

## Teaching Learning Activities Among Students with Physical Disabilities

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**Abstract:** The main aims of this study is to analyze the current scenario of teaching learning practices among students with physically disabilities in their study area. This study analyzes existing instructional practices used for students with physical disabilities, find out challenges in teaching students, and suggest appropriate instructional techniques for academic output of the students. The study was conducted through general qualitative research design with interpretive paradigm. The respondents of this study are physically disabled students, head teacher of the school who is physically disabled and teachers teaching students with physically disabled. Two schools from Kathmandu district is selected purposively. In-depth interview, observation, and focus group discussion were used in this study to collect primary data. Two student-respondents from the school were interviewed from the secondary level. Six teachers and one head teacher from selected schools were also interviewed. So, our total respondents in this research are 18. The collected data is analyzed using thematic analysis, a systematic approach involving several key steps. The themes are reviewed and refined through discussion and comparison with the original data. Creating inclusive learning environments, providing assistive technology, modifying curriculum and assessments, and promoting self-advocacy and independence are the major steps which can be implied in teaching/ learning process for better output of disabled students. The study also suggests for the appropriate instructional techniques to be used for academic improvement of the students with physical disabilities. By embracing a student-centered approach and fostering a supportive and inclusive learning community, educators can empower students with physical disabilities to reach their full potential physically, mentally, academically and socially well.

**Keywords:** Nerves, disability, neurological, appropriate, accommodation, empower, physiological

### INTRODUCTION

Physical disability is defined as partial or total loss of physical operational abilities, problems with nerves or muscles and complications with the composition and operation of bone and joints including amputation, arthritis and cerebral palsy. There are Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, Spinal Cord injuries, Stroke, Musculoskeletal injuries, varying degrees of loss of limb and other mobility. Other forms of physical disability are polio (as an acquired disease) and some genetic condition that can result in loss of mobility are different types of physically disabled. A

physical impairment of students means any physiological disorder or condition cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body system neurological musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive and lymphatic, skin and endocrine (Foster,2010).

Students with physical disability means any types of physical condition which impacts one or more major life learning activities. Students with physical disabilities may be the result of congenital birth issues, accidental injury or illness and others. Physical disability

means the specific condition by physically disorder which impacts his or her daily life. Mobility, work tolerance, self-care and communication are categories of daily living that tend to be impacted by significantly physical

disabilities. A student who is unable to work with their parts of body fully or partially, becomes illness, injury, birth issues and other difficulties to learn can be called students with physically disability.



Doing very well in classroom by instructional practices, right teaching strategies and using assistive technology help students who are physically disabled. Physically challenged students have some needs that arise from their relationship with the teacher as well as their peer group and others. When their social needs are not met, the challenged students become disappointed, unhappy and anti-social. Hence, lack of social support, non-acceptance, prejudice and devaluation faced by the challenged students creates the problems in their learning. It was further observed that, the physically challenged students have not been given special attention and proper care and guidance.

According to Racheal (2017), physically disable students have mainly the

problem in the area of admission, access to facilities in the classroom, transportation and hostel accommodation. Usually, students who are physically disable, have low academic performance. Many students with such disabilities have difficulty visually or auditory and students may have low attention teaching and learning. They are unable and are attracted by irrelevant stimuli. Difficulties with social skills can be as deliberating as academic problems to students with disabilities. Frustrated by their learning difficulties, students with disabilities act negatively and acquire negative feelings of self-worth rather than learning and developing attitudes. Students with physical disability also have their own needs and desires like normal students

but they cannot fulfill them. So, these students are inspired themselves to go to school and receive education.

But people behave differently with physically disabled students in comparison to the normal students in our society. It is said that it is the result of previous work of former birth. Because of this concept student with physical disability are always dominated which leads them back than normal students. These kinds of behave and behaviors are completely wrong. It is neither the result for evil work nor the punishment of God. But it is the result of malnutrition, careless of their parents and lack of knowledge. According the fundamental right in constitution of Nepal, the physically disabled person and citizen who are financially poor shall have the right to free education as provided for law (Constitution of Nepal, 2015).

All students can learn and deserve the opportunity. However, recognizing the diversity among children, educators do not except all students to learn the material in the same manner using the same resources in the same time frame. The classroom should focus the students on individual inclusion for studies, educational engagement and educational plan are in the classroom (Sutton & Kruder, 2015). Historically, people with disabilities have largely been provided through solutions that segregate them, such as residential institutions and special schools.

In the context of Nepal, Physical disability is the problem that arises in operation of physical parts, use and movement in a person due to problems in nerves, muscles and composition and

operation activities of bones and joints (Government of Nepal, 2006). It is estimated that there are 120-150 million children globally with disabilities under the age of 18, more than 90% of those living in developing countries do not attend school (UNESCO, 2009). This record clearly reflects the difficulties, which persons with disabilities face in accessing education. Around 2.2 percent (6,47,744) of the total population of Nepal reported having some kinds of disabilities (Central Bureau of Statistics 2078). Among them 2,40,609 are with physical disabilities in which 1,41,434 are males and 99,175 are females. This data shows that many school age children did not get the opportunity in primary education.

Besides this, there are reportedly 33 special schools in the country, 380 integrated schools and a planned additional seven special schools and seven inclusive model schools to be established in every province. Moreover, there are around 300 schools in hard-to-reach areas practicing disability inclusive education. There were, students with physical disabilities enrolled at lower level, 8576 at the upper basic level (MoEST, Flash I Report 2021).

Special education began in Nepal in the early 1960s opening of schools for the deaf, physically handicapped and intellectually disabled students. In the late 1980s, special education organizations were formed and run by the joint effort of the government and NGOs including the Nepal Disabled Association for uplifting the education of such disabilities. Students with physical

disabilities face many difficulties, obstacles, or bottlenecks that hinder students to achieve a specific learning outcome. Most instructional challenges are motivational or cognitive in nature (Hughes, 2005).

Different teaching learning practices should be used to motivate students, for students with physical disabilities assistive technologies should also be used. But, due to unavailability of such technologies, Nepalese teaching to special children do not accommodate their lesson effectively. Different methods, tools, materials, and resources should be used to enhance the learning achievement of the children otherwise the students will have difficulty in learning. This study is important for the teachers of special need education because it may help to develop their understanding of instructional challenges faced by the students with physical disabilities.

Through this study, teachers can also gain ideas, techniques, instructional practices, tools used in special teaching. Similarly, teachers are able to identify the gaps, issues, challenges if there, with this approach. This study will also be important for the researcher, policy maker, government bodies and so on. This study will also be important for teachers because teachers can develop their understanding related how to teach the students with physical disabilities. In addition, researchers, curriculum developers can also gain insights into the merits and demerits of this approach so that the curriculum can be revised accordingly addressing those issues.

People, particularly students with physical disabilities are usually perceived by societies as disadvantaged groups (Block, 1992). Hence, they are in a position of missing some economic, political and social benefits including the rights to quality education. Mcleod (2014) points out that, students with physical disabilities experience personal limitations in school environments that affect their social, psychological and academic spheres that may likely affect their academic performances at school. Some of the problems can be alleviated with parental and community involvement and government support. Teaching activities, classroom management, instructional techniques used for students with physical disabilities does seem supportive as per the need interest of the students. It seems that the curriculum also doesn't support and seems unmatchable to address such students. There are many lacks specially in teacher training and teaching learning strategies.

Based on the above problem, the researcher intends to seek in depth reality of educating process to the students with physically disabilities in study area. A good example cited is in the study by Firmer (2005) which shows that more than sixty percent (60%) of students with physical disabilities studying under unconducive learning environment performed poorly in their studies due to the difficulties they faced. Beside these, they encountered many difficulties while learning. Wide range of assistive technologies such as daily living aids, ergonomic aids, environmental aids, mobility aids,

seating and positioning aids, sports and recreational aids, computer access aids, and education and learning aids have been used all over the world to ensure the approach to education of children with physically disabled people in developed countries.

Due to the reason, those children get access to general curriculum in their countries. But the condition is not so good in the context of Nepal due to the lack of such resources. Most of the schools, where disabled children have been studying, do not seem to have even disability friendly furniture, ramps, toilets, etc. This situation indicates that the children with disabilities do not have proper access to curricula. They therefore show poor performance in exam, are unable to execute daily activities assigned by teachers efficiently, feel burden and humiliation, and they ultimately leave the school forever.

The researcher also advocates this issue for equality and equity in education. Furthermore, the teachers need to realize the students with physical disability and how they can be taught as normal students. In this regard, the gap between theory and practices need to be bridged. People still do not have open mind as they have for normal ones. This research study aims to explain the attitudes of the teachers towards physically disabled students and practices they apply in teaching. However, teaching and learning activities for such students need rigorous and serious effort (Moore, Beazley & Melzer, 1998).

They need suitable environment to encourage the learners psychologically,

emotionally and physically. This investigation provides the light on how to address the problem of effective teaching of the physically disabled students. As commonly acknowledged education empowers individuals for social political and economic independence, hence those who miss education stand at disadvantage. The study aims to analyze the current scenario of teaching learning practices among students with physically disabilities in study area.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study talks about the research methodology that has been undertaken for the sake of this study. It starts with the discussion of the research paradigm that has been chosen, followed by the philosophical considerations and research method. After that, I have mentioned the different stages I followed such as planning, selection of research site and participants, process of data collection.

### ***Research Design***

A research design is an arrangement of conditions for collecting and analyzing data in a manner that aims at combining relevance of the research purpose with economy in procedures (Kothari, 2004). Methodology is the main part of the research work. Different methods are used to collect necessary information. In this study, the researcher used general qualitative research design with interpretive paradigm as the research method as it helps to develop a detailed and in-depth understanding of some phenomena and explore a problem or an

issue. This research based on qualitative method. In this study 2 the researcher studying two organizations where physically disabled student's study. The researcher uses exact knowledge about teachers teaching physically disabled students and explore their perceptions about the children along with the challenges they face in the procedures of teaching.

### ***Selection of Respondent***

The respondents of this research study are physically disabled students, head teachers of the schools and teachers teaching students with physically disabled. It is qualitative research. The respondents are selected purposively which helps the researcher to find the real data from physically disabled students. The sample units are selected purposively. Two schools from Kathmandu district are selected. Khgendra Navajeevan Kendra and SGCP- Self-help Group for Cerebral Palsy are two sample schools. From which, two students from each school are selected as the respondents for the interview from the secondary level. Six teachers and one head teacher from each school selected for interviews by the researcher. So, there are total 18 respondents in this research.

### ***Sample and Sampling Method***

According to Ary et al (1996), a sample is a small group or subset of a population, in which a researcher selects for the purpose of the study and from which generalization is made about the characteristics of the population. In this study sampling was made of two schools, they are Khagendra Navajeevan Kendra and SGCP- Self-help Group for

Cerebral Palsy. These schools are providing basic education for students with disabilities in Kathmandu district. Researcher select two schools in Kathmandu district teaching students with physical disabilities. From each of the schools, two students with physical disability, 6 teachers and one head teacher also participants. Among students, one boy and one girl student from each school are selected by purposive sampling and the respondents were also selected by purposive sampling. Moreover, researcher discuss with other students and teachers as available and needs of the research study.

### ***Data Collection Tools and Technique***

This research is qualitative in nature so that the researcher collects data by the primary and secondary sources and analyzes with the help of literatures. The data collected by using interview, observation and focused group discussion are the main data collection tools. The interview schedule and direct class observation are the main tools for collecting necessary data. The study was based on primary and secondary source of data. The students with physical disabilities of Kathmandu district and teachers are the source of information. Secondary data collected from relevant books, journals and annual report of Municipality profile are used.

### ***In-depth Interview***

In this study, the researcher uses in-depth interview for data collection by conducting intensive individual interview with the head teachers, teachers and students from two school. The researcher takes the interview on the

basis of the objectives. Researcher constructs interviews schedule format in semi-structure interview with physically disabled students, teachers and head teachers. Questions are asked to the participants and their responses are recorded. The interview questions explore their perspective on a particular idea, program, or a situation. The interview guideline is formed separately for students, teachers and head teacher.

### ***Observation***

Researchers observe the student's participation in learning in research duration for identifying the challenges. The observation uses the student's participation in learning, teacher students' interaction in classroom, student's participation in group, class work, homework and teaching strategy. The observation of the 18 respondents are taken on the basis of factors like observation, listening and interaction for the essential data from the informants using the observation tool. In addition of class-observation, two students from each two schools selected for in-depth interview purposively.

### ***Focus Group Discussion***

A focus group discussion is a discussion among the participants in the group where there are people from similar backgrounds or experiences together to discuss a specific tissue of interest. It is a kind of qualitative research design where subjective questions are asked about their perceptions attitudes, beliefs, opinion or ideas. In such a group, six teachers from each two schools are selected for discussion purposively. The teacher teaching the students with physical disability asked some questions

in a group and their responses are recorded.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Teaching and learning practices for students with physical disabilities should prioritize inclusive and accessible approaches that cater to the unique needs and abilities of each individual. One of the main problems facing physically disabled students is the lack of accessibility and accommodations in educational settings. Here is additionally, physical disabilities can impact mobility and communication, making it difficult for students to fully participate in class activities and engage with their peers. It is important to create a supportive and empowering environment that fosters independence, self-confidence, and a sense of belonging among students with physical disabilities.

Collaboration between parent's teacher's students foster successful learning outcomes and maximizing the potential of students with physical disabilities. Implementing innovative strategies, utilizing assistive technologies and advocating for inclusive policies, this may include providing ramps, elevators, adaptive equipment and alternative formats for reading and writing. we can create a more equitable and inclusive educational experience for students, regardless of their physical abilities. Discrimination and stigma towards people with disabilities can also be a significant challenge for physically disabled students in academic environments.

## CONCLUSION

This study regarding the physically disable students have mainly the challenges in the area of admission, access to facilities in the classroom and school compound, transportation and hostel accommodation. Usually, students with physically disabled have low academic performance and achievement. Most of the schools, where disabled children have been studying, do not seem to have even disability friendly furniture, toilets, classrooms, etc. In this situation children with disabilities do not have proper access to curricula as well. They, therefore show poor performance in exam, are unable to complete daily activities assigned by teachers efficiently, feel burden and humiliation, and they ultimately leave the school forever. By inclusive approach and practice in the school, these students can reach in their full potential to get full academic performance. It is crucial for educators to be proactive in addressing such issues and the needs of students with physical disabilities to succeed in the classroom.

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