are the ones to regret the most. For instance, beginners (up to 5 years of teaching experience) were found not to regret as opposed to the veterans (more than 20 years of experience) in lesser proportions (3% versus 10%).

**Table 6.7: Regret becoming a teacher as stated by females (%)**

Feeling of regret	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Regretful	5.4	7.7	13.8	6.2
Not regretful	94.6	92.3	86.2	93.8
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>400</b>

#### 6.2.4 Ever thought of quitting the teaching job

Huberman (1993) argues that people do ask questions of meaning and purpose at different moments of their teaching career. It is natural for people to ask whether they are in the right career or opt for something else. The survey asked the female teachers whether they ever thought of quitting the teaching profession at any stage of their career. An overwhelming majority of the teachers firmly stated that this moment never occurred in their career, while some 14% of them underwent through such feeling (Table 6.8). This thought of quitting teaching occurred among primary teachers in lesser proportions as compared to the lower secondary or secondary grade teachers. Proportionally, more teachers teaching in the Mountains (12%), Hills (16%) and the Tarai (15%) gave ‘yes’ response as compared to those teaching in the Kathmandu Valley (4%).

**Table 6.8: Ever thought of quitting teaching as experienced by female teachers (%)**

Feeling of quitting teaching	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	12.8	21.6	17.2	14.0
No	87.2	78.4	82.8	86.0
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>394</b>

On being asked to give reasons for their desire to quit teaching, the female teachers provided numerous responses. The question generated 9 different responses (Table 6.9). Most teachers mentioned that ‘failure to obtain permanent status in teaching’ and ‘failure to obtain transfer in the desired school’ were the two reasons that prompted them to consider quitting teaching. Despite their qualifications, some teachers were forced to work at a lower level. Teachers in Nepal are not paid according to their academic qualifications. The basis of payment is one’s level of appointment. For instance, the qualification required of a primary teacher is SLC (Grade 10 Pass). If a person has a qualification of the Master’s degree but is appointed as a primary teacher, the person will be paid the salary and benefits associated with that appointment. There were cases where teachers thought of quitting teaching because they were appointed at a level lower than they deserved on the basis of qualifications.

**Table 6.9: Reasons why female teachers would like to quit teaching (%)**

Reason	Percentage
1. Failure to obtain permanent status in teaching despite several efforts	12.0
2. Failure to obtain transfer in the desired school from the current school	11.0
3. Appointment at a lower level	10.0
4. School too far from one's residence	8.0
5. Failure to upgrade one's academic and professional qualifications	7.0
6. Continued poor performance of students in examinations despite hard work	6.0
7. Lack of community support and respect	5.0
8. Unfair treatment from authorities in matters of career advancement	3.0
9. Unacceptably low salary and allowance	3.0

### 6.2.5 Plan for remaining in teaching

In an attempt to develop further understanding about female teachers' attitudes toward teaching profession, the survey asked the teachers how long they planned to remain in teaching. Teachers were given four options: (a) leaving soon, (b) undecided at this time, (c) stay until something better, career wise, comes up, and (d) stay until retirement stage. As can be seen in Table 6.10, a slight majority of the teachers in the sample (53%) plan to stay in the current career until retirement. The rest of them are either undecided (33%) or plan to stay in teaching until something better, career wise, turns up. Those planning to leave soon virtually do not exist. It may be a good sign; however, it is certainly not good news to any profession if a significant proportion of the job holders (47%) do not commit to remain in the profession until retirement. It is to be noted that proportionally more secondary teachers (69%) are prepared to stay in their current jobs until the retirement stage in comparison to their primary (53%) and lower secondary colleagues (46%). It is probably logical for people to look for better opportunities. Currently, school teachers in Nepal are going through difficult circumstances due to the situation of armed conflict. There are reports that teachers are often subjected to torture, extortion and humiliation, which may have caused uncertainty and anxieties on the part of teachers.

Female teachers' career plans as regards whether to remain or not to remain in teaching until retirement is not uniform across the different ecological regions. Proportionally, more teachers from Tarai (68%) plan to remain in teaching until retirement as compared to their colleagues from Kathmandu Valley (48%), Mountains (46%), and Hills (43%).

**Table 6.10: Female teachers' plan to remain in teaching (%)**

Future plan	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Leaving soon	0.3	0.0	6.9	0.7
Undecided at this time	33.8	33.3	24.1	33.2
Stay until something better comes up	13.1	20.5	0.0	12.8
Stay until retirement	52.8	46.2	69.0	53.3
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>405</b>



### 6.2.6 Re-selection of teaching as a profession

A question was asked to the teachers if they would choose the teaching profession if they had the opportunity of choosing their profession all over again. The assumption behind this question was that those who are committed to and/or have positive attitudes toward teaching would re-select teaching as a profession if such an opportunity was ever made available to them. It was also assumed that those who are frustrated and burned out would refuse to re-select teaching as a profession. The question elicited a mixed response from the teachers. Of the total female teachers who answered this question, a slight majority (54%) declined to choose teaching as a profession again, but the remaining 46% of them remained firm in their choice of teaching as a profession (Table 6.11). This is consistent with the data presented earlier where the female teachers were firm to say that they do not regret becoming a teacher.

Lower secondary (55%) and secondary (52%) teachers in higher proportions showed greater interest in teaching compared to their primary counterparts (45%) by saying that teaching would be their choice once again. Teachers working in rural areas (59%) expressed their greater faith in teaching as compared to their counterparts working in urban areas (49%). Likewise, some differences are noted in teachers' views in terms of ecological region. Teachers working in the Kathmandu Valley (59%) were more likely to re-select teaching compared to those working in Mountains (40%), Hills (47%) and Tarai (49%).

**Table 6.11: Reselection of teaching as a profession by female teachers (%)**

<b>Reselection of teaching</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	44.8	55.0	51.7	46.3
No	55.2	45.0	48.3	53.7
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>406</b>

### 6.2.7 Choice of teaching profession for sons and daughters

Teachers were asked if they would like to see their children also become teachers. There was one explicit assumption behind the question: teachers who respect teaching profession would not have any objection if their sons and daughters choose to become a teacher. Table 6.12 summarizes the findings. To the above question, some 34% of the teachers answered in the positive and 66% answered in the negative in the case of sons. In the case of daughters, however, some 56% of the teachers answered in the positive, while the rest did so in the negative. The data suggests that most teachers (66%) would have objection if their sons chose teaching, but fewer teachers (44%) would have objection if their daughters did the same. This is true for all levels of teachers. Clearly, teaching is perceived to be more appropriate for girls than for boys. It can be seen as good news as well as bad news. It is good news because teaching is considered to be appropriate for females. It is bad news in the sense that females are perceived appropriate for certain positions and not for others. There is a risk that teaching might turn into a feminized profession, a phenomenon occurring widely in many industrialized countries.

**Table 6.12: Choice of teaching profession for sons and daughters by female teachers (%)**

Choice of teaching	Primary		Lower Secondary		Secondary		Total	
	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters	Sons	Daughters
Yes	35.9	57.8	25.0	53.8	27.6	42.9	34.2	56.3
No	64.1	42.2	75.0	46.2	72.4	57.1	65.8	43.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>389</b>

### 6.3 Perceived Change in the Status of Teachers and Teaching

How do teachers see the social status of the teaching profession changing? How do they see their economic condition changing? And, how do they see their intellectual ability changing? Teachers' attitudes toward teaching will depend upon how they judge themselves in terms of the above three questions. This section presents and analyzes data obtained from the female teachers on the above issues.

#### 6.3.1 Perceived status of teaching in the society

Some studies have reported that the status of teaching in the society has declined in recent years compared to the past. How do teachers themselves view this situation? The study surveyed female teachers' views on the status of teaching in society. They were asked to choose one response out of the possible four: 'declined badly,' 'declined slightly,' 'remains the same,' and 'increased.' The results are displayed in Table 6.13. Although in a majority of cases, teachers mentioned that the status of teaching remains the same (58%), none of the teachers accepted the view that the status of teaching has increased today as compared to the past. Some one-fourth of the total teachers see the status of teaching declining badly as compared to the past. The percentage of teachers who believe that the status has declined only slightly is also not small (16%). Different categories of teachers have different views. Proportionally, more primary teachers find the status of teaching unchanged (60%) as compared to their colleagues teaching in upper levels. If many teachers see the status of teaching profession declining or remaining the same, it can have a negative impact on the profession.

**Table 6.13: Social status of teaching in the society as perceived by female teachers (%)**

Social status of teaching	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Declined badly	23.3	37.8	31.0	25.2
Declined slightly	16.3	10.8	24.2	16.4
Remains the same	60.4	51.4	44.8	58.4
Has increased	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>397</b>

Cross-tabulation of the above data in terms of location (rural versus urban) shows interesting pattern: more proportion of teachers working in urban areas (47%) find the social status of teaching either declined badly or declined slightly as compared to their rural counterparts (36%). It is natural because it is in urban areas where the teaching profession must compete with other professions. In rural areas, however, the profession is still respected.

Teachers felt that a number of factors are responsible for the decline in the social status of teaching profession. Some of them are described below.

Heavy teacher involvement in politics. Many said teachers themselves, not others, are to be blamed for the decline in the status of teaching profession. Following the restoration of democracy in 1990 and even earlier, teachers have been used as their 'workers' by the political parties for political gains. The public perhaps wanted teachers to be in schools and classrooms, but teachers took to streets to ensure their professional rights and achieve political goals often defined by the parties.

Extreme privatization of education. The public sector monopoly in the delivery of education has more or less ended after 1990. The presence of the private sector has remained heavy in recent years. The schools operating under the private sector gave a choice to the many parents who were not happy with the performance of the public schools. Many parents, especially those who could afford expensive private education pulled away their wards from the public schools. This led to the decline in the status of the teaching profession.

Emergence of other professions. Teaching can be considered one of the oldest professions. In recent years, with the increasing role of the private sector in all aspects of life and the growing use of technology, new professions have emerged. These new professions pay more in comparison to teaching. Teaching has now become the destination of those who cannot grab other professions.

Lack of teacher accountability and motivation. Public school teachers are notorious for lack of motivation, low commitment, and poor accountability. Teachers' absenteeism saw record high in the last ten years or so.

Many teachers frequently mentioned 'lack of peace and security in the country,' 'lack of transparency in teacher recruitment and promotion,' 'indiscriminate entry of unqualified people into teaching,' 'frequent change in educational policy,' 'erosion of moral and ethical values in the society,' 'continued poor performance of students in SLC,' 'lack of transparent reward and punishment system in the profession,' 'lack of systematic government efforts to enhance the social status of teaching,' 'inconsistent and unstable educational policy,' and 'lack of social recognition of the value of education' as the major factors contributing to the decline in the status of teaching in the society. Teachers seem very critical of their own actions and behaviors. While they find the fault somewhere else in the decline of social status of teaching, they are also prepared to take the blame for the decline of the status of their work, but only partially. These responses call for urgent action to uplift the status of teaching profession in society.

### 6.3.2 Perceived change in the economic condition

We asked the teachers to rate on a four-point scale whether their economic condition had declined badly, declined slightly, unchanged or improved since they joined the teaching profession (Table 6.14).

**Table 6.14: Change in the economic condition as perceived by female teachers (%)**

<b>Change in economic condition of teachers</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Declined badly	5.8	8.1	3.5	5.8
Declined slightly	36.0	48.7	51.7	38.4
Remains the same	58.2	43.2	44.8	55.8
Has increased	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>396</b>

For the most part, teachers' economic condition remains the same (56%). None of the teachers admitted that their economic condition had improved since joining the teaching profession. A substantial proportion of teachers (44%) disclosed that the condition had either declined slightly or badly. Teachers supposedly who earn more (lower secondary and secondary level teachers) find their economic situation further deteriorated compared to those who earn less (primary teachers). Proportionally, many primary teachers define their situation as remaining unchanged, while many lower secondary or secondary teachers define it to have declined, whether badly or only slightly. It is not immediately explicable why teachers' opinions differ on this aspect. Again, none of the teachers admits having his or her economic situation improved as a result of joining teaching. However, field observations revealed that in most villages teachers do enjoy better economic status as compared to the local people.

### 6.3.3. Change in the intellectual ability

It is a truism that the teaching profession allows one to grow mentally, intellectually and academically. Whether this assumption holds true for the female teachers in the sample was a matter of inquiry in this study. On being asked if they felt any change in their intellectual ability since they joined teaching, the respondents gave mixed response (Table 6.15). A large majority of the respondents (81%) does not support the view that teaching provides an opportunity for intellectual and academic growth. According to them, their intellectual ability neither declined nor improved since joining teaching. They stated that their intellectual ability remains more or less the same. A small fraction of the respondents however feels that there has been some growth in their intellectual ability due to their involvement in the teaching profession. On the other hand, a few others (13%) hold the view that either their intellectual ability has declined (badly or slightly).

There are noticeable differences between secondary grade teachers and the others. Proportionally, more secondary teachers find their intellectual ability improved in

comparison to primary and lower secondary teachers. It could be due to the fact that teaching secondary grades poses a particular challenge and one has to update with the recent developments in the field. This is probably not true in lower grades. Further examination of the above data in terms of ecological zone, location and gender reveals interesting findings. First, the teachers working in the Kathmandu Valley (15%) were firm to say that their intellectual ability has grown due to their involvement in teaching in comparison to those teaching in other parts of the country (Hills, 6%; Mountains, 7%; and Tarai, 2%). Secondly, teachers working in urban areas have higher chances of keeping themselves abreast of the academic knowledge as compared to those who work in rural areas (9% versus 2%). Thirdly, more male teachers find themselves in a state of intellectual decline as compared to their female counterparts (22% versus 13%).

**Table 6.15: Change in the intellectual ability of female teachers after joining teaching (%)**

<b>Change in intellectual ability</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Declined badly	3.0	7.5	0.0	3.2
Declined slightly	11.0	2.5	3.4	9.6
Remains the same	83.6	80.0	55.2	81.3
Improved	2.4	10.0	41.4	5.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>406</b>

A number of remarks made by teachers during interviews make the point that there is little opportunity to grow intellectually due to the routine nature of teaching. Here are some excerpts from their interviews:

‘I feel empty now. A primary teacher is basically a care giver. I do babysitting. How can I teach a crowd of more than 80 children in one room?’

‘There is no pressure that I should learn new things. After all, I am a primary school teacher.’

‘When you are expected to teach the same thing for your life time, what do you learn?’

Some female teachers who teach in secondary grades had a different story altogether. Here is one example:

‘The curriculum is so tough, I can hardly teach without preparing myself. It (the curriculum) has created a lot of pressure. I need to learn something before I can teach youngsters.’

## **6.4 Status of teaching in the community**

During the focus group discussions with parents and community members, we also inquired about the status of teaching profession in the community. Many of the FGD participants expressed their dissatisfaction with public school teachers. People do not have positive opinions about teachers, regardless of gender. Interestingly, however, teaching is still a respected profession. Many regard it as social service. Normally, there is a tendency of classifying work into two groups: 'prestige-reducing' and 'prestige-enhancing.' Many define teaching as a prestige-enhancing job. Female employment is no longer a low status activity. Indeed, many in rural communities see female employment in teaching as the mark of a family's prestige. Some community members whose daughters are currently employed as teachers are very proud of them. On the whole, people do not seem to be antagonistic to the idea of educated women joining the teaching profession. Educational planners who are committed to increasing the number of female teachers should seize the opportunity by maximizing the prestige incentive to become a teacher.

It was an irony that in some communities there were schools without female teachers while there were plenty of unemployed women in the community who were eager to be employed. There were some who did not seek teaching positions for fear of the possibility of being placed in locations away from their husbands.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE WORK AND THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The main purpose of this chapter is to describe and analyze the work and working environment of the female teachers. The chapter at first assesses the difficulty involved in joining teaching and then examines the current placement of female teachers. The aim here is to find out whether the female teachers are working in a school and in a community of their choice. Secondly, the chapter makes an in-depth examination of their teaching assignment. An attempt has been made whether female teachers' personal needs are taken into account while giving teaching or non-teaching assignments. Third, the chapter then moves on to examine the availability of physical and instructional resources in schools as seen by the female teachers. Fourth, data on teacher support and supervision is presented with a view to examining whether on-site support and supervision is available to the female teachers. Fifth, data related to career advancement is presented and analyzed. Sixth, the chapter presents an analysis of the teachers' assessment of the financial and other benefits. Finally, an attempt has been made to understand the problems schools are facing as reported by the teachers.

## 7.1 Joining the Teaching Profession

### 7.1.1 Difficulty involved in joining teaching

What was it like to be employed as a teacher? Was it difficult or not difficult? Is the experience of joining teaching uniform across the different types or groups of teachers? If there are difficulties, what kind of difficulties are these? And, how can they be overcome? These questions are equally important to policymakers, administrators, and those who are considering joining teaching. The survey, therefore, asked the respondents if it was difficult to be employed as a teacher. This was a 'yes' or 'no' question. Table 7.1 provides the raw data. In a majority of cases, joining teaching was a difficult experience (64%). Those who did not experience any difficulty were the ones recruited during BPEP I under female teacher recruitment program, where women did not go through rigorous selection procedure. One female teacher admitted that her gender was an advantage for being appointed in the teaching job.

Are there differences between different groups and types of teachers in terms of difficulty involved in joining teaching? The data suggests that the experience is not uniform. In the first place, primary and lower secondary teachers in higher proportions found it difficult to be employed as a teacher in comparison to the secondary teachers. It is possible that primary and lower secondary teaching positions are more competitive than the secondary level teaching positions. Data was examined to see if there were differences between men and women. Proportionally, there are more men (72%) than women (64%) who experienced

difficulty while being employed as a teacher. It may be that teaching is more competitive for males than for females.

**Table 7.1: Difficulty in joining teaching profession as experienced by female teachers (%)**

<b>Difficulty in joining teaching profession</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	66.3	65.0	37.9	64.1
No	33.7	35.0	62.1	35.9
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>404</b>

### 7.1.2 Nature and type of difficulty encountered

On being asked to specify the difficulties they had experienced, the female teachers stated the following:

“Candidates are selected on the basis of source and force...There is lot of favoritism and nepotism...Real qualification is rarely counted.”

“There were only males on the interview panel.”

“My poor Nepali was a major hurdle and disadvantage.”

“The competition was fierce since there were not many teacher quotas (openings).”

“Teachers are selected based on political considerations. Political affiliation was a major criterion rather than competence. Those who were selected were those who were not qualified.”

“I had to go to the district headquarters for both written examinations and interview. The distance was much to me. I did have two small children then, and my husband was working in another district.”

“To prepare for the written as well as oral examinations was indeed very difficult because I didn’t have any materials to study.”

“I had to please the School Management Committee.”

“Criteria for selection was not clear to me. Questions asked during interviews were beyond the teaching field. The interview appeared to me fatiguing.”

“I had to wait for a long time to be appointed as a permanent teacher. It took the government almost a decade to manage the entire recruitment



process. The government is simply inefficient to manage teachers. It was never clear when written and oral examinations will be held. What was most unclear was when the results will be published and when I would get the letter of appointment.”

“Priority was not given to women during written and oral examinations. Women had to compete with men who know how to get around.”

“There was caste discrimination.”

## 7.2 Teacher Deployment

How are teachers deployed or redeployed to different schools? Are the female teachers in the present sample working in their school of choice? Is the school where they are currently working the place of first appointment? Are they happy with the present school or are they seeking transfer? Before examining the nature of job assignment, the nature of school assignment was explored. Teachers will be motivated and committed to work if they are deployed in the school of their choice. This is particularly important for female teachers who must combine the household work with the school work.

### 7.2.1 School of first appointment

On being asked if the female teachers were working in the school of first appointment, teachers remained divided (Table 7.2). For nearly 31% of the respondents, the current school was the first school of appointment, while for the remaining (69%) the current school was not the first school of assignment. This shows that teaching is a mobile profession. A majority of the teachers are thus found to have worked in more than one school. Marginally higher proportions of lower secondary and primary teachers have stayed in the same school as compared to the secondary teachers. Between male and female teachers, there was no major difference in terms of their response to this question.

**Table 7.2: Female teachers' school of first appointment (%)**

First appointment	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	31.8	32.5	27.6	31.5
No	68.2	67.5	72.4	68.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>405</b>

### 7.2.2 School of choice

It should be even more meaningful to find out if the teachers are working in the school of their choice. The majority of the female teachers (75%) said that the school where they are currently placed is the school of their choice, while for others it does not seem to be the case. Teachers teaching higher grades (lower secondary and secondary) are found to be working in

their schools of choice as compared to their colleagues teaching lower grades (primary). Some 90% and 83% of the total lower secondary and secondary teachers are placed in a location that suits them. In the case of primary teachers, however, the corresponding proportion is 76%. No major difference has been detected in terms of teacher's gender, suggesting that male and female teachers are working in their schools of choice in more or less equal proportions.

### 7.2.3 Number of schools served

Table 7.3 shows the distribution of female teachers according to the number of schools they have served so far. More than two-third of the teachers have served in more than one school. This is true for all levels of teachers. The average number of schools served is 2.3. The averages obtained for different levels of teachers are more or less the same.

**Table 7.3: Number of schools served by female teachers (%)**

Number of schools served	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
One school	31.8	32.5	27.6	31.5
Two schools	29.1	37.5	17.2	29.1
Three schools	15.4	10.0	37.9	16.5
Four or more schools	23.7	20.0	27.2	22.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.	100.0
N	337	40	29	406
Average number of schools served	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.3

### 7.2.4 Seeking transfer

The survey attempted to find out if the female teachers were seeking transfer from their current school. One-fifth of the total respondents were found to be seeking transfer, while a majority of them were happy to continue in their current school (Table 7.4). Proportionally, more primary and lower secondary teachers are seeking transfer compared to secondary grade teachers. In fact, a very small proportion of the secondary teachers are seeking transfer. The ones working in rural areas are seeking transfer compared to those working in urban areas (27% versus 14%). In terms of ecological zones, more proportions of teachers currently placed in the Mountains (27%) and Hills (23%) are seeking transfer compared to those placed in the Tarai (13%) and the Kathmandu Valley (11%). Interestingly, equal proportions of married and unmarried female teachers are seeking transfer (20% each). Slightly more proportion of permanent teachers is seeking to move from the current school compared to the temporary teachers (20% versus 17%). For better utilization and personal satisfaction of teachers, their choices must be honored. The transfer process is so cumbersome that it is almost impossible to figure out how it works. Teachers mentioned that political considerations do play a major role in teacher transfer.

**Table 7.4: Seeking transfer from the current school by female teachers (%)**

Seeking transfer	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	22.0	16.2	3.6	20.1
No	78.0	83.8	96.4	79.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.	100.0
N	<b>323</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>388</b>

### 7.2.5 Reasons for seeking transfer

Female teachers were asked to mention the reasons for seeking transfer from the current school. The reasons are varied. Their responses are grouped into 11 major categories.

1. Political reasons. Lack of support from the local political parties, negative attitude of local politicians, extortion by the Maoists, and lack of security were cited as reasons for deciding to leave the school. There were some cases where there was pressure from the Maoists either to join them or leave the community.
2. Family and personal reasons. Some wanted to leave the place for family reasons. The need to be with the family members especially for reasons of aging or sick parents, being eldest or youngest in the family, nuclear composition of the family, lack of helpers in the farm owned by the family, the desire to stay and work close to home, long separation with husband and children, poor health, family migration to a new place, etc. were frequently mentioned as reasons for seeking transfer.
3. Academic reasons. Many of those who were seeking transfer wanted to do so for academic and professional reasons. They wanted to be placed in areas where institutions of higher learning are available so that it would be possible for them to combine their studies and work. As we have reported earlier, there is a tendency among people to join teaching early with limited education and then upgrade qualifications while in teaching. Further discussions with the teachers revealed that many of them cannot afford full-time studies.
4. Professional reasons. Under this category, we have included the following responses: desire to be appointed at a higher level regardless of the place, desire to teach the subjects of one's proficiency or training, heavy teaching load, crowded classrooms, etc.
5. Climatic/geographical reasons. Few teachers wanted to leave the school for climatic and/or geographical reasons. Teachers frequently mentioned that remote location, inconvenient location, unsuitable climate, inaccessibility, difficult to reach, lack of communication and transport, etc. as the reasons for seeking transfer.
6. Cultural and linguistic reasons. Some teachers were finding it difficult to cope with the culture and language of the community. They were finding it difficult to adjust in the community where they are currently placed. Since local teachers cannot be

recruited in many communities of Nepal, there will be need for bringing people from outside, who might often experience difficulty adjusting in cultures that are not similar to theirs.

7. Low respect for teachers and the teaching profession: There were few cases where teachers did not get respect from the community. They observed lack of respect for teachers and the teaching profession among community members, which prompted them to leave the place.
8. Financial reasons. Many mentioned that financial hardship was the reason for seeking transfer. It was not possible to live by with one source of income. They wanted to move to areas where it was possible to take up another job or some side job. Low salary was often the reason in such cases.
9. Desire to serve in a disadvantaged community. Some teachers wanted to be placed in a community where schooling is still in the early stage. They wanted to work for and with the marginalized communities, ethnic/linguistic minorities, and children living under difficult circumstances.
10. Want of security, accommodation and food facilities. The lack of security, accommodation and food facilities was the main reason for many female teachers for wanting to shift to a different school.
11. Desire for change. In a few cases, teachers expressed that they were bored of working in the same school for a long time. They said their job did not have the 'fun' and 'pleasure' any longer. They seemed little tired of working with the same set of teachers for a long time. They wanted to try out new places, new people, and new practices.

## **7.3 Nature of Job Assignment**

### **7.3.1 Weekly teaching load**

Schools in Nepal normally begin at 10 am and end at 4 pm. Schools operate six days a week. School time is divided into different 'periods,' each period consisting of 40 or 45 minutes. There is a recess or tea break in the middle of the day. Typically, there are four periods before the recess and three periods after the recess. Friday is a half working day, with only four periods of teaching. Altogether there are 39 periods in a week. Thus, if a teacher is assigned full teaching load, he or she will have a total teaching load of 39 periods in a week. Teachers consider a weekly load of 25 periods or less as 'desirable', 26 to 30 periods as 'somehow manageable', and more than that as 'humanly impossible.'

In an attempt to develop an understanding about the work of female teachers, the study made an attempt to assess their teaching load. The weekly teaching load of teachers has been

categorized into three groups using definitions given by the teachers themselves (Table 7.5). Overall, 42% of the total teachers have a teaching load of 30 periods or more, while 38% of them teach between 26 to 30 periods in a week. One fourth of the teachers, however, have a teaching load of up to 25 periods. More proportions of lower secondary and secondary teachers are on the lower end of the teaching load, while more proportions of primary teachers are on the upper end, implying that primary teachers' work burden is heavier than those of the lower secondary and secondary teachers. Average weekly load of teachers also confirms that primary teachers (30 periods per week) teach more periods as compared to the others (lower secondary 28; secondary 26). When asked to comment on their teaching load, 42% of the total primary teachers mentioned their teaching load as being 'too heavy,' the corresponding figures being 40% and 34% for lower secondary and secondary teachers respectively.

Teaching load of teachers is not uniform across the different ecological regions. Teachers in the Mountains (31.6 periods per week) have slightly higher teaching load in comparison to those who teach in the Hills (28.9 periods), Tarai (29.1 periods) and the Kathmandu Valley (30.5 periods). Gender breakdown of the data shows that both men and women do have the same amount of teaching load, the average weekly load being 30 periods per week for both. Again, it confirms that the workplace does not treat teachers in different ways. Both male and female teachers must bear the same amount of work.

**Table 7.5: Weekly teaching load of female teachers (%)**

<b>Weekly load</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Up to 25 periods	17.2	21.6	50.0	20.1
26 to 30 periods	34.8	56.8	46.4	37.9
More than 30 periods	48.0	21.6	3.6	42.0
Total	100	100	100	100
Average load/wk	30.4	28.2	25.7	29.8
<b>N</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>367</b>

### **7.3.2 Subject of choice**

Teachers will be able to perform effectively if they are assigned to teach subjects of their choice. Female teachers were asked whether they were teaching subjects of their choice (Table 7.6). A large majority of women responded (82%) that they are faced with a situation where they do not get to teach subjects of their choice. Only 18% of the total respondents responded in the positive, meaning that they are teaching subjects of their choice. One might note that primary female teachers are teaching subjects of their choice in higher proportions compared to their female colleagues teaching lower secondary or secondary grades. Analysis of the same data in terms of ecological region shows that teachers working in the Mountains (86%) and the Tarai (86%) often teach subjects of their dislike as compared to their counterparts working in the Hills (76%) and the Kathmandu Valley (73%).

**Table 7.6: Subject of choice of female teachers (%)**

Subject of choice	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	19.5	12.5	10.3	18.2
No	80.5	87.5	89.7	81.8
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>402</b>

### 7.3.3 Possession of relevant academic background in subjects currently teaching

Some studies have reported serious deficiency of knowledge of the subject matter on the part of school teachers in Nepal (World Bank, 1994). At the primary level, the government expects teachers to be able to teach all subjects included in the curriculum. At upper levels, however, teachers are expected to teach subjects they studied in school or college. Given the fact that most teachers are under-performers in schools and colleges, as defined by their passed division, it is not surprising that teachers do not have sufficient mastery of the subject matter. At times, teachers happened to be asked to teach subjects which they never studied in school or college due to faulty teacher deployment practices. Frequent changes and/or additions of new subjects to the curriculum further worsen the situation.

In the above context, female teachers were asked if they possess relevant academic background in the subjects they are currently teaching. Let us examine the data shown in Table 7.7. It should be noted that only 394 female teachers answered this question, of which ‘yes’ accounted for 18% and ‘no’ response some 82% of the total. The situation appears to be problematic owing to the fact that a large majority of female teachers are teaching subjects in which they feel having no relevant academic background. Primary teachers, more than the lower secondary and secondary grade teachers, teach subjects with no relevant academic background. This finding confirms the earlier findings which have reported that teachers in Nepal do lack subject matter proficiency. The reasons given to account for the lack of relevant academic background varied. Here are few teachers’ accounts:

“I am asked to teach subjects which I never studied during my college years. I am a Nepali major, here I have been asked to teach English.”

“The shortage of teachers is so acute that one must be able to cover the entire curriculum.”

“I have been weak in math since my school days. Although a primary teacher is expected to teach all the subjects taught in primary grades, but this is not possible. I cannot do this, and many of my friends cannot do this either.”

**Table 7.7: Subjects studied by female teachers in college or school (%)**

Teaching subject(s) studied in school or college	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	15.5	28.9	25.0	17.5
No	84.5	71.1	75.0	82.5
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>394</b>

### 7.3.4 Match between teacher training and subjects teaching in school

It is generally not possible to find teachers who have relevant academic background, especially in Nepal where teaching is not the destination for the many who are academically smart. One way of dealing with the deficiency of subject knowledge is through teacher training. School reform projects funded by various donors organize in-service training courses to refresh and update teachers with both academic and professional knowledge and skills. In this context, an attempt was made to examine the match between their training and the subjects they are actually teaching. Teachers were asked if they were assigned to teach subjects in which they had received training. The findings are displayed in Table 7.8.

In the majority of cases teachers (61%) mentioned that they are asked to teach subjects outside their training. The ‘yes’ response accounted for 39% of the total, meaning that in some cases there are matches between training and job assignment. The mismatch is pronounced most at the secondary level (28%) as compared to other levels. The nature and consequences of the mismatch are painted in the following excerpts:

“To tell you the truth, I am a Social Studies teacher, but I have attended training in Math and Science teaching. This is all due to the quota system. The school is asked to send teachers to participate in training courses. Since the head teacher could not release Math and Science teachers for the training, I was asked to go. It is not that I did not learn anything. I did. But, I cannot teach these subjects simply because I do not have relevant academic background.”

“It is a waste of time, complete waste of time and resources. The moment I came back to school after a month-long training in SEDU, I was asked to teach a different subject.”

**Table 7.8: Match between female teachers' training and subjects teaching in school (%)**

Teaching subject(s) studied in school or college	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	38.5	52.6	27.6	39.1
No	61.5	47.4	72.4	60.9
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>394</b>

### 7.3.5 Teaching assignment at a higher level

Normally, teachers are appointed to teach in a particular level of schooling (primary, lower secondary or secondary). And, this appointment is based on their academic qualifications. For instance, a person with a SLC (completion of Grade 10) is eligible to become a primary teacher, while those with the Intermediate and Bachelor degrees are eligible to become lower secondary and secondary teachers, respectively. Most secondary schools in Nepal do run lower (primary and lower secondary) grades as well, so do lower secondary schools. In such schools, a teacher appointed at a lower grade level is likely to be asked to teach in higher grades when teacher shortage is serious. Teaching at a higher level demands additional preparation for which they are not paid. Does it happen with the female teachers? The response was obtained in ‘yes’ or ‘no’ (Table 7.9). For the most part, female teachers are assigned to teach grades in which they are formally appointed to teach. But, there were some cases where little over one-fifth of the female teachers reported having been assigned to teach higher grades while their appointment did not demand so. This experience was common for teachers of all grade levels. Proportionally, more secondary teachers had this experience as compared to other types of teachers. Many secondary schools in Nepal currently operate higher secondary grades as well. Such schools suffer seriously from teacher shortage. In such cases, secondary level teachers are often found teaching the higher secondary classes.

**Table 7.9: Teaching assignment at a higher level by female teachers (%)**

Teaching assignment at a higher level	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	22.5	23.1	27.6	22.9
No	77.5	76.9	72.4	77.1
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>401</b>

Some teachers enjoyed taking responsibility for teaching higher grades, while others expressed the opposite experience. Here are some examples:

“I don’t really mind teaching higher grades, although I am just a lower secondary level teacher.”

“I am fed up with my teaching load and the pressure to teach higher grades for which I am not paid and I am not formally appointed. It takes a lot of energy and time, which I do not have.”

“We don’t have enough teacher quotas. It is difficult to get teacher quota from the District Education Office. We are five in this school and we do everything. The head teacher is helpless. He must manage the school with the available staff.”



### 7.3.6 Assignment of difficult subjects

How do the female teachers find the subjects they are assigned to teach in terms of the ease and/or difficulty? The findings are tabulated in Table 7.10. It is seen that slightly less than half of the female teachers (48%) find the subjects they are currently assigned to be difficult, while little more than half of them (51%) do have the opposite experience. This finding is not surprising given the fact that many teachers are assigned to teach subjects which they never studied during their student years and for which they have not received any training. The assignment of difficult subjects is uniform across the different grade levels. Cross-tabulation of the data by sex provides some interesting findings. Experience of difficulty is more prominent among male teachers (57%) than the female teachers (48%). Secondary male teachers (63%) faced the situation of teaching difficult subjects in higher proportions as compared to the lower secondary (56%) and primary teachers (55%). Normally, there is a common belief that females are less capable than males in subjects like English, Mathematics and Science. These negative perceptions could be one reason for not assigning difficult subjects to the female teachers.

**Table 7.10: Ease and/or difficulty level of subjects assigned to teach for female teachers (%)**

Ease and/or difficulty level	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Difficult	48.4	50.0	48.3	48.5
Not difficult	51.6	50.0	51.7	51.5
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>404</b>

### 7.3.7 Teacher involvement in non-teaching assignments

Apart from teaching teachers are often expected to perform non-teaching tasks such as cleaning staff room or classrooms, preparing tea or snacks for colleagues, filling out forms, handling school accounts, etc. Teachers' involvement in such tasks can hamper the quality of teaching. Some schools manage to hire accountants, administrative assistants and peons for such tasks, while many others cannot manage to do so because either they do not receive any funds from the government for administrative purpose or the amount they receive is too small. Our inquiry about teacher involvement in non-teaching assignments has revealed that in most cases female teachers remain involved sometimes (54%), while in other cases the extent of involvement is even higher (Table 7.11). The findings show that teachers of all grade levels must perform non-teaching tasks whether sometimes or frequently. However, there are some variations across the grade levels. For instance, proportionally more secondary grade teachers reported that it is only sometimes (65%) that they must be engaged in such tasks. On the other hand, more proportion of lower secondary grade teachers must perform these tasks frequently (62%).

Male teachers' experiences differ from those of their female colleagues. Of the total male teachers, 62% performed non-teaching tasks only sometimes and the rest (38%) did it frequently. When these responses are compared with those from the female teachers, it becomes visible that male teachers are less likely to be engaged in non-teaching assignments than the female teachers.

**Table 7.11: Female teachers' involvement in non-teaching tasks (%)**

<b>Involvement in non-teaching tasks</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Sometimes	55.5	37.5	65.5	54.4
Frequently	44.5	62.5	34.5	45.6
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>406</b>

### 7.3.8 Time for preparation for teaching at school

Teachers need to prepare for teaching. Needless to say, effective teaching calls for adequate preparation on the part of teachers. Whether their teaching load allows them to prepare for teaching was a question of interest to this study (Table 7.12). When asked if there was time available for preparation, most teachers (58%) answered in the negative, suggesting lack of time for preparation. Nearly 42% of the teachers however said that there was time available for such a purpose. Once again, differences are noted across the grade levels. More proportions of primary teachers (63%) reported lack of availability of time as compared to their female colleagues teaching in lower secondary (42%) and secondary (31%) grades.

**Table 7.12: Time for preparation for teaching for female teachers (%)**

<b>Availability of time for preparation</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Available	37.4	57.5	69.0	41.7
Not available	62.6	42.5	31.0	58.3
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>398</b>

### 7.3.9 Consideration of women's personal needs while giving assignments

It is a truism that women employed are also expected to carry on the major burden of domestic work. Women with children find it extremely difficult to make a balance between career schedules and the demands of household work and childcare. For these reasons, working women would expect some consideration of their personal needs by their supervisors while being assigned. In this context, female teachers were asked how much their personal needs were taken into consideration by their head teachers while giving assignments. The results are tabulated in Table 7.13. The findings are rather mixed. A little over one-fourth of the female teachers stated that their head teachers were never considerate of their personal needs and problems. In a majority of cases (66%) female teachers mentioned that occasionally their needs were being considered. Very few female teachers (8%) stated that their head teachers were considerate of their needs. These findings do suggest that for the most part head teachers are not cognizant of the female teachers' needs and difficulties, especially how their domestic obligations can affect their performance in school.

**Table 7.13: Head teacher consideration of personal needs of female teachers (%)**

Degree of consideration	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Never	25.9	30.8	25.0	26.3
Occasionally	65.6	64.1	71.4	65.9
Always	8.5	5.1	3.6	7.8
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>384</b>

Variations in responses are minor in terms of grade level. Proportionally, more primary teachers (8%) found their personal needs having been considered as compared to the lower secondary (5%) and secondary teachers (4%). At the secondary level, there is heavy pressure on school administration to produce good results in the SLC examinations. The shortage of teachers further worsens the situation. Cross-tabulation of the data by ecological zone shows varying experiences. Female teachers working in the Mountains, Hills, the Tarai and the Kathmandu Valley have unpleasant experience in this regard. Those serving in the Kathmandu Valley (26%) characterize their head teachers being always considerate of their personal needs as compared to the teachers working in other places (Mountains, 12%; Hills, 5%; and Tarai, 4%).

### 7.3.10 Availability of leisure time

It is obvious from the data presented above that female teachers must bear a heavy load of work both at home and school. Teachers were asked if their teaching load ever allows them to take some leisure. Data shown in Table 7.14 suggests that a large majority of the teachers do not enjoy any leisure time. This is equally true for all levels of teachers.

**Table 7.14: Availability of leisure time to female teachers (%)**

Availability of leisure time	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Available	31.8	36.8	34.5	32.5
Not available	68.2	63.2	65.5	67.5
Total	100	100	100	100
<b>N</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>394</b>

## 7.4 Availability of Physical and Instructional Resources

### 7.4.1 Availability, condition and adequacy of physical facilities in schools

The survey asked the teachers to assess the availability, condition and adequacy of the physical facilities available in the school. The findings are shown in Table 7.15. Data reveals that except for toilet facilities for girls and female teachers, other facilities are available in a majority of cases. Although most teachers in the school report the availability of physical facilities, their condition and adequacy is however less than satisfactory in a large majority of the cases. It is to be noted that many schools have not been able to arrange separate toilet

facilities for girls and female teachers. Most research tends to associate girls' frequent absenteeism in schools for the lack of separate toilet facilities.

**Table 7.15: Availability, condition, suitability and adequacy of physical facilities as stated by female teachers (%)**

Physical facility	Availability		Condition		Adequacy	
	Available	Not available	Good	Poor	Adequate	Not adequate
Staff room	75.0	25.0	63.2	36.8	68.2	31.8
Classroom	100.0	0.0	57.5	42.5	69.0	31.0
Blackboard	90.0	10.0	82.5	17.5	84.7	15.3
Teachers' chair	72.4	27.6	74.5	25.5	62.7	37.3
Teachers' table	38.7	61.3	71.6	28.4	57.5	42.5
Cupboards for storage	37.9	62.1	70.2	29.8	48.0	52.0
Student furniture	84.0	16.0	73.5	26.5	60.3	29.7
Toilet facilities for students	74.5	25.5	57.5	42.5	57.5	42.5
Separate toilet facilities for girls	57.5	42.5	60.3	29.7	57.5	42.5
Toilet facilities for staff	74.5	25.5	63.2	36.8	60.3	29.7
Separate toilet facilities for female staff	53.4	46.6	32.5	67.5	60.3	29.7
Drinking water	77.8	22.2	NA	NA	NA	NA

#### 7.4.2 Availability of instructional resources

One would expect each school to have a set of curriculum, teachers' guides, textbooks, reference books and teaching materials. Therefore, teachers were asked to rate the status of availability of instructional resources in their schools. The findings are summarized in Table 7.16. On the whole, the situation appears to be encouraging in terms of the availability of the resources regardless of grade level. Compared to other resources, curriculum and textbooks are found in a majority of the cases. However, data suggests that there is a need to increase teachers' access to teachers' guides, reference books and teaching materials.

**Table 7.16: Availability of instructional resources as stated by female teachers (%)**

Resource	Primary		Lower secondary		Secondary		Total	
	A	NA	A	NA	A	NA	A	NA
Curriculum	91.0	9.0	92.1	7.9	89.7	10.3	91.0	9.0
Teacher guides	89.0	11.0	74.4	25.6	89.7	10.3	87.6	12.4
Textbooks	93.7	6.3	86.5	13.5	100.0	0.0	93.5	6.5
Reference books	65.4	34.6	55.6	44.4	67.9	32.1	64.7	35.3
Teaching materials	74.2	25.8	61.8	38.2	88.9	11.1	74.2	25.8

Note: A stands for availability and NA for non-availability.

## 7.5 Teacher Support and Supervision

### 7.5.1 Teacher supervision

Teacher support and supervision is at the heart of teachers' professional development. Teachers need to grow in their profession, and it requires supervision and support from multiple sources: colleagues, parents, managers, supervisors, resource persons, administrators, and other actors in education. School reform projects in Nepal have been promoting the practice of teacher support and supervision through the resource centers. With a view to enlarging our understanding of the professional lives of female teachers, we made an effort to assess the extent to which they were receiving professional support and supervision from different sources. Teachers were specifically asked to mention the number of times they had been supervised by different categories of people in the last three years. The findings are tabulated in Table 7.17.

The teachers estimated the frequency of visits in the last three years by 12 different categories of people who are expected to observe or supervise their classrooms. A four-point scale was used: never, once, two times, and three or more than three times. The head teacher is found to be the principal source of teacher supervision, followed by resource person, SMC members, teacher colleagues, and the school supervisors. It is surprising to note that substantial proportion of teachers was either never supervised or supervised once or two times by the resource persons and school supervisors, whose primary responsibility is to provide teacher support and supervision. In recent years, especially after the Seventh Amendment of the Education Act, SMC members are beginning to take interest in teachers' work. This is evident in the data. Parents may also have started taking interest in teachers' work. But, the evidence of parents taking interest is minimal.

Although a few instances of supervisory visits are observed, planned supervision of teachers' work for the most part is a rare activity. Focus group discussions also revealed that the teachers' work goes largely unobserved, unmonitored, and unsupported. By and large, teachers work in isolation. Under the current circumstances, teacher effectiveness largely depends upon where teacher stands in terms of moral and professional integrity.

On being asked what follows after supervisory visits most teachers mentioned that the visits are more for administrative purpose rather than for professional purpose. For the most part, supervisory visits are carried out to find out how things go in school classrooms rather than with the explicit purpose of supporting teachers. There were cases where resource persons were reported to organize post-observation conferences with the teachers for providing professional feedback. These cases were however very insignificant in number.

**Table 7.17: Frequency of supervision by different people as stated by female teachers (%)**

Source of supervision	Never	Once	Two times	>=3 times	Total
District Education Officer (416)	74.3	11.5	6.3	7.9	100.0
School supervisor (399)	34.9	19.3	11.5	32.8	100.0
Resource Person (410)	24.9	12.0	13.7	49.5	100.0
Head teacher (407)	21.9	2.0	3.9	72.2	100.0
Teacher colleagues (403)	51.6	4.2	6.0	38.2	100.0
Teacher colleagues of other schools (408)	76.2	8.8	4.7	10.3	100.0
Fathers of students (413)	69.5	5.3	5.3	19.9	100.0
Mothers of students (411)	73.0	3.9	3.9	19.5	100.0
SMC members (408)	41.7	7.8	9.1	41.4	100.0
Representatives of donor agencies (395)	77.2	8.6	5.6	8.6	100.0
Educationists/researchers (389)	71.2	8.7	5.9	14.1	100.0
Central officials of MOES and RED (387)	78.6	10.9	4.9	5.7	100.0

Note: Figures within parentheses represent N.

### 7.5.2 Source of professional advice

Where do teachers go for any kind of professional advice that they might need? Is there one to assist them at times of difficulties and needs? To seek an answer to this question, the teachers were provided with a list of six potential sources of professional help and asked them to choose one. It is not to deny that in real life teachers might go to more than one source for any professional advice. Of the total teachers in the sample (416), only 374 chose to answer this question. The findings are displayed in Table 7.18. As expected, most teachers are likely to go to the head teachers (36%) and their teacher colleagues (35%) for professional help. It is noteworthy that the incidence of teachers seeking professional advice from their head teachers and colleagues takes place in schools where the number of female teachers is high. But, contrary to our expectation, very few teachers are found to consult with the school supervisors and resource persons on professional matters. Very often, government documents define school supervisors and resource persons as teachers' professional friends. There is very little evidence of professional exchange amongst teachers, resource persons and school supervisors. The cases of seeking help from the DEO, family members or the SMC members are negligible.

**Table 7.18: Source of professional help for female teachers (%)**

Source of professional help	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
DEO	0.3	8.6	3.8	1.3
School supervisor	16.3	2.9	7.7	14.4
Resource Person	10.5	8.6	7.8	10.2
Head teacher	36.2	40.0	26.9	35.8
Teacher colleagues	33.9	31.4	50.0	34.8
Family members	0.6	2.8	0.0	0.8
SMC members	2.2	5.7	3.8	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>374</b>

There are some variations across the different grade levels in matters of seeking professional help. Proportionally, secondary grade teachers more often approach their colleagues (50%) as compared to their primary (34%) and lower secondary grade counterparts (31%). On the other hand, primary (36%) and lower secondary teachers (40%) seek help from their head teachers more often than their secondary grade colleagues (27%). Cross-tabulation of data by sex reveals interesting findings. Proportionally, more male teachers seek help from the resource persons than the female teachers (20% versus 10%), while more female teachers (36%) do so from their head teachers than male teachers (26%). It appears that the female teachers cannot utilize the resource centers as much as their male counterparts perhaps because they are not as mobile as the latter. One thing is however clear that the female teachers are likely to use the easily available source of help, i.e., the head teacher. Cross-tabulation of data by location of schools (rural versus urban) shows interesting pattern. The use of school supervisors and resource persons is greater in rural areas than in urban areas (32% versus 23%).

## **7.6 Professional Advancement and Recognition of Work**

How much opportunity is there for female teachers for professional advancement in their work? Professional advancement in this study is defined as upward mobility of teachers in terms of academic upgrading, promotion, and appointment to a higher level. Normally, financial and other rewards are associated with teachers' professional advancement. Advancement in the career is necessary not only for financial reasons, but also for professional and motivational reasons.

### **7.6.1 Academic upgrading**

Academic upgrading refers to the change in the teachers' educational status during their teaching career. It occurs when teachers upgrade their educational qualifications while they are still in teaching profession. In order to measure the opportunity available to female teachers for academic upgrading, they were asked to provide two pieces of information: (a) qualification at the time of joining teaching and (b) current qualification. The information supplied by 406 female teachers is tabulated in Table 7.19. It is seen that at the time of entering into teaching 71% of the teachers had academic qualification of SLC or below, and 21% and 8% of them had Intermediate and Bachelor degrees respectively. Current academic qualifications of the same cohort of teachers are however different: SLC or below, 43%; Intermediate, 33%; and Bachelor, 24%. One can observe heavy concentration of teachers on the lower end of qualifications at the time of joining teaching. This situation has dramatically changed at the present. It means that several teachers upgraded their academic qualifications after they joined teaching. Overall, nearly 38% of the total teachers are found to have acquired higher academic qualifications after they joined teaching.

Cross-tabulation of the data by gender shows interesting patterns. Proportionally, more male teachers had higher qualifications at the time of joining teaching than their female counterparts (SLC or below, 53%; Intermediate, 30%; and BA or more, 17%). The male-

female difference is pronounced in the current qualifications as well. Current qualifications of male teachers are as follows: SLC or below 24%; Intermediate, 28%; and BA or more 48%. Male teachers' current academic qualifications concentrate on the upper end. Overall, 46% of the total male teachers are found to have upgraded their academic qualifications since they joined teaching. This proportion compares favorably with that of female teachers. Data suggests that teachers, whether male or female, are likely to upgrade their qualifications while in the profession. But, this is more likely among male teachers than the female teachers.

**Table 7.19: Qualifications of female teachers at the time of joining teaching and at the present time (%)**

<b>Initial and current qualification</b>	<b>SLC or below</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Bachelor or more</b>
Qualification at the time of joining teaching	70.9	21.2	7.9
Qualification now	42.5	33.3	24.2

### 7.6.2 Promotion

Promotion refers to movement from a lower rank to that of a higher rank within the same position. Teaching consists of three ranks: Class III, Class II and Class I. A teacher initially has a Class III status. Over time, teachers can be promoted to higher ranks (Class II or I). Teachers were asked whether they had received any promotion during their teaching career. The findings are presented in Table 7.20. Only 12% of the total respondents (403) reported having been promoted once during their teaching career, while a large majority of them (88%) did not have the opportunity of being promoted. Data suggests that the opportunity for promotion is not equally divided across the different grade levels. Proportionally, more secondary teachers were able to receive promotion as compared to their primary and lower secondary counterparts. School location is found to be related to the likelihood of teachers getting promotion. Female teachers working in urban areas (15%) have better prospects for promotion as compared to those who are serving in rural areas (8%). Further cross-tabulation of the data in terms of ecological zone and caste/ethnicity shows interesting results. Proportionally, more teachers from the Hills (17%), Tarai (11%) and the Kathmandu Valley (15%) received promotion as compared to the teachers from the Mountains (6%). In terms of caste/ethnicity, the distribution of those who received promotion is as follows: Chhetri (14.2%), Newars (22%), and Brahmin (29%). None of the Janjati teachers was able to acquire promotion. The fact that the prospects for promotion are limited for teachers working in the Mountains and rural areas as compared to other types of teachers is discouraging. Female teachers would not be attracted to serve in the Mountains and rural areas if such prospects are limited.

**Table 7.20: Frequency of promotion of female teachers (%)**

<b>Promotion</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Promoted once	10.2	15.0	31.0	12.2
Never promoted	89.8	85.0	69.0	87.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>403</b>



The same data was examined in terms of gender to see if the opportunity for promotion was equally distributed between male and female teachers. Evidently, the results are in favor of men. Some 18% of the total male teachers received promotion as opposed to only 12% female teachers. The data thus confirms the general perception that men are advantaged on promotion matter than women. It is interesting to note that during interviews women blame themselves for their failure to get a promotion, rather than to some flaws in the teacher promotion system.

### 7.6.3 Grade upgrading

Another measure of professional advancement is grade upgrading. Grade upgrading refers to vertical mobility in terms of appointment from a lower level to a higher level. It occurs when a person upgrades his or her academic qualifications. For example, a person with a qualification of SLC becomes a primary teacher. As the person upgrades his or her academic qualification to the Bachelor level, he or she could be appointed as a secondary level teacher, provided he or she meets other requirements. Of particular interest here was: “what percent of the teachers in the sample were able to move from one level to the next higher level (primary to lower secondary or secondary)?”. Most teachers in the present sample were appointed as primary teachers at the time of joining the profession (Table 7.21). As the findings suggest, some of them were able to upgrade themselves. In total, 9% of all teachers are found to have upgraded their level of appointment. It does not compare favorably with the proportion of male teachers (21%) who were able to upgrade their levels of appointment.

**Table 7.21: Initial and current appointment of female teachers (%)**

<b>Initial and current appointment</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
Initial appointment	88.4	9.4	2.2
Current appointment	83.0	9.9	7.1

### 7.6.4 Recognition of teachers’ work

Annually, MOES awards medals to school teachers and others on the Education Day. Although many times the fairness in the award of these medals has been questioned, at least there is some system in the country to identify and recognize good work done by teachers and others who make a significant contribution to the development of education. In addition to national awards, there are a number of other schemes at the district and school levels to honor the teachers and others involved in education. To obtain a view on the practice of recognizing teachers, the respondents were asked whether they were ever provided with a medal or certificate of appreciation during their teaching career. The results are presented in Table 7.22. It is seen that a large majority of teachers responded in the negative. Only 16% of the total female teachers in the sample reported having been awarded a medal or a certificate in recognition of their good work. Teachers teaching in upper grades (lower secondary and secondary) are found to be awarded more often than their counterparts teaching in lower grades, probably because the former category of teachers are more visible than the others.

Cross-tabulation of the data shows interesting results. No difference is found among the development regions in this regard. However, there are some differences in terms of ecological zones. Proportionally, teachers serving in the Mountains (15%) and Hills (15%) had slightly less chances of being recognized as compared to their counterparts working in the Tarai (18%) and the Kathmandu Valley (22%). In terms of caste/ethnicity, the recipients of the awards happened to be mostly Brahmins (18%), Newars (18%) and Chhetris (14%). The Janjatis do not compare favorably with Brahmins and Newars (8%).

Does teacher’s sex have to do anything with the chances of being recognized? Cross-tabulation of data by sex reveals that male teachers are more likely to be recognized than the female teachers (28% versus 16%).

During informal discussions and focus group discussions, teachers made a number of negative remarks about the Education Day Prize. It is clear from these remarks that the criteria for identifying and selecting people for medals or appreciations are not transparent and fair and this has de-motivating effect on the part of many others. Here are some of those remarks:

“These prizes and medals are for good guys.”

“I have not had that luck thus far. I don’t want to be awarded with that prize.”

“The respect I get from my students, parents, community members and colleagues is enough.”

“I never understood one thing: how do they select good teachers without actually seeing their performance in the classroom and the school?”

“It is a waste of resources.”

“This tradition of awarding teachers gives a few teachers few minutes of joy at the cost of thousands of others.”

**Table 7.22: Award of medals for female teachers (%)**

Received medal	Primary	Lower secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	13.9	25.0	34.5	16.3
No	86.1	75.0	65.5	83.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>416</b>

### 7.6.5 Perceived degree of equal opportunity for professional advancement

Data presented earlier does suggest that male and female teachers have unequal opportunity for professional advancement. Further probing of the same issue also confirms the above. On being asked if male and female teachers had opportunity for professional advancement, a little over three-fourth of the respondents answered in the negative, while only one-fourth of them answered in the positive (Table 7.23). It means that in a majority of cases female teachers perceive having been subjected to unequal treatment with respect to opportunities for professional advancement as compared to male teachers. Proportionally, more primary teachers (79%) perceive having been treated unequally as compared to the lower secondary (65%) and secondary teachers (65%).

**Table 7.23: Opportunity for professional advancement as perceived by female teachers (%)**

Perceived degree of equal opportunity	Primary	Lower secondary	Secondary	Total
Male and female teachers have unequal opportunity.	78.9	65.0	65.5	76.5
Male and female teachers have equal opportunity.	21.1	35.0	34.5	23.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>405</b>

### 7.6.6 Opportunity for assuming senior managerial positions

The extent to which female teachers have the opportunity to assume senior managerial roles was an issue of interest to the study. In this regard, the female teachers were asked if they were considered for managerial positions (e.g., head teacher, resource person, superintendent, etc.). Interestingly, very few admitted (3%) having been considered for these senior positions. For the most part, female teachers identify themselves as ‘forgotten entities.’ It is a fact that female teachers can be easily forgotten in a male’s world. The survey asked whether or not female teachers themselves ever considered assuming challenging roles. The answer is predominantly negative. Only 5% of the total female teachers answered in the positive. The data speaks for itself. According to them, there is virtually no opportunity for female teachers for assuming senior leadership roles. Evidently, they are not considered worthy of assuming leadership roles by male managers. It is also equally true that they themselves do not consider themselves worthy of being a senior manager. Lack of desire to reach senior levels was frequently noted during interviews. Many did not have aspirations to become administrators. Women often felt that they were excluded from informal networks. In a society where men are more likely to be ‘bosses’ and where women have been stereotyped into playing subordinate and supportive role, it is not entirely surprising that women are less likely to plan a career that included being a head teacher.

The following excerpts from interviews sufficiently illustrate the barriers to professional advancement of female teachers:

“I have never thought of becoming a head teacher. That requires frequent visit to the district headquarters, frequent participation in meetings, frequent interaction with government officials, and absence from home and family.”

“We are not made to become administrators. This is male’s business.”

“My family circumstances do not permit me to take roles other than teaching. The first and foremost thing for me is to fulfill my personal or home commitments.”

“My desire does not count here. I would certainly be happy to be appointed as the head teacher of this school. But, who is proposing my name? The DEO does not know me. The SMC chairperson does not trust me. My colleagues would not see me becoming a head teacher.”

“It requires a lot of politics, a lot of connections, and a lot of informal networking to become the head teacher. I simply do not have these things.”

Some female teachers recognized that their personal voices and problems would be heard if females are appointed in administrative and supervisory positions. One female teacher made the point that educational administrators have failed to assume accountability for women’s advancement. Many others mentioned that the lack of ‘mentors’ or ‘role models’ was a major barrier to women’s career advancement.

## **7.7 Teacher Assessment of Financial and Other Benefits**

### **7.7.1 Assessment of financial and other benefits**

The Education Act entitles teachers to a number of financial benefits and facilities, but their coverage extends to those who are permanently employed. Those who are temporary do not get some of the benefits and facilities (e.g., provident fund, pension, study leave, medical allowance). Teachers assessed the extent to which the benefits and facilities were adequate on a four-point scale: very poor (1), poor (2), reasonable (3), and highly satisfactory (4). The government provides 14 different types of benefits. The findings are presented in Table 7.24.

On a four-point scale, a mean value of 2.5 or more would mean that the benefit paid to the teachers is reasonable. As shown in the table, only 5 of the 14 kinds of benefits are represented by a mean value of 2.5 or more, suggesting that teachers perceive them to be reasonable. Others represented with a mean value of less than 2.5 are considered to be poor by the teachers. Clearly, some action is needed on this in order to make many of these benefits to a level which teachers find reasonable, if not highly satisfactory.

**Table 7.24: Female teachers' assessment of financial and other benefits**

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Salary	391	2.5	0.57
2. Provident fund	351	2.4	0.93
3. Pension	361	1.9	1.05
4. Gratuity/severance	379	1.7	0.87
5. Medical allowance	379	1.7	0.87
6. Annual increment	374	2.2	0.78
7. Training allowance	379	1.7	0.87
8. Paid maternity leave	386	2.8	0.65
9. Paid annual leave	382	3.0	0.49
10. Paid casual leave (emergency leave)	382	2.7	0.58
11. Paid sick leave	381	2.8	0.56
12. Paid study leave	361	2.0	1.05
13. Educational allowance	379	1.7	0.87
14. Insurance	257	1.3	0.57

Note: SD stands for standard deviation.

During interviews, teachers emphasized that they should have access to other benefits and facilities such as free accommodation or allowance for accommodation, allowance for transport, regular health checks, medical insurance, child care facilities, low interest loans for housing or other purposes, clothing/uniform, hardship allowance when deployed in rural areas, etc. Currently, teachers enjoy none of these benefits and facilities.

### **7.7.2 Modality of payment of teacher salary**

The Education Act provides for payment of a teacher's salary on a monthly basis. Any employee would normally expect to be paid his or her salary at the end of the month. The survey asked the teachers whether they were being paid on a monthly basis. That was true only for 28% of the total teachers in the sample. Two-thirds of the total teachers reported that they are paid on a trimester basis. Few others said that they are paid on a bi-monthly or a quarterly basis. There were instances where teachers had not been paid for more than six months. The government releases funds on a trimester basis. These releases are not made in advance. That causes delay in payment of teachers' salary. Frequently, the absence of relevant offices in the District Education Offices also causes delay in payment.

### **7.7.3 Overall assessment of working conditions**

Teachers' overall satisfaction with the existing conditions was assessed. While they have several complaints and grievances to make, on the whole, most female teachers (61%) expressed their satisfaction, while others were either partially satisfied or not satisfied at all. On the other hand, most male teachers (63%) expressed dissatisfaction with the current working conditions. Thus, important differences have been observed between the male and female teachers. Female teachers have a tendency of assessing the working conditions in terms of intrinsic factors, while the male teachers have the same in terms of extrinsic factors. A number of things such as status, salary, promotion, allowance, physical facilities, etc. were

frequently mentioned by the male teachers. On the contrary, things that kept female teachers satisfied are as follows: ‘being able to come out of the four walls of the house,’ ‘students’ progress in learning’, ‘intellectual development of children,’ ‘being able to meet good people,’ ‘respect from parents’ etc.

## 7.8 Problems Faced by Schools

Most public schools in Nepal are operating in difficult circumstances. How effectively teachers will be able to perform their roles depends on the types of schools they are working in. The study made an attempt to examine the problems facing the schools. A list of 24 different common problems of schools was given to the teachers for stating their perception about the seriousness of the problems on a 3-point scale (1, 2, 3 representing “Not so serious,” “Serious,” and “Very Serious” responses respectively. The perceived magnitude of these problems is presented in Table 7.25.

**Table 7.25: Problems faced by schools as stated by female teachers**

Problem	N	Mean	SD
1. Student indiscipline	318	1.79	0.41
2. Student irregularity	324	2.02	0.43
3. Lack of student interest in study	315	1.91	0.57
4. Students leaving the school for various reasons	318	2.11	0.42
5. Students not having sufficient books and stationery	322	2.01	0.56
6. Lack of parental interest in their children's education	324	1.86	0.62
7. Parental pressure in examinations	322	1.98	0.63
8. Teacher shortage	320	1.95	0.60
9. Inefficient teachers	323	1.61	0.64
10. Teacher absenteeism	324	1.83	0.50
11. Teacher involvement in politics	324	1.65	0.65
12. Lack of supervision from the DEO Office	323	2.17	0.76
13. Too much interference by local politicians	319	1.84	0.68
14. Shortage of physical facilities	321	2.09	0.59
15. Overly crowded classrooms	322	2.25	0.70
16. Shortage of instructional materials	322	2.19	0.57
17. Lack of funds	309	2.34	0.64
18. Frequent change in School Management Committee	321	1.93	0.57
19. Frequent change in head teacher	314	1.59	0.58
20. Too frequently teachers invited for training courses	319	1.47	0.59
21. Lack of communication between teachers and parents	322	1.77	0.57
22. Poor school management	318	1.88	0.65
23. Poor intellectual capacity of students	319	2.10	0.48
24. Lack of common teamwork among the teaching staff	322	1.82	0.62

Note: SD stands for standard deviation.

It is seen that female teachers as a whole have considered the following problems as serious or very serious represented by a mean value of 2.0 or more than 2.0: ‘student irregularity,’ ‘students leaving the school for various reasons,’ ‘students not having sufficient textbooks and stationery,’ lack of supervision from the DEO office,’ ‘shortage of physical facilities,’

'shortage of instructional materials,' 'lack of funds,' and 'poor intellectual capacity of students.' Ten problems such as 'student indiscipline,' 'lack of student interest in study,' 'lack of parental interest in their children's education,' 'parental pressure for examinations,' 'teacher shortage,' 'teacher absenteeism,' 'too much political interference,' 'frequent change in the SMC,' 'poor school management,' and 'lack of understanding and teamwork among the teaching staff' are close to the mean value of 2.0, suggesting that teachers also see these problems as serious. Teachers do not see 'inefficient teachers,' 'teacher involvement in politics,' 'frequent change of the head teacher,' 'too many training courses,' and 'lack of understanding between parents and teachers' as serious problems. Overall, the experiences of male teachers do not differ from those of female teachers.

## **7.9 Factors that Hinder Teacher Effectiveness and Actions Needed for Improvement**

### **7.9.1 Factors that might hinder teachers from being effective and productive**

Female teachers frequently mentioned that a number of factors often prevent them from being effective in their work. Heavy teaching load, lack of time to prepare for teaching both at home and at school, negative attitudes of parents, lack of discipline on the part of students, extra responsibility, frequent classroom interruptions, uncooperative colleagues, lack of resources and materials, assignment outside of education, training and experience, lack of administrative support, large class size are often identified as barriers.

### **7.9.2 Conditions necessary for being effective and productive**

For teachers to be effective and productive, schools must provide appropriate conditions. What would help teachers to be most effective and productive? The question generated multitude of responses. Small class sizes, supportive attitude of parents and community members, availability of instructional resources, appropriate physical atmosphere, collegial environment, adequate time for preparation, timely promotion, continuous opportunity to participate in professional development activities, hardworking and well-motivated children, orderly atmosphere in schools, reasonable teaching load, and administrative support are believed to boost teacher effectiveness and productivity. It was emphasized over and over again that 'proper scheduling' and 'shorter school hours' would help female teachers to work with young children.

## CHAPTER VIII

# GENDER ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOLS

Schools as organizations have the potential of being oppressive or enabling for men and women. Gender is a pivotal area of discrimination. Male and female teachers do not experience the school environment in the same way. People's attitudes, values, beliefs, relationships, language and practices will determine the gender relations in schools. The chapter is devoted to exploring gender environment in schools. First of all, the chapter attempts to explore teachers' understanding of the concepts of gender equality and gender discrimination. How do teachers perceive gender equality in the context of education and schooling? It will seek to answer whether gender discrimination exists in schools. If it does, in what form does it exist? Second, the chapter examines female teachers' perceptions about stakeholders' preference for male and female teachers. Third, the chapter analyzes female teachers' perceived sense of acceptance and safety in schools. It assesses the extent to which female teachers find themselves accepted or neglected. Most particularly, the study seeks to answer how male and female teachers interact and communicate with each other in school settings. Fourth, the chapter attempts to examine the extent to which female teachers are subjected to sexual harassment and unacceptable behaviors. Fifth, the chapter investigates whether female teachers face any difficulty in schools as a result of community beliefs about what should be done and what should not be done during menstruation and pregnancy. Then, the chapter analyzes attitudes of parents, children, male teachers and educational administrators toward female teachers. Finally, the chapter examines how female teachers perceive girl and boy children as learners.

### **8.1 Teachers' Understanding of Gender Equality and Gender Discrimination**

'Gender equality' and 'gender discrimination' dominate much of the development policy and practice in recent years. These two notions frequently appear in the media as well. The survey made an attempt to examine if this discourse of gender equality and gender discrimination has reached the teachers working in different parts of the country. In the main, it attempted to investigate how these concepts have been understood and interpreted by teachers in relation to education. It is important to know if teachers have clear understanding of gender related issues. Without proper understanding, they will not be able to act on the issues. As such, the policy goals of achieving gender equality in education and creating a gender friendly school calls for teachers' active role.

#### **8.1.1 Understanding of the concept of gender discrimination**

In an attempt to examine understanding of the concept of gender discrimination, we asked the female teachers if they had ever heard of the concept (Table 8.1). Gender discrimination being such a universal concept, we had expected that almost all the respondents would answer in the positive. It turned out that there were some (19%) who had never heard of the



concept before. Proportionally, more secondary and lower secondary teachers confirmed their acquaintance with the concept as compared to the primary teachers. It probably has to do with the level of educational attainment of these persons. Since secondary and lower secondary teachers have higher academic qualifications than the primary teachers, this difference can be understood.

Cross-tabulation in terms of ecological zone, sex, caste/ethnicity, school location and marital status presents unexpected results. More proportions of teachers in the Mountains (90%) and Hills (85%) are found to be familiar with the concept as compared to their counterparts in the Tarai (73%) and the Kathmandu Valley (72%). Janjatis (71%) and Newars (79%) appear to be slightly less familiar with the concept in comparison to the Chhetris (84%) and the Brahmins (83%). In terms of location, those living in the rural areas show their familiarity with the concept in larger proportion than those living in the urban areas (85% versus 79%). In terms of marital status, more proportion of unmarried women report having heard of the concept than those who are married (97% versus 80%). The Nepali translation of the term gender discrimination becomes ‘laingik bibhed,’ which is used only in formal occasions. The lack of familiarity with the concept among the Newars and the Janjatis and those living in the Tarai and the Kathmandu Valley may in part have to do with the non-Nepali linguistic background of the respondents.

During informal discussions, teachers mentioned that they had learnt about the concept from a number of sources. Newspapers, training, television, radio, colleagues, and textbooks were primary sources of information. Apparently, people learn many things through non-formal and informal means.

**Table 8.1: Heard about gender discrimination by female teachers (%)**

<b>Heard of gender discrimination</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	79.6	87.5	89.3	81.1
No	20.4	12.5	10.7	18.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>392</b>

### **8.1.2 Heard of gender equality**

The concept of gender equality also went through the same process of scrutiny. Teachers were again asked if they had heard of the concept of gender equality (Table 8.2). Again, those who answered in the positive make the overwhelming majority (87%). Those who expressed ignorance about the concept constituted 13% of the total respondents. More secondary and lower secondary teachers mentioned having heard of the concept of gender equality than did primary teachers. Cross-tabulation of the data in terms of ecological zone, caste/ethnicity, school location, and marital status of the respondents revealed uniformity rather than variations in the responses. Again, the respondents knew about the concept from multiple sources.

**Table 8.2: Heard of gender equality by female teachers (%)**

Heard of gender equality	Primary	Lower secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	85.2	92.5	96.4	86.7
No	14.8	7.5	3.6	13.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>399</b>

### 8.1.3 Gender equality in the context of education and schooling

Gender equality can mean different things to different people. Teachers were asked to define the meaning of gender equality in the context of education and schooling. The question generated a total 1,038 types of responses from 416 female teachers, which were then reduced to 15 categories by combining similar themes and/or views. The results are shown in Table 8.3.

**Table 8.3: Different meanings of gender equality as perceived by female teachers**

Meaning of gender equality	No. of responses	% of responses	% of respondents
1. Providing education to boys and girls without any discrimination.	116	11.2	27.9
2. Bringing girls into the mainstream of education.	113	10.8	27.2
3. Ensuring that every child has the opportunity to education regardless of his or her caste, ethnicity, gender, color, religion, and language.	110	10.6	26.4
4. Treating boys and girls equally.	94	9.1	22.6
5. Ensuring equal rights for men and women.	92	8.8	22.1
6. Recruiting more female teachers in schools.	83	8.0	20.0
7. Recognizing that boys and girls are equal in their individual and intellectual abilities.	75	7.2	18.0
8. Creating an environment where boys and girls have equal opportunity to learn.	64	6.2	15.4
9. Paying attention to girls' learning problems.	62	6.0	14.9
10. Engaging boys and girls in teaching and learning activities equally.	54	5.2	13.0
11. Making sure that both men and women have equal participation in teaching profession.	54	5.2	13.0
12. Ensuring equal participation of men and women in social, economic and educational development works.	34	3.3	8.2
13. Ensuring that both men and women have the same opportunity to move ahead in their life.	33	3.2	7.9
14. Ensuring that parents understand the value of education for daughters.	29	2.8	7.0
15. Ensuring that boys and girls have equal level of academic achievement.	25	2.4	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

The responses obtained from the teachers can be further categorized into two main groups: general and specific. ‘Treating boys and girls equally,’ ‘ensuring equal rights for men and women,’ ‘ensuring equal participation of men and women in social, economic and educational development,’ and ‘ensuring that both men and women have the same opportunity to move ahead in their life’ are examples of general categories of responses. On the other hand, ‘paying attention to girls’ learning problems,’ ‘recruiting more female teachers in teaching profession,’ and ‘creating an opportunity where boys and girls have the same opportunity to learn’ are some examples of specific categories.

Typically, the term gender is used to refer to girls or women. Gender equality would thus mean lifting the status of women or girls. Such a position separates men and women or boys and girls. Gender equality would thus mean lifting the status of women or girls, increasing the participation of girls in education, or addressing the problems of girls in schools as perceived by teachers. Examples include the following:

“Bringing more girls into the mainstream of education”

“Paying attention to girls’ learning problems”

“Recruiting more female teachers in schools”

On the other hand, gender is also viewed in reference to both boys and girls or men and women. There are sufficient examples of such views in teachers’ responses:

“Providing education to boys and girls without any discrimination”

“Treating boys and girls equally”

“Creating an opportunity where boys and girls have equal opportunity to learn”

Gender equality is also understood in a much broader way. This view of gender equality is inclusive of girls and marginalized groups. For example:

“Ensuring that every child has the opportunity to education regardless of his or her caste, ethnicity, gender, color, religion, and language”

Further examination of teachers’ responses reveals that gender equality is also understood in terms of (a) rights, (b) participation, (c) opportunity and (d) outcomes. Again, teachers demonstrated their understanding of the concept.

### 8.1.4 Existence of gender discrimination in schools

Taking our exploration of gender issues in schools a bit further, we asked the female teachers if there existed gender discrimination in their schools in any form. The results are presented in Table 8.4. A large majority of the respondents answered in the negative, suggesting that no gender discrimination exists in their schools. Only 20% of the total number of teachers admitted the existence of gender discrimination. It may be recalled that on being asked if they had ever heard the concept of gender discrimination some 19% had answered in the negative. As displayed in the table, more secondary and lower secondary grade teachers were of the view that gender discrimination does occur in schools as compared to the primary school teachers. Further analysis of the data revealed that teachers do have identical views on this issue regardless of their varying characteristics (ecological zone, school location, sex, marital status, and caste/ethnicity). It is interesting to note that most respondents did not see gender discrimination taking place in their schools. There can be two explanations why most respondents failed to see any discrimination taking place based on gender. First, substantial proportion of the respondents in the present sample is still unaware of the concept of gender discrimination. Second, the sensitivity involved in the notion of gender discrimination and cultural sanctions where matters involving sex can or cannot be discussed may, in part, prompted the respondents not to be open. Given that it is only an exploratory study, it should not be interpreted that there is no gender discrimination in schools. A comprehensive understanding of gender discrimination probably calls for a different research methodology.

**Table 8.4: Existence of gender discrimination as experienced by female teachers (%)**

Existence of gender discrimination	Primary	Lower secondary	Secondary	Total
Yes	17.0	33.3	35.7	19.9
No	83.0	66.7	64.3	80.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100	100.0
N	324	39	28	391

### 8.1.5 Different forms of gender discrimination in schools

Teachers were asked to describe the kind of discrimination they observe or experience in their schools on a day-to-day basis. Responses do confirm the existence of discriminatory practices in schools. Here are some brief comments:

“More opportunity is provided to male rather than female teachers. If there is an invitation for a training course or a workshop from the DEO Office, male teachers will be the ones to be asked first.”

“It is always the male teachers who make major decisions.”

“Head teachers always believe that male teachers are more capable of doing things. Often, male teachers will be asked to take on challenging and rewarding responsibilities.”

“Girls are often told to clean the classrooms, paint the floor, and fetch drinking water. On the other hand, boys will be made monitors to control classrooms and maintain order.”

“If the male teachers come late then it is not an issue. But, when female teachers are late, then a meeting will be held to discuss this.”

“Extra-curricular activities are mainly for boys.”

“Boys get more opportunity to learn than girls.”

The teachers also described the discrimination that takes place in the family in favor of boys. Here is one example:

“Sons are sent to private schools whereas daughters are sent to government schools. My class contains a crowd of girls. If this situation is to continue, girls will not learn how to behave and interact with boys or with males.”

A few female teachers reluctantly stated that they experienced some discrimination at the appointment stage. Many teachers however either denied or ignored to give examples of discrimination at this stage. Those who had the experience of discrimination at the appointment stage mentioned that there was preference for male teachers among the interview panel members. Those who were making appointments were concerned about how a woman with a child could teach full-time.

#### **8.1.6 Participation in gender training**

Training is one effective means of learning about gender and other topics. In recent years, there is growing interest in the gender issue. It should be noted that both pre-service and in-service teacher training courses have not included gender related themes at all. However, training courses are often available through International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other agencies working at the grassroots level. In this regard, teachers were asked whether they had participated in any kind of such gender training courses. The results are presented in Table 8.5. Only 14% of the total female teachers reported having participated in gender-related training courses, with a large majority of them having been deprived of such an opportunity. Proportionally, more secondary and lower secondary teachers had the opportunity to participate in such training courses as compared to their counterparts who teach in primary grades. There are no organized programs to train school teachers on gender related issues.

Cross-tabulation of the data in terms of teacher’s sex reveals that both male and female teachers had the opportunity to participate in the gender training in almost equal proportions (male, 16; female, 14%). Few teachers currently serving in rural locations (10%) had this opportunity in comparison to those working in urban locations (17%). Training courses should target all categories and types of teachers.

**Table 8.5: Female teachers' participation in training (%)**

<b>Participation in gender training</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	11.1	27.5	27.6	13.9
No	88.9	72.5	72.4	86.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>402</b>

## **8.2 Perceived Degree of Preference and Respect for Male and Female Teachers**

### **8.2.1 Teachers' self-assessment of stakeholders' preference for male and female teachers**

Who is more preferred in the teacher role? Are male teachers preferred over female teachers? Or, are female teachers preferred over male teachers? These questions are very important if the schools of Nepal are to be staffed with adequate numbers of female teachers. Before these questions are examined, it will be interesting to examine how female teachers see different stakeholders seeing themselves. In this regard, female teachers were asked how they see different stakeholders preferring between males and females as teachers. The findings are shown in Table 8.6. It is seen that most female teachers are not certain about what type of teachers are preferred by the fathers of students, community members, SMC members, head teachers and the district officials. The majority of female teachers are however certain that mothers of students and girl students would prefer female teachers over male teachers. The respondents in large proportion believed that boys also prefer to be taught by female teachers than by the male teachers. If the female teachers' assessment is correct, the task of increasing the number of female teachers is not easy. The findings reveal that those who are in the role of hiring and managing female teachers do not seem to have favorable attitudes toward female teachers. This issue will be further examined later to confirm if such a conclusion can be made.

**Table 8.6: Stakeholder preference for male and female teachers (%)**

	<b>Cannot say</b>	<b>Male teachers preferred more than female teachers</b>	<b>Female teachers preferred more than male teachers</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>N</b>
Fathers of students	45.5	27.9	26.6	100.0	376
Mothers of students	23.8	4.5	71.7	100.0	378
Boys	33.2	21.9	44.9	100.0	370
Girls	20.4	6.7	72.9	100.0	377
Community members	59.9	12.6	27.5	100.0	374
SMC members	60.1	21.1	18.8	100.0	368
Head teachers	58.8	21.3	19.9	100.0	371
District officials	77.5	8.9	13.6	100.0	369

### **8.2.2 Perceived degree of respect from parents, students and communities**

There are often complaints that female teachers do not get as much respect as their male counterparts from students, parents and community members. The study examined if there was any truth in these complaints. In this context, the survey asked the female teachers if they had ever experienced a situation where male teachers were given greater respect than to themselves by their students, parents and community members. The data suggests that there is some truth in the above complaint. As regards the respect from students, less than one quarter (23%) of the female teachers reported having experienced such a situation, while a large majority of them (77%) reported having not gone through such an experience. Proportionally, more secondary (83%) and lower secondary (40%) teachers have experienced such a situation as compared to the primary teachers (16%). Clearly, young children appear to be more respectful of the female teachers than the grown ups.

As far as the respect from the parents is concerned, some 23% of the total female teachers reported that they had experienced the situation as described above. Again, slightly higher proportions of lower secondary (28%) and secondary (30%) teachers reported having gone through the situation as compared to the primary grade teachers (23%). Similarly, a little over one-fourth of the total female teachers find community members disrespectful to them. They reported having faced a situation where community members paid greater respect to the male teachers as compared to the female teachers. Although in a majority of cases the female teachers find their students, parents and community members respectful to them, there are cases where the contrary is in existence. Any person would not want to stay and work in a situation where equal respect is not paid to the members of both sexes.

## **8.3 Female Teachers' Perceptions of Acceptance and Safety in Schools**

It is a fact that learning achievement of children depends to a large extent on the satisfaction and commitment of teachers, which in many ways comes from their feelings of belongingness, acceptance and safety in school environment. To be able to perform effectively and produce good results, teachers must feel that they are safe and they are a part of the team. Teachers, too, expect to work in a safe environment and be accepted by the school administration and their colleagues. If this is true for the female teachers working in different school environments was of particular interest to this study.

### **8.3.1 Sense of loneliness and/or isolation**

How do female teachers feel in environments that are male dominated? In order to find out the situation, the teachers were asked how often they feel lonely or isolated while they are at work. Teachers' response was sought on a three-point scale: never, sometimes or very often. The data is displayed in Table 8.7. In a majority of cases, female teachers (69%) have never had any feeling of loneliness while at work. There were however some cases where female teachers underwent through the feeling of loneliness or isolation very frequently (21%) or sometimes (11%). When the two responses 'sometimes' and 'very often' are combined,

secondary grade teachers (48%) had the feeling of loneliness or isolation more often as compared to the primary (31%) and lower secondary teachers (25%). The fact that there are more males on the staff than the females can make the former feel lonely or isolated. The sense of loneliness or isolation is less pronounced among the female teachers who are working in their own communities than those who are not working in their own communities (38% versus 30%). Naturally, those who live and work away from their family members and relatives will have the experience of feeling lonely or isolated. Women are likely to feel lonely or isolated in schools with male domination than in other types of schools.

**Table 8.7: Female teachers' feeling of loneliness or isolation at work (%)**

<b>Feeling of loneliness</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Never	69.4	75.0	51.7	68.6
Sometimes	10.7	2.5	24.2	10.9
Very often	19.9	22.5	24.1	20.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>405</b>

### 8.3.2 Sense of being ignored or neglected at work

To feel lonely or isolated is different from the feeling of being ignored or neglected. One can feel lonely when there is no one around to share one’s feelings. But, one can feel ignored or neglected when the environment fails to give the due attention, recognition, or consideration that one deserves. In this context, the teachers were once again asked to assess the extent to which they felt ignored or neglected. The results displayed in Table 8.8 show that in a majority of cases female teachers did not feel ignored or neglected at work. But, some 40% of the total respondents felt having been ignored or neglected at work sometimes (13%) or very often (27%). Proportionally, more secondary teachers (46%) felt ignored than the primary (40%) and lower secondary teachers (42%). Again, female teachers working in their own local community were less likely to feel ignored or neglected at work in comparison to those who work away from their homes (31% versus 42%). Again, women are likely to be ignored or neglected in male dominated school environments than in environments with dense presence of female staff. Here is one example of how female teachers are made to feel ignored or neglected:

“We (female teachers) are never involved in any kind of decision-making. Most decisions are taken outside the school after school hours. Male colleagues are regularly engaged in making a whole range of decisions about how schools should be managed and run or how resources should be spent. We are excluded from all these games.”



**Table 8.8: Sense of being ignored or neglected at work as experienced by female teachers (%)**

Feeling ignored/neglected	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Never	60.2	57.5	53.6	59.5
Sometimes	12.8	10.0	21.4	13.1
Very often	27.0	32.5	25.0	27.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>405</b>

### 8.3.3 Perceived sense of safety at work

In the final analysis, it is of utmost importance whether female teachers feel safe at work. On being asked how safe female teachers feel at work, an overwhelming majority of them answered ‘Yes’ and a few of them answered ‘No.’ The experiences of primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers are identical (Table 8.9). It is interesting to note that unmarried female teachers are more likely to feel unsafe at work than the married ones (13% versus 8%). Studies elsewhere have reported that unmarried women are more vulnerable than the married ones in terms of being sexually harassed, abused or raped (USAID, 2001). Again, one has to remember that issues involving sex, harassment, abuse or rape are not topics for open discussion in Nepal. Our findings cannot be considered to be conclusive.

**Table 8.9: Sense of safety at work as perceived by female teachers (%)**

Perceived sense of safety	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
I feel safe.	91.7	92.5	93.1	91.9
I do not feel very safe.	8.3	7.5	6.9	8.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>405</b>

### 8.3.4 Level of interaction between male and female teachers in schools

Traditionally, Nepal is a gender segregated society. Social and cultural barriers do not permit open interaction between males and females although these practices are gradually vanishing in recent years. Since teaching has remained a male dominated profession in Nepal, the women who choose to become a teacher must work in a male dominated environment. The policy of recruiting one female teacher in each school may be a revolutionary proposal in a society like ours, but this policy runs the risk of subjecting women to a male-dense environment with potential harassment. Being in such an environment alone can be extremely painful, more so in communities and environments where social and cultural barriers do not permit interaction between men and women. The quality of professional life of a female teacher depends on the quality of communication and interaction between the members of two sexes. The fact that substantial proportion of female teachers feel ignored and/or isolated at work is already a signal of the fact that there is limited interaction between the male and female teachers. Further inquiries were made in an attempt to assess the level of interaction between male and female teachers.

How do female teachers spend their leisure time at school? There can be at least five possibilities. A female teacher can spend her leisure time with her (a) female colleagues, (b) male colleagues, (c) both male and female colleagues, (d) students, and (e) finally herself (be alone). The results are tabulated in Table 8.10. For the most part, female teachers seem to spend their leisure time with their male and female colleagues (48%). This phenomenon occurs in schools where there are more than two female teachers employed in the school. It is indicative of the fact that female teachers are likely to interact and associate with the male teachers provided there are other female colleagues around. In schools where there are no male teachers, there are no options: female teachers will be interacting and associating with their female counterparts. In a few cases, we have found female teachers interacting with their female colleagues only (10%). On the other hand, where female teachers are deployed in a male only school the situation takes a different form. They are either on their own or spend their leisure with the students. Of the total female teachers who responded to this question, some 40% reported that they are either alone or with the students during their leisure time. It is strange to note that spending time with the students occurs more often among primary teachers than the lower secondary and secondary teachers. But, being alone occurs more often among lower secondary and secondary teachers than primary teachers. The proportion of female teachers who were bold enough to say that their leisure time goes with the male colleagues is a mere 1 percent.

**Table 8.10: Spending leisure time at school by female teachers (%)**

Spending leisure time	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Mostly with female colleagues	11.3	5.0	7.2	10.4
Mostly with male colleagues	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.0
Mostly with both male and female colleagues	47.0	50.0	60.7	48.3
Mostly alone	18.8	30.0	25.0	20.3
Mostly with students	21.7	15.0	7.1	20.0
<b>N</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>404</b>

During the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, female teachers shared some of their painful stories of life that they had experienced in male dominated school environments:

“The staffroom is filled with smoke and filthy gossip. I can hardly bear all this.”

‘I am not interested in politics, not at all. Our colleagues only know to talk of politics. What else can I do other than leaving the teachers’ room?’

‘I get peace when I am with the children.’

‘They (male teachers) discuss anything, anytime. There are dirty jokes. They will be vomiting anything. It is like living in a hell. They do not even notice that I am there.’

## **8.4 Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**

### **8.4.1 Experience of sexual harassment**

Western research tends to suggest that women are often subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace. Those who work in schools, colleges and universities are no exception to this experience. Educational research in Nepal has not examined the issue of sexual harassment yet. As such, what constitutes sexual harassment in the context of Nepal has not been defined properly. Therefore, a list of acts that are believed to be sexually offensive or unacceptable was prepared by reviewing the available western literature. In an attempt to examine the incidence of sexual harassment in the schools, the survey asked the female teachers to assess whether and how frequently they have been through a number of such acts that are associated with sexual harassment. The findings of the survey are tabulated in Table 8.11.

It should be noted, at the outset, that it is improper culturally to ask questions related to sex or sexual harassment. It is even more unacceptable a man asking a woman questions involving sex. Since there were females on the survey team, it was possible to have some discussion with the female teachers on the issue. Still, some 10% of the total respondents chose not to answer these questions. Often, victims of sexual harassment do not share their painful experiences even with the relatives or close friends. Therefore, surveys of this nature might not be the proper means of investigating the very sensitive issue of sexual harassment. Most enumerators reported that it was difficult to prepare the respondents to answer these questions.

The female teachers in the sample rated the extent to which various acts, defined to represent acts of sexual harassment in the western literature, occur in their schools. Except for the first three acts (making comments on clothing, making comments on physical appearance or body parts, and asking very personal questions), all other acts pertaining to sexual harassment occurred among a very small number of female teachers. An overwhelming majority of the respondents reported having not been through the several acts presented in the table. Being asked personal questions is one act faced by the largest majority of the female teachers in the sample (50% when 'sometimes' and 'often' are combined). Comments on clothing (34%) and comments on physical appearance or body parts (27%) are the two other acts experienced by the second and the third largest proportions of female respondents in the sample. Some respondents pointed out during interviews that it is part of social life to pass comments on others' clothing or physical appearance. They also mentioned that 'to ask or be asked very personal questions' cannot be considered as an act of sexual harassment. It is common among co-workers to take the relationship to the personal level.

**Table 8.11: Female teachers' experience of sexual harassment (%)**

Act of sexual harassment	Never	Sometimes	Very Often	Total	N
1. Making comments on clothing	65.8	28.8	5.4	100.0	389
2. Making comments on physical appearance or body parts	73.1	23.8	3.1	100.0	387
3. Asking very personal questions	49.7	45.2	5.1	100.0	390
4. Giving pat on the back or elsewhere	96.9	2.8	0.3	100.0	390
5. Making unnecessary phone calls	97.4	2.1	0.5	100.0	386
6. Inappropriate touching	95.6	4.1	0.3	100.0	388
7. Invitation for outing	98.4	1.6	0.0	100.0	385
8. Invasion of personal space	97.1	2.4	0.5	100.0	382
9. Making sexual remarks or gesture	98.4	1.3	0.3	100.0	379
10. Sending sexually offensive materials	98.7	1.3	0.0	100.0	384
11. Displaying sexually offensive materials	97.1	2.6	0.3	100.0	382
12. Making suggestive looks	97.1	2.6	0.3	100.0	383
13. Making sexual or dirty jokes	95.0	5.0	0.0	100.0	382
14. Making unwelcome sexual advances	98.7	1.3	0.0	100.0	380
15. Talking about sexual activity	95.0	4.5	0.5	100.0	381
16. Attempted rape	98.4	1.6	0.0	100.0	382

To obtain a general view, a direct question was asked if the female teachers have ever had to go through the experience of sexual harassment in the workplace during their teaching career. The question yielded 369 (93%) 'No' and 28 (7%) 'Yes.' The overall response is not different from what is reported in Table above. The fact that very few women admitted having been subjected to the different acts of sexual harassment does not mean that public schools in Nepal are safe for female teachers. The torture a woman goes through cannot be described in statistics. The fact that 28 out of 397 female teachers had to go through the experience of harassment is a testimony that the problem is serious. This reality cannot be dismissed. The situation could be even uglier if examined using a different research methodology.

#### **8.4.2 Male teachers' activities unacceptable to female teachers**

Female teachers who choose to work outside home also choose to work in a male dominated environment. Male teachers who have often worked in male environments might not be aware of how to deal with female teachers in the workplace. The survey asked the female teachers to describe their male colleagues' activities that were not acceptable to them. The responses seem to indicate that female teachers are often subjected to unacceptable activities. Here are what some female teachers had to say:

'At times, male teachers try to misbehave me. I know I am not being treated in a decent way. But, what else can I do?'

'It is very common for male teachers to use dirty and vulgar words. They do not even care that I am around.'

‘I am single. This is my choice and I want to live this way. But, day in day out I have to give explanation why I am leading a single life. I do not like people asking me the reason for staying single.’

‘I do not like those moments when women are described as fragile, weak and feeble-minded people.’

‘There is constant suggestion that women cannot fulfill higher level responsibilities.’

‘Those moments are not acceptable when I am asked very personal questions.’

### 8.4.3 Female teachers’ expectations from their colleagues

What do female teachers expect from people in schools, especially their male colleagues? This question produced multitude of responses from the female teachers. These responses are displayed in Table 8.12.

**Table 8.12: Female teachers’ expectations from other people (%)**

Expectation	Percentage
1. To be treated with respect and dignity	36.0
2. Recognition that female teachers are equally able to teach and do other things	35.0
3. Recognition of female teachers as a team member	34.0
4. Opportunity to be involved in all aspects of school management	34.0
5. Support for professional growth	33.0
6. Equal opportunity for career advancement	33.0
7. Recognition that female teachers’ needs are different from male teachers’	29.0
8. Recognition that female teachers’ have private lives	24.0
9. Let female teachers do their jobs without any interference	21.0
10. Frank interaction and communication	20.0
11. Use of decent language in the staff room	18.0

Naturally, female teachers expect to be treated with respect and dignity from their male colleagues. They expect that their male colleagues recognize their ability to teach and do other things that the post calls for. Often, female teachers feel alienated from the school environment. They do not see themselves as a team member. A little over one-third of the total female teachers stated that they would like to be recognized by their male colleagues as a team member. About the same proportion of them expected to enjoy an opportunity to be involved in all aspects of school management. Many of them expected support for professional growth and equal opportunity for career advancement. We have reported earlier that opportunity for professional growth is not equal for male and female teachers. Some have emphasized that male teachers need to understand that female teachers’ needs are different from their own and that female teachers have private lives. There was call from female teachers to let them perform their jobs without any interference. Frequent

communication and interaction was also called for. Finally, some female teachers expect the use of decent language in the workplace by their male counterparts. It appears that male teachers might benefit from the gender-related training programs that teach them how to relate to female counterparts in the workplace.

## 8.5 Beliefs about Pregnancy and Menstruation

Many communities in Nepal still espouse traditional beliefs on what a woman should do or should not do during pregnancy or menstruation. In particular, women are isolated during such times. Such beliefs can be obstacles to women’s joining the workforce and functioning effectively in the workplace. In this context, the survey made an inquiry on these matters.

### 8.5.1 Existence of the belief that pregnant women should not touch others

On being asked if there existed such a belief in the local community that pregnant woman should not touch others, some 20% of the total respondents mentioned that this belief was still alive in their community (Table 8.13). Many felt that such a belief makes it difficult to work in the community as a teacher. Cross-tabulation of the data shows interesting results. More proportions of Brahmins (22%) and Chhetris (24%) reported the existence of such belief as compared to the Newars (11%) and Janjatis (4%). This belief was more prominent in the Mountains (26%), followed by Hills (21%), the Tarai (16%) and the Kathmandu Valley (4%). Likewise, this was reported in more proportions by teachers working in rural areas than those who work in urban areas (25% versus 15%).

**Table 8.13: Community belief about pregnancy as stated by female teachers (%)**

Existence of community belief	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Exists	20.2	13.5	25.9	19.9
Does not exist	79.8	86.5	74.1	80.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>335</b>

### 8.5.2 Parental refusal to be taught by pregnant woman

Further, the female teachers were asked whether parents refuse their children to be taught by pregnant women (Table 8.14). The data suggests that the remnants of the tradition are still around. Of the total respondents (335), 7% said that parents still do so. The majority of the respondents responded in the negative. The teachers serving in the Mountains (11%) and the Kathmandu Valley (8%) do have such an experience in higher proportions as compared to those who work in the Hills (7%) and the Tarai (2%). In terms of development region, this was experienced by higher proportions of teachers in the Mid and Far Western Development Regions (9%) and the Central Development Region (8%) as compared to those in the Eastern Development Region (6%) and Western Development Region (4%). Proportionally, more Newar (11%) and Chhetri (8%) female teachers had this experience than those who belonged to the Brahmins (5%) and the Janjatis (6%).

**Table 8.14: Refusal to be taught by female teachers during their pregnancy (%)**

<b>Refusal</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Parents do refuse.	6.7	3.2	9.5	6.6
Parents do not refuse.	93.3	96.8	90.5	93.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>335</b>

**8.5.3 Existence of the belief that women should be isolated during menstruation**

The belief that women should not touch others during menstruation and therefore should remain in isolation is found to be rampant (Table 8.15). Sixty-five percent of the total female teachers reported that this belief does exist in communities where they are currently working. This is felt more often experienced by Brahmin (73%) and Chhetri (66%) female teachers than those who belong to other caste/ethnic groups (Newars; 45; Janjatis; 54%). This belief appears to be very strong in the Mountains (80%), followed by the Hills (62%), the Tarai (61%) and the Kathmandu Valley (40%). Proportionally, more teachers in the Far and Mid Western Development Regions (71%) suffer from this belief than the rest (Western, 65%; Central, 64%; and Eastern, 59%). It is not surprising that female teachers in rural areas reported the existence of this belief in great proportions than those working in urban areas (69% versus 62%). District-wise variations are noteworthy. Jumla, a district in the Mid-Western Region, ranks the highest (94%) in terms of the existence of this belief as reported by the teachers, while, Kathmandu, the capital city of the country ranks the lowest (40%). Most of these findings are consistent with our apprehensions.

**Table 8.15: Belief concerning menstruation as experienced by female teachers (%)**

<b>Existence of community belief concerning menstruation</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Lower Secondary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Exists	64.7	69.2	57.1	64.6
Does not exist	35.3	30.8	42.9	35.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>401</b>

Women told their side of the stories how much difficulty they must face due to the existence of such a belief in the community. Here are some excerpts from interviews:

“I cannot come to the school during my period. Every month I am absent for at least 3 days, for which I do not get paid because I am a temporary teacher. I was in fact asked by the head teacher to do so.”

“I am the only female teacher in this school. There is only one toilet for the entire staff. You can imagine how hard it could be during such times.”

“I do go to school during the period of menstruation. But, I must isolate myself from the rest of the staff. I cannot sit in the same room as others.”

## 8.6 Attitudes toward Female Teachers

The extent to which women will be effective in their work will depend on how they are perceived and supported by their male counterparts, parents, students, head teachers and educational administrators. Qualified females will be attracted to join teaching if the environment is positive and supportive.

### 8.6.1 Male teachers' attitudes toward female teachers

Needless to say, the world of work is heavily male dominated. Teaching is also a male dominated profession. We did observe sufficient cases of women working alone in the crowds of men during our field visits. The study made an effort to examine male teachers' attitudes toward female teachers. In this context, the male teachers were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with a set of statements as presented in Table 8.16.

**Table 8.16: Male teachers' attitudes toward female teachers (%)**

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Total	N
1. Female teachers' presence in schools can boost girls' enrollment and retention.	46.3	53.7	100.0	311
2. Women are lazier than men.	69.4	30.6	100.0	310
3. Women are more talkative than men.	59.7	40.3	100.0	310
4. Women are not good at organizing extra-curricular activities.	60.5	39.5	100.0	315
5. Women are more regular and punctual than men in class.	20.1	79.9	100.0	304
6. Women are more appropriate to teach younger children.	61.9	38.1	100.0	312
7. Women are as competent as men.	15.3	84.7	100.0	314
8. Women take more leave than men.	74.0	26.0	100.0	311
9. Women, too, can become strong administrators.	8.0	92.0	100.0	313
10. Girls feel safer when female teachers are present.	59.8	40.2	100.0	311
11. Parents feel safe to send their daughters to schools if female teachers are present.	55.0	45.0	100.0	309
12. Women are more sincere and hardworking than men.	35.3	64.7	100.0	312
13. Women are good at giving care to children.	70.3	29.7	100.0	313
14. Women are prepared to take on difficult assignments.	15.9	84.1	100.0	314
15. Women are competent to teach Science and Mathematics.	38.8	61.2	100.0	312

As displayed in Table 8.16, a total of 15 statements were given to the male teachers. Each statement carries a theme which either presents a positive image of female teachers or a negative image. The respondents simply expressed their approval or disapproval. Teachers' approval of the positive statement would mean that they agree with the message of the statement. In a majority of cases, male teachers believed that woman are 'lazier', 'more talkative,' 'less capable of organizing extra-curricular activities,' 'less regular and punctual in class,' 'less competent,' 'more appropriate in smaller grades as teachers,' 'less sincere and



hardworking,' 'less prepared to take on difficult assignments,' 'less able to work as strong administrators,' and 'less competent to teach Science and Mathematics' than men. Male teachers further believed that women take leave more frequently than men due to the fact that they have to take care of their children, family members, and household affairs. On the positive side, male teachers believed that both parents and girls feel safer in schools when female teachers are present in schools. The widely held belief that female teachers' presence in schools boosts girls' enrollment and retention is rejected by a significant proportion of the male teachers. However, they did strongly support the view that female teachers are good at giving care to younger children. On the whole, the data suggests that male teachers do not have positive attitudes toward female teachers.

### **8.6.2 Parents' attitudes toward female teachers**

During focus groups discussions, parents were asked to comment on the work of female teachers. The views expressed by the parents are discouraging and damaging to the female teachers. They characterize female teachers as unprofessional, uncommitted, unmotivated, and unqualified to teach. Here are some of these observations:

"Female teachers never complete the course. Classes are often hampered because they take maternity and other kinds of leave frequently."

"Female teachers come to school late and leave school early. They always rush to go home."

"They are never serious in their work. They are careless. They are less concerned with professional matters. They are more concerned with domestic and family matters."

"Even if they come to school, they spend time talking, gossiping and knitting sweaters."

"Some women bring their children to school with them. Instead of taking classes, they are busy taking care of their own children during school hours."

"Female teachers never assign homework. If they do, they never check."

"Many female teachers are not competent to teach their subjects. They are not qualified in the subject matter."

"Female teachers come to class without making any preparation for teaching."

"They cannot control the class. They cannot punish the bad students."

“They come to school to take rest. They just sit in the sun.”

“Female teachers cannot contribute to the total development of the children because they are not exposed to and familiar with the outside world. They do not have experiences that are useful to children.”

“Female teachers can spoil children because they cannot discipline them. Children need to be punished, guided, and controlled when necessary. Female cannot do any of these. They can only give affection and love which can spoil things rather than improve.”

In addition to the above negative observations, the parents had also some positive things to say about their female teachers. Here are some examples:

“They love children.”

“They can win children’s heart.”

“They behave equally to all children in the class.”

While the parents made a number of negative comments about the female teachers, it does not mean that they only approve of male teachers and they do not have anything to say about the male teachers. In our discussions with the parents, we did inquire about what parents thought of the male teachers. In Nepal, parents in general are critical of the public school teachers’ performance. On being asked to describe the performance of male teachers, the parents made a number of observations as follows:

“Male teachers do not pay serious attention to teaching. They stay in the class for a very short time.”

“Male teachers do take part in politics which hampers their teaching seriously.”

“They give heavy punishment to the students.”

“They do not work wholeheartedly. It is like *Rajako Kam Kahile Jala Gham*, meaning that they are only concerned about the pay check and would want to work as little as possible.”

“They get angry soon. They beat children. Their harsh behavior does not make them an ideal teacher.”

“They spoil the school environment. They are wrong role models for children because they go to school taking tobacco and drugs.”

“Male teachers can harass girls sexually.”

### 8.6.3 Children’s attitudes toward female teachers

Children’s attitudes toward their female teachers were examined using a number of indicators.

Comparative assessment of male and female teachers. How do students assess their male and female teachers? In assessing students’ views on their teachers, 20 statements relating to teachers’ typical behaviors were developed through a review of literature. And, students were asked whether a particular behavior was a characteristic of a male or a female teacher. While a large majority of students remained indifferent, some students expressed their opinion either in favor of a male teacher or a female teacher. Results of the survey are shown in Table 8.17.

**Table 8.17: Student assessment of male and female teachers (N=653)**

Behavior	Female teacher (%)	Male teacher (%)
1. Missing classes frequently	18.5	31.5
2. Keeping good command of the subject matter	9.7	22.8
3. Listening to students’ personal problems	25.6	11.4
4. Being prepared to listen to students’ family problems	22.7	9.2
5. Coming to teach with full preparation	9.9	17.5
6. Getting angry easily	18.5	42.5
7. Keeping a good sense of humor	11.8	18.3
8. Making the subject interesting while teaching	10.2	20.9
9. Making the subject understandable	10.2	20.9
10. Making the class interesting	11.6	22.6
11. Allowing students to ask questions any time	10.0	12.6
12. Being prepared to assist students with their learning problems	9.4	16.1
13. Looking cheerful	12.5	18.5
14. Wasting class time in gossips	14.1	28.7
15. Paying attention to a particular student or students	12.1	21.7
16. Giving and grading homework	6.0	15.5
17. Handling any interruption in class effectively	7.3	19.6
18. Encouraging students to work hard	9.1	20.5
19. Completing the course in time	11.7	18.7
20. Respecting the students	14.6	9.3

It is seen that proportionally more students identified a number of undesirable behaviors such as ‘missing classes frequently,’ ‘getting angry easily,’ ‘wasting time in class in gossips,’ and ‘paying attention to a group of students’ to be the characteristics of male teachers. Students seem to favor their female teachers on these behavior parameters.

On the other hand, students identified several positive behaviors associated with male teachers such as: ‘keeping good command of the subject matter,’ ‘making the subject interesting while teaching,’ ‘making the subject understandable,’ ‘making the class

interesting,’ ‘coming to teach with full preparation,’ ‘being prepared to assist students with their learning problems,’ ‘keeping a good sense of humor,’ ‘looking cheerful,’ ‘giving and grading homework,’ ‘handling any interruption effectively,’ ‘encouraging students to work hard,’ and ‘completing the course in time.’ It implies that female teachers did not have a positive profile on the basis of these classroom behaviors. As expected, more students found some seemingly positive behaviors associated with the female teachers: ‘listening to students’ personal problems,’ ‘being prepared to listen to students’ family problems,’ and ‘respecting students.’ It is not surprising that students found male teachers less receptive than their female teachers.

Students’ assessment of female teachers. At the first level, students were made to compare between male and female teachers on a number of indicators. At the second level, students assessed their female teachers without any reference to the male teachers. In this case, students were provided with three statements to which they could express their agreement or disagreement (Table 8.18). For the most part, most students (68%) were in favor of the statement that female teachers give good care, love and affection to children than the male teachers. Some 60% of them also expressed their agreement with the statement ‘children feel secure and confident with female teachers than the male teachers.’ Clearly, children perceive their female teachers as good care givers. It appears that they are less threatened in classrooms taught by female teachers. It is certainly encouraging that female teachers were believed to be good at care giving roles. But, it is frustrating to note that children, just like many others, also believed that their female teachers are incompetent in teaching the so-called hard subjects such as English, Science and Mathematics. As such, the number of female teachers who teach subjects like English, Science and Mathematics is small. Data seems to suggest that students do have an image of their female teachers as a good care giver but a weak professional.

**Table 8.18: Student assessment of female teachers (%)**

<b>Student assessment of female teacher</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Female teachers give good care, love and affection to children than male teachers.	67.7	32.3	100.0
2. Children feel more secure and confident with female teachers than male teachers.	60.2	39.8	100.0
3. Female teachers cannot teach difficult subjects such as English, Science and Mathematics.	71.9	28.1	100.0

Students’ choice of teacher’s sex. The boy and girl students were asked if they had a chance to choose between a male and a female who they would choose to be their teacher. Results are shown in Table 8.19. Overall, students seem to be equally divided between male and female teachers. Of the total students, 47% preferred males to be their teachers, while 45% of them chose females for the same. Some 8% of the students did not have any opinion. Cross-tabulation of the same data in terms of boys and girls shows interesting findings. Proportionally, more boys (67%) have shown their preference for male teachers, while more girls (64%) have done the same for female teachers. Apparently, the Nepali society is a

gendered society. From an early age, students learn who they should relate to and who they should not relate to.

**Table 8.19: Student preference for teachers (%)**

<b>Student preference</b>	<b>Boys (N=318)</b>	<b>Girls (N=335)</b>	<b>Total (N=653)</b>
Male teachers	67.4	28.4	46.9
Female teachers	24.4	64.2	45.3
No opinion	8.2	7.4	7.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Discussions were held with boys and girls separately to find out their views and experiences with the male and female teachers. It is interesting to note that many of the observations made by students are not different from those made by the male teachers and parents. It appears that people in general hold similar views on woman female teachers. Boys often commented that female teachers didn't know how to teach, didn't have sufficient knowledge of the subject matter, were not laborious and hardworking, arrived schools late and left early, spent school hours gossiping rather than working, and were more concerned about girls than boys, etc.

The boy students felt that the female teachers did not have the characteristics that are necessary in a teacher. Some of their comments follow:

“Madams are easily dominated. They cannot control the ill-mannered students.”

“They are not strict.”

“Our female teacher does not teach. She just sits on the chair and asks us to read on our own.”

“Female teachers cannot engage us in extra-curricular activities and sports.”

However, the students also made a number of positive remarks about female teachers such as:

“They are kind and nice.”

“They do not beat us.”

Girl students also made similar negative observations about female teachers. Some girl students felt that female teachers were ‘fashionable’ and paid more attention on their physical appearance rather than on their work. It was also mentioned that female teachers were too rude and less caring. The students reported that their female teachers scold them frequently. On the positive side, girl students had to make some observations as follows:

“We can share our problems with the female teachers. It is good to have female teachers in schools.”

“Female teachers love us. We are not shy to talk with them. We are not afraid to ask questions.”

#### **8.6.4 Head teachers’ attitudes toward female teachers**

The head teachers (106) were requested to assess the performance of female teachers. Most head teachers felt the need to employ more female teachers in schools for the obvious reason of attracting more girls in schools. However, some head teachers were not very appreciative of the female teachers’ performance and role. Their observations were similar to those of the male teachers, parents, and students. Female teachers were frequently characterized as ‘lazy,’ ‘irregular,’ ‘talkative,’ and ‘not capable of handling difficult assignments.’ One head teacher, for instance, stated the following:

“It is not a good idea to hire young women who are recently married. Immediately, they become pregnant and go on maternity leave, which disrupts teaching in the school.”

On the other hand, a few head teachers were very positive about the performance and role of female teachers. Here are some remarks made by them:

“Female teachers are more concerned with their work and children than anything else. On the contrary, male teachers are obsessed with politics. Male teachers are frequently absent in their class. I would always love to have female teachers on my staff.”

“Female teachers’ presence has helped in many ways to increase girls’ enrollment. Parents in the local community are very conservative. They do not recognize the value of girls’ education. The presence of female teachers has to some extent motivated such parents to send their daughters to schools.”

There were two schools where the entire staff was female, including the head teachers. These two head teachers when interviewed had the following observations about the female teachers:

‘I had enough of female teachers. Our school needs male teachers as well. It is difficult to deal with the parents, SMC members and the district education officials. We need to go the District Education Office frequently to attend meetings and do other stuff. None of us can do this. If there is any vacancy in future, I will keep male teachers.’

Another female head teacher had to say the following:

‘The image of our school has already gone downhill. I did not choose these many women in my school. I would have chosen male teachers. All these women came from the District Education Office. We never approached the District Education Office to give us female teachers. We are already 10 here. These are all on deputation. Many do not teach. The public sees us as the collection of women.’

#### **8.6.5 Educational administrators’ attitudes toward female teachers**

Discussions were held with the District Education Officers and school supervisors in order to examine their views on the female teachers. By and large, they supported the government’s policy of recruiting more female teachers in schools. However, they said that there were five barriers toward the effective implementation of the policy. First, there were not enough female teacher quotas. Despite its declared policy of posting at least one female teacher in each school, the government was not giving sufficient female teacher quotas to the districts. Secondly, approved teacher positions in schools were already filled by the male teachers. Thirdly, if teacher quotas were available, female teachers were not available in local community. Fourthly, if female candidates were available in the district, they were reluctant to be posted in rural and remote areas. Finally, at times female candidates were prepared to go to remote and rural areas, but the head teacher and SMC members were not keen on hiring female teachers.

Educational administrators had rather positive views about female teachers. They characterized female teachers as being ‘serious,’ ‘honest,’ ‘more appropriate for younger children,’ ‘less interested in politics,’ and ‘hard working.’ One frequently made negative comment was that the female teachers have a tendency of avoiding deployment in rural schools and seeking deputation or transfer to a school in the district headquarters, possibly to stay with their family members.

### **8.7 Teachers’ Attitudes toward Boy and Girl Children as Learners**

Needless to say, teachers’ attitudes toward learners have instrumental role in student learning. Teachers’ attitudes and behaviors can either discourage or encourage students to learn. How they relate to boys and girls, what beliefs they have about the boys’ and girls’ ability to learn, and how much boys and girls will participate in classrooms are determined by the teachers’ attitudes. It should be emphasized that both teachers and students are not neutral entities. The gender and caste relations that exist in the society do have bearing on how teachers will relate to their students and vice versa. While the study did not examine this complex web of relationships between teachers and students, it made an attempt to examine what beliefs female teachers have about boys and girls as learners. In the above context, teachers were provided with 11 statements to express their agreement or disagreement. Each statement compares boys and girls on a particular parameter. These statements were derived from a discussion with a group of teachers, which took place at the time of designing the instruments. The data are displayed in Table 8.20. One might note

duplication in the statement. That was done deliberately in order to test consistency in the responses.

The data suggests that teachers have certain pre-established images of boys and girls as learners. For the most part, girls are perceived to be quiet, calm and submissive in comparison to boys (91%), therefore, easily controllable than the latter (75%). Not surprising, teachers find girls more obedient than boys (91%). Almost two-thirds of the total respondents expressed their agreement with the statement “girls are shy and nervous to ask questions in the classroom.” This could be one of the reasons for poor performance of girls as compared to that of the boys. This belief on the part of teachers combined with the lack of action to correct the so-called ‘shyness’ and ‘nervousness’ found among girls contributes to poor learning. Although most female teachers did not agree with the many other statements presented to them, substantial proportions of them did not have positive images of girls. For instance, girls are believed to be (a) less able to learn math and science (45%), (b) less aggressive in their study (41%), and (c) less able to learn (42%) in comparison to the boys. Similarly, they are believed to take less interest in their studies (43%) as compared to the boys.

**Table 8.20: Female teachers’ attitudes toward boys and girls as learners (%)**

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Total	N
1. Boys work harder than the girls.	34.4	65.6	100.0	337
2. Boys need more education than do girls.	33.5	66.5	100.0	337
3. Boys take greater interest in their studies than do girls.	43.3	56.7	100.0	337
4. Boys are more aggressive in their study than girls.	40.9	59.1	100.0	337
5. Girls are easy to control than boys.	75.1	24.9	100.0	321
6. Boys are more obedient than girls.	8.6	91.4	100.0	324
7. Girls are quiet, calm and submissive than boys.	90.8	9.2	100.0	326
8. It is easy to work with boys than girls.	40.7	59.3	100.0	337
9. Girls are less able to learn than boys.	42.1	57.9	100.0	337
10. Girls are much weaker in math and science.	45.4	54.6	100.0	337
11. Girls are shy and nervous to ask questions in classrooms.	62.2	37.8	100.0	333

Nearly one-third of the teachers found boys to be working much harder than girls. Teachers often overlook the fact that girls are subjected to longer hours of household work, which gives them little or no time for study. This very fact puts them behind in studies. It is not surprising that a substantial proportion of female teachers still believe that boys need more education in comparison to the girls. It would be no exaggeration to say that we would be failing to promote girls’ education unless teachers have faith in girls’ ability to learn and are prepared to create a favorable learning environment for girls in schools.



## CHAPTER IX

# INCREASING THE NUMBER OF FEMALE TEACHERS: BARRIERS AND POSSIBILITIES

In recognition of the importance of female teachers in raising girls' education and promoting gender equality in schools, His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/N) is considering recruiting two female teachers in each school. Supplying female teachers to rural schools of Nepal is a major challenge, where the status of girls' education is very poor. The study explored the barriers to and possibilities for increasing the number of female teachers in the schools operating in rural and remote areas of the country.

### 9.1 Benefits of Hiring Female Teachers in Schools

What are the perceived benefits of hiring female teachers? The question of whether female teachers themselves see the need for hiring female teachers in schools was a matter of interest to the study. The respondents came up with multitude of responses. These responses were reduced to 15 by combining similar themes and removing overlapping themes and ideas. The findings are shown in Table 9.1.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents mentioned that the presence of female teachers increases girls' enrollment and retention in schools. Many saw the need for female teachers to disseminate the value of girls' education in the community. Nearly, one-half of the respondents' position had been that the posting of female teachers in schools creates gender equality in schools. Female teachers in substantial numbers observed that female teachers' presence is essential to create suitable learning environment, make school environment gender friendly, and ensure that children get love and care. Some teachers saw positive association between female teachers and increased status of girls and women in the community.

Other benefits of female teachers included increased literacy, increased public awareness, increased women's development, decreased unemployment of educated women, decreased incidence of girls trafficking, gender discrimination and sexual harassment. There were some who felt that female teachers are critical for improving the quality of education. One interesting observation has to do with the increased accountability and motivation of male teachers due to female teachers' presence in schools. Final observation is that the recruitment of female teachers contributes to improve the economic status of women. Similar observations were echoed during our interviews and focus group discussions with parents, students, head teachers, male teachers, community members, and educational administrators. On the negative side, some extreme views were also expressed, which did not support the recruitment of female teachers in schools.

**Table 9.1: Reasons for hiring female teachers (%)**

Reason	Number of responses	% of responses	% of respondents
1. Increase girls' enrollment and retention in schools	336	16.7	80.8
2. Disseminate the value of girls' education in the community	224	11.1	53.8
3. Ensure gender equality in schools	210	10.4	50.5
4. Create a suitable learning environment in the school	197	9.8	47.4
5. Create gender friendly environment in the school	180	8.8	43.3
6. Ensure that young children get love and care in the school	160	7.8	38.5
7. Increase female literacy in the community	114	5.6	27.4
8. Bring about public awareness and change in the community	106	5.3	25.5
9. Elevate the status of girls and women in the society	101	5.0	24.3
10. Contribute to women's development in the community	96	4.8	23.1
11. Decrease unemployment of young women	74	3.7	17.8
12. Discourage the incidence of girls' trafficking, gender discrimination, and sexual harassment of women	62	3.1	14.9
13. Improve the quality of education by engaging women who are more qualified and committed than men	60	3.0	14.4
14. Increase male teachers' accountability and commitment toward the profession	54	2.7	13.0
15. Improve economic status of women	44	2.2	10.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

## 9.2 Teacher Preparedness to be Placed in a Rural and Remote Areas

### 9.2.1 Ever thought of working in even more rural and remote location?

Whether female teachers have ever thought of working in schools located in rural and remote areas? The data obtained from the field shows that only a small proportion (14%) of the total respondents answered in the positive (Table 9.2). Apparently, the large majority of female teachers had never considered working in difficult locations. Teachers did not have identical views. Proportionally, more secondary grade teachers had not considered working in rural and remote locations as compared to the primary and lower secondary teachers. Similarly, more teachers working in the Mountains (25%) reported having thought of working in even more rural and remote locations as compared to their counterparts from the Hills (11%), the Tarai (9%) and the Kathmandu Valley (11%). More teachers who are temporary in their jobs considered working in the remote and rural locations than those who are permanent (22% versus 11%). There is a possibility that temporary teachers could be prepared to work in rural and remote settings before they are made permanent in their jobs.

**Table 9.2: Female teacher consideration to work in a rural and remote location (%)**

Teacher consideration to work in rural and remote locations	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Considered	13.9	22.5	3.4	14.0
Not considered	86.1	77.5	96.6	86.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>401</b>

**9.2.2 Teachers' choice to continue teaching if transferred to a remote and rural location**

Teachers were provided with a hypothetical situation where they had to choose whether they would continue teaching or leave teaching if they are transferred by the government to a remote and difficult location. In a forced situation, more teachers appeared to be prepared to work in remote and rural areas as compared to a situation where they are left to choose. The results are tabulated in Table 9.3.

**Table 9.3: Female teachers' choice to continue or quit teaching if transferred to a remote area (%)**

Teachers' choice	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary	Total
Continue teaching	30.6	31.6	25.0	30.3
Quit teaching	69.4	68.4	75.0	69.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>N</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>396</b>

As presented in Table 9.3, some 30% of the total female teachers expressed their commitment to continue teaching in a situation where they are deployed to teach in remote and rural locations. Secondary grade teachers seem to be less prepared than the other categories of teachers. The majority of the teachers (70%) are prepared to even quit teaching if the government forces them to go and serve in remote and rural locations. One probable reason for this choice could be that the family is more important than the job in the life of a female teacher. Once again, those who are already deployed in the Mountains (43%) and Hills (33%) are prepared to be redeployed in remote and rural locations as compared to those who are currently working in the Tarai (21%) and the Kathmandu Valley (17%). Cross-tabulation of the data in terms of teachers' status of employment shows an interesting pattern. Permanent teachers are less flexible than temporary teachers. Proportionally, twice as many temporary teachers (47%) said that they would continue their teaching career if they are redeployed in remote and rural locations as compared to the permanent teachers (24%). It is clear from the data that if the government is prepared to take administrative action to make female teachers available in schools operating in remote and rural locations, there is some potential for the relocation of the temporary teachers to a large extent.

### 9.2.3 Reasons for not willing to work in rural and remote locations

Educational policymakers and planners who are concerned about staffing schools located in rural and remote locations with female teachers need to know why qualified women cannot go to such locations. The question generated several responses. The major themes that occurred frequently in the responses and the categories that have been developed are tabulated in Table 9.4.

**Table 9.4: Female teachers' reasons for not willing to work in rural and remote locations (%)**

Major reasons	Themes that occurred frequently in teachers' responses
Political reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of being kidnapped</li> <li>• Extortion by the Maoists</li> <li>• Lack of peace and security in the country</li> <li>• Terrorism</li> <li>• War</li> <li>• Political instability</li> </ul>
Family and/or personal reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to take care of the household and family members</li> <li>• Family problem</li> <li>• Children too young</li> <li>• Need to stay close to home for taking care of aging parents</li> <li>• Sick family members</li> <li>• Husband's job elsewhere</li> <li>• Family reluctant to permit to go to rural areas</li> <li>• Need to give good education to children near home</li> </ul>
Financial reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to work multiple shifts due to financial hardship</li> <li>• Limited opportunity for extra work or double jobs</li> </ul>
Lack of incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate salary</li> <li>• Limited remote area allowance</li> <li>• Lack of additional financial and other rewards for the hard work done</li> <li>• No extra marks in promotion for the service rendered in the rural and remote areas</li> </ul>
Hardships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of proper accommodation and food</li> <li>• Lack of security</li> <li>• Difficult life</li> <li>• Difficult to raise children in new places</li> <li>• Inaccessibility and/or long distance from home</li> </ul>
Academic reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently engaged in the study</li> <li>• Fewer educational opportunities there</li> </ul>
Absence of resources and opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of communication and transport facilities</li> <li>• Lack of health care and other basic services</li> <li>• Poor physical and instructional facilities in schools</li> <li>• Lack of opportunity for personal advancement</li> <li>• Limited opportunity to utilize one's knowledge</li> </ul>
Social reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socially unacceptable for a woman to leave the family</li> <li>• Socially and culturally unacceptable to live alone in a remote place</li> </ul>
Lack of administrative action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of information and communication about the need for female teachers in remote and rural areas</li> <li>• Never approached or instructed by any official to consider going to remote and rural locations</li> </ul>

As can be seen in Table 9.4, nine factors stand as barriers in placing women in teaching positions in rural and remote locations. First, the themes relating to conflict, insurgency, insecurity, terrorism, extortion and the fear of being kidnapped appeared over and over again. It is not surprising that most female teachers did not want to be placed in rural and remote locations under the current political circumstances where the entire country is on the verge of war. Second, the female teachers mentioned themes grouped under the category of family and/or personal reasons several times. They cannot even think of leaving the family. It felt like it is almost unthinkable to run a family without a female. Third, financial reasons also dominated the discussion on why female teachers do not want to go to rural and remote locations. In cities and district headquarters, there are prospects of being engaged in what they called 'side job,' which are not available in rural and remote areas. As one teacher put it, "it is difficult to save money because of low salary and high cost of living in remote areas...I will not be able to support my family with limited income."

Fourth, teachers did not see any incentive to go to such places. Fifth, many teachers were not prepared to face the hardship involved in such places. Sixth, some teachers expressed that the desire to continue higher education prevented them from being posted in rural and remote areas. Many teachers combine study and work. Obviously, opportunities for higher education do not exist in rural areas. Seventh, the lack of services and opportunities in these places was one other barrier. Eighth, social and cultural practices that restrict women's free movement and independence discouraged women from taking up teaching positions away from their homes. Finally, administrative inaction was also mentioned to be one of the reasons for the lack of willingness on the part of female teachers to be placed in rural and remote locations. Evidently, there is no single remedy to tackle the shortage of female teachers. It calls for a comprehensive strategy.

#### **9.2.4 Encouraging female teachers to work in rural and remote locations**

The reasons that prevent women from being deployed in rural and remote locations already point to some actions that might be necessary to encourage and prepare women to go to those places and serve as teachers. With a view to obtaining a complete understanding about what would prompt women to work in rural and remote locations, the teachers in the survey were asked to mention the actions which they thought might be useful to boost the presence of female teachers in rural primary schools. Let us look at diverse views obtained from female teachers:

"If there is a secured place to live, I would indeed be happy to go. The government must make proper arrangements for lodging and food. The provision of free housing and food will encourage many."

"My husband is a service holder. We both work. I would go if my husband's service is also transferred to a place where I am assigned to work."

“It is difficult for a woman to live alone in a remote location. I will be prepared to go if at least another woman also is appointed to work in the same school.”

“I might consider serving in remote districts if the government pays higher salary and allowance.”

“The government should provide transportation facility, hardship allowance, medical allowance, and child care facility if it wants to attract committed and qualified women into teaching positions in remote areas.”

“A child care center in school would help.”

“Women should be given longer vacations so that they have more time to spend with their families back home.”

“The service provided in rural and remote areas should get bonus (additional marks) in promotion.”

“The government should pay educational allowance for children.”

“I will go if my children’s schooling is taken care of by the government.”

“There should be mandatory provision for every male and female teacher to spend a few years teaching in schools located in rural and remote locations.”

“Peace and security is a must. The present political crisis must end.”

“Those who work in remote places must be provided medals, awards, certificates of appreciation. The country must honor those who work in difficult circumstances.”

“The government must cover transport costs.”

While incentives and additional facilities may work to attract female teachers to be deployed in rural and remote locations, the only permanent solution is to develop the status of girls’ education in these areas. Here are some suggestions:

“Girls coming from the rural and remote locations should be provided scholarships to allow them to continue their education.”

“Qualified women who are married to such locations should be given priority while appointing teachers in local schools.”

Some respondents held the view that there should be changes in the attitudes of people toward women:

“It is essential that people have positive attitudes toward women who decide to work away from home and live alone.”

“Girls should be taught to be independent.”

To summarize the views of female teachers, the task of supplying female teachers in rural and remote locations is definitely a challenging task, but it is not something that cannot be addressed at all. Two things appear to be important: additional incentives and sound female teacher recruitment policy. Ultimately, the extent to which we would be able to meet the challenge depends on our own actions and decisions.

## CHAPTER X

# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold: (a) to summarize the major findings of the study, (b) to draw major conclusions based on the study findings, and (c) to provide a set of recommendations to address issues and problems that emerge from the data. In providing the recommendations, there will be particular focus on two things: (a) increasing the supply of female teachers in the rural and remote locations of the country, and (b) elevating the overall status of female teachers. The chapter is organized into two major parts. In the first part, major findings and conclusions are presented, while the second part provides the recommendations.

### **10.1 Findings and Conclusions**

#### **10.1.1 Demographic and professional profile of teachers**

One of the objectives of the study was to prepare a demographic and professional profile of female teachers. Brahmins form the largest majority in the female teaching force followed by Chhetris. The Newars constitute the third largest category. Indigenous groups and linguistic minorities appear to be seriously under-represented in teaching profession, which can be attributed to their low educational status and recruitment practices that do not favor them directly. Apparently, the ones to benefit from the creation of new teaching positions will be the Brahmins, Chhetris and Newars whose level of educational attainment is much higher compared to that of the indigenous groups and linguistic minorities. The average age for the current sample of female teachers is 36 years, the same being 35, 37, and 42 for primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers respectively. It implies that the female teaching force of the country is predominantly in the productive years of career. In terms of age structure, male teachers, with their average age of 37 years, are marginally older than the female teachers. The retirement age for teachers is 62. It will mean that the current stock of teachers will be in the profession for several years to come. Therefore, any investment to develop their skills and competencies will not be wasted, provided other things remain the same.

Those who are in teaching profession are mostly married. Marriages are universal in Nepal. It is both socially and culturally unacceptable to remain unmarried. Only 9% of the total female teachers interviewed were unmarried, while the overwhelming majority of them were married. This was also true for male teachers. As the average age of joining teaching suggests, a large majority of the female teachers joined teaching at the age of about 23, while their average age at marriage was 21. That means that most women joined teaching only after their marriage. Women perhaps enjoy some degree of freedom after their marriage.



Culturally, there are more restrictions on unmarried women than those who are married. It is probable that women are forced to choose to work by economic necessity after their marriage to supplement the husband's income. Apparently, educational planners will need to consider the marital status and age of the potential candidates while planning recruitment of female teachers.

Arranged marriage is the acceptable form of marriage among certain ethnic/caste groups. Among conservative group such as the Brahmin, the practice of arranged marriage remains to be the norm. Nearly 19 percent of the female teachers described their marriage as being 'love marriage.' The corresponding figure in the case of male teachers was found to be 25%. This kind of marriage was found among the Chhetris, Newars and Janjatis. The incidence of child marriage is found to be minimal (3%). Late marriage (or marriage after 30 years of age) is virtually non-existent (1.3%).

Of the total female teachers, 84% are currently serving in their own place of residence. The policy of the government has been to post female teachers in their own place of residence or in places where their husbands are posted (in the case of married women). Proportionally, more female teachers worked in their own community than men (84% as opposed to 77%). Cultural restrictions on free movement, the need to combine household work with the work outside home and a host of other factors perhaps force women to remain in their own place of residence. This probably explains why some efforts to supply female teachers in rural and remote areas had failed. The best bet for educational planners would be to recruit female teachers 'locally,' although that does not seem to be the case until several years to come.

The language profile of female teachers is self-evident in view of the fact that the present sample was heavily dominated by the Brahmins and Chhetris. Nepali is the mother tongue for the majority of the female teachers (93%). The proportion of Non-Nepali speakers was very small (7%). One should keep in mind that the problem of non-participation and low retention in primary and secondary education is acute among indigenous groups and linguistic minorities. Children belonging to these groups are perhaps better served by teachers who belong to their groups. Teachers' ethnicity and language will have to be taken into account in teachers' recruitment in future.

In preparing the professional status of female teachers, work experience outside teaching, teaching experience, academic qualifications, teacher training, etc. were examined. Teaching was the first job for a large majority of the female teachers (87%). That suggests that many came straight into teaching. Proportionally, more men were found to have joined teaching after a few years of work elsewhere as compared to women (23% versus 13%). Naturally, such options are more for men than women. Most female teachers in the sample were in the early stage or middle of their career. The average years of teaching experience for the sample as a whole was 14 years. In terms of teaching experience, male and female teachers appear to be more or less identical. The teachers are fairly stable as defined by their average duration of work at the current school (male teachers, 9.4 years; female teachers, 10.5 years). Female teachers were slightly more stable than their male counterparts in the teaching job.

The government has defined SLC (Grade 10), Intermediate (Grade 12) and Bachelor degree to be the entry requirement to become primary, lower secondary and secondary level teacher respectively. By and large, female teachers in the sample met the stipulated academic qualifications. The average years of schooling for primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers were 10.4, 11.9 and 12.7 respectively. Compared to other countries in the SAARC region, academic qualifications of school teachers of Nepal are much lower. The academic profile of male and female teachers did not differ much at all levels.

The possession of academic degrees is not the indicator of teachers' academic quality. A reliable measure of the teachers' academic quality is the division in which the teachers passed their academic examinations at the school level and thereafter. It was found that negligible proportions of female teachers passed their SLC (2%) and Intermediate (1%) in the first division. None of them passed the Bachelor level in the first division. If the pass division is to be used as the criterion, the academic quality of female teachers appears to be very poor. The profile of male teachers looked better only marginally, with 6% passing SLC in the first division and 5% each securing first division in the Intermediate and Bachelor levels. When the proportions of the second and third division holders were to be considered, male teachers appeared to have a better academic profile than female teachers. These findings are not very surprising given that education of girls does not receive as much priority as the education of boys in families and communities throughout Nepal. Apparently, teaching profession is not the destination for the many bright school or college students. No surprise why many school teachers lack command over the subject matter as reported earlier in several studies. This is certainly not encouraging at a time when there is so much public demand for quality education.

Data on the area of specialization points to the under-representation of female teachers in the so-called 'hard' subjects such as Science and Mathematics. Most female teachers reported Nepali (42%) as being their area of specialization, followed by social science (28%) and others (14%). Those majoring in English (10%), Mathematics (4%) and Science (3%) are few. Proportionally, more male teachers studied English (17%), Mathematics (15%) and Science (8%) as compared to the female teachers. Many studies have reported poor performance of girls in these subjects in school and college level examinations. The high concentration of female teachers on Nepali, Social Studies and other subjects perceived to be easy is often interpreted that they are less important than those who teach the difficult subjects.

Some 29% of the total female teachers interviewed had been serving for over 10 to 15 years, but their status of employment is still temporary. Being temporary would mean being insecure and exclusion from getting financial and other benefits. A temporary teacher is not eligible for several benefits (e.g., gratuity, pension, medical allowance, study leave and insurance). Prolonged temporary status can lower teachers' morale and motivation, which can finally hamper teachers' classroom performance. The proportion of permanent teachers was higher for male teachers (73%) as compared to the female teachers (71%), suggesting slightly greater chances for males to receive tenure.

In the past, the government of Nepal recruited teachers even without any professional training in order to meet the immediate shortage of female teachers. It would be ideal if those who join teaching have required level of pre-service teacher education and in-service training and support throughout their teaching careers. While the government has been providing certification training to the serving untrained teachers, still there is a big backlog of teachers who have not received any training. In the sample, only 36% of the total female teachers had completed their professional training, while the rest of them were either untrained or partially trained. The incidence of completing professional training was found to be high among the male teachers than among the female teachers (53% versus 36%). The picture was more or less the same with regard to their participation in INSET. Female teachers have fewer chances of participating in INSET as compared to their male counterparts (37% versus 29%). It was found that several factors lowered women's chances of participating in INSET: temporary status, recent employment, preference given for male teachers, training venue too far from home, lack of clear criteria for selecting teachers for INSET courses, favoritism, poor health, too few or no quotas for training, children too young, training not useful, too few teachers in the school, etc.

Both school and university teachers in Nepal are highly unionized. Although there have been some efforts in recent years to bring teachers under one umbrella, these efforts have not produced any results. Most of these unions are established along the political lines. Most female teachers (61%) were members of teacher unions. It is interesting to note that proportionally more secondary grade teachers were members of teacher unions in comparison to the lower secondary and primary teachers. Male teachers (70%) are likely to join teacher unions more often than their female counterparts (70% versus 61%). It is consistent with the commonly held belief that male teachers are more engaged politically as compared with the female teachers. The teachers in the sample were reluctant to identify the union they were affiliated to. Teachers' role in the political struggle in the late 1980s to overthrow the old Panchayati system was very instrumental. Many times, political leaders and parties have used teachers and their unions for their political gains. Since then, teaching has been a highly politicized profession.

### **10.1.2 Household characteristics and household dynamics**

The status of women in teaching depends to a large extent on their status and position in the family. How a woman is treated in her family and what her role is in the family will be reflected in her work. Recent literature on teacher professionalism also suggests that teachers' professional performance cannot be separated from their personal and family lives. Therefore, the study inquired about the household characteristics as well as household dynamics of female teachers.

The nuclear family structure was found to dominate the household composition of female teachers, with 63% of them saying that they do live in nuclear families. Data seems to indicate that female teachers, more than their male counterparts, do come from nuclear families (63% as opposed to 52%). Our finding is consistent with some studies that have shown that women's chances of choosing to work outside the home are higher in nuclear

families than in joint families. Sociological studies have reported that the joint family is culturally conservative and imposes greater constraints on women's freedom of movement than does the nuclear family. On the other hand, the nuclear family permits a more egalitarian relationship between the husband and wife which would facilitate women's employment outside the home. However, it will be a mistake to assume that the joint household poses an obstacle to female involvement in paid employment. In some cases, the joint household may provide considerable advantages for female employment in that it permits adjustments in the division of labor. Quite a few women in the survey mentioned that they were able to join teaching because their mother-in-laws and other family members were prepared to take on additional domestic responsibilities. The earnings of such female teachers were used for the benefit of the entire family. In this sense the availability of other family members provides a supportive environment, freeing women who would otherwise be tied to the home.

Parents' educational attainment was also one core area of interest to this study. A substantial proportion of the female teachers' fathers were found to be literate (38%), followed by those who had academic qualifications of SLC or more (34%). Only 15% of the teachers reported their fathers as being illiterate. As regards mothers' educational status, some 42% of the total female teachers had illiterate mothers, followed by about the same proportion of the female teachers whose mothers were literate. Only a small proportion of female teachers reported their mothers having some kind of formal education. Interestingly, female teachers, more than their male counterparts, had fathers and mothers who are either literate or had some years of formal schooling. The data thus seems to suggest that female teachers were most likely to come from educated family background. Literate or educated parents could be more supportive in their daughters' choice of teaching or paid employment outside the home than the illiterate or uneducated parents.

Most female teachers (87%) were found to have spouses with formal education of SLC or beyond. On the other hand, most male teachers had spouses who were either illiterate or had low level of educational attainment. These data seem to suggest that female teachers are likely to have educated spouses, while that might not be true in the case of male teachers.

Most female teachers' fathers were found to be engaged in farming (58%) and service (42%). As regards mothers' occupation, farming and/or household work constitutes to be the predominant occupation. Female teachers were found to differ from the male teachers in respect to father's occupation. More proportion of male teachers came from farming background than did female teachers (82% versus 58%). Likewise, higher proportion of female teachers' fathers were found to be engaged in salaried work (service) as compared to the male teachers' fathers (42% versus 17%). Parents who have worked outside the home perhaps encourage and inspire their girls for paid employment.

A large majority of the female teachers' spouses were engaged in salaried work (73%), followed by those involved in business (15%) and farming (11%). On the other hand, male teachers' spouses were found engaged in farming (75%), followed by those engaged in service (19%). Clearly, male teachers have only one source of income, while female teachers

have more than one source. Employed husbands are probably more conducive to their wives' employment. Many female teachers said that it was essential for both the husbands and wives to be engaged in salaried work for both financial and non-financial reasons. But, when both husbands and wives are employed outside the home, women are subjected to double or multiple shifts of work.

Women experience gender-based discrimination at an early age, and this begins at home. Relative to boys, girls are more likely to have less access to material resources (money, food, land and so forth) and social (knowledge, power, and prestige) in the family and the community, measured in absolute terms. In this context, the study examined if the female teachers had the same opportunity for education as their brothers. More specifically, the study attempted to know whether parents provided equal opportunity to their sons and daughters for schooling. A large majority (63%) of teachers stated that their parents provided unequal schooling opportunity to boys and girls, suggesting that the former enjoyed greater opportunity than the latter in their families. A query was probed whether the respondents had to quit schooling despite their desire to continue their schooling. Many female teachers in the sample (73%) reported that they had to quit their education despite their desire to continue (53% for male teachers). Apparently, gender played a major role in whether or not one has to quit schooling against the desire. Who between the father and mother was more supportive of female teachers' schooling? The data seems to suggest that fathers were more supportive in girls' schooling, while mothers were more supportive in the schooling of boys. Proportionally, more female teachers (59%) found their fathers to be more supportive (59%) than their mothers, while more male teachers (67%) found their mothers to be more supportive in their education than their fathers.

There are basically three groups of female teachers in terms of their income level: those living mainly on income coming from teaching (37%), those partially living on income coming from teaching (25%), and those living mainly on income coming from other sources (38%). The first group of teachers has only one source of income, while the second and third groups have two and multiple sources of income. Data showed that more male teachers had only one source of income as compared with the female teachers (49% versus 37%). Only one-quarter of the total male teachers had multiple sources of income. The ones with single source of income are probably the ones to experience the most economic hardship. Ironically, many women (55%) did not have control over their own income. Interestingly, those having higher level of education and teaching in upper grades seemed to have greater control over their income. Further, those living in the joint household have less control as compared to the others. In joint families, incomes of family members become part of the joint household income rather than as personal property of the person who earns it. Some research suggests that women who are employed outside the home play a greater role in family decision-making than do those who are not employed.

The study has confirmed the findings of several earlier studies that women must bear heavy work burden as compared to the men. The employment outside the home does not necessarily reduce the women's work burden at home. To choose to work outside the home is to be prepared to assume the 'double' responsibility of home and the school. Some argue

that women in developing countries have three different roles: reproductive and nurturing, family and household management, and productive and/or income generating roles. The average number of hours spent by female teachers on a day-to-day basis on household chores is 6 hours as opposed to 4 hours for male teachers. Some studies have shown that in developing countries women, especially poor women, work an average of 12 to 18 hours a day compared to an average of 8 to 12 hours for men. Cooking takes much of the time of women. In the present study, the overwhelming majority of the female teachers (87%) stated that preparing food was their day-to-day responsibility. It is not surprising that a large proportion of female teachers reported having no time for preparing for teaching at home. The major domestic tasks in which women engage aside from cooking include the following: collecting water, animal fodder and cooking fuel; caring for children and other family members; tending animals; and cleaning and washing. Many male teachers reported that they do not have to do anything when they go home from school. In fact, female teachers' work begins when their work at school ends. Clearly, the wife/spouse of male teachers normally bears the bulk of domestic responsibilities, but in the households of the female teachers the women tend to have a 'double shift' where they look after the home and children as well as the professional work. There were rare cases where husbands/spouses of female teachers shared the burden of domestic work with their wives.

To allow women to join teaching or any other work outside the home, permanent arrangements need to be made for childcare. Some 20% of them did not have any proper arrangements to look after their children. That meant that they themselves had to take care of children while they were at work.

### **10.1.3 Teachers attitudes toward the teaching profession**

Multiple methods were used to examine teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession. One obvious indicator of attitudes toward a particular profession is reasons for joining it. The financial motive appears to be strongest for joining teaching. Non-economic motives also played an important role in inducing women to become teachers. These motives included: desire to provide social service, long holidays, need to stay close to home, job security, opportunity that teaching provided to run family life in parallel, short working hours, desire to work with children, value of education in the community, respect for the teaching profession, desire to share the knowledge, interest in the subject matter, higher social status, influence of a former teacher, opportunity for self-advancement, natural inclination to become a teacher, etc. For the most part, male and female teachers converged on their motives for joining teaching. However, reasons such as long vacations, safe employment, ideal profession for sex and short working hours were more frequently mentioned by female teachers than by male teachers. On the other hand, interest in the subject matter and desire to remain in the academic environment appeared more important to male teachers compared to female teachers.

A number of indicators used to assess teachers' attitudes show mixed results. There are not many who hold positive views about their profession consistently. This is probably natural as human beings would always aim to promote their 'life chances.' Only one-third of the

total female teachers had considered becoming teachers while they were studying in schools. Many landed in teaching after their search for something more 'attractive' did not bring any results. This was more so for male teachers than for female teachers. More female teachers had considered joining teaching in their formative years than did male teachers. Most female teachers got advice to join teaching from their family members (61%). Almost one-third of them however chose teaching on their own. Whatever may have been the motive for joining teaching, the overwhelming majority of the female teachers (94%) did not regret becoming a teacher. On the other hand, if they had an opportunity of choosing their profession all over again, less than 46% of them would choose teaching, while the remaining (54%) would choose something else. This split indicates lack of faith in the profession. Of the total female teachers, some 14% were found actively involved in changing their job, while many seemed content with the profession. As regards their future career plan, a slight majority of the teachers in the sample (53%) planned to stay in the current career until retirement. The rest of them were either undecided (33%) or planned to stay in teaching until something better came up. Most teachers did not find the teaching profession to be appropriate for their sons (66%). They would have objections if their sons chose teaching as their career. On the other hand, many considered teaching to be appropriate for their daughters.

Most teachers believed that the social status of teaching had either declined badly or remained the same. None of the teachers was prepared to accept that the status of teaching had improved compared to the past. Many factors within the school and outside are responsible for the decline of the social status of the profession. Teachers had more or less similar view on their economic status. They mentioned that their economic condition has remained the same (56%) since they joined teaching. None of the teachers admitted that their economic condition had improved since joining the teaching profession. On the contrary, a substantial proportion of teachers (44%) disclosed that the condition had either declined slightly or badly. What is interesting is that a large majority of the respondents (81%) did not support the view that teaching provides an opportunity for intellectual and academic growth. They thought that their intellectual ability had neither declined nor improved since joining teaching. The routine nature of the profession and interaction with younger children on a day-to-day basis can make teaching a dull profession. The profile of teaching profession in terms of the perceived social, economic and intellectual status is thus not very encouraging. It can be discouraging to the many young men and women aspiring to become teachers.

#### **10.1.4 Teachers' work and working environment**

We began our investigation of female teachers' work and working environment by asking them if it was difficult to be employed as a teacher. Data revealed that it was not easy to be employed as a teacher in a majority of cases (64%). One-third of the respondents however had the opposite experience. A number of reasons such as the lack of source and force (connections), favoritism and nepotism, lack of command in Nepali language, fierce competition, few openings, selection based on political considerations, lack of time for preparation for job interview and written examinations, lack of understanding of the criteria

and procedure for teacher selection, lack of quotas meant to females only, etc. made the journey a difficult one. In some cases, the invariably all-male composition of the teacher selection committee resulted in fear, tension and apprehension on some female candidates leading to poor performance in interviews. Many of these barriers must be broken if there is any seriousness in the proposal of increasing the number of female teachers in the public schools of Nepal.

For a majority of the respondents (69%), the current school was not the first school of assignment. More than two-thirds of the teachers had served in more than one school. This is true for all levels of teachers. The average number of schools served was 2.3. Any placement without teachers' consent and comfort can undermine their motivation and productivity. Whether teachers are being placed in their school of choice is meaningful for many reasons. The data suggests that majority of the female teachers (75%) said that the school where they are currently placed was the school of their choice. Some 22% of the total respondents appeared to be unhappy with their current deployment. Both male and female teachers were found working in their schools of choice in equal proportions. The ones who were seeking transfer from the current school accounted for one-fifth of the total.

Female teachers were found to have a weekly teaching load of 30 periods. A large majority of the teachers (68%), therefore, reported not having any leisure time at work. About 42% of the total female teachers described the current teaching load as being 'unreasonable,' impossible' and 'too heavy.' Male and female teachers did not differ in terms of their workload. That means that women's needs have not been seriously considered in giving assignments. It appears to be frustrating that a large majority of the female teachers (82%) were found not to have been teaching subjects of their choice, probably because many of them (82%) do not possess relevant academic background in the subjects. Primary teachers, more than lower secondary and secondary teachers, taught subjects with no relevant academic background. The government has a policy that at the primary level a teacher must be able to teach all the subjects included in the curriculum. The notion of 'all-subjects teaching primary teacher' is false in a situation where the minimum academic qualification to become a primary teacher is as low as SLC (completion of Grade 10).

The above finding confirms the earlier findings that teachers in Nepal do lack subject matter proficiency. Further, the study revealed that in a majority of cases female teachers (61%) were teaching subjects outside their training. Although most teachers were assigned to teach grades in which they are formally appointed to teach, a little over one-fifth of the female teachers reported having been assigned to teach higher grades while their appointment did not demand so. This experience was common for teachers of all grade levels. A substantial proportion of the respondents (48%) reported that the subjects they are currently assigned to teach were also difficult.

Aside from teaching, teachers are often expected to perform non-teaching tasks such as cleaning staff room or classrooms, preparing tea or snacks for colleagues, filling out forms, handling school accounts, etc. About 46% of the total female teachers remain engaged frequently in such tasks in contrast to 38% of male teachers. Clearly, male teachers are less



likely to be engaged in non-teaching assignments than female teachers. Heavy teaching load combined with frequent involvement in non-teaching tasks does not allow sufficient time for preparation for teaching. In the above context, it is not surprising that women with children find it extremely difficult to make a balance between career schedules and the demands of household work including childcare. A little over one-fourth of the female teachers stated that their head teachers were never considerate of their personal needs and problems.

Although most teachers reported the availability of physical facilities in their schools, their condition and adequacy are however less than satisfactory in the large majority of the cases. It is to be noted that many schools have not been able to arrange separate toilet facilities for girls and female teachers. Most research tends to associate girls' frequent absenteeism in schools with the lack of separate toilet facilities. The situation appeared to be encouraging in terms of the availability of resources. Compared to other resources, curriculum and textbooks were found in a majority of cases. Data suggests that there is a need to increase teachers' access to teachers' guides, reference books and teaching materials.

The study made an effort to assess the extent to which teachers were receiving professional supervision from different sources. Although a few instances of supervisory visits were found to have taken place, supervision of teachers' work for the most part was a rare activity. The head teacher is found to be the principal source of teacher supervision, followed by others. It is surprising to note that substantial proportions of teachers were either never supervised or supervised once or two times by the resource persons and school supervisors, whose primary responsibility is to provide teacher support and supervision. Focus group discussions also revealed that the teachers' work goes largely unobserved, unmonitored, and unsupported. By and large, teachers were found to work in isolation. As expected, most teachers went to the head teachers (36%) and their teacher colleagues (35%) for professional help. But, contrary to our expectation, very few teachers turned to school supervisors and resource persons on professional matters.

It was found that teachers, whether male or female, upgrade their academic qualifications while on the job. But, male teachers (46%) were found to have upgraded their academic qualifications in higher proportions as compared with female teachers (38%). Only 12% of the total female teachers were reported having received promotion once during their teaching career. More male teachers (18%) received promotion as opposed to female teachers. In total, 9% of the female teachers were able to upgrade their level of appointment. It did not compare favorably with the proportion of male teachers (21%) who were able to upgrade their levels of appointment. Only 16% of the total female teachers reported having been awarded a medal or a certificate in recognition of their good work. Male teachers were more likely to be recognized than female teachers (28% versus 16%). On being asked if male and female teachers had opportunity for professional advancement, a little over three-fourth of the respondents answered in the negative, while only one-fourth of them answered in the positive. It implies that in a majority of cases female teachers perceive having been subjected to unequal treatment with respect to professional advancement as compared to male teachers.

The study examined whether female teachers had aspirations for managerial positions (e.g., head teacher, resource person, superintendent, etc.). Interestingly, very few admitted (3%) having considered for these senior positions. Further, we examined whether or not female teachers were ever considered by the district administrators or local authorities for being appointed in leadership roles. The answer was predominantly negative. Only 5% of the total female teachers reported to have been considered by their supervisors for senior positions. Lack of desire to reach senior levels was frequently noted during interviews. Many did not have aspirations to become administrators. The data seems to suggest that women deselected themselves from serious consideration for appointments in leadership roles either by not actively seeking positions or by turning down positions when offered. For the most part, resistance, prejudiced attitudes and/or stereotypical beliefs about women also blocked the consideration of women for such positions. Since those who do the appointments are males, it was unlikely that the positions would go to females.

Female teachers found the salary, sick leave, annual leave, maternity leave, and casual leave to be reasonable, while they felt that several other benefits such as insurance, pension, gratuity, medical allowance, annual increment, training allowance, educational allowance, study leave, and provident fund to be inadequate. Most teachers did not get their salary on a monthly basis.

Schools where female teachers are currently working are facing several problems, which they define to be serious or very serious. Some of the problems felt to be very serious include: 'student irregularity,' 'students leaving the school for various reasons,' 'students not having sufficient textbooks and stationery,' lack of supervision from the DEO office,' 'shortage of physical facilities,' 'shortage of instructional materials,' 'lack of funds,' and 'poor intellectual capacity of students.' Overall, the experiences of male teachers did not differ from those of female teachers.

### **10.1.5 Gender environment in schools**

The two concepts of 'gender discrimination' and 'gender equality' were familiar concepts to the large majority of the respondents. However, 19% of them were not familiar with the former and 13% of them with the latter. More secondary and lower secondary teachers reported their familiarity with the concepts than did the primary teachers. Gender equality was understood in terms of 'treating boys and girls equally,' 'ensuring equal rights for men and women,' 'ensuring equal participation of men and women in social, economic and educational development,' and 'ensuring that both men and women have the same opportunity to move ahead in their lives' 'paying attention to girls' learning problems,' 'recruiting more female teachers in teaching profession,' and 'creating an opportunity where boys and girls have the same opportunity to learn.' Many teachers were found to be reluctant to admit that gender discrimination existed in their schools, although 20% of the total teachers admitted that it did exist in one or other form. Specific examples of discrimination were as follows: 'more opportunity for male teachers while selecting for training courses,' 'lack of opportunity to participate in decision-making,' 'lack of confidence and faith in the ability of female teachers on the part of head teachers,' For the most part, gender inequalities

and discrimination were accepted as 'natural' or 'normal.' These were not seen as something unjust and morally unacceptable. Only 14% of the total female teachers reported having participated in gender-related training courses.

The majority of the female teachers perceived that the mothers of students (72%) as well as the girl students (73%) prefer female teachers over male teachers. Some also (45%) believed that boys also prefer to be taught by female teachers as opposed to male teachers. But, in terms of getting respect, female teachers perceived that male teachers received greater respect from students, parents and community members.

There were cases where female teachers underwent through the feeling of loneliness or isolation very frequently (21%) or sometimes (11%). The survey has found that at times teachers (40% of the total) felt having been ignored or neglected at work by their colleagues and the head teacher. On being asked how safe female teachers felt at work, an overwhelming majority of them (92%) said that they felt safe, while the rest of them did not have that experience. The experiences of primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers were found to be identical.

How do female teachers spend their leisure time at school? For the most part, female teachers seemed to spend their leisure time with their male and female colleagues (48%). Some 40% however reported that they preferred to be either alone or mix with the students during their leisure time. In a few cases, the study found that female teachers interacted with their female colleagues only (10%). The proportion of female teachers who were bold enough to say that their leisure time goes with the male colleagues was a mere 1 percent.

Sexual harassment is a serious form of gender discrimination which can hinder the advancement of women. Western research has shown that women are often subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace. As reported by female teachers in this study, the incidence of sexual harassment is minimal or non-existent in some cases. All indicators of sexual discrimination did not come out high in the ranking. The most frequently occurring acts associated with sexual harassment are as follows: frequent comments on clothing, comments on physical appearance or body parts, frequent asking of very personal questions, etc. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature were not frequent. Women identified the trouble makers to be either a male colleague or a member of the supervisory and/or administrative staff. Of the total respondents, only 7% admitted having been subjected to different kinds of acts of sexual harassment. These data should not be interpreted to mean that schools in Nepal are safe for female teachers. Two things must be mentioned about sexual harassment. In the first place, the victims do not want to make such incidence public for fear of negative impact on their career or exposition to a bad name. Secondly, even if it is reported, it is less likely that school administration will take any appropriate action against the offender. It should also be mentioned that few respondents – especially male teachers – denied the existence of sexual harassment vehemently and considered it a western concept imposed on the eastern culture. Given the complexity of the meaning of sexual harassment in the Nepalese culture, perhaps a more qualitative methodology involving case studies or life histories may need to be employed to investigate the problem.

The survey showed that female teachers hold a number of expectations from people around them. The first and foremost expectation was that they desire to be treated with respect and dignity from their male colleagues. They expected that their male colleagues to recognize their ability to teach and do other things. They wanted to be accepted as a team member. Many also expected to enjoy an opportunity to be involved in all aspects of school management. Support for professional growth, equal opportunity for career advancement, frequent communication and interaction, use of decent language, etc. were also desired by them.

Negative attitudes held by people about pregnancy and menstruation can also cause stress on the part of female teachers. On being asked if there existed the belief in the local community that pregnant woman should not touch others, some 20% of the total respondents mentioned that this belief was still alive in their community. Many felt that such a belief made it difficult to work in the community as a teacher. Of the total respondents, 7% said that parents often protested against their children being taught by pregnant female teachers. The belief that women should not touch others during menstruation and therefore should remain in isolation was also found to be rampant. Sixty-five percent of the total female teachers reported that this belief does exist in communities where they are currently working.

The extent to which women will be effective in their work will depend on how they are perceived and supported by their male counterparts, parents, students, head teachers and educational administrators. Qualified females will be attracted to join teaching if the environment is positive and supportive. The study found that male teachers held both negative and positive attitudes toward female teachers. On the negative side, male teachers believed their female colleagues as being 'lazy', 'talkative,' 'less capable of organizing extra-curricular activities,' 'less regular and punctual in class,' 'less competent than men,' 'more appropriate in smaller grades as teachers,' 'less sincere and hardworking,' 'less prepared to take on difficult assignments,' 'less able to work as strong administrators,' and 'less competent to teach Science and Mathematics subjects' in comparison to men. Male teachers further believed that women take leave more frequently than men due to the fact that they have to take care of their children, family members, and household affairs. On the positive side, male teachers believed that both parents and girls felt safer in schools when female teachers were present in schools. The widely held belief that female teachers' presence in schools boosts girls' enrollment and retention was rejected by a significant proportion of male teachers. However, they did strongly support the view that female teachers are good at giving care to younger children. On the whole, the data suggested that male teachers did not have positive attitudes toward female teachers.

During focus groups discussions, parents were asked to comment on the work of female teachers. The views expressed by them were discouraging and damaging to the female teachers. They characterized female teachers as being unprofessional, uncommitted, unmotivated, and unqualified to teach. Frequent hampering of teaching due to excessive use of maternity and other kinds of leaves, not completing the course in time, being late in school, leaving for home early, not being serious in work, giving priority to domestic and family matters rather than to the teaching duty, spending teaching hours in unproductive

tasks, not being able to control class were some negative observations about female teachers. On the positive side, there were appreciations such as these: good at giving care to children, loving to children, behaving equally to boys and girls, children feeling safe under them, etc.

Children's attitudes toward their female teachers were also explored using a number of indicators. Proportionally, more students identified a number of undesirable behaviors such as 'missing classes frequently,' 'getting angry easily,' 'wasting time in class in gossips,' and 'paying attention to a group of students' to be the characteristics of male teachers. Students seemed to believe that their female teachers did not possess these behavior parameters. On the other hand, several positive behaviors were found to be associated with male teachers: 'keeping good command of the subject matter,' 'making the subject interesting while teaching,' 'making the subject understandable,' 'making the class interesting,' 'coming to teach with full preparation,' 'being prepared to assist students with their learning problems,' 'keeping a good sense of humor,' 'looking cheerful,' 'giving and grading homework,' 'handling any interruption effectively,' 'encouraging students to work hard,' and 'completing course in time.' It implies that female teachers did not have a positive profile on the basis of these classroom behaviors. As expected, more students found some behaviors associated with the female teachers highly positive. These behaviors are: 'listening to students' personal problems,' 'being prepared to listen to students' family problems,' and 'respecting students.' It is not surprising that students found male teachers less receptive than their female teachers.

Further inquiry revealed that female teachers were perceived to be good at care giving and maternal roles. As a result, it was stressed that women would be better teachers in primary grades. But, their role as an effective teacher has not been fully recognized. In particular, they were perceived to be incompetent in teaching the so-called hard subjects such as English, Science and Mathematics. Some found female teachers to be good only at subjects like Nepali and Social Studies. Such perceptions do harm than good to female teachers. These perceptions can confine women to junior levels and tasks perceived to be easy.

The students were asked, "If you have a chance to choose between a male and a female, who would you choose to become your teacher?" Overall, the students were equally divided in their choice of male and female teachers. Of the total students, 47% preferred males to be their teachers, while 45% of them chose females for the same. Some 8% of the students did not have any opinion. Cross-tabulation of the same data in terms of boys and girls showed interesting findings. Proportionally, more boys (67%) showed their preference for male teachers, while more girls (64%) did the same for female teachers.

Discussions were held with boys and girls separately to find out their views and experiences with the male and female teachers. It is interesting to note that many of the observations made by students were not different from those made by male teachers and parents. Boys often commented that female teachers didn't know how to teach, didn't have sufficient knowledge of the subject matter, were not laborious and hardworking, arrived schools late and left early, spent school hours gossiping rather than working, and were more concerned about girls than boys, etc. Girl students also made similar negative observations about

female teachers. Some girl students felt that female teachers were ‘fashionable’ and paid more attention on their physical appearance rather than on the actual work. They also mentioned that female teachers were too rude and less caring. They said that they were frequently scolded by their female teachers. On the positive side, female teachers were described as being considerate, loving, receptive, etc.

Most head teachers felt the need to employ more female teachers in schools. However, some head teachers were not very appreciative of female teachers’ performance and role. The head teachers’ observations were similar to those of the male teachers, parents, and students. Female teachers were frequently characterized as ‘weak,’ ‘lazy,’ ‘irregular,’ ‘talkative,’ ‘fearful of responsibilities’ and ‘not capable of handling difficult assignments.’ A few head teachers were very positive about the performance and role of female teachers. They were described as having more understanding of students’ needs, tolerant, having good communication abilities and easily accessible to children.

The district level administrators had rather positive views about female teachers. They characterized female teachers as being ‘serious,’ ‘honest,’ ‘more appropriate for younger children,’ ‘less interested in politics,’ and ‘hard working.’ One frequently made negative comment was that the female teachers have a tendency of avoiding deployment in rural schools and seeking deputation or transfer to a school in the district headquarters, possibly to stay with their family members.

The study’s findings on teachers’ attitudes toward boys and girls as learners were revealing. For the most part, girls were perceived to be quiet, calm and submissive in comparison to boys (91%), therefore, easily controllable than the latter (75%). Not surprising, teachers found girls more obedient than boys (91%). Girls were reported to be shy and nervous to ask questions in the classroom, which could be one reason for their poor performance as compared with boys. This belief on the part of teachers combined with the lack of action to correct the so-called ‘shyness’ and ‘nervousness’ found among girls can contribute to poor learning. Girls were also believed to be (a) less able to learn math and science (45%), (b) less aggressive in their study (41%), and (c) less able to learn (42%) in comparison to the boys. Similarly, they were believed to take less interest in their studies (43%) as compared to the boys. Nearly one-third of the teachers found boys to be working much harder than girls. Teachers often overlook the fact that girls are subjected to longer hours of household work, which gives them little or no time for study. This very fact puts them behind in studies. It is not surprising that a substantial proportion of female teachers still believed that boys need more education than girls do. So long such beliefs are held by educators themselves, it can be difficult to create a favorable learning environment for girls in schools. Teachers’ negative expectations and attitudes undermine girls’ confidence and performance in subjects like Math, English and Science. Some classroom studies have concluded that the way teachers organize and manage teaching learning activities in classrooms works against the girls. Studies have reported that the amount of support and attention that girls receive inside and outside classrooms from their teachers is minimal as compared to their teachers.

#### 10.1.6 Increasing the supply of female teachers in rural and remote locations

Female teachers in the survey articulated that their presence in schools had multiple pay-offs. They felt that they can contribute significantly in increasing enrollment and retention of girls in schools, spreading the value of girls' education in the community, creating gender equality in schools, and creating suitable learning environment. Some teachers saw positive association between female teachers and increased status of girls and women in the community. Other benefits of female teachers included increased literacy, increased public awareness, increased women's development, decreased unemployment of educated women, and decreased incidence of girls trafficking, gender discrimination and sexual harassment. There were some who felt that female teachers are critical for improving the quality of education. One interesting observation has to do with the increased accountability and motivation of male teachers due to female teachers' presence in schools. The final observation was that the recruitment of female teachers contributes to improve the economic status of women. Many of these beliefs shared by female teachers were not shared by many others.

The study showed that only a small proportion of the total female teachers (14%) have considered working in rural and remote locations of the country, while the remaining of them never thought of doing so. What would be their response if they are transferred by the government to a remote and difficult location? Some 30% of the total female teachers expressed their commitment to continue teaching in a situation where they are deployed to teach in remote and rural locations. The majority of the teachers (70%) however mentioned that they would rather quit teaching instead of going to serve in remote and rural locations. It appears from the data that under the current circumstances it is not possible to relocate teachers from their current location to remote and rural locations. Many factors were identified as major barriers: the on-going conflict in the country, family and/or personal reasons, limited financial and non-financial incentive, extreme hardship, limited or no opportunity to upgrade one's academic qualifications, lack of services and opportunities, and social and cultural practices that restrict women's free movement and independence.

Female teachers stated that a number of actions would encourage them to go to remote and rural locations: ensuring secured place to live, provision of free housing and food, higher salary, hardship allowance, ensuring that there are at least two female teachers in each school, longer vacations, giving extra value for the service done in remote and rural areas in promotion, provision of child care, mandatory service in rural and remote locations for all teachers at least for a year, honoring those who serve in remote areas, transport costs. While incentives and additional facilities may work to attract female teachers to be deployed in rural and remote locations, the only permanent solution is to develop the status of girls' education in these areas, they emphatically stated. Female teachers believed that targeted scholarships for higher education, recruitment of local female teachers, and greater incentive for schools to appoint female teachers would also contribute to increase the supply of female teachers.

## 10.2 Major Recommendations

The study made an attempt to highlight the situation of female teachers in Nepal. On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

### 10.2.1 Formulating and enforcing policies to bring more women into the teaching profession

Enforce the two female teacher policy with a time-bound action plan. The one female teacher policy has subjected women to the crowd of men, where she can hardly function. The policy is merely a tokenism. For the most part, its impact is minimal. Being a small minority in the male world can cause professional loneliness and isolation that can significantly undermine the sense of comfort, confidence and belonging. Therefore, the government must take immediate steps to formulate a legislation that guarantees at least two female teachers in each primary school of the country. It should be recognized that the profession of teaching needs talented and committed teachers and cannot afford to discourage valuable members. The future of the profession will be greatly influenced by the presence of women, and its success will depend on a fair inclusion and accommodation of both genders in the schools. Policymakers and planners need to recognize that quality education of children may go compromised in an environment which does not accept the competence and talent of women. Policy proposals and reports that extol the benefits of gender equality are nothing more than empty rhetoric if they are not followed up with commensurate action. Any attempt to increase the number of female teachers must start with attempts to identify and remove impediments and barriers. The study has identified a number of barriers, which call for serious changes in the way things should be organized and managed. Among many things, changes need to take place in institutional cultures, societal power relations, social values, and stereotypes. While we emphasize that the government must take immediate steps to enforce its own policy of recruiting two female teachers in every school, we should not forget that this policy is merely a ‘tokenism.’ Such a policy cannot lead to gender equality. Tokenism is only a symbolic effort. It does not cure the root causes of inequality.

Consider employing women of diverse origins. Women should not be seen as a homogenous entity. Recruitment practices in the past have not considered women’s ethnicity, language, and place of residence. As the government is ready to execute the two teacher policy, there will be new employment opportunities for potential female candidates. Some women are more able than others to grab the advantage of new opportunities. Such a situation will not do justice to women belonging to indigenous groups and linguistic minorities, leading to further exclusion of these groups. Therefore, it is essential that female teacher policy recognizes the diversity among women.

Develop a complete package to attract female teachers to serve in rural and remote locations. Isolated actions will never address the shortage of female teachers in schools operating in rural and remote areas. Efforts made in the past have not yielded much in terms of attracting



women to work in difficult circumstances. Therefore, a complete incentive package is in order. Such a package can include the following:

- Provision of free housing and food
- Provision of childcare
- Differential salary structure
- Hardship allowance
- Ensuring that there are at least two female teachers in the school
- Longer vacations
- Giving extra value for the service done in the remote and rural area in promotion
- Honoring those who serve in remote areas
- Travel allowance (bearing travel costs to allow them to visit their families)
- Free boarding education for children
- Attractive insurance
- Reasonable workload (extra incentive for each additional lesson taught)
- Increased incentive for schools that hire female teachers and enroll girls

### **10.2.2 Formulating policies to improve the status of the teaching profession**

Adopt measures to make teaching an attractive profession. Data from the present study suggests that those who join teaching are not the smart ones in terms of their academic performance in schools and colleges. As new professions emerge due to growing urbanization, greater use of science and technology and diversification of the economy, teaching profession will need to compete with other professions to attract talented and highly qualified people. If the future of the nation depends on the quality of education, the quality of education depends on the quality of teachers. Therefore, serious efforts are needed to attract academically strong school or colleague graduates into teaching. In this context, it is advisable that the government reviews current salary structure and other benefits paid to the teachers. Teachers in this study did not demonstrate positive self-esteem and high morale. They perceived the status of teaching profession as being either static or declining. Definite steps need to be initiated to boost the morale of teachers and make teaching as competitive as other professions.

Increase teachers' access to resources. Both our observation of teachers' life and the data collected from the field suggests that many of them are living in desperate poverty. Teaching does not feed them and their family members. Both male and female teachers reported that their economic status has either declined or remained the same since becoming a teacher. Where teachers' salary and allowance cannot be increased due to the current economic crisis in the country, it should be possible to increase teachers' access to financial resources through cooperatives and rural banks so that teachers' family could be engaged in income-generating activities.

Take necessary steps urgently to make temporarily serving teachers permanent. Some 29% of the total female teachers interviewed have been serving for over 10 to 15 years, but their status of employment is still temporary. Being temporary would mean being insecure and excluded from getting financial and other benefits. A temporary teacher is not eligible for several benefits (e.g., gratuity, pension, study leave and insurance). Prolonged temporary status can lower teachers' morale and motivation, which can finally hamper teachers' classroom performance. Therefore, the government must take necessary steps urgently to make temporarily serving teachers permanent.

Prepare a teacher redeployment plan in order to meet the shortage of teachers in schools. Both male and female teachers are found to be taking a heavy teaching load. Many described their current teaching load as being unacceptable, unbearable, and in some cases impossible. Heavy teaching load reduces teachers' chance of being effective. It is no wonder that many teachers did not have time for preparation. Many even mentioned that they hardly get a 'break.' Heavy teaching load combined with heavy burden of household work makes female teacher's life miserable. Based on these findings, one is tempted to recommend that teachers should be given a reasonable amount of teaching load so that they have time for planning lessons, preparing instructional materials, using child-centered and participatory teaching methods, and providing individual attention and support to children. Among others, heavy teaching load is the result of insufficient number of teachers. In public schools, teacher quotas are centrally distributed and then redistributed at the district level. In the past, political considerations played a major role in distributing or redistributing teachers. Much of the teacher shortage has occurred due to inequitable distribution of available human resources. Therefore, it is advisable to develop a teacher redeployment plan in order to ease the shortage of teachers and utilize the scarce human resources.

### **10.2.3 Raising general awareness about the role of female teachers and about gender issues**

Raise general awareness about the role of female teachers. There is no shortage of negative attitudes about female teachers. While many see many good things in female teachers, for the most part, they are seen as being unprofessional, unaccountable, uncommitted and unmotivated. It is sad to note that having children is still viewed as an indication of a lack of seriousness and commitment on the part of women. Women's effort to combine motherhood with career is interpreted as lack of professional competence and commitment. They are viewed as being less motivated and committed to work as a result of having to fulfill domestic and childcare responsibilities. Pregnancy can be a source of resentment when a woman's absence creates more work for her male colleagues. Such negative attitudes held by male colleagues, parents, students, community members and administrators can negatively impact a woman's likelihood of success in the profession. These attitudes can decrease the likelihood of promotion or receiving other professional rewards. Discouragement and hostility against women can force them to leave the profession altogether. It is therefore imperative to raise general awareness among the public in favor of female teachers.

Develop and offer courses about gender. There is serious lack of gender awareness at all levels. Whether we like it or not, more and more women will enter into teaching in the years to come. Male teachers who have been working with colleagues of the same sex will find themselves in a different environment. Male managers and administrators will face a situation where they will need to manage groups of women. The demography of the teaching profession is certain to change. Male teachers and male managers will need to learn on how to work with female colleagues and vice versa. It is therefore recommended that academic and other training institutions should offer programs about gender and cultural issues to potential and serving teachers, administrators, curriculum experts, trainers, and planners. It is important that people are sensitized about harmful stereotypes and biases and they are able to work to prevent discrimination.

#### **10.2.4 Formulating and implementing measures for professional development and career advancement**

Introduce multiple measures to increase women's participation in training courses. Female teachers' participation in the in-service training courses is very minimal. Often there is a tendency to blame women for their low or no participation in training courses. The factors that prevent female teachers from participating in such courses are seldom explored. It is clear from the data that many barriers remain: location of training sites, lack of security in training centers, family pressure not to attend the training courses, household work, young children, etc. There were also cases where female teachers were not nominated for training courses. Low participation of female teachers in training courses can be addressed in several ways. First, mobile and on-the-spot training courses can be designed where it is not feasible for women to attend training institutions located far away from their homes. Second, at times training centers can organize 'female only' training courses. Where female teachers cannot attend training courses due to family members' perception of lack of security or possible harassment by trainers, such courses can be reassuring. Third, provision of childcare at training centers will help female teachers with young children. Fourth, training centers, just like the schools and any other institutions in Nepal, are male dominated. It will be necessary to recruit women in trainer role. Fifth, physical facilities will need to be developed at the training centers to meet special needs of female teachers.

Promote mentorship in teaching for women's career advancement. Increasing the number of women entering the profession of teaching does not alleviate the problem of lack of female role models. Without role models and good mentorship, women will be less likely to gain access to the positions of power that could in turn allow them to serve as mentors and role models for other women. It should be recognized that women's career advancement can be greatly facilitated and accelerated by the help of a mentor or role model. Increasing the number of women in managerial positions is one way of promoting mentorship. While male teachers and managers can also serve as effective mentors and role models for women, in a society that is divided along the gender lines males cannot always function as best mentors or role models for females.

Take necessary steps to end current gender disparity in professional advancement. The findings of the study indicate that women have fewer chances of achieving professional advancement compared with their male counterparts. Women enter the teaching profession at the same level as men, only to see their career progress moving more slowly, despite being equally qualified and committed to their male counterparts. Women believe that their professional opportunities are more limited than those of their male colleagues. Women are less likely to receive promotion, take part in training courses, and receive awards and medals than male teachers. These practices must end. These are the real facts of life, not the female teachers' skepticisms. The demands of family and pressure to accept a larger amount of responsibility for the family and its daily upkeep generally allow women less time to pursue their career goals. It is necessary to review the current policies and practices from a gender perspective. Women must believe that it is possible to grow and upgrade as much as their male colleagues. It is especially important to attract more able women and retain those who are already into teaching. That substantial proportion of female teachers is in the early or middle stage of their career, appropriate career advancement strategies are needed to continuously motivate them and retain them in the profession. It is necessary to consider career building strategies for women such as networking, career tracking and mentoring.

Encourage women to utilize available networks and create new networks where necessary. Women are often excluded from peer networks. Informal and collegial relationships can be an important source of peer and career enhancement. Collegial relationships provide the opportunity for the exchange of information about their personal and professional lives. Often excluded from these informal networks, women can be disadvantaged in a number of ways in the absence of these networks. Through training courses, female teachers must be encouraged to use the existing networks or create new ones where such networks do not exist. In most rural communities of Nepal, a number of associations, user groups and organizations are found to be functioning. Some of them work for women and children. Mothers' groups have been particularly useful in empowering rural women. Experiences from forestry, agriculture, rural banking and cooperatives suggest that women can manage their own affairs, take leadership and change practices. Female teachers might benefit from their increased collaboration and solidarity with such grassroots levels organizations.

Encourage female teachers to establish their own association. Female teachers will not be empowered unless they are organized and unless they take the responsibility of protecting their rights and raising their professional status in their own hands. This is not to suggest that men and women should have separate teacher unions.

Organize counseling and self-assertion training for female teachers. Female teachers do not have a positive self-concept of themselves. Women are socialized to become docile and obedient. At times, they cannot articulate their demands and raise voices against any suppression. Further, women are by tradition and mores more likely than men to avoid taking risks for fear of failing. It is important to point out here that failure is itself an important aspect of the learning process. Counseling and leadership training courses can be organized to build up self-confidence and assertiveness on the part of female teachers. It is

essential to increase women's decision-making power within the family as well as the school.

Increase the number of women in leadership positions. The urgency of listening to women articulate their needs and including them in decision-making process cannot be overemphasized. The study revealed that female teachers are often subjected to an experience what is often defined as the 'glass ceiling,' which refers to invisible barriers that block women from getting into senior executive positions. These barriers are often created by attitudinal and organizational prejudices. Stereotypical prejudices against women tend to emphasize unsuitability of women for leadership positions. The massive under-representation of women in leadership positions questions about male administrators' ability to identify with the concerns and needs of female teachers and girl children. Fewer women in leadership positions means under-representation of women in decision-making and fewer prospects of women for their career advancement. The government should take immediate steps to increase the number of women in leadership positions. In many districts of the country, there is already a large pool of female teachers to provide strong candidates for such positions at least at the primary level. During our fieldwork, we met many women who were able to combine the exceptional challenges of career and family. There are a number of public and private schools in the country managed and led by female head teachers. These schools are no less than the schools managed and led by male head teachers in terms of their effectiveness. These cases can be excellent examples in inspiring female teachers to become head teachers. Famous professional women can also be enlisted as role models to inspire young women. Educational planners and managers need to be made aware of such successful cases.

### **10.2.5 Improving the condition of schooling in rural and remote areas**

Develop and implement appropriate educational strategies for the rural and remote districts of Nepal. Schools currently functioning in rural and remote districts of Nepal are far behind in many ways. Our own observation and previous studies suggest that on-going reform efforts initiated under externally funded projects are not reaching the rural and remote districts. These schools are seriously lacking the bare minimum physical and human resources, let alone the qualified and trained female teachers. All available indicators suggest that the status of schooling in these areas is very poor. Children's enrollment, retention and learning achievement compare very unfavorably with several other districts. Most particularly, girls and children belonging to indigenous groups and linguistic minorities have deplorable educational status. While the supply of female teachers might contribute to address some of the problems facing the schools in rural and remote areas, this alone will not be enough to lift the status of schooling in these areas. Therefore, the government must devise and implement educational strategy that is particularly designed to address the educational needs of these areas. The campaign to promote female teachers in the rural and remote locations should be a part of the total school reform package. Most female teachers in the present study come from families where both fathers and mothers are either literate or have some years of formal education. It means that when parents are literate, they are likely to encourage their girls to work outside the household. It suggests that the campaign to

promote female teachers in the rural and remote locations has a chance to succeed when it is combined with literacy campaigns for adults.

Re-introduce the National Development Service (NDS) to meet the immediate shortage of qualified male and female teachers in rural and remote districts. During the 1970s, Nepal launched a very successful educational strategy as part of the National Education System Plan (NESP) under which university students were required to participate in a one year mandatory National Development Service (NDS). The primary task of the students was to teach in a secondary school during their one year stay in the remote and rural villages. Aside from teaching, they initiated a number of community development initiatives mobilizing local resources. The students were paid a small sum of money just enough for their survival. Students' work was evaluated and they were assigned grades based on their quality of work in schools and villages. The program gave the students an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of the rural Nepal and problems facing the people in different parts of the country. It was an excellent example of higher education being useful to poor people. The program was suspended for political reasons. Our discussions with the university students during our study revealed that there is plenty of enthusiasm and willingness on their part to join such schemes.

#### **10.2.6 Improving the overall status of girls' education**

Encourage women to study English, Science and Mathematics. There is a high concentration of female teachers on the so-called soft or easy subjects. That makes them less important as teachers. There exists a common perception among male teachers, administrators, parents, students and community members that female teachers cannot teach hard subjects. Female teachers themselves tend to believe that girls are much weaker in English, Mathematics and Science. During interviews, we were able to note sufficient fear and anxiety on the part of girls concerning these subjects. What is most unacceptable in this context is that many consider this as 'natural' and 'uncorrectable.' Girls are made to believe that some academic disciplines and professional careers are beyond their abilities. Therefore, changing the presuppositions, attitudes and expectations of parents, teachers and girls might be the key to improving attainments of girls in these important subjects. A number of actions can be suggested to correct the phobia of English, Mathematics and Science. First, scholarships can be made available to girls to study English, Mathematics and Science in higher education. Second, additional classes can be organized to enhance girls' learning achievement in these subjects. Thirdly, teacher training courses should probably emphasize most recent experiences from many industrialized countries where girls are out-performing boys in all subjects. Fourthly, public awareness campaigns using media and other means can be effective in dispelling such negative impressions about female teachers from the minds of students, parents and others.

Introduce attractive scholarships. Scholarships have been widely used in Nepal and elsewhere as a means of bringing girls into schools and colleges. Studies have noted that the amount of scholarships is negligible and the distribution system is very poor. Scholarship schemes should be redesigned making it possible for girls from rural and remote areas to

complete the secondary education and continue up to higher education. These scholarships should be properly targeted.

### **10.2.7 Changing school policies and practices**

Integrate gender into all school policies and practices. The shortage of female teachers should not be seen as a number game. It is not just about adding few more women on the teaching staff. It is essentially changing the entire school culture. How people of different origins and sexes relate to each other and whether there are equal chances for all to live and succeed are more important than the numbers of women. The present study and many other studies conducted in Nepal and elsewhere suggest that schools reflect the various kinds of inequalities that exist in the larger society. Discrimination that males and females experience in schools mirrors discrimination existing in the society as a whole. While school is the reproducer of inequalities and discrimination, it does have the potential to transform the individuals and the society as a whole. Therefore, it is imperative to integrate gender into all aspects of school life. To this end, issues of gender should form an integral part of school life. Schools are one major source from where children acquire messages about gender and roles of males and females. The ultimate goal of educational policy should be to develop schools as gender inclusive institutions. Gender elements must be woven into all aspects of school life such as teaching, classroom management, assessment, school environment, physical atmosphere, school management, and human relationships. For this, a whole school approach needs to be adopted where it is possible for male and female teachers to work together to create a learning environment that ensures equal learning experiences and outcomes for boys and girls. Schools need to be engaged in preparing and implementing an action plan for addressing gender equity. Most public schools in Nepal prepare school improvement plans (SIP) as part of the ongoing school reform. It is recommended that gender be included as one key element of the SIP process.

Promote collegial culture in schools in order to promote teacher support and supervision. Training is not the answer to improve teachers' classroom performance. While training is necessary, there are a number of ways of improving teachers' performance. One effective means of teacher development is on-site teacher support and supervision. It was found that the teachers' work goes largely unobserved, unsupervised and unsupported. Although the head teachers are reported to make supervisory visits to teachers' classrooms, those visits are for administrative purpose rather than for purpose of teacher support and development. Resource Persons and/or School Supervisors whose main duty is to supervise and support teachers do not visit teachers on-site, let alone provide professional support. The incidence of peer supervision and support is virtually non-existent. Clearly, schools lack a professional culture where teachers and others gather and collaborate to improve teaching and learning. It is recommended that the instructional and supervisory role of the head teacher should be strengthened so that teachers are constantly supervised, monitored and supported. Collegiality must be promoted so that teachers support each other. Teacher follow-up and supervision should be the core function of the Resource Centers.

Arrange for teacher assignment based on teachers' training, qualification, experience, interest and ability. Staffing arrangements in schools are *ad hoc* where any one could be asked to teach any subject regardless of his/her academic qualifications, training or experience. There were abundant numbers of cases where both male and female teachers



were assigned to teach outside their area of expertise, academic background, training and experience. It was commonplace for the teachers to be asked to teach higher grades while their appointment was at a lower level, assign subjects to teach that they did not like, or assign subjects they felt to be difficult or very difficult. Any assignment beyond the teacher's training, academic background, interest, ability and experience can result in poor quality of teaching and hence poor student learning. Teachers' shortage, faulty assignment practices, indiscriminate selection of teachers for training courses, poor intra-district or inter-district teacher allocation may in part explain the messy state of teacher assignment in schools. Teacher assignment should take into account teachers' training, academic qualification, experience, interest and ability.

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**Annex 1.1: Districtwise distribution of primary schools with and without female teachers**

<b>District Name</b>	<b>No. of primary schools</b>	<b>School with <math>\geq 1</math> female teachers</b>	<b>School without female teachers</b>	<b>% of schools without female teachers</b>
Taplejung	281	149	132	46.98
Panchthar	301	144	157	52.16
Ilam	430	263	167	38.84
Jhapa	503	410	93	18.49
Morang	552	363	189	34.24
Sunsari	311	184	127	40.84
Dhankuta	308	193	115	37.34
Terhathum	234	126	108	46.15
Sankhuwasabha	342	139	203	59.36
Bhojpur	362	169	193	53.31
Solukhumbu	222	130	92	41.44
Okhaldhunga	317	171	146	46.06
Khotang	446	209	237	53.14
Udayapur	307	148	159	51.79
Saptari	309	163	146	47.25
Siraha	338	135	203	60.06
Dhanusha	274	142	132	48.18
Mahottari	229	114	115	50.22
Sarlahi	337	193	144	42.73
Sindhuli	421	122	299	71.02
Ramechhap	266	85	181	68.05
Dolakha	309	123	186	60.19
Sindhupalchok	466	155	311	66.74
Kavrepalanchok	585	321	264	45.13
Lalitpur	300	223	77	25.67
Bhaktapur	266	246	20	7.52
Kathmandu	900	872	28	3.11
Nuwakot	429	173	256	59.67
Rasuwa	102	59	43	42.16
Dhading	458	227	231	50.44
Makwanpur	419	167	252	60.14
Rautahat	262	123	139	53.05
Bara	288	113	175	60.76
Parsa	246	114	132	53.66
Chitawan	424	366	58	13.68
Gorkha	467	267	200	42.83
Lamjung	372	230	142	38.17
Tanahu	524	358	166	31.68
Syangja	576	429	147	25.52

<b>District Name</b>	<b>No. of primary schools</b>	<b>School with <math>\geq 1</math> female teachers</b>	<b>School without female teachers</b>	<b>% of schools without female teachers</b>
Kaski	416	293	123	29.57
Manang	29	25	4	13.79
Mustang	67	58	9	13.43
Myagdi	225	138	87	38.67
Parbat	322	198	124	38.51
Baglung	478	306	172	35.98
Gulmi	532	332	200	37.59
Palpa	450	283	167	37.11
Nawalparasi	544	345	199	36.58
Rupandehi	432	334	98	22.69
Kapilbastu	268	167	101	37.69
Arghakhanchi	374	232	142	37.97
Pyuthan	292	132	160	54.79
Rolpa	296	106	190	64.19
Rukum	240	95	145	60.42
Salyan	332	122	210	63.25
Dang	377	247	130	34.48
Banke	202	105	97	48.02
Bardiya	252	174	78	30.95
Surkhet	422	216	206	48.82
Dailekh	333	115	218	65.47
Jajarkot	263	100	163	61.98
Dolpa	111	52	59	53.15
Jumla	119	51	68	57.14
Kalikot	156	74	82	52.56
Mugu	122	44	78	63.93
Humla	107	37	70	65.42
Bajura	198	82	116	58.59
Bajhang	274	67	207	75.55
Achham	232	62	170	73.28
Doti	309	128	181	58.58
Kailali	458	277	181	39.52
Kanchanpur	237	181	56	23.63
Dadeldhura	99	57	42	42.42
Baitadi	362	120	242	66.85
Darchula	291	129	162	55.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>24704</b>	<b>13802</b>	<b>10902</b>	<b>44.13</b>

**Annex 3.1: Structure of School Level Education in Nepal, 1951-2003**

<b>Period Effective</b>	<b>Level Named</b>	<b>Grades Covered</b>
1951 – 1970	Primary Middle High	Grades 1 – 5 Grades 6- 7 Grades 8-10
1971 – 1980	Primary Lower Secondary Secondary	Grades 1-3 Grades 4-7 Grades 8-10
1981 – 1992	Primary Lower Secondary Secondary	Grades 1-5 Grades 6-7 Grades 8-10
1993-2003	Primary Lower Secondary Secondary	Grades 1-5 Grades 6-8 Grades 9-10

**Annex 3.2: Number of male and female teachers employed at different levels, 1975-2003**

Year	Primary				Lower Secondary				Secondary				All Combined			
	Male	Fem	Total	% Fem	Male	Fem	Total	% Fem	Male	Fem	Total	% Fem	Male	Fem	Total	% Fem
1975	19240	12	19252	0.06	6618	0	6618	0	3587	0	3587	0.00	29445	12	29457	0.04
1976	19183	1706	20889	8.17	7160	772	7932	9.73	3084	355	3439	10.32	29427	2833	32260	8.78
1977	21539	1856	23395	7.93	7989	759	8748	8.68	3281	384	3665	10.48	32809	2999	35808	8.38
1978	22612	2040	24652	8.28	8539	877	9416	9.31	3548	400	3948	10.13	34699	3317	38016	8.73
1979	23802	2582	26384	9.79	9505	1040	10545	9.86	3850	415	4265	9.73	37157	4037	41194	9.80
1980	25045	2681	27726	9.67	10532	1160	11692	9.92	4376	307	4683	6.56	39953	4148	44101	9.41
1981	26468	2666	29134	9.15	11346	1161	12507	9.28	4463	449	4912	9.14	42277	4276	46553	9.19
1982	29260	3034	32294	9.39	9733	1087	10820	10.05	5025	609	5634	10.81	44018	4730	48748	9.70
1983	34522	3530	38052	9.28	9142	1004	10146	9.90	5278	486	5764	8.43	48942	5020	53962	9.30
1984	41765	4596	46361	9.91	9648	950	10598	8.96	5914	513	6427	7.98	57327	6059	63386	9.56
1985	46165	4870	51035	9.54	9918	1102	11020	10.00	6671	571	7242	7.88	62754	6543	69297	9.44
1986	49229	4136	53365	7.75	9897	2622	12519	20.94	7699	1557	9256	16.82	66825	8315	75140	11.07
1987	50337	4870	55207	8.82	10712	1044	11756	8.88	8003	915	8918	10.26	69052	6829	75881	9.00
1988	51035	6169	57204	10.78	10934	1055	11989	8.80	8446	697	9143	7.62	70415	7921	78336	10.11
1989	55942	8003	63945	12.52	10861	1384	12245	11.30	9333	874	10207	8.56	76136	10261	86397	11.88
1990	62033	9180	71213	12.89	11000	1399	12399	11.28	9524	897	10421	8.61	82557	11476	94033	12.20
1991	64289	10206	74495	13.70	11520	1485	13005	11.42	10689	938	11627	8.07	86498	12629	99127	12.74
1992	66263	11685	77948	14.99	11503	1722	13225	13.02	10885	1247	12132	10.28	88651	14654	103305	14.19
1993	66819	12771	79590	16.05	11846	1801	13647	13.20	11421	1235	12656	9.76	90086	15807	105893	14.93
1994	67149	14395	81544	17.65	13493	2190	15683	13.96	12444	1376	13820	9.96	93086	17961	111047	16.17
1995	66760	15885	82645	19.22	14536	2285	16821	13.58	13337	1248	14585	8.56	94633	19418	114051	17.03
1996	70937	18450	89387	20.64	17176	2528	19704	12.83	14729	1694	16423	10.31	102842	22672	125514	18.06
1997	70920	20544	91464	22.46	18046	2595	20641	12.57	15147	1347	16494	8.17	104113	24486	128599	19.04
1998	71196	20682	91878	22.51	19528	2567	22095	11.62	15471	1206	16677	7.23	106195	24455	130650	18.72
1999	75774	23608	99382	23.75	21385	3311	24696	13.41	17581	1604	19185	8.36	114740	28523	143263	19.91
2000	73109	24770	97879	25.31	22324	3051	25375	12.02	18008	1490	19498	7.64	113441	29311	142752	20.53
2001	72232	24427	96659	25.27	22938	3740	26678	14.02	17358	1488	18846	7.90	112528	29655	142183	20.86
2002	78624	31549	110173	28.64	23686	4474	28160	15.89	20437	2316	22753	10.18	122747	38339	161086	23.80
2003	79621	32739	112360	29.14	24990	4905	29895	16.40	21103	2194	23297	9.42	125714	39838	165552	24.03



**Annex 3.3: Proportions of Female Teachers Employed in Schools and Proportions of These Female Teachers Trained at Primary Level  
District-Wise Profile 1997 and 2003**

	District	Employed		Difference	Trained		Difference
		1997	2003		1997	2003	
1	Taplejung	17.76	19.16	1.40	15.61	11.44	-4.16
2	Sankhuwasabha	15.30	19.40	4.11	16.18	27.91	11.72
3	Solukhumbu	25.16	28.08	2.92	9.60	11.74	2.14
4	Panchthar	15.38	17.63	2.25	20.83	13.60	-7.24
5	Ilam	16.82	31.90	15.07	44.64	15.72	-28.91
6	Dhankuta	23.00	17.45	-5.55	30.49	12.44	-18.05
7	Tehrathum	20.05	33.59	13.54	19.13	23.84	4.71
8	Bhojpur	13.78	20.19	6.41	23.45	12.94	-10.51
9	Okhaldhunga	19.00	28.47	9.47	29.56	15.02	-14.54
10	Khotang	16.84	19.63	2.80	17.00	14.22	-2.78
11	Udayapur	12.82	26.61	13.79	30.58	10.09	-20.49
12	Jhapa	27.30	34.53	7.23	10.39	9.56	-0.83
13	Morang	26.49	32.14	5.65	13.72	12.39	-1.33
14	Sunsari	31.14	35.38	4.24	14.16	11.32	-2.85
15	Saptari	13.03	13.44	0.41	31.93	35.23	3.30
16	Siraha	11.07	15.55	4.48	24.49	38.67	14.18
17	Dolakha	15.99	18.73	2.74	34.71	30.11	-4.60
18	Sindhupalchok	11.63	14.52	2.89	36.81	17.44	-19.37
19	Rasuwa	21.30	24.40	3.10	26.39	42.39	16.00
20	Sindhuli	15.86	18.67	2.81	40.40	15.25	-25.14
21	Ramechhap	10.85	13.41	2.56	29.70	14.75	-14.95
22	Kavre	15.69	29.91	14.22	35.77	9.98	-25.80
23	Nuwakot	15.05	15.65	0.60	35.39	32.97	-2.42
24	Dhading	14.26	17.76	3.51	22.55	12.50	-10.05
25	Makwanpur	25.00	31.68	6.68	41.12	11.13	-29.99
26	Lalitpur	38.17	43.69	5.52	31.66	6.63	-25.03
27	Bhaktapur	41.85	43.05	1.20	47.35	11.48	-35.87
28	Kathmandu	62.69	62.67	-0.02	12.64	15.25	2.61
29	Dhanusa	17.63	26.62	8.99	16.36	20.16	3.80
30	Mahottari	13.43	18.25	4.82	48.63	40.47	-8.17
31	Sarlahi	18.60	27.47	8.86	49.11	14.87	-34.23
32	Rautahat	15.81	20.46	4.65	53.17	19.92	-33.25
33	Bara	15.31	21.94	6.63	49.17	25.66	-23.51
34	Parsa	12.65	20.90	8.25	60.90	13.48	-47.42
35	Chitawan	28.89	38.28	9.39	39.97	26.98	-12.99
36	Manang	35.25	34.85	-0.40	11.63	19.57	7.94
37	Mustang	21.89	27.90	6.01	12.31	9.09	-3.22
38	Gorkha	15.39	21.18	5.78	81.25	35.68	-45.57
39	Lamjung	23.29	29.26	5.97	31.67	20.78	-10.90
40	Tanahun	22.59	33.62	11.03	31.76	15.75	-16.01
41	Syangja	20.39	32.74	12.35	48.56	11.51	-37.06
42	Kaski	36.77	46.43	9.66	48.48	12.06	-36.42
43	Myagdi	16.24	33.85	17.62	56.64	9.89	-46.74

District		Employed			Trained		
		1997	2003	Difference	1997	2003	Difference
44	Parvat	23.30	26.45	3.15	55.30	16.94	-38.36
45	Baglung	18.00	27.68	9.68	64.93	9.62	-55.31
46	Gulmi	16.83	28.63	11.79	57.68	11.19	-46.49
47	Palpa	21.81	26.11	4.30	52.49	11.75	-40.74
48	Arghakhanchi	10.18	22.61	12.44	31.03	15.12	-15.91
49	Nawalparasi	17.78	30.08	12.30	37.45	8.70	-28.76
50	Rupandehi	26.47	39.98	13.51	56.07	8.29	-47.78
51	Kapilbastu	18.79	27.36	8.56	60.33	22.28	-38.04
52	Dolpa	16.50	18.93	2.43	37.25	18.31	-18.95
53	Jumla	10.95	21.32	10.37	40.00	15.46	-24.54
54	Kalikot	22.94	23.01	0.07	18.87	12.39	-6.48
55	Mugu	15.65	16.16	0.50	12.96	13.79	0.83
56	Humla	16.08	15.36	-0.72	0.00	0.00	0.00
57	Pyuthan	20.30	19.35	-0.95	43.68	19.66	-24.02
58	Rolpa	12.90	20.35	7.45	33.03	7.61	-25.42
59	Rukum	11.68	16.80	5.12	44.19	6.90	-37.29
60	Sallyan	11.26	15.66	4.41	36.84	14.79	-22.05
61	Surkhet	16.79	23.42	6.63	64.38	30.18	-34.19
62	Daikekh	11.29	15.19	3.90	35.19	22.44	-12.75
63	Jajarkot	13.96	19.97	6.01	28.24	9.68	-18.56
64	Dang	18.02	27.58	9.56	36.09	5.43	-30.66
65	Banke	23.49	37.69	14.20	48.21	8.48	-39.73
66	Bardiya	17.82	24.30	6.47	39.47	14.85	-24.62
67	Bajura	13.01	14.29	1.27	50.68	29.55	-21.14
68	Bajhang	7.62	10.95	3.33	100.00	12.50	-87.50
67	Darchula	13.62	15.24	1.61	37.86	34.07	-3.79
70	Achham	9.44	13.64	4.20	6.33	18.71	12.38
71	Doti	13.67	19.53	5.86	52.63	18.09	-34.54
72	Dadeldhura	13.73	17.29	3.56	7.14	20.00	12.86
73	Baitadi	7.26	15.34	8.08	47.06	11.03	-36.02
74	Kailali	16.55	26.13	9.57	59.65	4.65	-55.00
75	Kanchanpur	21.84	27.60	5.76	33.33	13.95	-19.38

District		Employed			Trained		
		1997	2003	Difference	1997	2003	Difference
Eastern DR		20.57	26.49	5.93	18.54	14.64	-3.89
Central DR		29.00	33.79	4.79	26.70	16.43	-10.26
Western DR		21.94	31.92	9.98	48.92	13.22	-35.70
Mid-Western DR		16.17	22.63	6.47	39.43	13.48	-25.95
Far-Western DR		12.71	19.40	6.70	43.67	14.48	-29.20
<b>Nepal</b>		<b>22.46</b>	<b>29.14</b>	<b>6.68</b>	<b>32.04</b>	<b>14.79</b>	<b>-17.26</b>
Mountains		15.94	18.55	2.62	26.66	19.93	-6.73
Tarai		21.05	29.16	8.11	31.99	14.77	-17.22
KTM Valley		54.90	54.42	-0.48	18.64	13.01	-5.63
Hills		24.44	30.95	6.51	32.72	14.26	-18.46





# **INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE “STATUS OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN NEPAL”**



**4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2005,  
The Radisson Hotel  
(Kathmandu, Nepal)**

Supported and facilitated by:  
UNESCO office in Kathmandu

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A seminar on the 'Status of Female Teachers in Nepal' was held from 4-6<sup>th</sup> September 2005 at the Radisson Hotel, in Kathmandu, Nepal. The seminar was organised by the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu to support the Government efforts to achieve the EFA goals set by the Dakar Framework of Action, namely to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by the end of 2005 and to achieve gender equality in education by 2015.

In spite of all the efforts made by His Majesty's Government of Nepal, international organizations, non-government organizations and civil society, gender disparity in primary and secondary education remains to be a major challenge. In Nepal, the gender parity index remains at approximately 0.8 in primary schools. The lack of female teachers, and hence the absence of female role models in primary and secondary schools, may be considered as one of the root causes of gender inequality. Moreover, it is widely recognized that the fewer the female teachers in schools, the wider the gap between the enrolment, retention and promotion of female and male students. As a result of this background and in recognition of the broad social benefits that can be gained from a critical reduction in gender inequality, the UNESCO office in Kathmandu conducted a survey on the status of Female Teachers in Nepal.

The survey's main objective was to collect information pertaining to the socio-cultural aspects of female teachers in order to enhance understanding about their professional and personal lives. Rather than concentrating solely on surveying the quantitative aspects of female teachers, the study attempted to capture qualitative aspects both of their daily lives as teachers, and as members of society through observing and documenting perceptions of female teachers both by female teachers themselves and by the community at large. With a view to sharing the findings and further improving the conclusions and recommendations of the study, UNESCO Kathmandu organized a workshop in Nepal from 4 to 6 September 2005 with the following specific objectives:

- To share the key findings of the survey with all major education stakeholders in Nepal
- To obtain information, feedback and comments from international experts and academics on various best practices of female teacher deployment in their respective countries.
- To establish recommendations for the Government, and other relevant stakeholders, improving the conditions for female teachers. This will be achieved in conjunction with various participants from a range of educational sectors.
- To gain support and commitment from various education stakeholders, including the Government to implement and follow the recommendations, which have been jointly developed and improved.

### **Participants**

A total of 63 participants were present at the workshop, including officials from the Ministry of Education and Sports and its line departments, University professors, educationalists, and representatives of bilateral and multilateral donors, international and national NGOs, teacher unions and civil society.

The international resource persons invited were academic experts such as Dr. Muhammad Memon, Professor and Director of The Aga Khan University in Karachi (Pakistan), Dr. Varaporn Bovornsiri, Department of Educational Policy, Management and Leadership, Faculty of Education at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok (Thailand). UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok, also provided relevant programme officers including, Dr Molly Lee, Senior Programme Specialist in Higher Education; and Ms Mita Gupta, Programme Officer, Resource Mobilization, Basic Education and Gender.

### **Methodology of the seminar**

The seminar involved various presentations, followed by question and answer sessions, and floor discussions. A presentation of the survey's results was delivered on the first day. In order to share a common understanding of the Nepalese context, various presentations were made by government officers from the Department of Education, the National Centre for Education Development (NCED), NGOs and academicians. UNESCO also presented its policy position regarding female teachers. Experience sharing around the Asian continent was also pooled with the aim of disseminating successful strategies to increase the quantity and quality of female teachers. The workshop also devoted a session to preparing suggestions for policy recommendations on aspects relating to recruitment, professional development, conditions of work and empowerment of female teachers

### **Opening Session:**

The workshop was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, Mr Chuman Singh Basnet, Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports. The UNESCO Representative opened the seminar followed by the Chief Guest's inaugural address.

The participants were welcomed by Ms. Kanno, the UNESCO Representative, who outlined the purpose and expected outcome of the workshop. Namely, that the workshop had been organized with a view to validating the findings of the research study undertaken by Professor Min Bahadur Bista and his team on the status and conditions of female teachers in selected districts in Nepal. This study was conducted within a larger framework of UNESCO's programme activities in support of national efforts to achieve the Dakar 2000 Education for All (EFA) Goals particularly Goal 5 relating to gender parity and equality in education.

Ms. Kanno highlighted that the absence of female teachers is often considered a key factor for parents not sending girls to schools. To increase girls' enrolment in schools, Nepal has adopted a policy to increase the number of female teachers in each school. Despite numerous initiatives and efforts made by the Government and other partners in this regard, particularly under BPEP, Nepal has not been able to achieve the desired objective. The UNESCO Representative further reiterated the need to accelerate the implementation of the Government's "Two female teachers per school" policy for the eventual increased participation of female children in primary and secondary schools and hence the need to develop an appropriate new strategy to this end.

**Chief Guest: Mr. Chuman Singh Basnet**, Secretary, Minister of Education & Sports, highlighted the importance of the seminar in identifying the critical role of female teachers and highlighting their contribution to the students learning level and enrolment numbers of female students. He expressed his expectations of the seminar resulting in realistic strategies to increase the female students enrolment ratios through the increased participation of female teachers in schools.

He reiterated that His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/Nepal) attaches great importance to competent teachers and their ability to impart quality education to the students. This is the very reason why the Government has previously focused its efforts on providing appropriate and relevant training to teachers so that they are competent in their field. Furthermore, he stated the Government's commitment to improving teaching conditions. He acknowledged that women are behind their male counterparts in several fields, including the teaching profession; and that this has resulted in a great challenge as 'how to prepare female teachers, especially in rural areas'.

Some of the initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Education in Nepal to improve the situation include:

1. The 'teacher education project'.  
This is currently in operation and has already led to an increase in the number of female teachers employed in primary education.
2. Free education for girls up to the 7<sup>th</sup> level. This is instrumental in creating a pool of potential female teachers, especially in remote areas.
3. A scholarship of Rs. 2000, per month, for SLC graduate girls to fund their higher secondary school education or training.

The government has endeavoured to increase the number of female teachers and to explore the possible options in supporting, increasing, and improving the status of permanent teachers. Mr. Basnet hoped that this seminar, bringing in international exposure, would assist the Government in supporting, providing and meeting the appropriate training and in promoting teaching as an attractive profession for females in order to increase their numbers and profile. Furthermore, he hoped this seminar would be good exposure and experience sharing of how developing countries can potentially increase the number of competent female teachers.

## **2. PRESENTATION OF SURVEY FINDINGS**

**Dr. Min Bahadur Bista**, Lead Researcher for the UNESCO Study, gave a power point presentation on the outcomes of the study.



The overall objective was to gain an in-depth understanding of the status of female teachers in Nepal. The study was undertaken in an environment where there was a lack of information regarding the status of female teachers. It was an exploratory study covering a wide range of issues involving the personal and professional lives of female teachers. In addition, the study analyzed how the community, parents, students, and male teachers perceive female teachers. The study identified barriers and constraints that prevent women from joining the profession. Finally, the study developed a set of policy recommendations to increase the amount of female teachers in Nepal, especially in rural and remote locations.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative data collected from primary and secondary sources.

The study indicated that there were multiple benefits of hiring female teachers. The presence of female teachers was linked, inextricably, to the increase in girls' enrolment, retention and promotion; a decline in the incidence of student dropout; and an increase in attendance. Female teachers were better equipped to give care and education during the formative years of children. However, it also illustrated that the mere presence of female teachers does not automatically create a girl-friendly environment in schools. It appeared that the positive attitude towards children was more important than the physical presence of female teachers in increasing girl's enrolment. As it stands, the existing evidence is too vague to draw concrete conclusions regarding this causal relationship.

In conclusion, the study found that most policies set were ineffective in dealing with the existing problems. Female teachers tended to view their presence in the teaching profession as being token. Policies tended to view female teachers as a homogeneous group and diversity was not recognized, thus the respective policies and actions did little to effectively cater to the majority. Moreover, the teaching profession tends to attract academically poor students and it became apparent that there was a lack of sensitivity toward female teachers' problems on the part of administrators.

The study noted negative self-esteem, low morale, and alienation on the part of female teachers. They are subject to limited decision-making power both at home and at work. Their efforts to combine motherhood with teaching are seen as unprofessional and lacking commitment. The study further reported that there is a gendered division of labour both at home and at school. Often, there was a lack of administrative support and sensitivity towards female teachers' needs and problems. There also appeared to be unequal opportunities for career advancement and that female teachers were being 'ghettoed' within teaching, assigned to lower grades and so called 'soft' subjects. They also appear to be excluded from professional networks of teachers.

The findings of the study suggest that there is a need to formulate and enforce appropriate policies to bring and retain women into the teaching profession. The study also indicates that isolated efforts and actions will not be sufficient to attract women to go to rural and/or remote locations. Therefore, serious reforms are necessary in a number of areas such as teacher recruitment, professional development, working conditions and empowerment.

**Discussion:**

The participants appreciated the study's findings, which reveal the actual status of female teachers in Nepal. The study examined both the personal and professional lives of female teachers. While acknowledging the wide coverage and scope of the present study, some participants voiced the need for undertaking a more in-depth analysis of female teachers. It was also stressed that further research is required to examine the reasons, why many teachers, both male and female, do not choose to join or stay in the teaching profession, and why the teaching profession is not valued highly even by the teachers themselves.

While the study analyzed the demographic profile of female teachers, further analysis of the data based on ethnicity showed the extent to which females belonging to different social and ethnic groups are represented in teaching. The study reported that female teachers often experienced gender bias, stereotyping, and discrimination in the workplace. It also reported that female teachers were less likely to attain leadership and/or managerial positions in schools and were often relegated to teaching so-called soft subjects. Furthermore, female teachers' chances for being selected for residential training courses were rare for various reasons. The participants also felt the strong need for qualified female teachers in such subjects as science, mathematics, and English. Moreover, concerns were raised as to whether or not female teachers were allocated subjects of their interest or those that they have experience and qualifications in.

The need was felt for effective monitoring and evaluating of teachers in order to improve the quality of school education and the efficiency of the educational system. These two checks have previously been weak or non-existent, throughout the system. Proper and effective monitoring and evaluation of the participation of female teachers would provide valuable feedback on how to increase the number of high quality female teachers.

In Nepal, female teachers are in the minority even at primary school level. Regarding this, the study raised several questions regarding the status of teachers, such as; is it related to a shortage of teachers in general and female teachers in particular or another factor? Is it related to the question of deployment, or the distribution of existing teachers in rural and urban areas? Alternatively, is it a question of a shortage of female teachers in secondary schools rather than in primary schools? The participants felt the need for further analysis of the problems related to the shortage of female teachers.

The fact that female teachers are not assuming higher responsibilities in the school system also requires in-depth gender analysis. However, it should be noted that this tendency is also prevalent in other professions or careers. On the one hand, as the study indicated, female teachers are given less opportunities than male teachers for in-service training are, but on the other hand, it is also true that female teachers cannot benefit from the available opportunities. It was found that female teachers are reluctant to fulfil higher management posts. Many women give priority to family duties and obligations, which, they fear, cannot be satisfied if they accept the senior managerial posts. In addition, female teachers themselves believe in gender stereotyping and socio-cultural biases, effectively agreeing that senior management

positions should be assumed by men. In many other countries, female teachers are more dominant, because they can pursue a teaching profession without sacrificing their family life.

Another issue highlighted was the low number of girls in secondary education who could form a reserve army to become future teachers. Girls' NER at the secondary level is only 28.8%, which suggests that there is a very small pool of young women from whom to recruit female teachers, which in turn creates a 'catch 22' situation. The study shows the strong connection between the presence of female teachers and the enrolment of female students in schools. This is true for primary level and in rural areas. Further work will be required if this also holds true for other levels of education and geographic areas.

The study, surprisingly, indicated that it is often due to the father's influence that female teachers' decide to join the profession and continue with their higher education. It became apparent that mothers hold norms that are more conservative and have a conventional view of gender and family relations. While this can be explained from the viewpoint of the patriarchal social system where the father or male head of the household is the decision-maker, we cannot overlook the important role fathers play in girls' education, and the dynamics of decision-making within the family concerning daughters who are in general considered less important than sons are.

The group recognised the need for a strong push towards creating comprehensive strategies and other supporting policies in order to increase the number of female teachers and to implement fully the Government policy of two female teachers per school. Such strategies and policies should encompass issues such as female teachers' recruitment, deployment, promotion, training, professional capacity and conditions (such as subjects assigned to female teachers) physical working environment, such as accommodation and food security in the rural areas. The workshop participants felt that these issues should be dealt with, without compromising the quality of education/teaching, and without distinction based on gender and other social, cultural, and geographical conditions.

### **3. NEPAL'S NATIONAL POLICY REGARDING FEMALE TEACHERS**

**Mr. Janardan Nepal**, Director General, Department of Education, gave a brief account of Nepal's Government Policy on Teachers, and explained the government efforts and measures that have been taken in order to increase the number of female teachers.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the Education for All (EFA) goals stipulate that by 2005, gender parity should be attained in both primary and secondary education. Nepal is committed to ensure the EFA goals are achieved by 2015. Nevertheless, at present, it is apparent that Nepal will not be able to achieve gender parity by 2005. Gender parity for student enrolment is achievable but for teachers, there is still a long way to go.

At primary level, female teachers represent only 30% of the labour force, at lower secondary level that figure is only 16%, and at secondary level, the figure is a mere 8.6%. Overall,

female teachers represent 24.7% of the teaching labour force. Furthermore, the number of trained teachers accounts for only 27%.

The present efforts to increase the number of female teachers includes the policy of recruiting one female teacher for every three teaching positions; two female teachers per every four to seven teacher positions; and three female teachers if there are more than seven teaching positions in any given school.

There is also a provision for female teachers to undertake teacher licensing and teacher recruitment exams. With regard to teacher training, in-service training is available in 34 training centres around the country. In order to make training opportunities available, the National Center for Educational Development (NCED) has established partnerships with other organizations to provide a 10-month in-service training programme. This has been in effect for the last 3 years. For pre-service training (10 months), around 150 training centres for teachers have been established in order to facilitate access to training opportunities for female teachers.

Scholarships have also been earmarked for 2500 females from the disadvantaged groups (DAG), in remote areas, for teacher training. To ensure that the unrepresented groups receive the scholarships, the Government is attempting 'child tracking', which should highlight exactly how scholarship schemes operate. Once the child tracking has been undertaken, the Government will be able to target interventions appropriately.

There are also additional block grants available to primary schools with more than 50% female teachers. The Feeder Hostel programme has been established for DAG girls to train them as prospective teachers, which has already proven to be effective. Further consideration should be given to review the policy of Feeder Hostels in order to boost the number of female teachers in rural areas. There is also a provision of an additional Rs. 500 allowance for female teachers who are deployed out of their locality. In order to improve the gender parity, almost all of the 13,023 Early Childhood Development (ECD) facilitators will be females recruited from local communities.

There are many challenges in meeting gender parity. They include resource constraints, security of female teachers and winning social confidence among others. In addition, there are serious security issues and the limited opportunities open to female teachers to undertake training due to their family situation and the location of the training sessions. Furthermore, teacher training needs to focus further on content and the delivery process, and to be more gender friendly. Another problem is that there is an imbalance in in-service education where some teachers receive too much training whereas others receive none.

### **Discussions**

It was pointed out that the MOES already has directives in place to manage the positive discrimination against girls in the scholarship programme. In 22 districts where there are wide gender gaps, the MOES provides scholarships for 2 years to girls who have passed the

SLC exam. In order to ensure that the scholarship programmes for girls and *dalits* reach the target population groups, the Government has introduced the 'child tracking' system.

In the Karnali Zone, there are specific packages for disadvantaged group students. The seminar participants enquired as to the status of the package, whether it had started or was still in the process. It was established that female teachers receive Rs. 100 per month at primary school and Rs. 150 per month at lower secondary and secondary schools. Moreover, in the Karnali zone, there are plans to introduce mountain hostels that will provide schooling for DAGs.

Similarly, questions were raised regarding residential allowances, whether these had started and if the district education officers (DEO) had made specific allowances for female teachers from the regular budget. It was stated that future policies are under discussion and initiatives are being undertaken to increase female teachers and improve gender parity. For example, the district education officers (DEO) in all districts are preparing baseline information on schools which have, or lack, female teachers, an update regarding qualified female teachers, the availability of potential candidates, the coaching of female candidates to appear in teacher exams and the counselling and continual support of female teachers.

Regarding training, it was suggested that female teachers do not receive opportunities to undertake training due to their family obligations or for other reasons. It was therefore felt that training opportunities should be available equally to female and male teachers alike. In addition, the training centres should not be located in central or regional areas, but rather they should be placed near schools to make them more accessible to teachers, especially female teachers.

It was also stressed that there is a need to move away from traditional training methodologies. In the present context, training should be based on new values. The need is to stress 'quality' teacher training consisting of professional and personal development. Professional development cannot take place until and unless there is room for personal development. Hence, it is imperative to assess how training can address the issue of changing teacher's attitudes.

Teacher training modules also need to take into account aspects such as content and the delivery process. Furthermore, serious consideration needs to be given to making the training more appropriate and comfortable for female teachers, and steps should be taken to provide a balanced and equitable training programme for all teachers.

## **4. OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN ASIA**

### **4.1 Unesco's Position Regarding Female Teachers**

**Ms. Molly Lee**, APEID Coordinator and Senior Programme Specialist in Higher Education, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok, stated during her presentation: The aim of the presentation is threefold:

- (i) To review and evaluate the research report "The Status of Female Teachers in Nepal",
- (ii) To present UNESCO's position on the status of teachers especially on female teachers and rural teachers; and
- (iii) To give a brief overview of the patterns of teacher education and national policies, related to teachers in the Asia Pacific region.

It was noted that the research study revealed an atypical situation regarding female teachers in Nepal that is quite different from many other countries especially those in the East Asia and South East Asia regions, in that the majority of teachers out-with Nepal are female.

The following are some recommendations as to how the research study could be refined and improved:

- Redefine the research problem statement to make it more precise, to yield research findings that are more useful to policy makers.
- Expand the literature review to include literature on the under-representation of women in other fields and professions besides teaching.
- Organize the research findings to support the hypothesis that there are socio-cultural, psychological, and organizational barriers to females wishing to join the teaching profession in Nepal.

Ms. Molly Lee further presented numerous International Recommendations concerning teachers. The 1996 UNESCO Recommendation on the status of teachers (See Annex) includes statements on the preparation for the teaching profession; further education for teachers; employment and career opportunities; the rights and responsibilities of teachers; conditions for effective teaching and learning; teachers' salaries; and social security.

In a brief overview of the patterns of teacher education in the region, it was established that the development of teacher education varies in different countries at a particular point in time, and can also differ in a particular country at different points in time. The countries in the Asia-Pacific region are very diverse, and face different problems pertaining to teacher education, resulting in different types of policies and practices. Despite the aforementioned differences, it is still possible to identify common trends in the practice of teacher education and common policy issues among countries, including Nepal.

## **4.2 Status of Female Teachers in Pakistan**

**Dr. Muhammad Memon**, Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development, Karachi, gave the presentation on the status of Female Teachers in Pakistan.

The Government of Pakistan is committed to meeting the Education for All (EFA) goals related to achieving gender parity at primary school level. The Government aims to reduce the gender gap by 10% annually at primary school level throughout the country. In order to achieve the target, the Government of Pakistan has relaxed the age and qualification criteria for females wishing to enter the teaching profession. Furthermore, the Government has introduced special monetary incentives for female teachers placed in 'difficult' regions. Education statistics from 2003 suggest that the number of female schoolteachers is less than that of their male counterparts at primary and secondary school level. However, female schoolteachers outnumber their male counterparts at middle school level which presents an encouraging and promising state of female teachers' status in the country.

Several contributing factors affecting primary teachers professional status have been identified and classified into three categories:

- (i) Professional related perception;
- (ii) Government policies; and
- (iii) Social barriers

In order to improve the present situation, a number of recommendations were put forward. These include: (a) the need for creating an enabling environment for female teachers; (b) providing cluster-school-based transport; (c) introducing horizontal promotion and merit-based performance; (d) providing professional support; (e) ensuring security for female teachers; (f) providing continuing professional development opportunities; and (g) implementing gender equity and equality.

## **4.3 Status of Female Teachers in Thailand**

**Dr. Varaporn Bovornsiri**, Associate Professor, Chulalongkorn University, highlighted the situation of female teachers in Thailand.

In Thailand, women receive education to an advanced level compared to men in terms of the number of enrolments and graduates. As for the teaching profession, the statistics also reflect the fact that more female teachers receive an advanced level of education in comparison to men. However, in administrative and leadership posts such as school level director, deputy-director, and positions of principals, males dominate these positions. This may be because of the dual role of women as housewives and teachers. A woman, while working as a housewife, has to sacrifice her time and energy for family affairs that could otherwise be utilized in her work as a professional. It was also established that women have to work much harder and longer than men to reach the same high post. There are already a lot of women in administrative and leadership positions in education, especially at university level

and other sectors of the economy such as in the business sector, but the number is still relatively low compared to that of male teachers.

The presentation also reflected that there are more women than men studying in higher education in Thailand.

### ***Discussions from the three presentations***

Three main issues were raised during the presentations and the discussion on recruiting female teachers, namely:

1. How to attract more females into the teaching profession? Whether to relax the qualification of females to enter the teaching profession or not?
2. Whether single sex schools are better for girls' education; do these increase enrolment; and are they academically superior?
3. How does the society or public at large and other professions view the teaching profession?

In Pakistan, the prerequisites to join the teaching profession used to be graduation from grade 10 plus one year of teacher training. Now the minimum is passing grade 10 and training, for elementary education. For secondary education, passing grade 12 plus training is required, but graduation is still preferred.

In other countries like Thailand, the situation concerning girls' education is slightly different. The issue of increasing female numbers does not arise in Thailand. It has been found that girls work harder than boys, pass more exams, and then go on to higher education. On the other hand, boys are reluctant to study hard. Thus, Thailand is concentrating its efforts on promoting women in senior, leadership, and decision-making posts in education.

Examples from Thailand and other countries suggest that girls do better in school and correspondingly, an increased number of females are enrolling in higher education. In Thailand, more and more females are starting to enter male-dominated sectors such as engineering and medicine. In Singapore, the quota for women has been restricted in the medical profession, as female students would be dominant if the selection was based purely on the results of the examinations.

In addition, the issue of gender disparity in the teaching profession has to be taken seriously by governments and they need to become more gender sensitive in order to hire female teachers. This could be done through introducing hostels for girls to undertake their studies, scholarships, mobile service, and transportation in order to help achieve gender parity.

Many initiatives have been undertaken to encourage the recruitment of women in the teaching profession. For example, in Thailand, government policies encourage women to join the profession by allowing wives to be deployed to the same area as the husband's work place. There are more and more females working as district education officers and in supervisory roles due to the government's initiatives and support. There are ample



opportunities for female teachers to progress from one level to another, but the presence of female teachers in senior positions could still improve. Female teachers are being assigned placements near their homes and the salary scale has been increased recently, a jump from 30 to 35 % for all teachers.

The question of whether single sex schools were more effective in terms of girls' education was discussed at length. The argument was raised that girls do better in single sex schools because they receive more attention from teachers, and also are expected to take leadership roles in the absence of boys. In Pakistan, schools are moving towards co-education for primary schooling. However, this is not likely to happen in secondary or higher education due to religious reasons. In addition, where religion plays an important role, like in Pakistan, the MOE has received the support of religious leaders as to the importance of education for girls which has, in turn, enhanced girls' education and enrolment figures. In some universities, there is co-education. The debate continues on whether to make all educational systems co-educational which would remove disparities between boys and girls, and enable them to learn from each others' strengths. Co-education is a future policy for Pakistan.

In the US, on the other hand, some co-educational institutions or certain courses, in particular those subject areas considered "masculine" are moving towards single sex education in order to allow girls more attention in class. This debate is likely to continue which will result in sound gender policies needing to be developed in the future.

The question of how society in general and other professions perceive the teaching profession for girls was also discussed. Nepal and other countries in South Asia are in a quandary where female education is concerned. In Pakistan, when girls were asked their career preference, a mere 10% of higher education students chose teaching as a profession. In rural areas, the situation is no better. There are two complementary possibilities for action:

- (a) Provide free access to education for girls and
- (b) Lower the entrance requirements for teaching for women.

However, the problem is that when you lower standards it can be assumed that the quality of education will be adversely affected. One possible solution would be to relax the qualifications required by female teachers temporarily in order to provide a conducive environment for females to enter the teaching profession and provide them with comprehensive training both before and in-service in order to upgrade their existing qualifications.

As for increasing the self-esteem of female teachers, the concept of 'horizontal promotion' was discussed. Horizontal promotion would provide teachers the opportunity to participate in horizontal decision-making.

## **5. SHARING EXPERIENCES: STATUS OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN NEPAL**

### **5.1 Presentation of VSO Report on the Status of Female Teachers in Nepal**

**Purna Kumar Shrestha**, representing the Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO), shared the outcome of their study on teachers in Nepal.

The VSO study was undertaken to determine how Nepali teachers perceive their profession. It looked at motivational<sup>1</sup> factors as well as the perceptions of other stakeholders. It further attempted to analyse how to support the joint efforts of the Government and other agencies in Nepal to improve the quality of teaching and their participation in education. The research methodology utilized mixed tools including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), one-to-one interviews, and questionnaires.

The results further revealed that financial conditions, job satisfaction, impact, and working conditions also affect teachers' motivation. The role of teachers was also found to be influenced by their students (for example, students' participation, discipline, achievement of students), support from the community and school management community (SMC); external environment, and the quality of educational resources (teaching materials).

VSO research established that female teachers are more motivated than their male counterparts. Female teachers reported a higher degree of 'satisfaction level' with their profession, and it was also found that they were receiving better treatment than other females in their family. On the other hand, it was found that male teachers are more ambitious, want better work opportunities, and do not see the teaching profession as their primary career.

VSO research suggests that teachers lack supervision and that the monitoring and evaluation of teachers has not been implemented effectively. It was previously assumed that teachers do not like to be supervised, but the VSO study indicates otherwise.

The VSO research also revealed that female teachers face sexual harassment, more so in Terai regions than in the mountains.

#### **Discussions:**

The VSO research indicates that one of the predominant de-motivating factors for teachers was the lack of ownership of programmes and goals. The NCED has been inviting teachers from teachers' unions to provide input in order to improve their participation. It was emphasized that the teachers unions are not effectively cascading information to teachers in rural areas. It can, however, be seen that where teachers have been involved, there was an improvement in teaching methods and in their commitment. There are well-intentioned

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<sup>1</sup> Motivation is hard to define and subjective to psychological and sociological environment. Hence, it did not measure motivation but rather 'perceived motivation'.

policies in Nepal, but at the grass-root level, they do not appear to have been implemented. For example, teacher-training packages are developed and teachers are trained at the central level, but it is not extended to rural teachers nor does it take into account the problems experienced in the rural areas.

Teachers' participation has been sought in 'school improvement plans'. However, many teachers, mainly head teachers, hurriedly completed 'school improvement plans', in the hope that they would receive funding. In some instances, numbers are miscalculated in order to obtain more funding. Teachers are not necessarily consulted.

Three important observations were presented in the VSO Study:

- The academic qualification of teachers only reflects the content covered during their training, but the teachers need to upgrade their pedagogical techniques as well.
- Attitudes and values of teachers are very important for their performance and self-esteem.
- Emphasis should not only be on recruiting teachers, but also on 'on the job' training which is currently lacking.

The study also highlighted the issue of the on-going armed conflict as a de-motivating factor for female teachers. Mostly, this involved the fear factor of being extorted, abducted and/or caught in crossfire. The study found that teachers were being forced to surrender 10% of their salary, teach Maoist curriculum, cancel classes because of numerous bandhs (strikes), and that SLC exams were held even though schools had been closed for a number of days due to the armed conflict.

Teachers felt excluded from Government and donor agency reforms and hence felt they lacked ownership of programmes and goals. The study also found that teachers are expected to teach subjects they are not trained in.

With regard to sexual harassment, there is a strong need to develop a 'code of conduct' and discuss the sensitization of sexual harassment with head teachers, other teachers, and students. The sensitization of sexual harassment should also be conveyed to the community at large and should be considered in conjunction with gender awareness and gender sensitization. The question as to why sexual harassment was higher in the Terai region was queried by participants.

Though the UNESCO study did not include private schools, it was noted that private schools hire more female teachers. Irrespective of gender, the salary scale of teachers was found to be lower and that it fluctuated depending on the area of deployment. Hence, it can be assumed that private schools hire more female teachers as they are willing to work for lower wages.

Participants recommended that female teachers should receive more opportunities to participate in relevant consultations, workshops, and seminars. It was also revealed that female teachers lacked opportunities to further their education or study. Furthermore, it

appears that there are many obstacles, visible and invisible for female teachers to join training courses. This was also true in relation to the hiring of female teachers.

It was pointed out in the presentations and conveyed by participants that teachers would appreciate academic training. For example, some teachers requested distance education courses, while others said they were simply too tired after work to spare time for distance education. In addition, teachers stated that they do not receive enough support when travelling to urban areas for training.

## **5.2 Nepal's National Policy on Teacher Training**

**Dr. A. B. Bhandari**, Executive Director, the National Center for Educational Development (NCED) briefed the workshop participants on the general government policy and programme regarding teacher training.

The National Center for Educational Development (NCED) policy guidelines are to develop trained and licensed teachers. The training envisioned by the NCED is linked to school reform initiatives and practices. They are also designed to enhance the capacity of trainers at local level and to provide professional development through recurrent training and on-site support.

The basic requirement to be a trained teacher is a ten-month mandatory training programme after the requisite academic qualifications are achieved. Female and DAG teachers, who hold a teaching license, are given priority. The teacher selection process will be gradually localized with the award of 20% bonus points for DAG candidates over the next 5 years.

All currently employed untrained teachers will receive ten months of training and all trained teachers will receive ongoing teacher training. Newly recruited teachers will also receive a seven day on the job induction. There will also be provisions for in-service training for temporary female and DAG teachers. Furthermore, there will be in-service training available for private school teachers through public - private partnerships with a cost sharing modality.

There will be inter-linkage of training, licensing, and professional development provisions. The training delivery mode will be both practical and theoretical with ample opportunities for participation by teachers. Training will be conducted by qualified, trained, and certified trainers. All training will be gender-sensitive and gender-balanced.

Monitoring and post-training support will be introduced. Performance indicators will be developed and implemented for the assessment of training institutions, schools and teachers.

The NCED will provide unified and coordinated training in partnership with other training institutions such as the Faculty of Education at Tribhuvan University (FOE/TU). In addition, institutional linkage with national and international institutions will be developed for organizational learning.

**Discussions:**

There is a strong need to link training with school reform initiatives and practices. Moreover, there is also a need for a single training policy with clear guidelines and a strong base for quality enhancement. It should be child-friendly and consider the needs of female and DAG teachers.

Teacher education is a long-term process and, accordingly, a suitable timeframe is required to develop professional skills and knowledge. Regrettably, many teachers have a poor understanding of their subject matter and it is imperative that this be addressed. Therefore, more time is needed to develop qualified and professional teachers.

Currently there are many untrained teachers teaching. The Ministry of Education has not taken action in private schools where teachers have not been trained. The teachers are willing to take training programmes, but the community are unwilling to send them due to the lack of substitute teachers to continue classes while training is taking place.

The Ministry of Education is committed to achieving gender parity and all teachers should be sensitised and trained on gender issues. Every programme developed by NCED has attempted to incorporate gender issues through a consultation process with relevant groups.

There are also private institutions providing teacher training. These institutions are affiliated with NCED and use NCED materials in their training courses. Candidates are required to pay fees to participate in the training.

It was emphasised during the discussions that there was a need for a concurrent programme where students can choose to study teaching during the first year of a BA and undertake training in pedagogical techniques.

There is a strong need for the Government to implement policies and training more effectively as they often have good policies, but they are not implemented at the ground level. This could be achieved through monitoring and evaluation.

**5.3 Teacher Training Situation Report**

Prior to the conclusion of the workshop discussions, **Mr. Kedar Nath Shrestha**, Dean, School of Education, Kathmandu University, was requested to present his views concerning teacher education and training in Nepal and put forward any suggestions for improvement in the quality of the teaching profession.

Teacher training programmes have been supported by international donors and development banks for the last thirty years. It has been found that approximately 90% of what teachers learn in training programmes is not transferred or implemented in the classroom. Thus, it would appear that teachers are not utilizing their professional training to its full extent in the classrooms.

Today, there are many materials for teachers developed by NCED which are good in terms of content. Nevertheless, if trained teachers were queried about the materials they received during their training, it would become apparent that the training materials had not been brought to school. Furthermore, it appears that teachers have not read and/or utilized those materials. Despite having materials and the means to transport these materials to remote areas, they are often not used. Sometimes, there are situations where books, which are provided freely, are not transported to the correct place. In addition, some books can be used over a certain period, but teachers fail to use these books. It appears that the value of teaching and quality of teachers is on the decline. Teachers seem to have lost their sense of innovation in creating learning materials despite a shortage in Government provided resources.

There are many good education policies in place, but the implementation of those policies has not been administered effectively. There are few monitoring or administrative procedures to ensure that policies have been implemented adequately. The same holds true for teacher training. Furthermore, there is no consistency in applying the policies and these are changed on an ad hoc basis. The quality of teacher training is decided by the NCED without input from the university. These factors may explain the alleged decline in standards.

The NCED is now a legal institution through which all teacher-training programmes, even for teachers graduating from the university, have to be administered. Currently, teachers are gaining knowledge but not practical teaching skills. The Government should revise their policies in consultation with universities and other relevant stakeholders to produce high quality and confident teachers.

Serious consideration should be given to the possibility of linking the ten-month pre-service training with an academic or recognised qualification. When teachers are given the opportunity to upgrade their skills and knowledge, many will benefit from these services and subsequently join the teaching profession. On the other hand, if the ten months pre-service teacher training is not linked with academic qualifications, few students are likely to join these programmes.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STRATEGIES**

### **6.1 Dr Min Bahadur Bista, the Lead Researcher, presented a chapter on Recommendations from the UNESCO Study.**

The major findings from the Study revealed the following issues on the current policies and the situation concerning female teachers:

- Policy goals are without action
- Presence of female teachers is seen to be tokenistic
- Women are seen as a homogeneous entity, their diversity is not recognised
- The ability to combine career and motherhood is perceived as unprofessional
- Sense of alienation and exclusion among female teachers
- Schools play a limited role in promoting gender awareness
- Negative perception of female teachers results in being ‘ghettoed’ into a role from which they cannot progress
- Inadequacy of infrastructure support for women including toilets, childcare etc.

Other areas that need to be considered when developing recommendations are:

- Realistic strategies need to be developed to increase the number of female teachers, as, at the moment, only 30% of them are females
- When developing recommendations, consideration should be given to who will be implementing them and how the recommendations will be followed up.
- Should be reflective of what is already happening and what requires changing.
- Do not put women’s issue in a ‘ghetto’ to avoid women being excluded from the mainstream.
- Be cohesive and explicit in recommending policies. They should be consistent with the context of the country and the needs of female teachers.

It was emphasised that the issues raised are not only in relation to the retention of female teachers but also with the recruitment of female teachers. Hence, programmes such as the ‘Feeder Hostel’ should be continued and re-strategized to better target the objectives. For example, data shows that urban women have been seizing the opportunity to join Feeder Hostels. It is most likely that these urban girls, due to the wider range of employment opportunities in the urban areas, will not accept teaching jobs, and if they do, they will not teach in rural areas.

The positive and negative aspects of interventions should also be considered realistically. For example, establishing women only associations can create pressure for change, but they could result in alienating women as well.

Teachers’ enrolment, recruitment and retention, should be looked at from a rights-based perspective, rather than as a ‘favour’ to women. Female teachers have the ‘right’ to be

proactive members in the teaching profession and the Government and other stakeholders have a duty to ensure that these rights are met by providing conditions that enable the true participation of women. There is a strong need for female empowerment and developing leadership roles for women to move forward in the education system.

Finally when planning the implementation of the recommendations, some issues should be considered:

- Who should do the teacher training?
- There are currently many training models in practise, but there are serious questions as to how they are guided through national policies
- Developing action plans for implementation and follow up

## **6.2 Group Discussions on Recommendations**

In addition to the validation of the Study, the main purpose of the workshop was to provide contributions to the final chapter of the study which relates to policy recommendations. To this end, participants have had international and regional exposure in order to acquire experiences and learning opportunities on improving gender parity in primary and secondary education. After reviewing the study and the experiences from the three days of interaction, the participants were divided into four groups. Each group was given one topic for discussion. The topics were as follows:

1. recruitment of female teachers
2. professional development of female teachers
3. conditions of work for female teachers
4. empowerment of female teachers

### **6.2.1 GROUP 1: RECRUITMENT OF FEMALE TEACHERS**

This group looked at:

- (a) Increasing girls' enrolment at primary level by providing incentives to families to send their girls to school,
- (b) Non-formal education (NFE) to quality girls to join formal education and,
- (c) Identifying female role models from vulnerable groups.

In order to increase participation of DAG teachers, the group suggested that education should be relevant and that the number of DAG teachers appointed should be increased to serve as role models for DAG students.

For teachers' entry level into the teaching profession, the group suggested the entrance level should remain as it is for the next five years in the remote areas. From grade 4 and up, the requirement should be a minimum of ten plus two pass. When licensing is being undertaken, additional measures to test competency levels should also be explored. The group suggested that teachers should be deployed with their families and that female teachers should be deployed in their own locality.



### **6.2.2 GROUP 2: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF FEMALE TEACHERS**

The professional development group recommended that female teachers in remote areas should be compensated for the cost incurred during their deployment. The knowledge of female teachers should be improved with pedagogical skills in subjects like Science, Mathematics, English, and Nepali. Female teachers should be supported through the provision of childcare and flexible hours. Furthermore, linkages should be developed between schools, teacher training and education policies. Teachers, especially female ones, should be provided opportunities to upgrade their skills and knowledge through periodic courses and training.

### **6.2.3 GROUP 3: CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR FEMALE TEACHERS**

Group 3 discussed recommendations for conditions of service towards creating a conducive and friendly environment for female teachers. The group concentrated on deployment conditions, salary schemes, pregnancy and maternity leave, school facilities, instruction materials, gender responsive working environment, grievances and complaints, and temporary teachers. The group considered these conditions under four levels: policy, institutional, programme and personal levels.

The group stressed that there should be at least 2 female teachers in each government school and that 50% of all teachers should be female. There should be an extra remuneration provision for teachers deployed to remote areas. In addition, schools should be physically safe with separate toilets and library facilities. The instruction materials should also consist of gender-friendly materials. The group also stated that the backlog of temporary teachers should be cleared.

### **6.2.4 GROUP 4: EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES FOR FEMALE TEACHERS**

The group recommended that female teachers should have time-bound recruitment into managerial posts, supported with counselling, guidance, mentoring, and leadership training. There should be a female teachers' union under the Teacher Union for networking. Female teachers should also have the opportunity to be involved in SMCs. There should be a change in attitude of all stakeholders regarding behaviour or attitudes towards female teachers and their profession. Mentoring and role models should be utilized to encourage female teachers from DAG communities.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE SEMINAR

Based on the concrete recommendations provided by the four working groups, the workshop participants agreed upon the following recommendations in relation to the four areas to be considered and reflected in the final version of the Study, and adopted as the recommendations of the present workshop.

### RECRUITMENT OF FEMALE TEACHERS

- 1.1 Recruitment Policy** The recruitment policy of two females in every school should be enforced and implemented. For the sustainability and continuity of teachers, efforts should be made to recruit female teachers from their place of residence. In the process of recruitment, deployment, and transfer, ample consideration should be given to family responsibilities such as marriage of female teachers.
- 1.2 Time-bound Policy** Recruitment policies should be made time-bound with achievable targets at all levels of the teaching profession in a balanced way. For example, at least one female teacher in each school by the year 2006 and two female teachers by 2008.
- 1.3 Access to Teaching Profession** To encourage and increase prospective teachers' access to the profession, scholarship schemes should be made available, targeting the poorest and most disadvantaged sectors of society with special emphasis being given to female students from underrepresented social groups. Furthermore, other incentives such as 'Feeder Hostels', transportation costs, learning materials/stationery, etc. should be initiated.
- 1.4 Increasing number of qualified female students** Considering the limited pool of female human resources such as teachers, there is a critical need to encourage girls' participation in primary and secondary level schooling. Provisions such as provisions of scholarships, uniforms, stationery, lunches, etc should be made to encourage girls to join and continue their schooling. In addition, the provision of ECD (early childhood development) classes, an equivalency programme to/from NFE (non-formal education), Feeder Hostels, tutoring, and so on should be made more widely available. In particular, tutoring facilities should be extended to the Dalit and ethnic minority groups' children in remote areas to enhance their continuity and improve their learning achievements.
- 1.5 Entry level qualifications** Although it has been recognized that the qualifications of teachers have to be improved, considering the dire situation of rural education and the under-representation of female teachers in the education system, the current entry level qualification of teachers must be maintained for a limited period of time until sufficient female teachers are available for deployment in remote rural areas. The following are suggestions for differential entry level qualifications:
  - For teachers of grades 1-3, schools may continue to hire female teachers who are SLC (school leaving certificate) graduates with a 10-months pre-service teacher training. This policy should be implemented for 5 years after which, assuming the

female teacher pool has increased, schools should consider increasing the entry level qualifications of female teachers.

- For teachers of grades 4 and above, the minimum requirement for teachers should remain at 10+2 minimum qualification plus a 10 month pre-service teacher training for the same time period as above.

**1.6 Licensing Examination** In order to improve the quality of the teaching profession, the national ‘Licensing’ examinations should cover general ability, aptitude, content knowledge, and pedagogical skills of the candidates. To facilitate the preparation for the licensing examinations, additional tutoring and support should be provided to female candidates. This should cost little, if anything, for female candidates, especially those from the under-represented groups.

**1.7 Deployment** During the deployment of female teachers, the following should be considered:

- Provide employment opportunities to all qualified and trained female teachers.
- Reduce class size; reduce the pupil/teacher ratio; and increase teaching positions.
- Measure and analyze the degree of chronic teacher absenteeism. Take necessary measures through a forum to address the cause and provide solutions to remedy the situation
- Post female teachers with their families, preferably in their local area (if desired).

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**2.1 Information** Female teachers should have timely access to information, knowledge and resources on various policies pertaining to teachers. This should be achieved by implementing responsive capacity building schemes.

**2.2 Capacity-Building Schemes** Female teachers should have access to both special recurrent and upgrading courses. The programmes should be relevant, contextual and gender sensitive. The participation and representation of female teachers should be ensured by the provision of training opportunities at local level.

**2.3 Pre-Service Training** The current pre-service training should be reviewed. The teaching and training methodology should include scope for self-critical analysis by all stakeholders; it should include reflective methods and cooperative learning; with the curriculum focusing on local needs. In addition, teaching second languages; sensitization of multi-cultural issues; and multi-grade teaching skills should be emphasized.

**2.4 In-service training** The current In-service training modalities should be reviewed, updated and revised. The need for in-service training is high and should be relevant to providing quality education in a child-friendly manner. In-service training should

- be needs-based;

- be based on the pedagogical knowledge and skills that have been gained during the service;
- school-based;
- coordinated and supervised by head teachers and other concerned authorities;
- include on-site pedagogical class support.

**2.5 Strengthening of Pedagogical Content Knowledge** There is a strong need to enhance the pedagogical content knowledge and skills of female teachers especially in subjects such as Science, Mathematics, English and Nepali at all school levels in which there are low numbers of female teachers. The pedagogical content knowledge should also be emphasized during the pre-service training, with practical components to make classrooms more child-friendly.

**2.6 Quality of Teaching** Quality of teaching and the school environment should be ensured through proper alignment of classroom teaching and the relevant policies; programmes; and delivery.

**2.7 Training Modalities** To support and strengthen those currently teaching, the following training modalities other than the fixed in-service training should be considered to meet the various training needs of female teachers:

- Mobile teacher training;
- Distance Education;
- Self-learning Modules;
- Hostel-based teacher training in remote areas (current programmes to be reviewed); and
- Local media – FM and the print media.

**2.8 Other professional support** Female teachers should receive professional technical support such as a 10-month training programme, academic support to pursue further studies or degree, mentoring, etc. Such provisions would facilitate the provision of opportunities to temporary teachers to upgrade their professional capacities.

## CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

**3.1 Work Environment** To retain, increase and ensure a qualified and professional pool of female teachers, there should be support mechanisms and systems established to provide a congenial school and home environment for female teachers such as;

- subsidy or allowance for career development for female teachers in remote areas
- provision of local child care centres
- flexible working hours, whenever possible
- private rooms for female teachers
- schools as ‘no-smoking’ zones
- physically safe and emotionally secure environment.
- separate toilets (with water and soap)

- primary health facilities
- library facilities (including basic instructional materials)

**3.2 Maternity & Paternity Leave** The allocated maternity leave days should support the female teachers in their biological and family roles. The maternity leave days should be increased from the current 60 to 90 days for breastfeeding and proper care of both the newborn and the mother/female teacher. In addition, a conducive environment should be created to encourage male teachers to take paternity leave (currently 15 days) to support their partners and fulfil their paternal roles.

**3.3 Salary Structure** The current salary structure of teachers should be reviewed to reflect the present economic and academic conditions. A differential salary structure should be considered according to academic qualifications, training and experience.

## **EMPOWERMENT**

**4.1 Female Teachers in Managerial positions** Priority should be given to the appointment of female teachers to managerial positions (e.g., head teacher, school supervisor, and resource person). The capacity of female teachers should be enhanced through counselling and guidance, in-house mentoring, and management and leadership training to enable them to accept managerial roles. It is also necessary that female teachers are given the opportunity to participate in decision-making at all levels including the School Management Committees.

**4.2 Female Teacher Networking** To further the rights of female teachers and for mutual information-sharing, a forum for female teachers should be established under the Teacher Union and/or network among other agencies such as the National Women's Commission, Ministry of Local Development, Ministry of Women, Children and Social welfare etc.

**4.3 Gender-Awareness Training** To generate a change in attitudes and behaviour of all stakeholders and communities in general, special gender training should be conducted through the media and other means of communication. Packages should be developed regarding gender sensitization, awareness-raising campaigns, interaction with communities etc.

**4.4 Female Teachers from Disadvantaged Groups** Considering the under-representation of female teachers from a large proportion of socially excluded groups, and in order to include them, mentoring and role models for female teachers should be employed within the respective communities and schools and by providing access and resources.

**4.5 Promoting Teaching Profession** The teaching profession is not appealing to talented youths for a number of reasons such as poor pay, lack of promotion opportunities, poor working conditions, and the decreasing social status of the profession. The Government should take appropriate action to promote the overall status of the teaching profession.

## **ANNEX1: Work Schedule**

### **Sunday, 4 September 2005**

<i>9.30 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.</i>	<i>Registration Tea &amp; Snacks</i>
10.00 a.m – 11.00 a.m	Opening and Introduction  Inauguration by the Chief Guest Mr Chuman Singh Basnyat Secretary, Minister of Education & Sports  Introduction of the Seminar Ms. Koto Kanno UNESCO representative in Nepal  Opening Remarks Mr. Janardan Nepal Director General, Department of Education  Inaugural Statement by Chief Guest Mr. Chuman Singh Basnyat Secretary, Minister of Education & Sports
<i>11.00 a.m. – 11.15 a.m.</i>	<i>Tea Break</i>
11.15 a.m. – 13.00 p.m.	Presentation of the Survey Results and Findings Dr. Min Bahadur Bista Lead Researcher  Comments and Discussions
<i>13:00 p.m. – 14:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 p.m. – 15:00 p.m.	Presentation of National Policy regarding Female Teachers in Nepal Mr. Janardan Nepal Director General, Department of Education  Comments and Discussions
<i>15:00 p.m. – 15:15 p.m.</i>	<i>Tea Break</i>
15:15 p.m. – 16:30 p.m.	UNESCO policy and position regarding teacher's education with special reference to female teachers. Ms. Molly Lee. Senior Programme Specialist UNESCO Bangkok Regional Office for Education  Comments and Discussions

## **Monday, 5 September, 2005**

<i>09:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Tea &amp; Snacks</i>
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Female teacher related situation brief – Pakistan Professor Dr. Muhammed Memon Aga Khan University  Comments and Discussions
11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Female teacher related situation brief – Thailand Assoc. Professor Dr. Varaporn Bovornsiri Chulalongkorn University  Comments and Discussions
<i>11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</i>	<i>Tea Break</i>
12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Presentation of report of VSO International Survey “Valuing Teachers”  Comments and Discussions
<i>12:45 p.m. – 13:45 p.m.</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
13:45 p.m. – 14:30 p.m.	Nepal’s National policy on Teacher Training Mr. Arjun Bhandari Director, National Center for Educational Development  Comments and Discussions
14:30 p.m. – 15:15 p.m.	Teacher Training situation report Mr. Kedar Nath Shrestha Dean, School of Education, Kathmandu University  Comments and Discussions
<i>15:15 p.m. – 15:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Tea Break</i>
15:30 p.m. – 16:45 p.m.	Presentation of the recommendations of the survey Lead Researcher Dr. Min Bahadur Bista  Comments and Discussions

## **Tuesday, 6 September 2005**

<i>09:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Tea &amp; Snacks</i>
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 a.m.	Group Discussions on the Recommendations
<i>12:30 p.m. – 13:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 p.m. – 15:00 p.m.	Presentation of Group Discussions’ Summary and Discussions
<i>15:00 p.m. – 15:15 p.m.</i>	<i>Tea Break</i>
15:15 p.m. – 17:00 p.m.	Presentation and Adoption of Recommendations
17:00 p.m. – 17:30 p.m.	Concluding Session and Closure
<i>17:30 Onwards</i>	<i>Reception</i>

## **ANNEX 2 : Information Note and List of Participants**

Participants are invited from Nepal as well as from other countries around the region. From Nepal, officials from the Ministry of Education and Sports and its line departments, University professors, educationalists, bilateral and multi lateral donors influential in policy developments and implementation, civil society, international and national NGOs will be present.

Internationally, academic experts such as Dr. Muhammad Memon, Professor and Director of The Aga Khan University in Karachi (Pakistan) and Dr. Varaporn Bovornsiri, from the Department of Educational Policy, Management and Leadership, Faculty of Education at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok (Thailand) will be present. Also invited are Dr Molly Lee, Programme Specialist in Higher Education and Ms Mita Gupta, Gender section, both from UNESCO office in Bangkok (Thailand).

### **Preparation for the meeting**

#### *Presentations*

For any presentations, it would facilitate if you could send us the presentations materials beforehand. We would be very grateful if all speakers could kindly prepare a half-page summary on their presentation to facilitate the work of the secretariat.

#### *Reading*

It would be crucial that all participants read the documents provided by UNESCO office in Kathmandu prior to the seminar. UNESCO office in Kathmandu will also provide, at the workshop, with a folder with more relevant materials.

Please let us know also if you – as a facilitator – will be referring to any particular document during your presentation in order to have them copied and added to the workshop folder.

### **Workshop venue**

#### **Seminar Venue and Accommodation:**

The seminar will take place in the Rara Conference Room at the Radisson Hotel in Kathmandu.

#### **Meeting rooms**

On 4 – 6 September, the meeting will take place at the Rara Conference Room on the 1st Floor of the Radisson Hotel. The reception, on the evening of 6 September, will be held at the same venue.

#### **Accommodation**

Rooms have been booked at the Radisson Hotel for workshop participants coming from abroad.

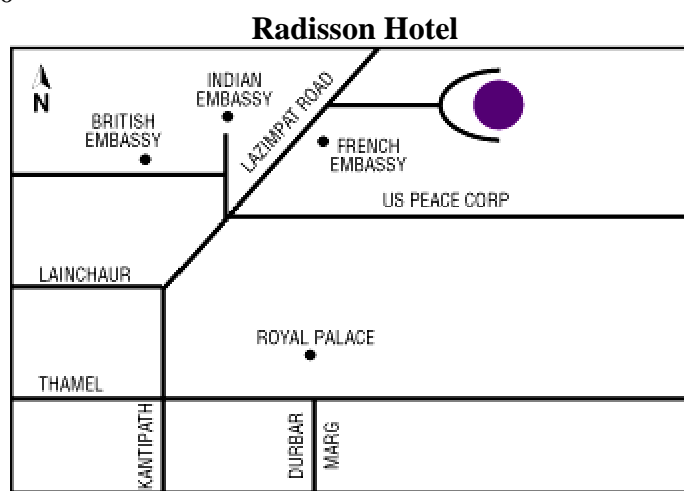


Please note that UNESCO office in Kathmandu will pay a daily subsistence allowance of 108 US \$ per night (7,587 NRPs). This amount should cover for all your expenses during your stay, including your hotel room. During the seminar, we will provide you with tea/coffee and snacks during the breaks, and a lunch. Appropriate reimbursements for Visa application fee, airport tax will be made in local currency.

Below are the hotel name and address as well as a map for your reference:

**Radisson Hotel Kathmandu**

Lazimpat  
 Ward No. 2  
 Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Nepal  
 Phone: 977-1-411818/423888  
 FAX: 9771 411 720



**Weather**

The Kathmandu Valley, at an altitude of 1310m (4297ft), has a mild climate. In September, temperatures are expected to be around 25 degrees Celsius, with a high chance of rains. Therefore the required clothing will be lightweight clothes with umbrella or a light raincoat. While it is warm outdoors, you might want to bring a sweater/shawl/stole for when you are indoors, as it is often quite cold because of the air-conditioning. Conservative clothing is required.

**Working Language:** English

**Contacts:**

For assistance and information, participants may wish to contact:

Ms Sohae Lee	Mr Sergio Hoyos Ramos
<a href="mailto:s.lee@unesco.org">s.lee@unesco.org</a>	<a href="mailto:s.hoyos-ramos@unesco.org">s.hoyos-ramos@unesco.org</a>
(977-1) 5554769 or 5554396 ext 15	(977-1) 5554769 or 5554396 ext 29

### ANNEX 3: List of Participants

S No	Title	Name	Oganization	S No	Title	Name	Oganization
1	Ms	Ami Kasai	JICA	31	Mr.	Krishna Panday	ADB
2	Ms	Anjani Bhattarai	UNDP	33	Mr.	Laba Prasad Tripathee	MOES
3	Ms	Anju Khadka	M phil Student	34	Ms	Lalita Awasthi	M phil Student
4	Dr.	Arjun Bahadur Bhandari	NCED	35	Dr	Lava D Awasthi	MOES
5	Mr.	Arjun Niraula	DOE	36	Mr.	Laxman Khanal	DOE
6	Mr.	B K Ranjit	UNFPA	37	Ms	Lazima Onta	UNDP
7	Mr.	Babu Ramadh	NNTA	38	Mr.	Lekh Nath Sharma	FOE, TU
8	Mr.	Bal Chandra Luitel	KU School of Education	39	Ms	Linda Kentrao	USAID
9	Ms	Bandana Shrestha	Consultant	40	Ms	Madhavi Gautam	M phil Student
10	Dr	Basudev Kafle	FOE, TU	41	Ms	Madhavi katuwal	Teachers union of nepal (TUN)
11	Mr.	Bhoj Bdr Balayar	NCED	42	Ms	Mette Jensen	DANIDA/ESAT
12	Mr.	Bhoj Raj Sharma	CDC	43	Dr	Min Bista	Consultant
13	Ms	Bindu Ban	M phil Student	44	Ms	Mita Gupta	UNESCO Bangkok
14	Mr.	Birendra Kumar Singh	MOES	45	Dr.	Mohammad Menon	Aga Khan University Pakistan
15	Ms	Bunu Shrestha	NCED	46	Ms	Molly Lee	UNESCO Bangkok (Senior Program Specialist)
16	Mr.	Chuman Singh Basnet	MOES	47		Nancy Spence	UNICEF (ROSA)
17	Ms	Devina Pradhahanga	DOE	48	Ms	Neera Shakya	DEO
18	Ms	Elin Gjedrem	Royal Norwegian Embassy	49	Mr.	Nepali Sha	Save the children Japan
19	Ms	Else Moller Nielsen	Danish Embassy	50	Ms	Phillipa Ramsden	VSO
20	Ms	Gopini Panday	Save the children Norway	51	Prof	Purna Bdr Lamichane	M phil Student
21	Mr.	Hari Bhakta Neupane	M phil Student	52	Mr.	Purna Kumar Shretha	VSO
22	Mr.	Harish Chandra Yadav	DEO	53	Mr.	Rajan Sharma	EJC Advisor
23	Mr.	Harka Shrestha	CDC	54	Ms	Rajaya Laxmi Nakarmi	DEO
24	Mr.	Hridaya B Bajracharya	CERID	55	Mr.	Rajendra Premi	M phil Student
25	Mr.	Ishwar Subedi	DOE	56	Ms	Renu Thapa	CERID
26	Mr.	Ishwor Pd Sapkota	NTA	57	Mr.	S K Sapkota	NCED
27	Ms	Jayanti Subba	Embassy of Finland	58	Mr.	S R Bandhu	M phil Student
28	Mr.	Juho Uushihkala	Embassy of Finland	59	Mr.	Sadananda Kadel	Plan Nepal
29	Mr.	Karsten Jensen	DANIDA/ESAT	60	Ms	Sanjana Shrestha	READ Nepal
30	Mr.	Krishna Lamsal	JICA				

S No	Title	Name	Oganization
61	Ms	Sarah Huxley	Students Partnership Worldwide
62	Mr.	Satya Bdr Shrestha	National commission for UNESCO
63	Mr.	Shankar Thapa	DOE
64	Mr.	Sharad Simkhada	M phil Student
65	Mr.	Shiva Raj Vhandhu	M phil Student
66	Ms	Sumon Tuladhar	UNICEF
67	Ms	Sunita Malakar	NCED
68	Dr	Sushan Acharya	FOE, TU
69	Prof	Tirtha Parajuli	FOE, TU

S No.	Title	Name	Oganization
70	Mr.	Tulsi P Thapalia	NCED
71	Mr.	U N Lamsal	M phil Student
72	Mr.	Uddav Poudel	ILO
73	Mr.	UN Lamsal	M phil Student
74	Ms	Usha Dixit	DOE
75	Ms	Uttara Vajracharya	CERID
76	Dr	Varaporn Bovornsiri	Department of Education , Policy Management and Leadership (Professor Higher Education Program )
77	Dr	Vishnu B. Karki	Save the children US
78	Ms	Yasodhara Pant	FOE, TU

