School Leadership Manifesting Dominating Behavioural Style Leaping Towards New Public Management of Community Schools in Nepal

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Abstract. This research explores the behavioural leadership style of community schools in Nepal under the New Public Management (NPM) initiative of decentralisation of the educational management system. The theoretical background derives from the leadership behavioural theory of Ohio State and Michigan Universities. Case studies were conducted in three primary community schools located in Kathmandu. Interviews were conducted with school stakeholders and members of the school management committee in order to triangulate the data analysis with a view to validating the dominant leadership behavioural style. The result suggests that all the participating schools adopted relations-oriented leadership behaviour as the dominant leadership behav-

ioural style. The decentralisation of educational management by using NPM in community schools enabled the appointment of leaders from the community. It was also revealed that school leaders contributed to the social welfare of the schools for the sake of prestige and political recognition. The school leaders made available lesser time to understand the school's organisational behavioural pattern of the teachers, parents, students and academic programmes. This enabled the school leaders to demonstrate relations-oriented behaviour. Due to the lack of academic expertise, the effective approach of leadership was to adapt chiefly on relations-oriented behaviour. Adopting the dominant leadership relations-oriented behavioural style enabled less flexibility to switch to task-oriented behaviour as determined by the contested environment. The politically contested school context enabled leadership approaches to implement political solutions.
Keywords: leadership relations-oriented behaviour, task-oriented behaviour, manifesting dominant behavioural leadership style, New Public Management

1. Introduction The Nepalese educational system has taken a different turn, starting from community managed school to public schools and again back to community managed schools in the form of decentralisation of the educational management system. Modern education in Nepal was introduced in 1851 with the establishment of Durbar High School, serving at best the interests of affluent families, especially amongst the Rana family [Ministry of Education, 2003]. The school system in Nepal can be categorised into public schools, private schools and community schools. Private schools emerged in the mid-1980s as a result of the failure of the public school system. Teacher absenteeism and poor educational facilities and infrastructure were the main reasons for the failure of Nepalese public schools [Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, CERID, 2004]. As a result, many affluent families had to send their children to private schools while the poor were left with no option other than to enroll their children in public schools [Rajbhandari, 2007]. In order to improve Nepal's public school system, the decentralisation of school management was undertaken by transferring the school management to the local community. This was implemented via the formation of the school management committee (SMC). The school leadership position is assumed by the SMC chairperson who lacks educational expertise and experience. Ministry of Education [2003] stated that the main reasons for decentralising the school management system were to enable local participation in the decision-making process, improve the quality of education through the new public management (NPM) and strengthen the leadership potentials at the local level.

However, the anticipated quality in education through the decentralization of the school management system did not meet the expectation of the national education policy. Consequently, attempts were made by amending the community schools directives (CSD) to ameliorate the existing anomalies in the Education Act. Several amendments have been made in the CSD, meanwhile, the attempt to eradicate the confusion of leadership role for teacher appointments and resource management remained a dilemma. Although, the community managed school (CMS) attempted to establish accountability, however, the process/mechanism to achieve this was not explicitly stated in the current Education Act and regulations [CERID, 2009]. The World Bank [2010] asserted that the administrative responsibilities of the CMS were not clear. While all public schools are also community managed, nevertheless, existing public schools supported by SMC and those supported by the communities differs. Therefore, the schools which are formally transferred to the community are the community-managed schools. However, communities do not want to take responsibility for the school management because they believe the government was abandoning its responsibility to cater for the schools financially. Furthermore, this constitutes the main reason

the communities were not enthusiastic about taking over the managerial responsibility of the local schools [CERID, 2009].

In addition, the school leadership role is not clearly defined by the policies and regulations in the Education Acts and directives. The acts and directives also contradict each other in connection to school autonomy, teacher recruitment, teacher allocations, teacher terminations and financial clauses [CERID, 2003, 2004]. New public management (NPM) involves the decentralization of the school management within public services [Larbi, 1999]. The NPM in the context of decentralization of school administration in Nepal focusses on conferment of autonomy on the school leaders in administering the school. However, these preferences were amended and the autonomy was redefined in favor of the government which still remains unclear.

The purpose of this study is to explore the school leadership adapting dominant behavioural styles in the contested environment to the NPM approach. With significance to this, school leaders are influenced to grow themselves within the political welfare to construct their social prestige. Moreover, the contradiction between the Education Acts and CMS Directives generated confusion for the school leadership role. However, this chaos environment enabled school leaders to formulate their behavioural approaches by creating a harmonious environment that allowed an advantage on their behalf to gain socio-political kudos. In relation to this problem statement, the aims of this study are to illustrate how the leadership behavioural style manifested the school and what the consequences of their dominant behavioural style are. Sergiovanni [1995. P. 29] states that a leader's polity for success leads "to win more for yourself than you have to give back in return".

2. Research Methodology

The qualitative content analysis explores the manifestation of leadership dominating behavioural style to address the consequences of the leadership behaviour in schools' progress under the New Public Management.

2.1 Theoretical construction

This study is based on the leadership behavioural theory developed by researchers from Ohio State University in 1945 and the University of Michigan in 1947. Northouse [2010] identified two types of behavioural leadership styles namely: relations-oriented and task-oriented behaviour in its treatise on the actions of leadership. Employee-centred and production-centred leadership behavioural styles developed by Stogdill (1945) from Ohio State University as well as employee-centred and job-centred behaviour developed by Likert (1947) from the University of Michigan were later replicated as relations- and task-oriented behavioural leadership styles respectively. In this study, behavioural leadership theory explains the school leaders' behavior orientations towards the school's professional community. The theoretical framework was constructed to explore relations-oriented leadership

behaviour and task-oriented behavioural style to observe the consequence of the leadership behaviour towards organisational climate and the effectiveness of the school management. This offered a holistic view towards understanding the manifestation of the behavioural leadership pattern incorporating situations and the school's professional community.

2.2 Data collection procedures

This study was conducted in three primary community schools located in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, with a view to exploring the dominating behavioural leadership style, and the relations-oriented and task-oriented behavioural style of the school leaders. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with stakeholders including SMC chairperson and members, the principal, assistant principal, five teachers and one administrative staff from each community school. Interview schedules were prepared separately for school leaders and other respondents. The separate interview schedules provided relevant information on behavioural leadership style from the leaders' perspectives as well as the followers' perspectives. The duration of each interview session was at least sixty minutes and a maximum of one and half hours. All the interviews with the key respondents were conducted on the school premises at the convenience of the respondents time, which was arranged by the school principals.

2.3 Data analysis procedures through theoretical implication

In exploring and understanding the dominating behavioural leadership styles, case studies of each school offered additional validation through data triangulation and cross-verification of the responses. The data was tape recorded and transcribed word by word for analysis and for additional reliability. To identify the behavioural leadership style for both task-oriented and relations-oriented behaviour, investigation through semi-structured interviews focusing particularly on manifested task and relations-oriented leadership behaviour was carried out. Data reduction enabled the simplification of analysis by discarding the irrelevant data. Case studies on the schools' behavioural leadership pattern on high and low task- and relations-oriented behaviour was also carried out by data triangulation analysis with a view to giving meaning to the data. For ethical considerations, anonymity was ensured by applying pseudonyms of community schools and respondents. Prior consent was gained via telephone and personal visit for interviews. The timing for the interview was arranged according to the convenience of the respondents.

3. Results

For the purpose of exploring the school's dominating behavioural leadership style, the results are constructed in case studies of school leadership to highlight relations- and task-oriented behavioural style. The case study also examined the consequences of behavioural leadership style that accounted for the school's success in light of NPM.

Bass [2008. P. 61] explained that the effectiveness of leadership as "task-oriented and relations-oriented is contingent on the demand imposed by the situation". Furthermore, Hersey and Blanchard [1977] proposed the behavioural leadership theory as a combination of task-oriented and relations-oriented behavioural styles that best fit the leaders according to the demands of the situation.

3.1. The dominating behavioural leadership style of School 1

Harris [2003. P. 10] stated that as schools are constantly changing, the challenges of school leaders in responding to the school's inner life as well as its external context also increase. The effectiveness of school leaders is demonstrated by exercising both professional and political leadership drawn from past experience while responding to a new situational context. This drives the choice of leadership style by the school leaders either to adopt working with internal affairs and an external context significantly, or inside-out and outside-in from micro to meso and to the macro level [Rajbhandari, 2011; 2012].

In School 1, the chairperson was a politician and a former minister. His behavioural leadership pattern tended towards relations-oriented, hence, rationally implying the political leadership incorporating both external and internal aspects into the school management. The principal supported this by saying:

> "He is a politician, however, he does not introduce politics into the school. He is polite and his thinking towards the development of the school is very positive."

In a collectivistic culture, relations-oriented leadership behaviour is easier to build with professionals and politically influenced people. The connection of the school management with the political environment brings progressive development through the generation of resources from donors and the government. This is made possible since the political leaders help to bypass the bureaucracies in the politically influenced environment. Teacher 1 attested this fact as follows:

> "The chairperson is a politician. In the Nepalese system, the political network connection for bringing any developmental programme to the schools is necessary. Without the connection to higher level authorities, nothing is possible. The chairperson, being a former minister, has political connections which have helped the school to secure resources from donors and a land grant from the municipality."

In corroborating the response of Teacher 1, the principal asserted the need for strong school leadership by mentioning that;

> "We know the politics in our country, our chairperson has a good reputation in our nation. With him in our school, everybody respects us and listens to us."

School leaders are mostly educationist, however, in the Nepalese educational setting, most chairpersons are either politicians or business people. This then necessitates the need to clarify the role of head teachers as academicians in leading the teachers, students and non-academic staff members. Moreover, in Nepalese schools, the formation of SMC is mandatory. The chairperson is delegated with authorities that are further passed down to the members of the SMC. In the schools' organisational structure, head teachers are primarily delegated with the responsibility for schools' administration and academic affairs. Consequently, head teachers assume the leadership for the day to day operation of the school. However, approval from the chairperson for accommodating programmes such as for any form of changes and development into the school system is considered very important. Therefore, the chairperson drives the leadership by giving time and energy to mobilise resources for the school's developmental programmes. Teacher 2 supported this by stating that:

> "He gives adequate time, he is positive towards school development. He is a politician and he has his influence to secure resources from the donors."

Moreover, within the academic culture, school leaders maintain relations-oriented behaviour; however, concern about tasks is often connected to student achievement. Head masters adopt task-oriented leadership behaviour to promote the school's effectiveness. The distribution of responsibilities is vague and complicated as indicated in the national educational policy and directives. This has resulted in problems in regards to the role of the chairperson in the school's leadership. Due to the fact that the chairperson is concerned with the developmental aspect of school management, he is also involved with the school's external affairs. In addition, the responsibilities of the chairperson as a politician and a school leader hinder him from giving full time attention to the school. The principal stated:

> "He is a national figure; he could have used his connections to help the school much better during the process of development. Though, he did many things for the school, but more effort would have yielded more positive results which I think he didn't do. I know he has his own professional life. But he could have used his connections much better so as to enable the school to obtain the benefit of additional financial resources. The Chairperson does not actually relate with the teachers."

Reflection from the principal regarding the chairperson's leadership behavioural style indicates it is relations-oriented. Nevertheless, the behaviour of an individual is guided by personality, values and interest, cognitive complexity, preference for taking risk, and personal satisfac-

tion. These patterns of leadership behaviours reflect both the task-oriented and relations-oriented. Consequently, the chairperson's preference for risk-taking as well as the value of and an interest in the school reflects the combination of relations- and task-oriented leadership behaviour. The principal supported this claim by mentioning that:

> "The Chairperson is democratic in nature, we discuss matters arising with the teachers and then come up with an agenda for deliberation of the SMC. The chairperson does not interfere in the administration of the school. He approves the agenda without hesitation as he is aware that the items on the agenda are to be implemented for the benefit of the school. His motive is to ensure that this school offers quality education to students. He believes in taking a risk and this has made us more capable and motivated to support and implement many good programmes in our school."

In the collectivism culture, risk-taking behaviour is associated with cooperation and indulging the organisational member. Risk-taking simply does not signify the task-oriented, however, in a collectivism society, the risk is distributed amongst and between the members. Therefore, it minimises the cost of the burden of the implemented decisions. Relating to the fact about sharing for planning and organizing, Teacher 2 stated thus,

> "He gives time to the school if the school requires; we celebrated our 50 year anniversary. If the school faces any difficulties in its finances or recruitment he is always there. However, managing and planning is initiated by the principal collaborating with the SMC."

In regard to the school behavioural leadership style, the chairperson collaborates with the SMC members. The democratic style of the chairperson enabled him to delegate authority to the headmaster for academic affairs. This enabled the chairperson to develop informal relations with the teachers and the administrative members. Teacher 3 affirmed this by mentioning that:

> "The Chairperson is positive and talks with us about the school through informal meetings. We haven't had any chance to build a good rapport. If we don't have any rapport, then it's obvious that we don't know their attitude and behaviour. However, in regards to professional work, he is very positive towards the school development."

Confirming the view of the Teacher 3, Teacher 1 also added that:

> "We desire to have good communication with the chairperson. If the opportunity abounds for communication, then, we may as well

grow more. He is very positive and optimistic regarding this school. He doesn't interfere in any issues regarding the developmental aspects."

Despite the demonstration of relations-oriented leadership behaviour towards the school leaders, the chairperson aligns with the SMC members alone in formulating the school's policies and plans. Moreover, the primary role of the chairperson is to develop the school by securing various resources to meet the needs of the school. Therefore, working outside the school occupies the chairperson's time working and this limits his concentrations inside the school as he has to delegate more powers and responsibilities to the head master. Furthermore, engaging in external affairs allows the chairperson to meet with the teachers and non-teaching staff informally for a short time. However, structural hierarchy was maintained by addressing all the issues directly to the headmaster instead of the chairperson. In doing so, he believes that the headmaster is the most suitable person that can resolve immediate issues affecting the teachers. Teacher 2 confirmed as follows:

"I think he should be more concerned with the school's internal affairs while paying less attention to external affairs. Hence, he gets more information from the principal and then formulates and executes policies accordingly in the school. He is well acquainted with people working here; he is social and talks informally with everybody, which makes most of us motivated."
Corroborating the view of Teacher 2, the principal said that:

"He wants every issue to be handled at first by the head teacher before bringing it to his attention so as to make my work easy. On top of that, the operational structure is more like a hierarchy and this is important in Nepalese culture. Otherwise everybody would approach him."

Furthermore, the leadership behavioural pattern of School 1, demonstrates relations-oriented behaviour by involvement in the school internal affairs and informally meeting the teacher and non-teaching staff in the school. The demonstration of task-oriented behaviour is confined within the SMC membership for the school's developmental planning and progress. Therefore, the headmaster is delegated with the responsibilities for the interest and value of the teachers whereas the external affairs are confined within the SMC.

3.2. The dominating behavioural leadership style of School 2

Enhancing students learning is directly connected witha well-managed, efficient and conducive school environment [Hopkins, 2003. P. 55]. Consequently, most school leaders are inquisitively engaged in developing a conducive environment for learning. In the Nepalese school system, a conducive environment is also highly connected with

infrastructure and financial resources. In regard to this, school leaders are expected to generate resources for physical development. For example, this includes the construction of classrooms and physical facilities as well as the renovation of the old buildings. In this regard, many community schools are involved in the restructuring of school buildings. Moreover, the physical development is necessary for the community schools due to the congested and poor physical facilities (lack of drinking water and toilets) and poor infrastructural facilities (dilapidated buildings and classrooms).

The school leader's crucial task is to bring about physical changes in the school. Focusing on the physical development is important for two reasons, namely: (i) the necessity of renovation and (ii) to attract student's enrollment from competing nearby schools. In regard to the relevance and necessity of the development of physical facilities, the Principal (head teacher) stated that:

> "This should be a very good school. We want this school to have good infrastructure such as buildings and good classroom facilities. Every member in the SMC has to be very active. Their concern towards the school should be to bring the development in different aspect related to physical facilities as well as academic affairs." In addition, the SMC member supported this claim by adding that:

> "We all participate in initiating the development projects. We don't usually gather to discuss with the teachers but we have the teacher's representative who comes to the SMC meetings to represent the interest of the teachers. We have more meetings in this school than is required. We are concerned with the construction of buildings and additional floors to accommodate the students."

To facilitate the changes, school leaders need to be cooperative and share their discussions with the SMC members in order to address the developmental needs of the school. In regard to this, the chairperson has developed good relationships with the teachers while most of the teachers and the chairperson live in the same local community. The behavioural leadership style of School 2 reflects the value and interest of the teachers. Teacher 4 acknowledged this by stating that:

> "We didn't have drinking water facilities in the school. We met the chairperson face-to-face and requested him to do something. He then invested his own money to install a drinking water tap. It cost a lot and also the government didn't even bother to think about it. I think it is quite wonderful of him to understand our needs."

Have adopted a relations-oriented behavioural leadership style, the chairperson's personal satisfaction was to bring about the necessary development to the school by understanding the situation and being

more open with the teachers and non-academic staff. The Assistant Principal (headmaster) supported this claim by stating that:

"I have worked in some schools before. I have found the difference in leadership if I have to compare. Our chairperson is social and the credit goes to him for generating resources for the school's development. We have informal communication. He is visionary and makes things clear for everyone. The chairperson visits the school quite often even if there is no meeting."

Adapting the relations-oriented behavioural style was necessary for the chairperson primarily because he resides in and belongs to the same community where the school is located. Moreover, most SMC members are also residents within the same community. More importantly, as a business entrepreneur in the locality, the chairperson had developed close relationships with many people in the community through business connections. This enabled him to demonstrate the relations-oriented leadership behavior style. The chairperson was elected for some years by the SMC which also encouraged him to build good relationships with the teachers and the SMC. The head teacher supported this by saying that:

"He is a local member of this community, but I feel that he should be in this school for a longer time. What he says, he does. The chairperson has a vital role in school development. He drives the teachers as well as the SMC to contribute towards the developmental projects of the school. The chairperson also has the vital role convincing the local community to support the community school. The chairperson collaborated with SMC members to drive the resource generation scheme by visiting people in the localities and organization."

Hopkins [2003. P. 56] stated that in a stable school system, maintenance has higher priority than development especially when school leaders are focused on protecting and promoting the interest of the school system. On the contrary, the school development has higher priority than its maintenance in the Nepalese school system. School leaders are focused on external affairs in order to generate resources for the stable development of schools. The leadership role in the Nepalese community schools involves other organisations seeking the opportunity to generate resources. Engagement in external affairs to bring about development in the internal affairs of the school requires cognitive leadership complexity. Furthermore, the chairperson must understand the school from outside in order to develop the school's infrastructure with the resources generated from the donors.

The behavioural leadership style of developing the school's infrastructure reduced the chairperson's time and concern for academic

affairs. This was enabled by adopting the democratic leadership style and further delegating authority to the headmaster. Nevertheless, the teachers desire the chairperson's involvement in the academic affairs which they believe would enhance motivation and commitment by also emphasising the task-oriented leadership behaviour. The assistant principal mentioned:

> "The Chairperson is not really concentrating on academic aspects at all. He is concentrated on the management and financial aspects. The Chairperson is only concerned with students' SLC examination results. He wants all the students to pass, which means a 100 percent successful result. If the chairperson had monitored the academic side more closely, things would have been better than they are at present."

The SMC members in collaboration with the school's leaders adopted a high relations-oriented behavioural leadership style to develop the school's infrastructure and physical facilities. This was promoted by the chairperson in order to address the urgent developmental needs which the government had not paid attention to. The relations-oriented leadership behaviour of the chairperson also promoted good relationships with the developmental agencies which awarded grants for the improvement of infrastructure in the school. In addition, the financial donation from the chairperson personally was an important contribution to the wellbeing of the teachers and students. The assistant principal admitted this by stating that:

> "The chairperson is very active in generating resources at the moment. We had many problems with financial aspects before, but now it's being properly addressed and we have realised the importance of development."

Financial resources were necessary to improve the quality of education in the school by bringing about the teaching and learning infrastructural development, such as computers, library, classroom facilities, building toilets and so forth. Therefore, the personal interest of the chairperson was to enhance the quality of education by bringing the SMC members together. His disposition to embrace collaboration within and outside the school indicated the importance of his contribution in fostering the development of the school. The principal mentioned this as follows:

> "The chairperson is very co-operative. He encourages and initiates development projects in the school. The chairperson has initiated infrastructural development such as the construction of buildings and toilet."

Despite the government claiming to be paying attention to the well-being of the schools, it must be emphasised that these leaders were not taken seriously prior to the appointment of the chairperson. Therefore, the chairperson initiated the development of infrastructural facilities related to the wellbeing of the school leaders through collaboration with the SMC members. The highly relations-oriented behavioural style enabled the school to progress in several areas such as construction of buildings and toilets in addition to resolving land conflicts. The leadership approach, strong on relations-oriented behavioural style, encouraged collaboration with donor agencies for generating funds. The school leader's benevolent democratic leadership styles promoted a relational school climate. However, the management of the school's academic affairs was delegated to the principal so that the chairperson was able to demonstrate little on task and highly on relations-oriented leadership behaviour.

3.3. The dominating behavioural leadership style of School 3

The decentralisation of the school management system enabled the school leaders to effect developmental changes thereby becoming change agents. Bower [1990] mentioned that innovation is the key to success in effecting developmental changes in regard to the reform strategies necessary to decentralise the school management system. In addition, Bower further asserted that the change agent who brings innovations could be anybody involved with school leadership. Meanwhile, the demand for innovation in the school management is highly anticipated from the school leaders who are saddled with the responsibility of bringing effectiveness into the school system. Reeves [2002] suggested that it is essential that school leaders spend ample time in the school in order to manage it effectively. Therefore, failure to bring about effective changes in the school management system can lead to catastrophic consequences. This can eventually lead to closure or merging of schools. More often, the victims who suffer the consequences are the students.

The school leadership approach in initiating changes for the future therefore prompts the school leaders to remain flexible and mobile in their approaches of relations- and task-oriented behavioural leadership styles. Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson [2001] identified four possible combinations of behavioural leadership style namely: (i) task-oriented behaviour, (ii) employee centered behaviour or relations-oriented, (iii) a combination of relations-oriented behaviour and task-oriented behaviour, and (iv) neither task-oriented behaviour nor relations-oriented behaviour.

Moreover, the involvement of school leaders was expected to bring about development in the schools in line with the NPM. However, the development in the school was evaluated by the influx of financial resources alone. This was because of the chairperson's political reputation and his involvement in raising funds for the school. In most community and public schools, the chairperson is elected on the ba-

sis of their popularity and political connections. This also enables the chairperson to enhance their social prestige while getting involved in the school management. The principal asserted his view on the appointment of chairperson by saying that:

> "In some parts of Nepal, the appointment of chairperson is celebrated like it is a politician who wins an election because the school has lots of property. We are really fed-up with this kind of situation. We don't have an opportunity to grow professionally. We are educationists and we are taking responsibility for the schools but those people who come to manage the schools are not from an educational background. I am frustrated and feel like resigning from the school. We are planning to go back to a public school and therefore hand over the management back to the government so they can manage the school as they want."

Consequently, the behavioural leadership approach manifested in this instance is the laissez-faire leadership style through which the chairperson demonstrated highly on relations-oriented behaviour. Hersey and Blanchard [2001] stated that flexibility and a combination of leadership relations- and task-oriented behaviour is essential for every leader to implement in situational differences. In addition, they also believe that leaders can combine two to three of these styles and apply it to a situation. Moreover, in the case of School 3, the behavioural leadership style illustrated two patterns, the relations-oriented and the neither task nor relations-oriented. Specifically, the chairperson demonstrated relations-oriented behaviour when he was inclined towards social well-being by adopting socio-emotional relations, however, for task-oriented, socio-professional was non-existent. The relations-oriented behavioural leadership approach did not motivate the employees towards goal-directed behaviour, thereby worsening the situation and impeding the accountability. The other pattern of neither task- nor relations-oriented behavioural leadership approach did not lead to achievement, therefore, impeding effective management of the school. The assistant principal supported this by stating that:

> "The roles and responsibilities of the SMC are seen in their meetings as a committee but their contribution to the school management is nowhere to be seen. Moreover, it's the headmaster who drives the academic affair but the management affair that was supposed to be driven by the SMC committee is not being driven."

The assistant principal further confirmed that the SMC's involvement with the school's management did not actually benefit the development of the school, as follows:

"The Management Committee is just there but it doesn't really work on the improvement of the school, rather it's the teachers and the headmaster who actually drive the school. In fact, if there is no meeting being held, the SMC members will not know anything about the school. This is not really helping in regards to the development of the school."

Moreover, relations-oriented leadership behaviour lead to socio-emotional interactions between the school leaders and this was considered favourable. The assistant principal admitted that the socio-emotional behaviour was personal and informal rather than a professional approach when he said:

"The Chairperson always talks to everybody whenever he comes to school. He asks about the teachers and non-teaching staff. His interaction is very promising."

In relation to this, the assistant principal provided insight about the leadership behaviour and the SMC's responsibilities when he stated that:

"I expect the chairperson to take the initiative to develop the infrastructure in the school since it's very important. The technical issues regarding the land and buildings have to be taken seriously. SMC is shifting the responsibility to the principal and the teachers. SMC doesn't show any sense of responsibility and do not take these issues very seriously."

The assistant principal emphasised that remuneration and benefits could motivate the SMC members when he said:

"The school does not provide any remuneration to the SMC for attending meetings. They only have positions in the SMC but when it comes to taking responsibilities they don't bother to put in their effort."

The behavioural leadership style is regarded to be effective when the leaders are successful in influencing the followers positively. Therefore, influencing the followers require immense intellectual capabilities. Moreover, in educational settings where many of the followers are intellectually inclined, the behavioural leadership style significantly contributes towards participation and delegation by adopting both relations- and task-oriented behaviour.

A behavioural leadership style combining relations- and task-oriented behaviour embraces both autocratic and democratic styles. At the time of change, the restraining forces are quite strong and become resistant to such change. Embracing changes by school leaders

through participation could drive these restraining forces towards the changes. Nevertheless, a standalone leadership approach can lead to teachers and SMC members becoming irresponsible. To increase participation from all sections of the community with a view to ensuring the growth of the school, it was considered that the enrollment of students should be increased. The support of the SMC members for this decision was very poor as they did not take any action. The view of the administrative staff reflects the standalone approach of leadership when she stated her optimism;

> "He supports us both infrastructurally and economically. He is also concerned with increasing the enrollment of the students. He is progressive by advocating that if four students are enrolled from one family, one should get free education. He agrees to any kind of development initiatives. In regards to finance, he donates money from his own pocket to meet the school needs occasionally. This also encourages other parents or community members to make donations but the donations are very small."

The behavioural leadership style in School 3 is neither task- nor relations-oriented behaviour due to the poor formulation of the national educational policy and the political system of the country. The community managed schools are still facing difficulties with frequent amendment of CMS directives because of its vague definition of autonomy in community schools in regards to hiring and firing, resources generation and utilisation. The administrative staff supported this assertion by stating that:

> "The chairperson is concerned about the school's development. He wants to take necessary action against ill-disciplined teachers but again it does not come with the authority given to the SMC by government. Even when disciplinary action is taken, there is again some political influence with somebody from higher ranking authority calling and asking us to withdraw such action. Actually, it's all about the autonomy that has been given to the SMC which is only on paper."

Corroborating the issue related to responsibilities and political influences in the school, Teacher 1 expressed his views by stating that:

> "I think with the lack of administration and leadership, we don't have responsibilities for the school. We are more politically influenced. Our name is more famous when we are into politics but there is no name when we are teachers. Anyhow, we get a salary even if we are not teaching properly. Then it's obvious that there is no development in the schools as this results in lower student achievement and increased dropout."

Teacher 1 was also of the opinion that SMC's effective involvement in academic affairs could lead to further development. Bringing up new ideas to implement changes is difficult. Therefore, the chairperson could encourage the SMC to participate in the management of the school. Supporting this claim he stated that:

> "Interference from the SMC is the most important factor for the school to develop. Interference means dedication to lead the school towards development. Moreover, there hasn't been a change of attitude in the staff since the transfer; the school's name from the public to the community has only changed. Actually, the same people working for the school now and then are the same with the same old attitude. So the school is not progressing."
> He further mentioned that;

> "If there is interference, the attitude will change and force the principal and teachers to work harder. This will lead to commitment. Without the SMC's interference, the school will not grow. The SMC is not able to utilise their potential to grow the school."

Moreover, failure to collaborate with a view to promoting participation management could be attributed to the chairperson who could not inspire the SMC members. Teacher 1 confirmed this by stating that:

> "I will the blame the SMC which doesn't meet to discuss how to improve teaching and learning activities. We don't have discussion. No policy on how to provide counseling to weak students. All of us have the attitude of doing our job but without any commitment and dedication. The chairperson is very progressive, whatever we ask he approves. He believes in us and delegates all the authorities to the head teacher and teachers."

The behavioural leadership style shows relations-oriented behaviour which promotes socio-emotional growth. However, an attempt to achieve professional growth was demonstrated by adopting a laissez-faire leadership style which employs neither task- nor relations-oriented behaviour. Leadership behaviour employing socio-emotional enhanced social wellbeing, however, non-adoption of intellectual development is demotivating the teachers in regards to contributing towards the development of the school.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Community Managed Schools (CMS) in Nepal made a historical and political contribution towards educating the general public when education was not accessible during the Rana regime. However, CMSs were also established to promote the political ideology against the Rana Regime. Nevertheless, CMS in Nepal enhanced the education

of children from local communities before independence. Increased numbers of CMS were nationalised after democracy was gained from the Rana Regime in 1951. The entire CMS system motivated the teachers despite the schools having poor quality infrastructure. A centralised educational management system was expected to enhance the quality of education, however, the outcome was poor. This resulted in the emergence of private schools in the mid-1980s as the public began to lose faith in government schools [Rajbhandari, 2007]. Consequently, the government transferred school management to the community in anticipation that the NPM would bring about quality education, additional finance, collaborations with donors and teacher appointments. The participation and involvement of the community in schools and in enhancing NPM lead to the decentralisation of the educational management system as initiated by the World Bank [The World Bank, 2000].

Under the decentralisation of the educational management system in which community participation and involvement is shaping the NPM, it was found that the leadership role has broadened the scope of management beyond expectation. This led the community school leaders to collaborate with non-governmental organisations (NGO's) for financial assistance and technical support in order to reduce government bureaucracies when accessing resources to develop the schools. The results suggest that this leadership approach was not limited to a standalone approach in administering the school management and resulted in a conducive environment for collaboration with external agencies' participation and involvement in.

Effective leadership enables school leaders to demonstrate goal-oriented behaviour with possible alternative behaviour and contextual solutions [Rajbhandari, 2013. P. 33]. Nevertheless, leadership approaches in school management under the framework of NPM were accountable for generating funds and building connections. The findings suggest that school leaders were elected from the local community on the basis of chairperson's popularity and political connections. This prompted almost all of the community schools to elect politicians and business tycoons to be their chairpersons. This, however, gives no room for academically sound individuals to become chairperson despite residing in the local community. The findings suggest that the Nepalese educational system was highly politicised as the students' union interfered in schools, thereby closing itthrough strikes. It is also clear that the NPM was influenced by politically sound leaders and business entrepreneurs who demonstrated their relational cohesive behaviour to resolve issues by engaging their political connections.

Although, the NPM is concerned with the holistic development of schools, more political approaches and finances are required in the community schools. The results suggest that among the three schools selected for the exploration of leadership behaviour using the NPM, the leaders of Schools 1 and 3 had political backgrounds as various

former ministers of Nepal. The leader of School 2 was a business tycoon well-known in the country. All these leaders have become assets to the community schools by rendering services through collaboration, financial contribution and using their political contacts to remove bureaucracies as and when required. However, the leaders of the three schools were unable to eliminate the disruption by the students' union who wished to close down the school by strikes and lockouts. This occurred despite the school leaders having an influential political background. The reason for this is yet to be explored and requires further analysis.

Furthermore, the dominating behavioural leadership style of the school leaders embraced the theory of leadership behaviour which reflects that school leaders in all of the three schools exhibited high on relations-oriented behaviour as their dominant behavioural approach. Nepalese socio-culturally is considered a tightly-knitted society by implying relations-oriented behaviour. This further enabled the leadership and followership approaches to embrace relational and behavioural commitment from amongst and between. Relations-oriented behaviour dominated the leadership approaches found in the three community schools due to the nature of the chairperson's professional engagement. The results suggest that the ownership of schools was not carried out with attitudinal commitment; however, behavioural commitment is highly favoured to foster organisational behaviour as seen in teachers' discipline, teachers' appointment, elimination of teachers' mismatch, administration of timing and teaching schedule.

The findings suggest that the chairpersons of the SMC were motivated to contribute to social welfare and gain recognition through their involvement in schools. The findings also suggest that the leadership approaches were directed towards external issues rather than real school administration of academic enhancement. Therefore, academic administration was delegated to the head teacher which was further transferred down to a few teachers. This leads to a communication gap between the school leaders on the one hand and the teachers and students on the other hand. The results also suggest that chairpersons were highly involved with their personal and professional work rather than allocating their time to school management and administration. They were present in the schools only during the SMC meeting summoned by the head teachers at the convenience of the chairperson's time and availability. This further indicates that task-oriented behaviour was least exhibited by the school leaders. It was also found that the chairpersons of the three community schools had no knowledge of academic management and administration.

Despite demonstrating relations-oriented behaviour, the school leaders did not contribute enough time in understanding the organisational behavioural pattern of the teachers, parents, students, and academic programmes. This shows that they adopted a relations-oriented behavioural approach to develop the socio-political image. This

promoted the social image in building trust within social and political aspects for future prospects. Nevertheless, business entrepreneurs in Nepal also rely heavily on political connections. On this basis, many business entrepreneurs are elected as a members of parliament, political financial advisors, and donors for political campaigns.

Moreover, the findings reveal that involvement in the schools was just an avenue to gain political recognition for furthering their political ambition. The school leaders are recognised as socially well-known individuals who are highly regarded as prestigious symbols of the school. Moreover, informal meetings with the chairpersons were often employed in resolving personal problems and taking advantage of the chairperson's political connections. This also enabled the school leaders to demonstrate high relations-oriented behaviour towards the school's stakeholders.

In terms of schools' development, the results reveal that many external agencies came to render technical and financial support. The reason being the political connections of the chairpersons. Therefore, the political connections of the chairpersons brought advantages to the community schools. For example, School 1 was granted a few areas of land in the locality by the municipality. School 2 was successful in resolving a historic land dispute with the community locals. School 3 was able to gain financial and technical support from the NGOs and the members of local community. It also managed to improve on the participation and involvement of local rich people and business entrepreneurs in the development of the school.

In conclusion, in the Nepalese context, a school's development is evaluated in terms of the amount of financial donations it receives. Adequate financial resources enable the development of infrastructure in poorly managed schools. This also indicates the chairperson's successful leadership. Hence, financial resources were accumulated by collaborating with local enterprises and donor agencies such as international non-government organisations (INGO's), community based organisations (CBO's) and non-governmental organisations (NGO's). The political connections of the chairpersons offered adequate benefits to the community schools. Collaboration with donors was possible through relations-oriented behaviour. Relations-oriented leadership behaviour is the dominant behavioural approach adapted by the school leaders. The manifestation of relations-oriented leadership behaviour was also demonstrated inside the schools between the teachers and SMC members as well as outside the schools between the donors and the SMC members. However, a combination of task-oriented and relations-oriented behaviour was also demonstrated by the leaders due to the lack of educational and academic expertise as well as the situational context. Although the findings in the three schools suggest that relations-oriented manifested itself as the dominant behavioural approach, it can only be hypothetically assumed. Moreover, the results suggest that this manifestation of behaviour was essential to

bring development to schools which operated in a contested educational environment. The manifestation of relations-oriented leadership behaviour offered opportunities to harmonise the environment that best suit the contextual administrative setting. Finally, the adoption of NPM in a community school initiated growth. However, the school's development was measured with relational behavioural leadership approaches building and bonding with the external environment which enables the development of physical facilities alone. But would there be a better solution to resolve the politically contested contextual issues without adapting politically manifesting behavioural approaches towards relations-oriented?

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