



Decolonizing Curricular Practices in Kathmandu University School of Education, Nepal: A Qualitative Inquiry

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Abstract

Modern Western curricula influences the university education of Nepal. There has been discussion regarding its domination and imposition on the education system and questioning whose knowledge matters? The purpose of this paper is: A) to explore the status of the curriculum in integrating Indigenous Knowledges in the curricula of the Master's Program through content analysis; and, B) to explore the status of Indigenous Knowledge from the faculties and students experience Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED). The method applied for the study is a content analysis and focus group discussions. Three focus groups were completed with students and four focus groups were completed with teachers of the four departments of KUSOED: Masters in Sustainable Development, Masters in Mathematics Education, Masters in Leadership and Management and Master in English Language and Teaching. The paper highlights that the teachers and students are in different phases of decolonizing higher education, i.e., the ongoing decolonization of the curriculum. There requires a complete reconstruction of the epistemological basis in the university program. The decolonized prospectus must place Nepal's diversity, local and Indigenous knowledges in the center of curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and research; incorporate Nepal's epistemic perspective, knowledge, and thinking and have an equal basis with the Modern western philosophy. Indigenous knowledge needs to be embedded in Nepal's higher education in a holistic approach to transformative change.

Background

Higher education in Nepal has a colonial legacy as it emerged with the influence of contemporary Indian higher education stimulated by British colonization. For example, the first college in Nepal, Trichandra College, established in 1919, was affiliated with Calcutta University and then to Patna University with prescribed courses (Upadhyay, 2018). In the few decades, there has been a shift from the regional sway of independent India to Britain's

ascendancy and the United States (Bista et al., 2019). However, 1951 heralded the new age of modern education with uniform and structured pedagogical practices in Nepal unless there were dominantly informal Indigenous education methods through traditional institutions. It came to Nepal as a part of a development with international support in expanding education (Stiller & Yadav, 1979). For example, recommendations made through a report of Nepal National Education Planning Commission, published by College of Education (1956), sometimes called the Wood Commission Report as it was heavily influenced by Dr. Hugh B. Wood, an American Professor, contributed to shape Nepal's education systems. Higher education was one aspect of materializing Western ideas and practices in education that was supposed to be essential in Nepal.

The report of Nepal National Education Planning Commission that was a milestone to open the door for formulating higher education policies in Nepal. As per the recommendation of the report, Tribhuvan University was established in 1959 introducing different graduate programs with technical and non-technical courses. The university played an essential role in introducing Western education, particularly Indian traditions guided by British colonialism after American traditions (Bista et al., 2019). This meant that the commission was instrumental in providing the space for introducing Western educational practices and values in higher education. The commission report clearly states:

Many of the general policies to be developed by the university authorities will be quite familiar and common to anyone well acquainted with the university administration in England and India... The administrative control is based on policies and principles more frequently found in the western hemisphere than elsewhere... The Commission recommends adopting a centralized academic credit system similar to that used in universities of the western hemisphere and recently introduced into certain Indian institutions... (College of Education, 1956, p. 132).

In addition to this, Nepal National Education Planning Commission (1956) laid the foundation for the importation of ideas, knowledge, skills, and language from the West as it recommended to promote laboratory works not only in science but also in social studies, agriculture, nursing, and many more (Pandey, K. C., & Wood, 1956). However, the commission favored using various learning materials and field-based practical activities in university learning processes. These recommendations were likely to facilitate to integrate the local Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing. However, it “recognized the dearth of material in the Nepali language and hence recommended to use all new materials from other parts of the world, translating into Nepali” (College of Education, 1956, p. 133). It envisaged that the research and foreign aid might combine to produce films and other more expensive

aids. The commission's recommendations welcomed the Western ideas, language, knowledge, and skills in Nepali universities.

The restriction of Indigenous languages in teaching-learning activities put away the integration of Indigenous Knowledge in classroom practices as Indigenous knowledge could only express through Indigenous languages, which means that the less competent students in the dominant languages were restricted from expressing their own beliefs and knowledge and worldviews. Further, the Nationalization of whole educational processes in the country in 1971 illustrated the state's wish to control the educational processes and the country's whole socio-cultural processes (Ministry of Education, 1971). Everything centralized under this plan – curriculum and textbook making the whole system rigid and emphasized transmitting certain values drawn from privileged worldviews. These were all clearly illustrated in the standardized and set curriculum and textbooks and the higher education learning processes.

Also, Nepali scholars who were schooled, trained, and graduated in the West contributed to importing the ideas and practices of the modern education system in universities in Nepal. Thus, following the international trend, Nepal also began to receive international support in expanding structured adult learning programs in the country (Stiller & Yadav, 1979). Foreign support came in all forms like money, system, technology, experts, and ideas. The imported ideologies and practices compelled the Indigenous knowledge, and ways of knowing remained suppressed. Thus, it was then quite natural that Nepali university education designed with Western worldviews, the ontology of materialism, objectivity as epistemology, and universality of knowledge (Luitel & Taylor, 2019) on the structure, curriculum, teachers, instruction, assessment, and governance. The West's hegemony allowed Nepali scholars and policymakers to assume that Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing were irrational, unscientific, and unable to lead the country toward modernity and development.

According to Heleta (2018), higher education works with a small part of knowledge systems, and Western knowledge engages in epistemicide or killing other knowledge systems. Undoubtedly, the knowledge systems are mastered by the western epistemologies and values rather than Nepal's own local, traditional, and Indigenous knowledge system. Hall (2017) mentioned that universities worldwide following the knowledge system created some 500 to 550 years ago by Europe by a white male scientist excluding Indigenous epistemologies. Whose knowledge matters, and why do we need to question knowledge reproduction? How do we move forward in knowledge generation and production in the university? How is the realization of teachers and students in university? How do they attempt to integrate Indigenous

knowledge in their curricular practices amidst the domination of Western education practices? These are key questions to address in Nepali university contexts.

This paper argues that the universities' pedagogies and students attempt to resist Western modern worldviews by integrating Indigenous or non-Western knowledge in curriculums, pedagogies, assessment, and research activities. The paper highlights that teachers and students are in different phases of decolonizing higher education: rediscovery and recovery; mourning; dreaming; commitment, and action (Laenui, 2000). The author further elaborates that the phases are presented in sequence for illustration; however, in practice often seen in combination. We analyze university teachers' perspectives and students in Master level programs in Kathmandu University School of Education, Nepal.

Methodology

We used a qualitative approach as a methodology for developing this paper. The qualitative inquiry facilitated us to understand the subjective views of key participants, teacher educators, and students of Master level programs. The paper is based on the data collected for developing a teacher manual for Kathmandu University School of Education. We tried to explore the participants' perspectives on how and how they integrate the Indigenous and non-Western knowledge in the processes of curricular activities, particularly in course content, pedagogies, and assessment and research activities. We employed an open interview method of focus group discussions that was more flexible, allowing the participants to change the conversation and bring up new issues we had not preconceived (Axinn & Pearce, 2006). In this way, we made understanding how the research participants selected perceive and feel the integration of Indigenous knowledge in a more expansive manner (Simon, 2006).

We reviewed the courses in four Master's programs of Kathmandu University School of Education such as Master in Sustainable Development [eight courses], Master in Mathematics Education [eight courses], Master in Leadership and Management [six courses], and Master in English Language Teaching [eight courses]. We conducted four focus group discussions with teacher educators and students of each of four programs within the month of July 2020. In each focus group discussion, there were four to eight participants. We conducted the focus group discussions virtually using Google Meet due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. The focus group discussions were appropriate methods for discussing and generating information from teacher educators and students on integrating Indigenous knowledge, which provided an understanding of their collective actions and accessing group beliefs, understanding, and attitudes (Lloyd-Evans, 2006). These methods supported us in

collecting different contrasting views of the participants. We maintained notes and recordings of the discussion and transcribed them in detail. We read and reread the data transcription for constructing meaning. Then, we followed the sequential process of coding, categorizing, and theme generation (Flick, 2019). We described, presented the data, and analyzed it further from different perspectives.

Recovery through Integration of Indigenous Knowledge in Course Contents

We reviewed eight significant courses of the Master of Mathematics Education. We focused on analyzing the courses from Indigenous perspectives. Most of the courses exclude Indigenous and non-Western knowledge—most of the courses are dominated by Western ideas and mathematics concepts. However, two courses: ‘EDMT 550: Ethno-mathematics and ‘EDMT 548: Recent Paradigms of Mathematics learning’ were likely to embrace Indigenous knowledge. For example, ‘EDMT 550: Ethno-mathematics’ includes ‘local mathematics-number, logic, and spatial configuration.’ This course provides space for discussing Indigenous mathematical concepts and ideas. One student (Yagya) in focus group discussion shared, “There is no integration of Indigenous knowledge in other courses, but it is a little there in Ethno-mathematics.” Another participant (Madhu) said, “There are contents of Indigenous knowledge in Ethno-mathematics of the first-semester course, but it is an optional subject.” Similarly, another participant, Shree, reported, “We also read the paper related to Ethno-mathematics.” Thus, Ethno-mathematics has provided the space for discussing Indigenous knowledge in Mathematics Education. The course enables students to develop mathematical reasoning by investigating non-Western cultures' mathematics and the mathematical structures inherent in games, music, and day-to-day practice.

Another course is ‘EDMT 548: Recent Paradigms of Mathematics learning’, which includes the ‘cultural role of mathematics, culturally responsive mathematics, and students' autobiographies.’ The course focuses on providing materials on culturally responsive mathematics pedagogies and culture in teaching mathematics learning. It has promoted culturally relevant mathematical ideas and concepts. It helps to understand the differences between ethnomathematics and academic mathematics, investigate the historical and cultural role of mathematics in non-Western societies, and appreciate the challenges non-Western mathematicians face. The course also facilitates integrating Indigenous knowledge as it intends to explore students' autobiographies in teaching-learning mathematics, which helps to unpack students' experiences as Indigenous knowledge.

Similarly, we reviewed eight courses of the interdisciplinary program of Master in Sustainable Development. There are several courses developed considering the present contexts in Nepal and elsewhere. There are four Master in Sustainable Development (MSD) courses that explicitly deal with Indigenous knowledge and other non-Western philosophies. The course ‘EDSD 540: Human Ecology and Sociology’ explains the relationships of humans, communities, culture, and nature, thereby constructing Indigenous knowledge. The courses EDSD 517: Gender Equity and Social Inclusion and ‘EDSD 512: Fundamentals of Sustainable Development’ have a component of Indigenous knowledge in each. Similarly, the course ‘EDSD 535: Diversity and Local Cosmology in Sustainable Development’ dominates Indigenous issues and other non-Western ideas and concepts. However, other courses have not apportioned the ideas of Indigenous knowledge.

We reviewed eight courses of the program of Master in English Language Teaching. Western ideas and concepts drive almost all courses. However, one course, ‘EDEL 507: English Poetry and Drama’, includes one particular issue, ‘Literary worlds of Nepal,’ which seems to support dealing with the local language. English as itself foreign language provides limited space for integrating Indigenous knowledge as the curriculum contents in other courses. One student (Hima) in a focus group discussion said,

The student gets exposure to foreign writers, and also our subject is the English language. Since it is a foreign language and Indigenous knowledge is under the shadow. There are no contents of Indigenous knowledge in any of the courses.

Similarly, we reviewed six courses of the program of Master in Leadership and Management. The Indigenous Knowledge is absent in almost all courses of Master in Leadership and Management. The courses offered by the program have limited spaces of Indigenous knowledge and are dominated by western theory, concepts, and reading materials. One student (Rita) in focus group discussion noted, “University's goal is to connect local to global knowledge, but the policy and activities in the classroom do not match.” The university lacks the integration of Indigenous knowledge in the course contents. Another participant (Himal) shared that the courses are more theory-loaded, and the teachers focus less on practical approaches through project-based and collaborative learning.

The following table list the courses that were reviewed for the study.

Program	Course Titles
Masters of Mathematics Education	‘EDMT 540: ICT in Mathematics Education’, ‘EDMT 517: Multivariable Calculus’, ‘EDMT 515: Discrete

	Mathematics and Problem Solving’, ‘EDMT 513: Abstract Algebra’, ‘EDMT 535: Teacher Professional Development’, ‘EDMT 550: Ethno-mathematics’, ‘EDMT 548: Recent Paradigms of Mathematics Learning’, and ‘MTED 402: Action Research in Teaching Mathematics’
Master in Sustainable Development	‘EDSD 509: Research Methodology’, ‘EDSD 547: Participatory Approach to Development’, ‘EDSD 540: Human Ecology and Sociology’, ‘EDSD 517: Gender Equity and Social Inclusion’, ‘EDSD 512: Fundamentals of Sustainable Development’, ‘EDSD 527: Project Management for Development Results’, ‘EDSD 528: Communication in Sustainable Development’, and ‘EDSD 535: Diversity and Local Cosmology in Sustainable Development’
Master in English Language Teaching	EDEL 503: Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis’, ‘EDEL 507: English Poetry and Drama’, ‘EDEL 506: English Fiction and Prose’, ‘EDEL 515: Evaluation and Testing in ELT’, ‘EDEL 509: English Linguistics’, ‘EDEL 531: Classroom Studies and Action Research’, ‘EDEL 514: Applied Linguistics’, and ‘EDEL 500: Academic Reading and Writing’
Master in Leadership and Management	EDLM 525: Program Development in School’, ‘EDLM 514: Education Policy and Planning’, ‘EDLM 544: Research Project’, ‘EDLM 532: School Governance’, ‘EDLM 527: Statistics’, and ‘EDLM 523: Program Evaluation’

It comes to know that Western ideas and concepts dominate most of the courses of the four master-level programs in Kathmandu University School of Education. However, few courses of Master in Sustainable Development and Master in Mathematics Education programs focus on the integration of Indigenous knowledge and non-Western ideas and concepts to some extent. However, in Master in English Language Teaching and Master in Leadership and Management, there are no specific courses that explicitly incorporate Indigenous knowledge and other non-Western ideas and concepts. The university teachers and students also agreed that Indigenous knowledge does not appear in most of the courses. The domination of Western knowledge is visible in the curriculums of Kathmandu University School of Education. However, integrating Indigenous knowledge as a form of resisting domination seems in a few

courses. Western knowledge in university-led us to mourn. They are mourning as a process where there is continued lamenting assault to the historically oppressed and former colonized other's identities and social realities (Chalise, 2012). Mourning should not elude us but should move us to dream as in the process of decolonization. The university teachers and students are integrating Indigenous knowledge through engagement in pedagogical practices.

Resisting Western Domination through Pedagogies

The focus group discussions with the faculty members, teachers, and students, gave insight into the individual effort to bring Indigenous, local knowledge into the classroom. Curriculum is guided by western knowledge and materials; however, the teacher made an effort to teach-learning local knowledge and practice in the classroom.

The Indigenous Knowledge as the content is not present in the curriculum, but through examples, Indigenous Knowledge linked during the teaching-learning process. In the classroom, local practices are brought in by the student and teachers. One teacher said,

The courses do not have Indigenous knowledge included explicitly. However, teachers and students share ideas and examples from local practices. Un/knowingly, the Indigenous Knowledge is blended in the process of learning. They contextualize the Western theories. The students get flexibility in assignments and research works.

Another teacher noted,

Actually, I do have fewer ideas on Indigenous Knowledge, but now (after discussion), I realized that I was unknowingly integrating it in the classroom practices bringing examples of local practices.

In this regard, one of the teachers in focus group discussion shared,

The course English itself is foreign, so it is difficult to incorporate the local contents here, but we discuss enough the local ideas, beliefs, and practices in the process of teaching-learning activities.

Another teacher said, "We facilitate the students' learning by sharing local examples and experiences." A teacher from Mathematics Education noted:

We have given more focus on Western ideas and concepts. It has become a culture. In the modern education system in which we have developed neo-liberal thoughts that have guided us. It is due to the neo-colonization of Western knowledge power. However, we have realized and are aware of our own inner worlds that we need to value. We need to question the domination of external knowledge systems. Therefore, we often engage students in self-reflective writing, story writing, and writing autobiographies.

As we question the university's practice of pedagogy, we need to acknowledge the effort put forward by the teacher's boundaries of the institution and acceptable modes of knowledge production and critique are still firmly policed by white and capitalist power structures" (Stein & Andreotti, 2016 p.3). So, the individual effort was noticed; however, it is not enough. A structural change and reformation are required. KUSOED has teacher practice in the classroom. It shows that the teacher has been practicing and making efforts to make students understand their everyday lives where Indigenous and local knowledge is embedded. Likewise, a student Shyam shared:

In the first semester, we learn about Indigenous Knowledge from teachers. When they taught, they brought the local story, idioms in the classroom, making it enjoyable. Now, Hari sir also teaches policy in Nepal [the country state like this]. He also brings idioms; interesting stories brought and shared. His research was about water from Dhulikhel and Dharan. He had taken the issues from here. Due to lack of time, he presented himself. We learn from him. Manav sir could not teach us due to lockdown. While he taught us, he gave the example of Nepal many times. However, learning definitions and notes that used to come from western because basically when we Google also came in. Our teachers have tried to include local things while teaching. As I have studied sustainable development, we can apply here when traveling in vehicles or places.

The teachers have developed that feeling rather than westernizing how local examples can be used here. Even some teachers share their family stories, connect and link. So the teachers were not hesitant about sharing their stories. That is also the openness of the teacher; their credibility is also very high. As for sharing personal things, it also taught us that we need to be open. Rather than always trying to bring stories from different places, it is good to share the personal story, which is easy and gain depth knowledge that we have learned from the teachers.

The teacher intentionally and knowingly has been sharing and teaching about Indigenous knowledge through their personal experience in the classroom. The students have developed the idea that knowledge is about what is in text or Western but in the local area and context. The teachers were able to develop some interest due to their effort. As Chilisa (2012) mentions, it is a rediscovery and recovery: The colonized other discover the significance of own history, culture, language, and identity. The teacher, through pedagogies as storytelling, writing, and reflection, has to include Indigenous knowledge. "They can also define their own rules on what can be known and what can be spoken, written about, how, when, and where," (Chilisa, 2012, p.31). As Foucault suggests, power is omnipresent and can be found in all social interactions (cited in Lynch, 2010). The educator had been using their way in decolonizing the curriculum. Nepal's diversity context, the university curriculum's decolonization process's rediscovery and recovery is a good start.

Rediscovery through Assessment and Research Practices

KUSOED has autonomy for the learner and teachers to be flexible in the curriculum. Some teachers have less idea on Indigenous knowledge; however, they have been integrating Indigenous Knowledge in the classroom without their knowledge. It might be necessary to have a teacher know what Indigenous Knowledge means so that curriculum can have Indigenous Knowledge explicitly rather than unknowingly. Despite not having Indigenous Knowledge Rita (Student) shared: “Kathmandu University has an environment of engaging students to share self-viewpoints. We have a presentation, group discussion, and group work to present our viewpoint openly.” The student echoed that their voices were heard in the classroom and engaged in university education. More decolonization requires revisiting, unlearning, and rewriting the existing dominant histories, theories, and approaches from the Indigenous perspective (Helata, 2018).

The University's goal is to connect local to international. However, students mentioned that saying and doing is very different. The policy and activities in the classroom do not match. Ram shares, "It looks like government policy. They have one policy and do work something else, which brings a fraction. In 20 subjects, we can keep one, at least in my opinion." The university lacks Indigenous Knowledge integration and Indigenous Knowledge related content. Local knowledge prioritizes based on need not only be sections of ethnomathematics. The teaching and learning activities should decontextualize.

In his opinion, one of the weaknesses of Kathmandu University is:

Kathmandu University has focused on collaborative, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and research issues but has not emphasized the Indigenous Knowledge of Nepal study. They know it needs doing and prioritized at the top level, but not found in class. Why does Kathmandu University not put a particular project? Like in the fourth semester, why not keep one subject on that topic? The research that I have done in my area is fit for my area, and another area teacher can research their areas that add to knowledge building for the teachers. It should be compulsory or kind of training- demonstration from the student—that kind of curriculum or framework I did not find. I knew I did, share with my friends. Many friends had it, but since it was not compulsory, they went to other sectors.

The students and teachers do agree that there is no Indigenous content explicitly in the curriculum. They do feel there is a gap in the Indigenous Knowledge integration in the university curriculum. One teacher admits, “No, Indigenous curriculum, we are saying yes

through practice. So, we are making no answer as ``yes''. As Hall (2017) mentioned, our universities are characterized as working with colonized knowledge which requires more work for the decolonization of the universities. The central epistemological evidence shows that other dominant knowledge requires the same engagement for transformative change as knowledge is power.

There is no presence of Indigenous Knowledge, which the university needs to accept and take as room for improvement. The Indigenous Knowledge in the classroom depends on the subject, teachers, and pedagogy used in the classroom. Nalina, one of the students, shared;

There was no assignment or activities related to Indigenous Knowledge in my course. The nearest we went to was a Nepali poem. It is because of lack of resource materials available we cannot focus on Indigenous knowledge.

University assessment and research practices are central to student evaluation and knowledge production. Kathmandu University has autonomy and flexibility where the teacher in their total capacity has used in every possible way to include Indigenous ways of knowledge production. Knowledge production plays a significant role in determining knowledge matters. In this regard, how the assessment is done and the research area to be the emphasis. As Chilisa (2012) mentions, the university can show its commitment and action. The decolonization process phase where commitment can be by defining community development research and providing scholarship for research. Likewise, an action which is for the social transformation. "The key aspect of participatory research is that the researched are actively involved in analyzing their situations, finding solutions, and taking action to address their concerns and to work for the betterment of their communities" (Chilisa, 2012, p. 32). The university has encouraged research areas that deal with Indigenous issues; however, the research in communities' social transformation should be emphasized more than ever. Through Foucault's writings, a new form of power emerged, which tracked the movement of the fluid amalgam of "power-knowledge" (Thiele, 1986, p. 247). Power is intertwined with knowledge and vice versa. Through these assessment and research practices the university can show visible commitments and actions.

Key Insights and Discussion

The key insights drawn from the study are a complete reconstruction of the university program's epistemological basis. Following the Laenui (2000) process of decolonization, the five distinct phases that illustrate purpose steps are presented as: Phase 1: Rediscovery and

Recovery, Phase 2: Mourning, Phase 3: Dreaming, Phase 4: Commitment, and, Phase 5: Action. In practice oftentimes we can see combinations of these in social changes. The decolonizing of the curriculum in Kathmandu University School of Education has also gone through these phases instead of steps in sequence. The student and teachers' voices emulate the curriculum's rediscovery and recovery of Indigenous knowledge. The understanding that one's history and culture, language and identity, and everyday practices can be part of the learning and teaching in higher education which is a fundamental of decolonization. There is mourning and dreaming among the participants as they expressed and shared how Indigenous knowledge in different ways and forms is included in the curriculum. It has led to the commitment and action in decolonizing the curriculum in the master's program at KUSOED. The commitment and acknowledgment have led to action such as integrating Indigenous knowledge in Masters curriculum; however, it requires more consensus of commitment and works on the earlier four phases so that transformational changes occur. Likewise, as Muller (2007) mentioned, the decolonization process is not simple but requires honest personal introspection and commitment to change. It indicates that effort from all areas and sectors need to be part of the process for desired change.

However, there is a domination of western ideas and concepts in the course of the study. The decolonized curriculum should place Nepal's diversity, local and Indigenous knowledge in the center of the curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and research. Incorporate the epistemic perspective, knowledge, and thinking as Foucault (1982) mentions how power exists in three distinct qualities: "its origin, its basic nature, and its manifestations" (p.785). The higher education epistemological originated from the west with domination, nature to influence every possible way in the education system from language to the course being taught and manifested as the power to control and demolish the Iks knowledge worldwide.

It is imperative to question how knowledge circulates, functions, and relates to power (Foucault, 1982), as knowledge is considered power. The university teachers have put some effort into including Iks; however, Western epistemology's influence is so powerful that their effort is a drop in the ocean of knowledge. Here, decolonizing the curriculum means having equal spaces and resources for all in the higher education space as a university and including all forms of culture and knowledge systems. McLaughlin and Whatman (2011) note that decolonizing knowledge includes a deep recognition and challenge to the hegemonic knowledge, pedagogical practices, and research methodologies. The university could address the challenges with the capacity they have. Power exercised in different forms, as Foucault

(1979) describes how modern institution does. The higher education institution has complex sets of power relations at every level of the social body. We must do what is needed. KUSOED has autonomy over curriculum, where we find that Indigenous Knowledge integrated as much as possible. However, for transformative change, what Stein and Andreotti (2016) propose could be followed.

Stein and Andreotti (2016) have proposed three sets of responses: First, emphasizing individual and institutional interventions on representation to primarily for an increased number of Indigenous, racialized, and low-income students and faculty and including curricula with non-Western perspectives. We found that KUSOED needs to diversify students and faculty from Indigenous communities during our research process. The Indigenous manual outcome of the project itself would not manifest the change that we envision. A second response would be to focus on systemic analyses of the creation of inequalities and the recognition of epistemological hegemony. We are in acceptance that Western ideologies heavily dominate our education system. However, as mentioned, we need to analyze how university education means equality creates a divide and inequality and how individuals from different ethnic communities, gender, classes, and backgrounds do not access knowledge creation, production, and dissemination.

Finally, emphasizing the university structure's ontological hegemony and orientation is not as sustainable as its approach embedded with modern existence, which depends on colonization and racialization. It is significant for the desired transformation involvement of state and government policy regarding higher education. Higher education plays a vital role in changing the community, society, and nation - it is pertinent that policy recognizes the knowledge at home at the local level. Different universities worldwide embrace and advocate for Indigenous knowledge integration, an unprecedented step to follow Nepal universities.

Conclusion

Higher education decolonizing the curricular practices should be an ongoing process. Decolonizing of the curriculum involves different phases and resisting curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, and research in the decolonization process. We elaborate on the need to embrace Indigenous knowledge in higher education for transformative change in communities. The university teachers and students are in different phases of decolonizing higher education. The decolonization process in curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and research is ongoing, and the different phases are happening in combination; however, it is not enough. Indigenous

knowledge needs to embed in Nepal's higher education in a holistic approach for a transformative change. There is a need to question educational institutions' structure and the pedagogical practices that we engage. Decolonized curriculum's 4R's as relational accountability, respectful representation, reciprocal appropriation, and rights and regulation put forward by Le Grange (2016) should take the central point in knowledge production.

Finally, as Charles (2019) mentions, we would like to conclude that it is the right time for decolonizing the curriculum and re-examining the curriculum, the voices, narratives, and different sources of knowledge. Aside from that, there is a need to address the lack of representation of staff, students, and other higher education areas.

Limitation and Need for Future Research

Our study is limited to Kathmandu University School of Education and study of four Master's programs of the university. It points to both the limits of our conclusions and the importance of working in other institutions and organizations. Higher education is highly influenced by Western knowledge and needs to decolonize the curriculum so that higher education seems relevant to the student.

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