

# Quality Education: In the Eyes of Parents

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## Abstract

*I have, in this article, made an attempt to analyze and interpret the meaning of quality education, its relevancy and practicality in day to day life of students and explored the quality enhancement process from the perception of heterogeneous group of parents. The crux of this study is mainly based on first hand data of Kabre District. I have organized this discussion in two strata with the purpose of exploring the meaning of quality education and relevancy of education. Here, my argument is that not only a single factor is associated for quality education but also the infrastructure of the school, academic part, physical facilities, knowledge, skill, attitude / behavior and the accountability of the teachers, head teachers, parents and stakeholders are responsible for the quality education. This explorative study has been incorporated purposive sampling procedure and the data were collected from six diversified field of parents by developing guideline questions.*

## Introduction

Quality education is a multi-dimensional, multi-level, and dynamic concept that relates to the contextual settings of an educational model, to the institutional mission and objectives, as well as to specific standards within a given system, institution, programme, or discipline. (UNESCO, 2007). The National Curriculum Frame work (CDC, 2007) viewed quality in life skill education; developing educational entrepreneurship skill, inclusiveness in education, equal access, equity and equality, relevancy and quality in education. Providing education to all with better quality has become the dominant agenda of all countries now. National and international agencies are working well to develop and flare the educational quality by providing different training to teachers, head teachers, educational leaders and support to extend school infrastructure, school management committee and teacher selection commission are also working in education sector. Global movement on education for all, international organizations and government have also been taking part in educational development (MOE, 2008).

## Organization of the data

Six heterogeneous professional groups of parents were selected purposively from different location of Kabhre district of Nepal. The purpose behind selecting six heterogeneous groups was to capture more varied pictures of parents' perception about quality education and its relevancy in their daily life. Multiple understanding was captured from those groups of parents. Parents were categorized in to three strata according to their income ratio and social status. The data were captured within three month of 2012.

## The quality education (In the parents' eyes)

Some parents see educational quality is related to the teachers' factor. The attitude or behavior of the teacher, skill of using teaching method and knowledge of subject matter as well as outdoor activities are the crucial factors for the quality education. Those factors enforce student to obtain high marks in exam. A parent from farming profession reveals that:

“If teacher teaches appropriately to his/her students, learns appropriately, treats equally to all, if there is no discriminatory environment in school, is called quality education. In the classroom, teacher should use new learning method; and focus on poor students and also focus on different types of indoor and outdoor games, providing new knowledge should support for their high achievement in the exam and for further reading and for future career”.

The above phrase shows that parents focus more on the accountability of the teachers. There is highly correlation between the high achievement of students and inside school activities specially teachers’ accountability. They believe more on outcome or achievement in final exam because of getting enrolment chance in big universities. Big universities have become the parents’ attraction these days. They provide different choices to the learner as their interest and fulfill the demand of world market. Parents from primary school teacher said; “We see marks of the children to enroll in big Universities and colleges. There is wide-range of subjects in the big university and college as their interested areas. For example, a better mark is needed to enroll in KU, and White House. If there is good marks/distinction marks in exam they easily get entrance to enroll and study within the choice area. There is maximum chance to get better job after the study with high income, such type of education seems to have quality.”

Quality can be seen from three aspects of education as remarked by a group of parents from college professor. First is quality in achievement, second is quality in skill and third one is the competitive capacity in the world market. They believe on three types of quality on education.

An attractive and high infrastructure of the school has become the choice of some parents for the quality education of their children. Practically, those types of schools can maintain the internal quality of education can have full physical feature in total.

A good behavior of teachers and administrators is vastly related to modify the behavior of the student. Good manner, polite and mutual behavior of teachers has become the attraction of the parents for educational quality. They can easily treat their learners to inculcate their own habit. An affluent family’s teachers and children have already possessed good behavior and they are enriched with the good etiquette.

Investing more in education is not only determining quality, but also needs more things to maintain quality in education. A middle class social group of parents could not entirely believe in the cost. They revealed that the cost is not only the determining factor of quality education. Internal classroom environments, disciplinary practices from school are also the supporting factors of quality education. Providing equal learning opportunity to all, focusing on poor student, using new learning method and technique in the class, focusing on all activities (indoor and outdoor) in school and outside school as well performing well with high achievement in the exam are the indicators of quality education.

Lower social group of parents believe more on investment in education that determines quality education. They reveal that “if we pay more in education our children will get quality education. If we pay more to the school, they teach our children to inculcate disciplinary practice at school and at home, that will support to get high marks in the exam and high quality job in future”. Good attitude, high achievement and quality job can be acquired from high investment has-been remarked from those parents who were from street vendor and driving profession.

### Improving quality in education

A group of parents from teaching profession revealed and compared the education system with our entire body system. “A small pinch in any part hurt the whole body. Like as any mistake from whole educational process will lose the balance or appropriate quality in education”. Similar to our body system all components of education should be in balance and operated in the same way from each level. A middle class group of parents especially from teaching profession focused more on improving the curriculum about its loads, utilization and productiveness. They noted this way:

“the entire school education system depends upon “Jack of all, master of none”, that means student becomes all-rounder but not specific in a single area. That’s way, the curriculum should design in each specific professional field to develop certain skill on them. Entire evaluation system should be improved to measure all-round development of the student. Determining the indicators of education, making educational policy from local level and develop transparency in education and management will ensure the quality of education. As a whole there should be triangular relationship between teachers, students, parents and curriculum to extend the quality in education and also should relate the school knowledge to the house hold chores”.

The study find that parents’ satisfaction is associated with the progress report of their children, good behavior of teachers and head teachers towards the students, good and mutual relationship among different level of staffs and motivational environment plays vital roles to enrich the quality in education.

“It is the time of need based education. The education should provide attitude, skill and knowledge (ASK) according to the need of the learner, parents and society that may varied in different social, economical, cultural, and geographical context. Parents from high social class share those ideas and experiences as they experienced in terms of their profession. “If we collect and sold things without identifying the need of the consumers, we will be lose our business. In this way the education should provide skill according to the need of the learners” a businessman said in terms of in-depth interview during this study.

### Suggestions

There was collective voice between local and global values and beliefs about quality education. Multiple factors plays crucial role for quality education. like as teachers related factors, their accountability, attitude, skill and knowledge, school related factors, the infrastructure of the school, accountability of the school, norms and value system of the school, curriculum related factors, relevancy of the textbook, relevancy of content and context, methods and evaluation system, relevancy from local to global job market, and cost of education. If the policy maker, curriculum designer, textbook writer, school administrator, teachers, parents and student are aware and become responsible from their respective stand the quality will be ensure as the parents aspiration for better future of their children.

### Summing up

In the heterogeneous group of parents, the quality is perceived in the result or achievement of the students, likewise they perceive on competency based education, life skill base education, accountability in education, cost of education and in long term change the behavior of learner that all enforces learner towards white collar job in the market for

the better future. Therefore, a single effort, a single part, a single person; single place and single agency is not responsible to determine the quality of education. Varieties or multiple factors are associated or responsible for quality education.

Quality education however is also linked with daily life practice of the learner. Parents see relevancy of education linking knowledge and skill to the job market. Unemployment problem of the youth, no practical knowledge in education, negligence of traditional occupation, not following the social norms and culture for good etiquette, were captured in terms of relevancy of education. They see education is the gateway to the future career development but long year of investment in school education seems unproductive. The new technology substituted those all factors towards urbanization and globalization.

The quality of school education is highly associated with different factors. Teachers related factors, their accountability, attitude, skill and knowledge, school related factors, the infrastructure of the school, accountability of the school, norms and value system of the school, curriculum related factors, relevancy of the textbook, relevancy of content and context, methods and evaluation system, relevancy from local to global job market, and cost of education.

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