DROPOUT OF TECHNICAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE/PRE-DIPLOMA STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

Deepak Khanal

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This dissertation entitled *Dropout of Technical School Leaving Certificate/Pre-diploma Students: A Case Study* presented by Deepak Khanal on July 20, 2022, and approved by

………………………   July 20, 2022

Prakash Kumar Paudel

Dissertation Supervisor

…………………………   July 20, 2022

Amrita Sharma

External Examiner

…………………………   July 20, 2022

Asst. Prof. Suresh Gautam, PhD

Head of the Department

……………………………   July 20, 2022

Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD

Dean/Chair of Research Committee

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of the library of Kathmandu University. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

………………………..   July 20, 2022

Degree Candidate

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree.

…………………..   July20, 2022

Deepak Khanal

Degree Candidate

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late father Ganesh Chandra Khanal who always showed me the path of morality and honesty and my family members. Similarly, it is to my beloved late mother, Damyanti Devi Khanal, who is a perennial source of love and an unconditional guardian in my entire life. And, of course, to my life partner Hima Mishra and my son Anmol Khanal who sacrificed the time they deserved from me during the study.

AN ABSTRACT

Of the dissertation of *Deepak Khanal* for the degree of Master in Technical Education and Vocational Training presented on September 20, 2020

Title: *Dropout of Technical School Leaving Certificate/Pre-diploma Student: A Case Study*

Abstract Approved

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Prakash Kumar Paudel

Dissertation Supervisor

In the history of Nepal, large numbers of students dropped out of school before graduation. This study focuses on the root causes for dropping out of the pre-diploma and then suggests to school administration, students and their parents, stakeholders, and further research for the action that they need to apply to minimize student drop out from pre-diploma level education. In doing so, I researched as a part of my master's degree course. In this research, I applied in-depth interviews to explore their perception regarding the reason for school dropout. Technical education has been an essential part of national development. In the context of Nepal, technical education at all levels has been an essential part of productivity and skilful human resources. I was always thinking about why students drop out without completing such a good course. This thesis has focused on the determinants of technical school dropout at pre diploma level. The leading focus of this study is to find out the reason students dropping out Technical School Leaving Certificates. In my research, I took an in-depth study with five students who dropped out without a complete course. According to the findings

of this study, the main reason for dropout and found different root factors of dropout students such as - attitude problems, mismatch of curriculum and learning objectives, high expectations, physically disable, weakness of school administration respect and recognition, laziness, and lack of motivation. Similarly, a secondary factor that I found in research is the hope of getting a low level of job, no guarantee of a good job and lack of value of education among students and parents.

 The most significant point is the weakness of the school administration which did not allow the student to rejoin the course after his recovery from sickness. This story has provided a lesson that the technical subject is not suitable for those students who do not want to do hard work and want a comfortable life. The primary areas that directly affect students, such as staff behavior, working environment, working mode, and curriculum design need to be improved by the school administration and industry to lower the dropout rate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

BSET	Balaju School of Engineering and Technology
BTS	Bheri Technical School
CERID	Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
KNPI	Korea Nepal Polytechnic Institute
KUSOED	Kathmandu University School of Education
MC	Management Committee
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MTVET	Masters in Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TEVT	Technical Education and Vocational Training
SM	School Management
SMC	School Management Committee
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) is one of the most important elements of education for the quality of life of human beings. It helps to measure the overall development of a nation. Of all the prerequisites of development, the technical workforce is the most important one. It can be prepared through technical education and vocational training. TEVT focuses on the acquisition of skills with knowledge and attitude. TEVT is solely responsible for producing the basic and mid-level workforce and the development of the nation is directly related to the technically quantitative and qualitative workforce. Quantitative refers to the volume of the workforce according to the demand of the market industry whereas qualitative refers to the quality of work performed by them. The quantity of the technical workforce depends on how many people enrolled in TEVT, how many of them were involved in the processing and how many of them completed the course.

School dropout is a problem in the general educational system and TEVT is not exceptional either in Nepal. The dropout percentage in the general education of grades 9 and 10 boys and girls was 3.6% and 3.7% respectively. (MoE, 2015). Similarly in 2017, 30 per cent dropped out from the Technical School Leaving Certificate in mechanical engineering (Balaju School of Engineering and Technology-BSET, 2017). Thus, dropout is exhibited as a problem in the Nepali context. The scholar Chugh (2011) states that dropouts from school are characterized as small kids, who sign up for school and certain justifications excluding death leave school before finishing the grade without moving to another school. This assertion demonstrates that there are different explanations for youngsters' dropout. Students continue to drop out

of school without sufficient education or skills for job entry. Dropping out of school is not new, but it is only in recent years that it has become a serious problem.

Statement of the Problem

The existing schooling system implies a serious problem in the school education system. Rapid improvement in the enrollment in primary grades, in other ways a considerable number of children leave school at higher grades. It is much more similar in Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT). The number of the technical workforce depends on the number of people enrolled in TEVT and their involvement in the processing and completion of the course.

When a person leaves school before completing his/her graduation, it directly influences the volume of output, waste of resources, government facilities and the individual himself. A technical school certificate is regarded as the minimum certificate of employability along with a knowledge of necessary skills for job entry. This course is now known as a pre-diploma which aims at producing skill-oriented technical and vocational human resources required in various fields. This may help in reducing the higher percentage of unemployability in the country. Despite the government's focus on technical education and high chances of employment, why do a considerable amount of TEVT students leave technical school without completing their courses? Different studies conducted in the past show that there are various phenomena like family background, socio-economic status, geographical barriers, school, community, and teaching-learning procedure are different factors generally involved behind dropouts (Acharya, 2017; Devkota & Bagale, 2015). However, in the context of TEVT, there is minimal information on why they drop. Without any study, it is difficult to identify the reasons for leaving school and understanding why students leave school without achieving educational competencies. High rates of

dropouts and non-completion of pre-diploma (mechanical) are gradually increasing day by day. Therefore, this study focused on who the droppers are and explore why they drop in the context of Nepal.

Research Purpose

This study explored the perceived reasons for dropout by dropout students from a technical school.

Research Question

The study has addressed the following research question.

a. Why do students drop out of technical school?

Significance of Research

Competent technical graduates play vital roles in the country. National policies focused on the development of technical human resources and the government should prioritize maximizing the output of technical graduates to meet the national requirement. Dropout is one of the most essential factors which impact the planners to meet the estimated graduates as per planning. Regarding the reasons for dropouts from the schools and campus, the report revealed that the population left the schools because of poor academic progress (24.6%), help needed at home (22%), because of marriage (17 percent), the parents did not want (7 percent), too expensive education (7 percent), etc. (Flash I Report, 2076). Despite this fact, the TEVT sector of Nepal has not given much attention to this yet.

This has created a heavy burden on the thinkers of the TEVT sector. Technical schools play a vital role in the human resource development of the country, but at the same time, a high dropout rate creates a big question mark on their performance, which makes this institution poorer performance in producing graduates. This study explored the various reasons perceived by the students for their dropout. In this sense,

the findings of this study contribute important knowledge in the TEVT sector. Similarly, the finding would be a knowledge asset for the relevant stakeholders of TEVT planning further.

Delimitation

This study only focused on the reasons directly related to the students' drop out from TSLC/pre-diploma level. This study is delimited to only pre-diploma (Mechanical Engineering) dropout students at technical schools. Coverage of the study is only concerned with dropout students who leave the school before completion of the course.

Organization of the Study

In Chapter I, I introduced my research topic and problematize my research topic showing the need for carrying out this study. In the research purpose section, I presented why this issue is researchable which helped me frame the research question. Following this, I presented the significance of the study which justifies why this research is significant.

Chapter II describes a literature review. This chapter contains a review of relevant literature. In the chapter, I reviewed drop out cases in Nepal and abroad. Moreover, I reviewed Bourdieu's theory of practice as a theoretical lens for this study. I reviewed the policy to see the policy and practices related to drop out in the context of Nepal. I found a research gap by reviewing some previous studies and presented a conceptual framework to show the overall concept and guidelines to carry out this study.

In Chapter III, I discussed the research methodology. The philosophical considerations guide me to see the narratives of the participants from different philosophical stances. Interpretive research paradigm and case study as a method

helped me choose a research site, participants, information collection, and analysis way-out which I presented in detail in this chapter. Lastly, I presented quality standards and ethical considerations that shaped my study to have a sound research study carried out under the qualitative research method.

In Chapter IV, I presented cases collected from the experiences of drop out graduates. I presented the cases of the participants. I kept their sharing and experience in their statements which I found relevant to draw the real taste of the narratives.

In Chapter V, I generated themes and analyzed and interpreted them with the support of literature. The chapter contains themes related to cases and the process of drop out.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with the review of different types of literature related to this study to become familiar with previous research concepts, interests, theories, research problems, interpretations, and findings. This study concentrates on the issues related to dropouts and their pattern in technical schools. So, I review the literature from two perspectives: theoretical and empirical. The theoretical review consists of a review of different types of theories relevant to my study. The theories guided me to search for theories related to dropouts and their practices. The reviews of empirical studies relate me to the reasons and existing issues of dropout in Technical education. This review enabled me to establish the focus of the research.

Dropout Case in Nepal

The history of education shows that a large number of students drop out of school education before graduation. In Nepal, the results of various efforts of public, private, and government have had some progressive results in education. Regardless of the types of schools, there are nearly about 40000 schools in the country. In general education, the net enrollment rate at the primary level has been raised to 96.9 percent in 2016. The rate at lower secondary (6-8), secondary (9-10), and higher secondary levels (11-12) gradually declined to 80.9, 59.8, and 18.2 percent respectively (MoE, 2016b). Out of 100 children enrolled in grade one, only 86.8 reach grade 5, and 74.6 survive to grade 8 (MoE, 2016). This indicates that a significant number of children gradually leave school when they are upgraded to higher classes. High dropout from school/college/ Technical schools has continuously been one of the major impediments to attaining the national educational goal of Nepal.

In Nepal, school and college dropout is one of the vital issues which reflect the promotion of grades and decreasing number of students The net enlistment proportions of primary level (grade 1-5) was 97.4 percent, basic level (1- 8 grade) was 94.7 percent and the secondary level (grade 9-12) was 51.2 percent in school term 2020 (Economic Survey, 2020-2021). The survey also shows that the retention rate up to grade 8 are 82.2 percent, up to grade 10, 64.6 percent, and up to grade 12, 29.2 percent whereas the net registration of grade 1 (admission age 5 years completed) was 96.9 percent in the school year 2019. The maintenance rate equal to grade 10 was 60.3 percent and up to grade 12 was 24.0 percent.

The ration of dropouts in technical education in Nepal is shown by one record in Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) in 2015 the dropout rate was 20%, in 2016, 30%, and in 2017 28% (BSET, 2016, 2017, 2018). Similarly, the rate of dropout of diploma in Civil engineering programs in 2016 is 18 percent (BSET, 2016, 2017, 2018). It is generally believed that student dropout is impacted by various factors such as the state, the community, the home, the school, and the student. We can have a better insight into this problem through a close look at how these five areas affect dropout. Thus, it is a complex problem to be addressed as soon as possible.

In a study on the dropout case of Nepal Acharya (2021) portrayed the major issues or reasons. A mismatch between the content and practical use of education is one of the major distractors. Likewise, job after study is very uncertain, so many youths intend to go abroad for income at an early age. Another reason behind dropout is economic conditions, low and middle-class families struggle to get quality education but due to high cost, they are compelled to drop out in Nepal. Though the study was conducted in the general education of Nepal, the reasons behind the dropout of high school students will be good resources for my study. The main reason

behind dropping out of technical education is likely to be a mismatch between content with practical skills and reality in the labor market, high investment, and physical work. Thus, this literature has been reviewed for my reference.

In conclusion, the net enrollment rate at the primary level has been raised, but the rate gradually decreases in the upper grades. This is because a significant number of children gradually leave school. Similarly, the rate of dropout in technical education in Nepal is very high due to mismatch, socio-economic problems, and differences in expectations of the students and reality in the labor market. These are the major issues related to students' dropout in TVET education in Nepal.

Dropout and Pre-diploma Student

Education plays a dynamic role in the improvement of a nation as well as it is considered both a method and conclusion of development. Education enhances the economic growth of the country and individual productivity (Haq & Haq, 1998). Thus, a person who leaves school before achieving a certain educational degree is considered to raise serious concerns for the whole world. The rationale behind this concern is that incomplete education to a certain level would bring costs both to individuals and society (Dale, 2010). The general context of dropouts in Nepal is those students who fail or incomplete school or college courses. The dropout student denotes the children who leave the educational system before the completion of their studies. Here, drop out implies the exit from the primary level i.e., grades 1-5. MoEST (2003) mentions that students, who leave the school system without finishing a grade or level, are called dropouts. Asharaf (1999) expresses that a child who leaves a course of study he or she started before its completion is called a dropout. Thus, dropout alludes to those children who are registered in school but who fall short to complete the relevant level of educational progression.

Review of Empirical Study

When I tried to find studies on dropouts, I found different works carried out by different researchers. I have reviewed some of the studies here.

Lamichhane (2016) has carried out a study on "Dropout students in Makwanpur district". He used interviews and documents as his data collection techniques. The researcher came with a finding that the roots of student dropout lacking strong educational policy and a concrete plan to support dropout students and not explaining in policy the importance of education, quality of education, vocational and technical education, and school environment with lacking learner-centered approach in teaching-learning and extra activities, student to student respect poor economic condition compelled to drop the study. He also mentioned that, after 12 children start to go to work to support his/her family, culture and tradition discrimination between son and daughter, punishment in school create an afraid environment in school and student do not like to go to schools, ill-treatment in the school create humiliation and discouragement, ignorance of the education, fail in the exam, household work, babies care, responsibilities of brothers and sisters, ignorance and lacking understanding the importance of education, it is for only rich people, the level of civil society, the trend our thoughts, child labor, the distance between the home and school, discouragement from guardians are the source of negative attitude and children are compelled to leave their schools. He also wrote that teachers are also responsible. The programs of free ships, Dalit and Janajati facilities, free textbooks, dress, stationery, and other programs which can support the poor students are not effective. Teachers' role as a guardian helps to control the dropout situation.

Another researcher, Acharya (2018) has researched "Out of School Children in Nepal: Who, Why and How". He has used questionnaires and interviews for data

collection. He concluded that household, socio-culture norms and school, parents, and children's characters are responsible for dropout. Double duty of household work and school life had made schooling painful. The financial burden and less relevant return on investment help people to develop their mindset for school dropout. The lack of successful educated role models in the community and experiencing the outcome of education are not much helpful to meet their expectations. They would find further education simply a waste of time, money, and effort. People's value more influences the dropout of education, the relevancy of education to their life, and the meaning of education constructed by people based on their beliefs, perception, and observation about school education.

Yi et al. (2015) researched "Exploring the dropout rates and causes of dropout in upper-secondary technical and vocational education and training (TVET) schools in China". Researchers found that the dropout rate of TVET students in two provinces of China is 10.7% and as high as 22% in poorer inland areas. They discovered that standard academic accomplishment and maternal schooling and migration status are solid correspondents for student dropout. The research found that there are two compelling determining factors of student dropout in TEVT. First, students with low achievement and, second, students whose mothers lack a junior high degree or migrate are more likely to drop out. Mostly, students with near to the ground achievement and those deprived of maternal care are most predisposed to drop out. The third one is that students with low accomplishment in technical abilities are likely to drop out. One of the most probable explanations behind their decision is that they do not feel confident to rely on their preparedness.

Korumaz & Eksuiglu (2022) researched "Why do students in vocational and technical education drop out? A qualitative case study." In the qualitative case study

with 23 students using the criterion sampling method, the authors portrayed different reasons behind dropout in technical and vocational education. They are the students' high dreams but less academic excellence, lack of interest in subjects, a mismatch between the content and real workplace scenario, social and economic reasons, and uncertainty of jobs in the future. Technical and vocational education in mechanical engineering is comparatively more expensive than general education and directly related to hard skills and physical employability. A harmonious relationship among employers, vocational schools, CTEVT, and students are expected. The authors also provided a way out against the dropout problem. Vocational habitus was mentioned as the right person in the right place. When there is good coordination among the stakeholders, students are likely to get ample orientation that leads them to choose the right course. The system can prevail vocational habitus that lessens dropout problems regarding content and market mismatch, the difference in expectation and reality, and the students' further endeavour.

TEVT proposes specific strategy headings. Governments ought to begin focusing on the students prone to dropping out: those deprived of maternal care and those with subpar success in technical skills. TEVT schools might consider programs zeroing in on students' sentimental or social requirements, for example, counseling sessions empowering them to continue in school or assisting them with recognizing their future objectives. Counteractive coaching may be presented for students who are not keeping up in class. Focus on individual factors to predict dropout rather than a school fixed-effects model. In substandard schools, students learn below the expectations of themselves and their guardians so maintaining the quality of an educational system is defined by; how much a student advances and how much the framework adds to expand their future profit. The dropout problem is based on the

socio-economic structure of our society. A concrete plan, program, and policies with effective education strategy seemed to be in place for the retention of dropout students. The TEVT school system well-matched with the industry/ market and community's context and needs of people and industry will be helpful in this regard

Dropout and Bourdieu's theory of Practice (Habitus)

Generally, social theory emphasizes the discussion of human patterns of values, beliefs, behaviour, and actions. Similarly, some social theories focus on agency structure and objectivity-subjectivity duality regarding human action. Avoiding the concept of agency or structure. I argue that dropout is neither the result of structure nor an independent decision of an individual. It is the interaction between agency and the structure of society. It is the product of a dialectical relationship between a situation and an individual's habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu's view on people's actions (in this research dropout) is guided by their habitus– a set of disposition of beliefs, preconceptions, and observations (Swartz, 2002) of school education with some generated meaning for them. This habitus-led perception and practice in any issue guide them to act. This happens accordingly in school dropout decisions. People perceive that school education after certain grades is less possible and not much relevant to their life as their experience concerning their background and context.

Dropout action, activity, and impact are similar in general and technical education. Technical school dropout students are imperfect in their skills and knowledge. A student who leaves vocational-technical school before making sufficient progress in a curriculum to enable him to get a job in his trade or field of study.

Linked with this, Bourdieu's concept of practice was more relevant to understanding the continuation of school dropouts in the community. Dropout is in the dialectical relationship between a situation and a dropout person. Dropout children's action is guided by their habitus – a set of disposition of beliefs, values, preconception, and observations

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is the foundation upon which our research is based and gives direction to the research. Based on the review of previous research studies, I developed a conceptual framework of research as follows. Following is the conceptual framework of my study. It gives brief information about my study. Here, I mention mainly methodology, theory, and the phenomena responsible for dropout.

Institutional Factors	Student Dropout in TSLC	Socio Econiomic Factors
Curriculum Employment Behavior School Environment Nature of Education Academic Performance Punishment in School Achievement in Technical skills		Environment Earning Marriage Value of Society Family Peer Group Career Child Labor Parents' Education Maternal Care
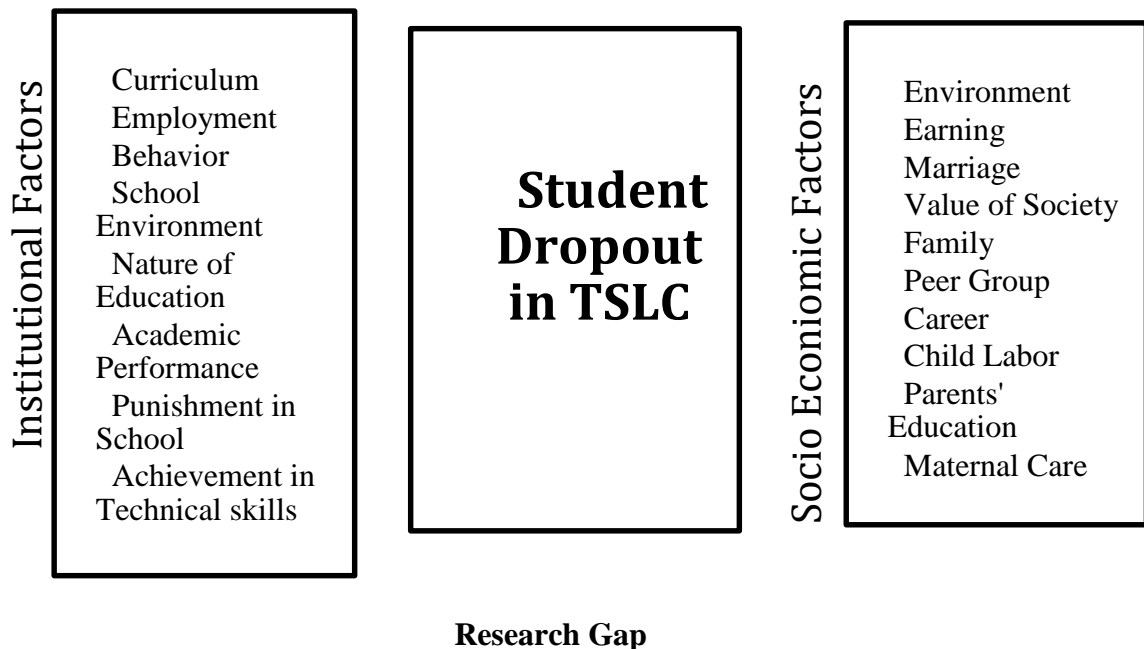
Research Gap

The review of previous literature and studies made me feel that reviewing literature gives a clear picture of the causes, factors, and characteristics of student dropout. To improve the condition of drop-out patterns many researchers have carried out different perspectives of dropout. When I reviewed all the above studies, I found

that those were carried out to explore dropouts in general education. Especially in Nepal, all the research focuses on primary and secondary general school education. Internationally some research performed on drop out from TEVT institutions. But in the Nepali TEVT context, only some descriptive articles are available. There is no in-depth study regarding the dropout from TEVT institutions. Therefore, my study is to fill this gap . I carried out this study to explore why and who dropped out from the TEVT institution under the qualitative inquiry applying the humanistic research paradigm.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the literature related to technical education and dropout. While reviewing the literature, I looked analytically and tried to search for causes of dropout. At first, I studied the dropout cases in Nepal and the dropout situation at Pre-Diploma level. I also reviewed the previous research studies, and came up with a research gap finally, the last section presented the conceptual framework which shows the overall picture of my study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I explain my research method in detail. The purpose of the study was to explore the characteristics and contributing factors of students' dropout. This chapter deals with the procedure of study and the philosophical position and qualitative inquiry of the researcher. I selected five dropout students and carried out research using the qualitative case study. I chose this methodology assuming that this study allows me to find the personal and social factors that each student bears behind his/her dropout.

Dropout is a human and societal phenomenon, in my understanding qualitative approach is the best to study dropouts. It can be assumed that dropout is a context where human behavior is guided by personal and social settings. I have tried to contextualize and interpret meaning from people's beliefs and perceptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), on community involvement in school management.

As I chose a qualitative case study method for my study, there was a need to decide the participants' selection, data collection, data analysis, and the related other approaches in research. Therefore, this chapter presents my methodological research outline and design including the philosophical foundation and credibility of this study. The objective of this study was to figure out the explanations behind dropping out of Technical schools. To meet that objective, a case study as one of the qualitative analysis methods was used in this study. It is a descriptive type of research based on the investigation with adequate interpretation in the context of social research.

Interpretive Research Paradigm

A paradigm or worldview is an essential set of convictions that guide an act (Guba, 1990, as cited in Creswell, 2007). So, I agree with the view that a paradigm is an expansive principle structure that shows the path to move ahead with the research and work accordingly in a field. The researcher needs to have a certain paradigm to view the research area (Willis, 2007); therefore, I decided to position myself personally to the interpretive research paradigm. The paradigm of interpretivism facilitates me to understand the multiple subjective views of my research participants concerning dropout. I believe that they have constructed the meaning of their participation in their socio-cultural context. In this regard, the interpretative paradigm allows the use of multiple methodologies and data collection from the natural setting of social phenomenon (Willis, 2007). I believe that each participant associated with dropout has different feelings, and experiences in the practices of dropout. They have their way of perceiving things.

Having experience with dropout characteristics, I have some ideas about the perception and practices of dropouts and used that knowledge in my data interpretation and analysis. During data collection, I noticed and observed different gestures, and symbols expressed by research participants, the interpretivism helped to understand, and meaning-making such symbolic interactions. In my understanding, these symbols are valuable to make the research more worthy.

Conducting this research, I have tried to understand and interpret the participant's behaviour through interpretivism which helped me generate different ideas from participants. In addition, as Miles and Huberman (1994) stated, I had my understanding and conceptual point of reference with desire and I took myself as one of the members of a particular culture where I was studying.

Philosophical Consideration

Philosophical considerations support research design as a plan to search the information that helps in the decision from broad assumptions for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2011). Thus, this study collected information, facts, characteristics, and causes of dropout of students. Ontology is known as the nature of reality (Edirisingha, 2012). In my research, the multiple realities of dropout are presented according to the perspective of participants. Multiple realities of dropout are included in this study and tried to find out the reality of who and why students dropout.

Somekh and Lewin (2005) explain that epistemology refers to philosophical questioning relating to the nature of knowledge of the truth. In my research, I attempted to get as familiar as possible with the participants during the study and tried to know what they know. I spent a prolonged time in the field and tried to understand the participants. The epistemology of this research is to interpret information or knowledge shared by the participants.

Axiology is accepted as a theory of value or value judgment. Keeping this in consideration, I gave importance to the participant's values, thoughts, and understanding. Similarly, I also believed that there are some reasons why people drop out of school.

Case Study as My Research Approach

Gerring (2004) defines the case study as a thorough study of a sole unit for identifying a grander class of comparable units. He further claims that case studies tackle those subject matters about which the researcher has some or little knowledge previously known or is fundamentally flawed. Creswell's (2007) case study is a qualitative tactic in which the investigator investigates a bounded system (a case), or

multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through comprehensive, in-depth data collection concerning multiple sources of information (observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports) and reports of a case description and case-based topics. In this regard, I had chosen an issue in our technical educational context and captured the dropout situation inpre-diploma as my case. It helped me to engage in the field of my research by observing how the dropout student react and understanding

Yin (2009) has presented that the effective case study design consists of five components namely research questions, the purpose of the study, unit analysis, a logic that links data to propositions, and the criteria for interpreting findings. Basically, "who" and "why" forms of questions are applicable to case study research. As the first component, my research questions are based on what the characteristics of the dropout students are and why they drop out. I specifically asked about their perception and the practice of dropout. The second component of the case study research design is related to the purpose of the study. Hence, my purpose for this particular research was to explore the characteristics and contributing factors of students who are dropouts.

The third component of the case study research design is the unit of analysis, and Yin (2009) described it as the area of the center that a case study analyses. In this study, the issues of five dropout students were the units of analysis of this study. Similarly, the fourth component is to connect data to propositions of case study research design. When themes emerge after the data collection period, this component to connect to plans is prepared. After the data were analyzed, I tried to match them to the theoretical plans of the case study. The themes that emerged after the transcription of data addressed my research questions 1 and 2. The fifth and final

component of the case study according to Yin is to design the criteria for construing findings. In this stage, I took out the meaning from the findings and connected it with other previous research work, theory, and my experience. This further helped me to draw my conclusion and recommendations.

As a qualitative researcher, I have collected my field data through in-depth interviews and observation over a continuous period which is required in a case study. Further, I reviewed some related documents available in school. Having interviews and discussions, I noted down and also recorded them and after that, I transcribed them into word documents. Thereafter, I coded the theme into different explanations and grouped them as emergent themes.

Study Area

I selected two institutes because they taught the same mechanical pre-diploma course. One is Bheri Technical School (BTS) from Nepalgunj, Banke district where I selected 3 students for this study and the other one is Korea Nepal Polytechnic Institute (KNPI), Butwal, Rupandehi district where I selected 2 students for this study, both institutes are located in Lumbini province. As a study area, I selected the technical school of CTEVT. My long experience, familiarity, and association with the TEVT sector helped me to reach and access the relevant document.

Selection of Site and Participants

In a qualitative research method, the researcher has the freedom to select the site as per their needs and purpose. In this regard, Stake (2005) has suggested choosing an inaccessible site where the researcher would have the opportunity to spend more time investigating and feel more comfortable about the case. The suggestion of Stake allows the researcher to select appropriate cases as per the requirement of the research issue and problem. Yin (2014) advocated that the case

must be selected carefully to expect similar results, which is considered as literal

replication or contrasting results.

Considering the above saying, I used purposive sampling to select participants

as per the requirement of the research issue and problem. My research participants

had similar characteristics of dropout. I selected participants who had similar traits to

contribute to my study. I selected certain sites and all male participants because pre-

diploma in mechanical engineering almost 95 to 100% are male students (BSET,

2018, 2019). In homogenous sampling, the researcher resolutely samples parties or

sites based on a similar group that defines similar character (Cresswell, 2012). I

adopted purposive sampling as my participants are from different places considering

the same grade level in dropout. Sindhu (1984) points out, "In purposive sampling,

the purpose of the study can be fulfilled even with a small sample which is picked up

purposely and carefully from the universe. In the context of the purpose of the study,

a small purposive sample can be a very good representative" (p.226). So, I carried out

the study with the help of five samples that are purposeful and contribute to my study.

The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate

choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses (Bernard,2002).

In qualitative research, we collect detailed information from a small number of

people. I selected five participants, who have left Technical schools without a

certificate.

Information Collection Technique

Strauss and Corbin (1998) have viewed the process of data collection is a feat

accomplished by an educational researcher that offers a greater understanding and

assessment of live experiences and facts from respondents. I agree with their views,

so I used in-depth interviews with my research participants, observed the school

environment, and reviewed the relevant documents of research schools for my research. I prepared guidelines for an in-depth interview where I also used my personal experience and reflection as the form of data. While preparing themes, I took the help of different literature along with my experience with it. But, when I was there in the field, I was aware that I would not be bound by those themes. I took those themes as the guidelines to generate information for this study.

Yin (2014) stated that a thoroughly led case study profits from including numerous sources of testimonies. He presented six different types of methods of collecting case study evidence: i) documents, ii) interviews, iii) archival records, iv) open observation, v) participant observation, and vi) physical items. In my study, I followed the documentation, interviews, and direct observation. I had in-depth interviews with five key informants and observed them when I was interviewing as well as during my visit to that site. I used multiple methods of data collection going beyond what Marriam (2002) believed. She maintains interviews alone will result in thick portrayals of the subject being studied that allow perusers to decide about the adaptability of study results.

Interview

An interview works with the analyst to obtain data through the respondent's coincidental remarks, facial and substantial articulations, manner of speaking, motions, responses, sentiments, mentalities, hesitance, and non-participation and that is unattainable by any other means (Sindhu, 1984). An interview is a tool for researchers to investigate the information through the conversation between interviewer and interviewee which is executed with the explicit aim of collecting precise information. An interview is an opportunity for the researcher to get information on people's beliefs, perspectives, and views (Boudhah, 2011). An

interview is one of the widely used methods for collecting information in qualitative research. In qualitative research, interviewers ask general and open-ended questions and record the audio, (Cresswell, 2012). Through the interview, researchers generate the inner thoughts of participants. Thus, I used the interview as my information collection technique that supported participants to express their responses in a detailed manner. I thought that interviews are an effective technique for collecting qualitative messages. It also helps to understand and gather information so closely and in a friendly way through open-ended questions.

For this research I used the interview technique to collect information, opinion, and feelings of the participants through the interview, researchers investigate the information gradually talking to the participants. I interviewed the participants several times talking to them physically and on a mobile phone. I talked to participants informally to collect the data that I was looking for. I talked to them until I felt the information, they provided was authentic and repeated. Then, I consulted with my research guide and my tutors to prepare an information collection plan.

Observation

Based on personal experience and understanding, I also used observation tools along with interviews to collect data and information, and this tool used to be important as it provides additional information about the research topic (Yin, 2014). My study was grounded on the interpretive research paradigm, and the interpretive paradigm is strengthened via observation and interpretation, to collect information about events, and interpret them to make meaning (Aikenhead, 1997). My observation was flexible and tried to observe dropout participants in their natural environment and setting. In the interview, I focused on the participant's behavior, values, feelings, expression, gesture-posture, and how they responded to the question of the interview.

Observation along with the interview was an opportunity for me to understand and generate meaning about respondent behaviour, feeling, thought and expression on dropout-related issues.

Analysis and Interpretation

Richards (2003, p. 268) emphasizes, "Analysis is neither a distinct stage nor a discrete process; it is something that is happening, in one form to another, though the whole research process". Collected information plays a vital role in research and it is evidence of research. It helps us to find the truth and reality of study. Information is interpreted according to the research purpose and research questions, and if possible, try to link it with the theories and literature. Interpretation includes explaining the findings, giving answers to why questions, connecting implications to specific outcomes, and putting outlines into an analytic scaffold (Best & Kahn, 2006). It's a process of identifying significant information from the information, and a method of building support for interpreting and analyzing the essence according to information. Analysis and interpretation is a procedure of making sense, interpreting and generating the themes, and justifying them by the literature based on the collected information. Outcomes were reinforced by direct quotes from answers provided by the participants.

I chiefly concentrated on the interpretive inquiry framework to interpret the experiences gathered and assembled through interviews and observation. Interpretation is quite a significant work to be done for the result of the study. So, first I assembled the data merging my own professional experience for the interpretation and meaning-making process. I explored the meaning within the viewpoint of the participants along with theoretical grounds.

Quality Standard

Research work should have a quality standard or should be consistent to exist in the academic field. Thus, my research work will consist of credibility, authenticity, confirmability, dependability, and quality standards. Biswa (2010) says, "The criteria of credibility refer to establishing the match between the constructed realities of the respondents and those realities represented by the researcher" (p. 58). As he said, the realities are created by the respondents themselves and as a researcher, I interpreted them according to their viewpoint. In my research work, I made my study authentic as much as possible by making my research participants feel comfortable while collecting information. I did not interfere with their talk during the interviewing process, and I respected their knowledge and reality. All the realities are present according to the participant's opinions and views. My research has the quality of conformability because my research participants are technical school dropout students, and information will be collected in a real setting. Dependability is another quality of my research study. All the information will be collected from the real participants and interpretation will depend on the participants' views.

Ethical Consideration

According to Flick (2009), research ethics is an important issue in planning and doing research. Ethical consideration directs the ethical condition of research. As a researcher of qualitative study, I faced many ethical issues during the research. During and after the research I addressed and maintained the confidentiality and privacy of respondents, utilized this research only for educational purposes, respected the right to refuse or cooperate in an interview, respect the feelings and perceptions of participants, and used simple and comfortable language for the interview.

Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with research type, philosophical considerations, and research paradigm. This chapter presented a methodological structure of my research. In specific, I have discussed the research method, data collection tools, data collection process, data analysis, and quality standards. Finally, this chapter ended with the ethical consideration of my proposed study.

CHAPTER IV

CASES OF SCHOOL DROP OUT

In this chapter, I discuss the dropout scenario of students. In this regard, I have focused on selecting five dropouts and their stories. I have included the cases of the participants in narrative form. I narrated the experiences they shared in the course during the interview. I have also incorporated participants' actual voices whenever relevant and also kept my opinion to make the story live.

Case of Jagan

It was a cold and foggy day on January 15, 2020, when I went to Jagan's village (a youth and TSLC apprentice dropout after completing 14 months course from KNPI) for the first time. He hails from Rohini VDC in Dhakdhai, Rupandehi District. It took nearly one hour to reach there from Bhairahawa on a motorbike. He was born into a poor family and he had family obligations. As per our telecommunication, we had set up a meeting for an interview at 3 pm. We also introduced each other during the telecommunication. Though we communicated with each other through phone calls, I requested a meeting at a hotel near his residence where we could maintain confidentiality.

When I met him in the hotel, he was not satisfied. There was no happiness on his face. He was eyeing me suspiciously, musing as if I had come from the institute he studied at

In the hotel, we started a conversation about his life and education. We focused on how he had been motivated to study technical subjects and his previous education status. We spent about an hour talking. I gradually probed the issue of Jagan's Technical education and the reason for dropping out of school after almost

half term. Jagan joined the pre-diploma apprentice program at KNPI with the hope of a bright future. He continued for 14 months. In the starting phase, he was happy since all was going well until he took theory class for 3 months and 10 months of the practical period in the industry then he gradually became dissatisfied due to the low amount of stipend which he was getting from the industry. He further states, even the experienced workers are also getting only Rs. 20,000 per month as a salary. He thought, if a senior staff earns so little, the assistant-level employees may earn even less. So, how to secure a good future with that low income? After committing oneself to their studies, everyone hopes to get a salary accordingly. He told in his words:

> *After studying so hard, if I can find a job with a salary of only ten thousand, why do I continue with this course? Instead of this, I can start my own business. I dropped out after 14 months. During this period, I learned some skills to fulfill some basic needs and understand entrepreneurship, and how start up my own business. Even in the industry, no one respects us. They always treat us as labor which always demotivates me. I felt insulted. I would have continued to study if I got at least Rs. 30,000 salary (Field note, 15th January 2020).*

Even he could not start up a new industry according to his study (in the mechanical field) as it needed a huge amount of investment (minimum 30 lakhs) which he could not afford due to his poor economic status. Similarly, he could not get respect for my work from the senior staff and owner of the industry. They treated students as a labor/ helper and the study was only focused on industry rather than the workshop. Besides that, he also explained that there was no health insurance/ examination, or checkup. He did not get an opportunity in the industry to develop himself as a competent worker. Likewise, he also mentioned that there is no freedom

in the workshop, and he had only worked as a laborer. The industry did not allow any opportunity to operate machines. Not only that, but he was also not satisfied with the school he studied at. The school was not focused on students like them, they only focused on pre-diploma school-based students. He never found a textbook related to the syllabus even though the teacher knows the textbook. He found YouTube to be better than school. These all factors compelled him to think of it as dirty and unexpected work and these factors badly demotivated him to continue his study. When I asked about the overall reason for dropping out of the course, he told me this with a heavy heart;

> *I did not get anything that I thought during the time of joining this course. This course is only practical. I did not feel the link between theory and practicality and there was only one workshop in the industry to learn for 2 years. So how could I learn better there? The working environment was not so good. We had to work continuously in the industry for too long as if we were helpers. I did not get any opportunities in the industry to develop myself as a competent worker. I did not feel freedom in the workshop. After seeing all these things, my family also did not like my course. They advised me to start my occupation rather than complete it. I did not inform the school, even the industry, that I was leaving the course. If I told them, they might have tried to stop me. I had the support of my family, so I did not find it necessary to inform the school and the industry. Finally, I left the course without informing in school and industry (Field note, 15th January 2020).*

If the industry had allowed tasks and the staff had shown good behavior, Jagan would not have dropped out. The behavior of the industrial staff, long duration of practical sessions in the industry, dissatisfaction in school, not being allowed to work

as a student, and high expectations of salary are some of the reasons for his dropping out which is directly linked with higher expectations. His story clearly said that he was not satisfied with the industry and he had some dissatisfaction with school also. His family members also supported him to drop out. In my view, a technical school needs to follow the curriculum and the desire of students must be addressed even if only a little. There is a need for a meeting between industry administration, students, and school before the placement of students in the industry for practical purposes. Proper orientation to the student about their roles and responsibility during the placement period could help them to be mentally prepared.

Case of Akhil

With the hope of being self-independent, Akhil (a youth and pre-diploma apprentice dropout after completing 14 months course from KNPI) started his study in KNIT which was the 2 years mechanical course of TSLC but he could not complete his study. He dropped out after 11 months into the course. Why did Akhil drop out midway through the course, what were the main reasons and what factors led him dropping out without completing the course? To find out the answers to these questions, I selected him for my research study. It was a cold but sunny day on 18 January 2020, I went to meet him in his district Kapilvastu. Like the other people, he too had a house made of mud. He was born into a poor family and he had family responsibilities. As per our telecommunication, we had set up a meeting for an interview at 11 A.M. We also introduced each other via telecommunication. In addition to the phone conversation, I requested him to sit on the school grounds near his house where we could conduct our conversation basking in the sun.

When I saw him on the school grounds, he looked tired and annoyed, which I could guess from his face. In his case, he started to study this course with the hope to

get a good job and improve his family's financial status as his family was not in a favorable economic status. Since his father had already passed away, he was responsible for the family. He had started this course with new hope, but it was diminishing day by day when the institute placed him in industry. The company did not provide any opportunities to learn about work, skills, and knowledge of what he can do with the certificate. He did not find a positive environment during his industry period. He shared sadly;

> *I was not allowed to do any noteworthy work; I had to work as a helper rather than learn an industrial skill. I would have to clean motorbikes, floors, and machines. I did not study this course to do such low-level work, which is one of the reasons for my incomplete study. During those periods, I could not learn anything that was in my syllabus, and how could I pass the exam and get a good job? There was no healthy learning environment. I was not allowed to learn new skills but asked to maintain a diary and do nothing more than take notes in it (Field note, 18th January 2020).*

During our conversation, he also shared his desire to go abroad to earn money. After the demise of his father, the family's responsibility was his. He had to bring in cash somehow, so going abroad was not his desire but an obligation. Even though he changed industries, he was dissatisfied. He wanted to complete this course with new knowledge and skills, but that could not be fulfilled due to the attitude and behavior of the industry. I again dig the point about another reason that led to him dropping out. He further stated;

> *Students were not allowed to operate machines until 6 months into the starting phase. We were only allowed to work outside. We were assigned to work with painting, washing materials, and handling equipment. I felt it was a waste of*

time and switched industries with the hope to learn something as per our syllabus. The working industry changed but the behavior with us did not change. I spent more than 8 months in the industry and hardly operated the lathe machine 3 to 4 times during this period (Field note, 18th January 2020).

After talking a lot about the industry, I started by asking him about his experience at his college (KNPI). He said he was not as dissatisfied with the college as he was in the industry. In the first three months of college, everything was fine. He added more points happily

During the college period, teachers taught us very well and we had many opportunities to practice in workshops. All the teachers were good. They were always focused on teaching-learning activities which directly helped us to learn new things. When sending to the industry for practical purposes it was better to send only after finding out whether the industry has availability of the machine/equipment for us or not. (Field note, 18th January 2020).

He was again reminded of the behavior and attitude that he faced during the period of practice in the industry and told:

I was trying to do my best to learn skills somehow and pass the exam, but it could not be possible only from my effort. In the internal assessment, I was successful in passing the theory class however, I failed the practical exam. It all was a waste of time and a waste of money. The stipend was very low around Rs.1500 to Rs.2000 compared to the work nature. This was not enough for even my pocket money. Sometimes the industry let us, but the allowance did not have the labor. That money was not enough to pay my rent. Besides this, the company's attitude was not adjusted to learning objectives. Due to all this dissatisfaction, I wanted to protest against the company, but the situation did

not favor me. I left the course without informing the school and industry. All these reasons compelled me to drop out without completing the course (Field note, 18th January 2020).

The expectation that he had during the starting phase was not fulfilled when he got placed in the industry. The main reason for his dropout was the low level of practical work instruction in the industry, staff behavior, mismatched learning objectives, and company attitude, low opportunities on practical machines, and fewer opportunities to conduct lathe machines. In my view, technical schools are required to mention to the industry what the learning objective is and what students need to learn there so that students can learn as per the learning objective and the curriculum of the course.

Case of Rajib

I met Rajib, an adolescent and TSLC apprentice dropout after 14 months into the course from BTS. It was a sunny day on 12 March 2020, when I reached Rajib's village, Bardiya. He was doing household work with his mother. Likewise, in my previous practice, I fixed meetings via telecommunication. We introduced each other over a phone call and he accepted my request for a meeting. Rajib is an 18-year-old adolescent boy living in Sanoshree, Bardiya. His house was near the forest. He does not have enough land for agriculture. The crops grown on the land were not enough for a year, so he decided to study a technical subject so that he could support his family financially. His family also encouraged him to study technical lines. One day, he heard that Bheri technical school opened the entrance for a 2-year mechanical sub-overseer course. He started to study there. He studied well and was good in study and did well during his theory classes. After 3 months the school placed him in Gautam Engineering for practical purposes. Other friends were also with him for the practical

course. In the industry, the school had placed him in the sector of welding. He was doing well in the starting phase of practical but gradually it started giving problems in his eyes. He told:

> *I came here to start my study with a big dream, but I worried because school placed me in the welding industry where my eyes were having a lot of problems. I felt unbearable pain in my eyes. In the beginning, I got my eyes checked and put eye drops on them. Although I was suffering, I kept practicing for a few months continuing to keep the medication in my eyes. One day, when I was working, my eyes got completely closed, so I had to take an emergency leave. Although I used all the safety equipment like a hand shield, shoe, and eyeglasses my eyes kept hurting a lot. Sometimes I could not see anything. I could not continue welding even if I wore protective goggles (Field note, 12 March 2020).*

Not only Rajib but his mother was also very happy when he chose to study a technical subject. She had wanted her son to study a technical subject and work on it in the future which could help the family financially. That is why Rajib tried his best to continue this course even after undergoing eye treatment. All his friends who had been posted in the same industry did not have any problem. They were working smoothly but Rajib was facing complications badly.

He thought if the school could place him in the next industry working on machinery, he would not have eye problems, but he could not request the school to move him to this kind of industry. If the school had placed him in the machinery industry, he would not have had this kind of problem and he would have continued his study. I think he was very interested in this sector and studied attentively but due to eye problems, the situation was going south. After all, he was compelled to quit the course without informing the school.

I tried my best to continue the course, but my eyes were more valuable than my study. Nobody from the school asked me about my situation and if they could be of any help. I worked hard with honesty and completed my tasks on schedule. I tried to complete the course for 14 months but could not go further. I quit the course. Now, I am thinking about going abroad to earn money because I do not have other options. Going foreign country is not my desire, this is my obligation. I would like to earn some money staying there for 3 years and want to establish my small business in my hometown. I do not like to blame the school and the industry where I studied and did practical work. I found a good attitude and behavior from both sides, but my health did not support me to complete this course (Field note, 12 March 2020).

This case shows that physical inability can be the reason for school dropout

Rajib was happy in school and industry. The main reason he dropped out of school was his eye problem because his placement was in the welding industry. However, he tried to continue his study, but no matter how hard he tried, his eyes did not support him, and he had to leave. He would not have had to drop out of school if he had been placed in a machinery industry instead of welding. Rajiv's story teaches that the school should place the student by knowing which student is best suited for which industry.

Case of Prema

On the sunny afternoon of 12 March 2020, I met Prema, a young pre-diploma apprentice dropout. He dropped out after 14 months into the course from BTS. He started his study in the mechanical course but he could not complete his study. The course was 2yeaars long but he dropped out after just 5 months. to know the reasons behind his dropping out after such a short period, I selected him for my research

study. I had fixed the date and time to meet him over the phone. He called me to his house to meet him. I reached his home at the exact time however; he was not there. His mother called him and he arrived shortly after. Before his arrival, I talked to his mother. She told me that he does not help with household chores and does not like to work so much. He spends most of the time with his friends rather than at home.

When I met him in his room, he looked scared as if I was from that institute and I was there to coax him to return to school. He was not satisfied at all. I started a conversation by asking about the reason why he dropped out in a short duration. He shared that he had started to study with the hope of enrolling in an easy subject that did not involve hard work. He chose the Mechanical Sub Overseer course. All was good till 3 months when he was in Bheri technical school and taking theory classes but when the school placed him in the industry for practical classes, he could not adjust to that situation. His days went like this; waking up early in the morning, cooking, cleaning the room, washing the clothes, all these chores were burdensome for him. He shared:

> *I could not get up before 8 am as I am a boy and I had never done household chores. I was happy for 3 months. I enjoyed the first three months, taking theory classes, and gossiping with friends. I still remember that moment with good thoughts. But when college sent us to the industry for practical classes I started to feel very sad. I had to work on a tight schedule in the industry. Getting up in the morning, cooking food and going to the industry, cleaning the room, and doing hard work the whole day in the industry had been very difficult for me. I had never done that kind of hard work. I also did not find the behavior and attitude of the staff there to be welcoming. I was not allowed to do any educational work; I was only allowed to work as a helper rather than a*

learner. I had to clean the motorbikes, floor, and machine, and shift heavy

equipment. I did not study this course to do such low-level work, I have never

gone through such pain in my life. I started resenting the subject which is one

of the reasons for my incomplete study. Finally, I quit the course without

informing the school and industry (Field note, 12 March 2020).

I again dug for more reasons that he left the course at such an early stage.
When I wanted to know more about the reasons, he became disappointed.

When I was placed in the industry, I became sick frequently. I could have gone

to the hospital regularly for a checkup, but they did not grant me leave for a

doctor's appointment. They always became angry with me. I could not find

freedom there. I did not have an interest in working in the industry. Besides this,

there was no facility for rented rooms with toilets. It felt so difficult to adjust to

that local community. I could not cook meals regularly as I slept until late

morning daily and I could not maintain a daily routine due to which, my meals

were not regular. I was too scared to work in front of the supervisor. When I

came back from the industry after completing my daily duty, I looked dusty and

dirty which I did not like at all. I was worried about what my friends would say

if they saw me in such a situation. I would not do that kind of work even if I got

a certificate without completing the course. I did not like that kind of work from

any angle so I could not complete that course. Even now I am frightened to

remember that moment. I had never felt such discomfort in my life before, so I

could not cope with that difficult situation. If I had struggled a lot since my

childhood, I would have faced that situation easily. I would not like to reminisce

about that situation as it was the worst part of my life which I want to forget. I

started this course thinking that it would be easy and I wouldn't have to do

heavy work but when the school placed me in the industry, I realized that I could

not complete this course (Field note, 12 March 2020).

Toward the end of the conversation, I also talked to him about future planning and he said he is preparing to study hotel management as he thought that his further concern and career is in hotel management, banking, and accountancy. So, he chose hotel management. It is understood that the reason for Prema dropping out of school is not because of any reason from school and industry but because of his attitude. He could not handle any kind of discomfort so his attitude also can be the reason for his school dropout. This story has provided the lesson that this subject is not suitable for those students who are not active and dream of luxurious life without having to work hard for it.

Case of Shiva

It was 13 March 2020, when I reached Shiva's house (a youth and pre-diploma apprentice dropout after completing 8 months course from BTS) which is in Nepalgunj-15. When I reached his house at 3 pm, there were other family members as well. I could not comfortable talking in a noisy environment, so we went to a hotel to conduct our meeting. I shared my intention to meet with him and he agreed to talk to me. His family is a middle-class family, his father has his own business and agriculture farm as well. His brother-in-law has a welding industry. This welding industry motivated him to join a 2-year mechanical course. I found him very energetic and work-oriented. Listening to all this, I got eager to learn more about the reason that led to his dropping out of the course in 8 months, what were the main reasons and what factors led to him dropping out in this early phase. Why he dropped out even though he was so interested?

I was very interested to study this course and took admission. I used to study hard and I was one of the good students in the class. As per our educational schedule, I got placed in an industry where I performed well. All the staff in the industry liked me, and I was very happy to work there. It was difficult to work in the industry, but I was happy because that was my subject of interest. All was good until 14 months but suddenly I became sick and was diagnosed with Typhoid. I became very weak. The doctor advised me to rest for one month and I obliged. And after completing my treatment, I tried to rejoin the course, but I was rejected from the school. The school administration did not believe me. They told me to show the medical certificate. As per advice from the school, I submitted the medical certificate, but they did not allow me to rejoin the course. (Field note, 13 March 2020).

When he was telling all these things, he looked insulted and hurt. I was shocked when I was listening to his point that he had to go through all that hassle without his mistake. I asked him if he had notified the school of his illness beforehand and he replied,

When I fell ill, I tried to inform my class teacher and I called him but he did not respond to my call. I had a hard time and was getting weaker so I rested and could not inform anyone. Then I did not communicate about this with others. I had never imagined such a situation would arise. I tried 4 times to rejoin the course, but the school ignored me every time saying, "You have already been absent, so you are disqualified to rejoin the course." I was so interested to complete the course. I had joined this course with new hope and energy, yet my circumstances did not uphold me. A month of illness did not allow me to fulfill my dreams. After talking for around 40 minutes, I asked him about his plans. He

further said that as the apprentice training program door was locked for him, he joined +2 in Mangal Prasad school and worked at his brother-in-law's welding industry. He keeps questioning himself about why the school did not permit him to continue his studies when he was not at fault. He asked me whether I was from Bheri Technical School, and he stated, "The school declined my request as if they were against students falling ill. I am just a representative character, there may be other students who have dropped out due to illness. I had seen my future in the technical field which could not be possible (Field note, 13 March 2020).

This story has also shown that physical disability is one of the reasons for school dropout. Shiva was very keen to join the school after he recovered from typhoid. He requested the school to let him rejoin but the school did not comply with his pleas leaving him unhappy. After listening to all his stories, I feel the school administration is responsible for his dropout. Schools need to understand students' problems and their psychology and support them in their difficult situations.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the experiences of participants collected through narratives. The experiences of my research participants have been presented as their cases. The cases showed the reasons behind drop-out of technical school. Thus, analyzing these cases I developed themes that I have discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

CAUSES OF DROP OUT

This chapter discusses the causes of dropout. In the chapter, I have come up with the causes of the dropout of each participant. From the case presented above, I developed some common themes as the causes of dropout. The study shows that students leave the course because of many reasons. Among th, *high expectations, respect/recognition, behavior of industrial staff, dissatisfaction with school administration, and duration of the practical course in the industry* are the main causes of dropping out of their study.

High Expectations Not Addressed

This study shows that the high expectations of the students are the major cause of leaving their course. It is believed that expecting only positive outcomes and achieving only higher goals and having higher expectations may also lead to failure. Jagan wanted to earn a lot of money even during the course, he did not want a long-term practical course that he was doing in the industry. His expectation of quality education from a technical school also was not fulfilled. He narrated that he could not find a good job with a handsome salary even after studying so hard so he decided not to continue the course after 14 months. Though there are free ships, Dalit and Janajati facilities, free textbooks, dress, stationery, and other programs, however, the support system was not effective (Lamichhane, 2016). Students expect good work and pay after study rather than the facilities during study. Thus, Jagan started his own business.

Akhil had thought that he would get a chance to operate machines in the industry and they would guide him very well which did not happen. Instead, he had to

do a low level of practical work; nobody was guiding him in the industry. The expectation that Akhil had before placement in the industry was not fulfilled so, he left the course to go to a foreign country. From the findings of Acharya (2018), less relevant return on investment and relevancy of particular education to their lives made the students drop out of the program. One of the reasons behind Akhil's leaving study and going for foreign employment was his social habitus of giving preference to foreign employment as a better socio-economic value. His mindset can be seen through the lens of Bourdieu (1977); habitus is the interaction between agency and the structure of society. It is the result of a relationship between a situation and an individual's habitus. Societal constructed value on education and foreign employment compelled Akhil to leave the course before completion and choose a foreign country for unskilled employment.

Similarly, Rajib is an honest and hardworking student. Even though he was good, the flawed placement strategy of the school to place students in their suitable places led him to drop out. He wanted to continue studying if school shifted him from the welding industry, but the technical school never asked him about the problem that he was facing. Showing his detest, he narrated to me:

> I tried my best to continue the course, but my eyes were more valuable than my study. Nobody from the school asked me about my situation and if they could be of any help. I worked hard with honesty and completed my tasks on schedule. I tried to complete the course for 14 months but could not go further.

It showed that Rajeev could not get proper orientation; thus, he was compelled to pursue a welding occupation that was different from his subject of interest. On the same note, Lumsden (1997) also stated that though students accepted the low-standard teachers, they wanted teachers to expect more from the students academically and

behaviorally. If instructors expected high from the students and orient them in their comfortable alignment, dropout problems like Rajib's would have decreased.

In a similar line, Prema was another student with high ambitions; he desired Luxurious life but he could not work hard at all. He wanted to complete the course without any hassle. He used to be stressed even over small things; his habit led him to leave the course midway. However, my next participant, Shiva, did not leave the course because of higher expectations. He had to leave the course due to health problems. He shared his problems:

> *All was good until 14 months but suddenly I became sick and got diagnosed with Typhoid. I became very weak. The doctor advised me to rest for one month and I did. And after completing my treatment, I tried to rejoin the course, but I was rejected from a school. The school administration did not believe me. They told me to show a medical certificate. I did it but they did not allow me to rejoin the course.*

This shows he did not leave the course intentionally but due to health issues. He expected that the school administration would allow him to continue this course after his recovery but his expectation met with disappointment. Doll et al. (2013) also agreed with the pivotal event as the antecedent reason for dropout. They also stated that the reason is the culmination of a long process as Shiva had to discontinue though he tried to resume school for a long time.

It is understandable for students to have a certain level of expectation from the courses they choose. However, the participants seem to have let their expectations get the best of them. They had expected the course to be enlightening and the school to be supportive of their expertise and areas of interest. But the school seemed to have conned them with the vision of a bright, prosperous future. The disappointment in

their words was evident. This might also be because the stakeholders and colleges extol the courses in such a way that the students appear to depend on something that is not guaranteed. Also, colleges need to take responsibility for the promises they make. The students have also mentioned the dissatisfaction of their parents/families with the course. Amos reports that many economically disadvantaged parents may place a high value on education for their children, although they are largely undereducated. Some of the parents are supportive too but like the students, they also naturally develop some expectations. In our society, the sons are the breadwinners of the family after the father. This is even more prevalent in middle-class and lower-class families. Almost all five of my participants are wage earners in the family. They joined the courses hoping to learn the skills and secure a good-paying job. But the disappointment was too difficult to process causing them to drop out and opt for other opportunities like going abroad.

Pursuit of Respect and Recognition

Lack of respect or recognition for TVET occupation is another cause of students' dropout. Jagan had to leave the course due to the staff's behaviour during the industry placement. He narrated, "*In the industry, no one respected us; they always treated us as labourers, which always demotivated me. I felt insulted.*" He further added that he did not find a good working environment in the industry. He had to continue in the industry for too long as a helper.

Akhil shared the same story. He was not satisfied at all with the industrial staff's behavior which was the main reason for his dropout. The scenario seems the students were contrived by habitus as envisioned by Bourdieu. Habitus is a set of preconceptions, observations, and beliefs that lead to specific actions' perceptions, and practices (Swartz, 2002). Here, the company owners' habitus perception of TVET

students being labourers and having no social recognition. That's why the students like Jagan and Akhil had to leave their studies after practical work in the companies.

They treated him as a helper rather than a learner of industrial skills. Moreover, he shared,

> *Students were not allowed to operate machines until 6 months into the starting phase. We were only allowed to work outside. We were assigned to work with painting, washing materials, and handling equipment. I felt it was a waste of time and industry with the hope to learn something as per our syllabus. The working industry changed but our behavior with us did not change.*

My next Participant, Rajib's story was a little different from both Jaga's and Akhil's. The main reason for his dropout was his physical disability; however, respect and recognition from his school and industry appeared indirectly. He could not continue his studies because of health problems. He wanted to continue his studies after he recovered, but the school did believe him or could understand his problem. Therefore, he finally dropped out of the course even after having the desire to complete it.

Although the main reason for Prema's dropout was his laziness, the lack of respect and recognition from the industry were also the causes of his dropout. According to him:

> *I also did not find the behavior and attitude of the staff there to be welcoming. I was not allowed to do any educational work; I was only allowed to work as a helper rather than a learner. I had to clean the motorbikes, floor, and machine; and shift heavy equipment. I did not study this course to do such low-level work. I had never experienced such pain in my life.*

The final participant of my study, Shiva, told me that he would not have left the school if the school administration had understood his problem and his desire to continue his study after his recovery. As Lamichhane (2016) stated that due to, cultural and traditional discrimination among genders and punishment in school create a fierce environment in school, and ill-treatment in the school creates humiliation and discouragement among the teachers, He shared:

> *I had a hard time and was getting weaker so; I rested and could not inform anyone. Then I did not communicate about this with others. I had not imagined such a situation would arise. I tried 4 times to rejoin the course, but the school ignored me every time saying, "You have already been absent, so you are disqualified to rejoin the course."*

So, one of the main reasons for his dropout is that the school administration did not understand him and did not respect his feelings.

All my participants have had this issue with the school administration and the industry staff. From their confessions, there seems to be a lack of basic courtesy among the staff. My participants shared that this problem gnawed at their hearts and demotivated them to continue their studies. Not allowing the student to continue their studies after sick leave, treating the interns and students like mere laborers, and not deciding the placements according to their interests and strengths look like the weaknesses of the institutes.

Also, being mistreated made the participants feel disrespected. One of them did not even want to share his situation with his friends fearing the embarrassment he might have to deal with. Like any person in society, they also wish to have a good reputation in the society but being treated as a laborer, they doubted that the course could help them achieve a status of respect

Mismatch between Expectation and Reality Dissatisfies Students

The data show that the contrast between their expectation before joining the course and after joining led them to drop out. In this regard, Jagan revealed:

I did not get anything that I thought during the time of joining this course. This course is only practical. I did not feel the link between theory and practicality, and there was only one workshop in the industry to learn for 2 years. So how could I learn better there? The working environment was not so good. We had to work continuously in the industry for too long as a helper. I did not get any opportunities in the industry to develop myself as a competent worker.

According to Jagan's statement, there is a mismatch between the expectation and the reality of the TVET course. The same scenario was found in a study by Korumaz and Eksuiglu (2022). In their study, the participants decided to drop out of school due to a different reality than their expectations. They showed frustration that their dream job and the academic delivery were different, hence they were reluctant to proceed with their study. That's why, there is necessary coordination between vocational schools and industries so that students could get ample information about their study, practical work, and their prospects.

This shows that the participant dropped out in the middle of their studies due to a mismatch between curriculum and learning objective. Another participant Akhil also shared the same experience:

I could not learn anything that was in my syllabus, and how could I pass the exam and how can I get a good job? There was no healthy learning environment. I was not allowed to learn new skills but asked to maintain a diary and nothing more than taking notes in it.

Both participants' statements show that there was a lack of orientation and coordination among the school, students, teachers, and parents regarding the nature of the course, its prospectives, challenges, and way of preparation. Thus, the students' expectations and the reality of the course varied. A dropout study in the United States by Christenson and Thurlow (2004) specified that there was a provision for systematic monitoring of the student's performance to ensure realistic academic opportunities. Likewise, there was also a mechanism of monitoring by educators and families concerning the relevance of the student's academic learning and their personal and professional lives in the future. Moreover, the student's personal, social, and academic problems were also supported to solve across the school years.

Similarly, my third participant Rajib revealed that he had come there with a good dream, but he was worried when the school placed him in the welding industry where his eyes were having a lot of problems. There he got unbearable pain in his eyes. This shows that he had expected to do better work after studying there but when he was placed in such manual work, his expectation was not met.

Similarly, the next participant, Prema narrated his story reflecting the mismatch between his expectation and the reality of the work.

> I started this course thinking that it would be easy and that I wouldn't have to do heavy work but when the school placed me in the industry, I realized that I could not complete this course. I did not like that kind of work from any angle so I could not complete that course. Even now, I am frightened to remember that moment. I had never felt such discomfort in my life before, so I could not cope with that difficult situation. If I had struggled a lot since my childhood, I would have faced that situation easily. I would not like to reminisce about that situation that was the worst part of my life which I want to forget.

Among the five students, four students revealed that the dissimilarity between their expectations and reality was one of the main causes for dropping out of the course. The variance between the syllabus and their classes was vividly evident. This is one of the reasons for their dissatisfaction with the course. Although Akhil only mentioned directly the main reason for his dropout was the mismatch between his expectations and course reality, other students also indirectly revealed this during the one-to-one interview.

Their experience quite matches to differences between push and pull factors portrayed by doll et al. (2013). According to their studies, when there are differences between schools' environment for attendance and discipline as push factors; and external enticers as pull factors such as job and family, the consequences also change. The participants also experienced that the schools and workplaces failed to attract them with their push factors and they had no confidence in competitively transfer of their knowledge to a real job in the future. That's why they chose other economic activities over their formal technical and vocational studies and training.

The mismatch between the student's expectations and the reality during school years and the job market scenario also played a vital role in the dropout of students from the pre-diploma level of mechanical engineering in Nepal. It is seen that the vocational schools and employers i.e. factories and companies are to be well-oriented regarding the curriculum, workplace learning, students management, and TVET development. They are to be well equipped and well informed regarding teaching and learning of the TVET program and students' motivation.

School Administration Matters Dropout Issue

Dissatisfaction with the school management is another causing factor in the dropout of students. According to Jagan, the working environment was not so good. He had to work continuously in the industry for a long time as a helper. He did not get many opportunities in the industry to develop himself as a competent worker. He added that he did not feel freedom in the workshop. So, without informing both, the school or the industry he left the course. This reveals that he was happy with the school management because the school and working environment were not supportive.

Another participant, Shiva, had a similar opinion on the issue related to school administration. He shared:

I became very weak. The doctor advised me to rest for one month and I did. And after completing my treatment therapy, I tried to rejoin the course but was rejected from a school. The school administration did not believe me. They told me to show a medical certificate. As per advice from the school, I submitted a medical certificate, but they did not allow me to rejoin the course.

It is needless to say that health first. Though Shiva showed a medical certificate, he was not given an excuse or any sympathy. The school administration could have provided him with additional classes and mentored him for resilience in his study. It indicated that there was no proper policy for students retention after unavoidable situations. Through a study in China, Yi et al. (2015) demonstrated that students' low academic achievement also made them compel to leave their studies. Counseling and counteractive coaching for those backward students could help drag them toward the mainstream of teaching-learning. There is a need for policy review in

terms of students' retention in a hard situation and effective school administration for students' satisfaction and resilience in teaching learning and work-based learning.

Similarly, Rajib's story has also directly revealed that the reason for dropping out is the negligence of the school administration.

> *I tried my best to continue the course, but my eyes were more valuable than my study. Nobody from school asked me about my situation and if they could be of any help. I worked hard with honesty and completed my tasks on schedule, I used to do all tasks on time. I tried to complete the course for 14 months but could not go further. I quit the course.*

Rajib's story indicated that he would not have dropped out if the school had placed him in the machinery industry. So, this study has demonstrated that the negligence of the school administration is also one of the driving factors for the increase in the rate of dropouts. In this regard, Christenson and Thurlow (2004) suggested that the policymakers and educators had to be well-equipped with sound research. Likewise, the schools had to plan for sustained interventions and rapport with teachers and students when students' mobility was high. The educators and mentors of the schools also suggested that they had to track students' performance by making partnerships with the families within and across the country. So, the technical and vocational schools are to be updated with recent research and intervene in the required policies and plans to reduce the problem of students dropping out.

The stories of the participants show that the school administration was not sensitive to the problems of the students. The school administration has to be aware of it and find solutions so that they can decrease the rate of dropouts from their administrative part. If the school had not interrupted Shiva's studies, he would have resumed the classes and proven to be a competent citizen.

Besides this, the school administration's inability to place students in the field of their interest was the other reason for them quitting the courses. Prema also hinted that he dropped out as he did not like the work environment where he was placed for practical purposes and on the other side Jagan and Akhil also unbelievably mentioned this. It has shown that when placing students in the industry by the school, it should be done by paying attention to the student's interests and desires.

An institution cannot operate smoothly only through the decisions of the administration. It has to listen to the suggestions of the other parties like the teachers, the students, and the staff members as well. From above, I came to the conclusion that the institutes are not addressing the voice of the students which has led them to feel dejected and unmotivated. The decisions of the administration concerning the students are not always accurate and in favor of the students. I see a need for a proper administrative body that does not just decide the future of the students as it pleases but listens to all the voices while decision making. Having their voices addressed can motivate the students and make them value themselves while developing a sense of belongingness to the institution. So, to drop the dropout rate the stakeholders should take heed of the desires and interests of the students too.

Drop Out as a Process

It is not good to leave a course without completing it. The school administration as well as the practical industries do not allow the students to leave the course in the middle period of study, however, students leave the course as they are not satisfied. The dropout problem is a loss for all the stakeholders. It's a student's mobility but ultimately associated with school failure (Rumberger & Larson, 1998, as cited in Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). High dropout is a socio-economic loss of the family, school, and failure of school and even CTEVT. When I asked them about the

process of dropping out, most of the students said that they left the course without informing the school administration and industry.

This study shows that four out of the five students left the course without informing the school and industry. They had only informed their family. Only one student dropped out forcibly by the school as he was absent due to illness. After analyzing the case, I found two major processes of the students' dropout followed during the dropdown: they are uninformed and forcibly made to drop out by the school. The dropout process appears to be preceded by dissatisfaction, lack of motivation, and frustration, followed by an impromptu and hasty decision made by the participating students. The students might have cared less about letting the administration know about them leaving because they feel apathetic toward the school and its management team

During the interview with the five dropout students, I found that most of them dropped out without informing the school administration and industry as they were afraid they would not be allowed to leave the course. When things didn't go as planned, Jagan left the course in the 14th month out of two years. Due to various reasons, he could not continue the course. During the period of the left course, he did not inform the school and industry; however, he informed his family as his family was also with him, and they advised him to leave the course and do his own business. He told;

> *After seeing all these things, my family also did not like my course. They*
>
> *advised me to start my occupation rather than complete it. I did not inform the*
>
> *school, or even the industry that I was leaving the course. If I told them,*
>
> *they might have tried to stop me. I had the support of my family, so I did not*

find it necessary to inform the school and industry. Finally, I left the course

without informing in school and industry (Field note 15 January 2020).

His statement portrays the perception of society toward technical and vocational education. The scenario is like the habitus explained by Bourdeau (1977), Jagan's family members did not like the TVET course, which also influenced him to quit the study. In contrast, if he had gotten a positive vocational habitus from the school, employers, and family, as described by Korumaz and Eksuiglu (2022), he would not have dropped out of the course. If he had been allowed to work in his interest, he would have completed the course. So, the vocational habitus right person in the right place plays a vital role in the student's decision.

Sometimes he used to talk to his friends and share his dissatisfaction. They also advised him to leave the course if he was not satisfied. Before leaving the course, he analyzed the situation from every angle; it was better to leave the course or keep continuing. Finally, he decided that dropping out was the best option.
It was the same case with Akhil as well. He also left due to some dissatisfaction without informing the school and the industry about his leaving as he feared that the school would not allow him to leave. He informed his family and they agreed to his decision as he had plans to immigrate to a foreign country. He told,

I had joined this course with hopes of a bright future which could not be

possible due to the behavior of industrial staff. I had to study for 10 more

weeks to complete the course. I was afraid to share my desire to leave the

course with the school administration and industrial staff assuming that I

would not be allowed to leave. I talked to my family and supported my

decision because I used to share my dissatisfaction with them. I went

home for a weekend while I had a practical then I did not return to the

industry this way I left the course (field note 18 January 2020).

Akhil tried to continue the course but due to the behavior of the industrial staff, he could not continue the course. He thought that it would be better to go abroad and earn money than to continue studying in an unfavorable environment. He wanted to leave the course as he had bitter experience in the industry, however, he had no idea how to leave, so he took advice from a friend on how to run away from the industry and he did the same as his friend's advice. He did not inform both the school or the industry. He went on leave saying that he had a much-needed job at home and did not return to the industry.

Rajib, who had left due to his problem, had no other reason for discontinuing the study. He tried to continue the course. For this, he frequently went to the doctor for eye treatment, but he had to leave the welding profession to save his eyes. He could not request the school to move his placement to another industry where he could do machinery tasks because of fear. So, he did not inform the school and industry that he was leaving. He shared this with his family only. One day he went to the doctor for a regular checkup and did not return to the industry. Rajib further told;

I still feel guilty for dropping out of the course but what I did was good for my

eyes. I do not have any eye problems right now. The industrial staff assumed

that I might drop out of the course by seeing my eye problem, but I never told

them I was leaving the course (Field note 12 March 2020).

Among the various reasons behind dropout, the main reasons are personal, social, and institutional reasons. Another participant Prema wanted to live a comfortable life but had to work very hard in the industry, so he planned to leave as soon as the industry placement. Before leaving the course, he took advice from

friends, who advised him to leave only after completing the course with his friends, but he disobeyed his friends. He told;

> *I did not like the place where I lived. I did not like the community, I did not like the working environment of the industry, I did not like anything so, how could I complete the course? My friend did not advise me to leave the course, they advised me to complete it with them which was impossible for me. One day he went home on the weekend and he told his mother everything he thought about the industry. At first, his mother advised him not to give up the course. Further, he told his mother emotionally that he could not live in that place under any circumstances and that he could not work in that industry. After that, his mother's heart melted and she said, "if you do not like the course, you can leave. Then I left the course*

Highlighting the five major reasons behind dropout in TVET education, Korumaz and Eksuiglu (2022) portrayed those as economic, academic failure, indifference to school and real learning, social background, and uncertainty in students' expectations. The participants faced individual, economic, social, and most commonly, the difference between their expectations and the reality of the course.

When I approached my participants for the first time, they all hesitated because they thought I was a representative from the schools. of them had not informed their respective schools about them dropping out so they naturally feared that I had contacted them to coax them into rejoining the courses. This might be due to them fearing what the administration would say. The bitter experience they had during their stay at the school looks to haunt them even long after dropping out. According to interviews with five students, four dropped out of school without informing the school, and one because the school forcefully made him drop out. He

was Shiva. Shiva dropped out of the course completely different from the other students.

Shiva was forcibly expelled from the school for missing a month of school due to his illness. Many times, he requested the school administration to let him continue his study, but the school administration did not allow him to rejoin the course. The school administration could not understand his desire to study. He told;

> *I did not want to leave the course, but the school administration did not allow him to rejoin the course when he requested after recovery from his illness. Leaving in the middle course was not in his interest, it was an obligation. There is a big mistake in the school administration (Field note 13 March 2020).*

In this study, most of the students left the course without being informed by the school administration. Why do students drop out of the course without giving any information to the school administration? This is the big question. I think this is due to the fear that the school will force them to complete the course. It seems the school administration must discuss with students regularly what they want, what is bothering them, and what can be done better for students.

Similarly, having expectations is good for achieving goals, however, the high expectation may lead students backward. My study has shown that one of the leading factors of dropout is high expectations. The social values, norms, and social behavior taught the students to have high expectations. Many pieces of literature have shown the factors which lead to high student expectations.

According to Bourdieu's social capital theory, social capital is a virtue of the individual, rather than the collective, derived chiefly from one's social standing and status. Social capital assists a person to exercise authority over the group or individual

who rallies the resources. For, Bourdieu's social capital is not evenly accessible to a group or collective affiliates but is available to those who provide labor to obtain it by getting positions of dominance and status and evolving goodwill (Bourdieu, 1986). For Bourdieu, social capital is irrevocably connected to class and other kinds of delineation, which in turn are linked with several forms of advantage or advancement.

As per the above statement of Bourdieu, social position and status are one of the major causes of the school dropout decision. Parents know which level of school education gives them optimum benefits to match their context and socio-economic capital. Thus, in many cases, school dropouts are voluntary decisions.

A study by Acharya (2021) identified some dropout issues in Nepal. They were — a mismatch between theory and practical use of education, the job market was uncertain, the tendency to go abroad for income at an early age was high, and economically low and average-class families could not afford the education cost in Nepal. In my study, the participants indicated job market uncertainty, a mismatch between content and reality, economic problems, and foreign job tendencies.

 Students are more likely to drop out of school if the school environment is not found as they thought the reason for the students leaving the school is also a matter of discipline. My research has shown that one of the reasons for school dropouts is an expectation that they thought of before joining the school even though the curriculum of the subject may not have fulfilled their expectations. Jordan also talked about the push and pull dropout factor: -

Jordan et al. (1994) explained the pressures on students

of push and pull dropout factors. A student is pushed out when oppositional circumstances inside the school surrounding lead to outcomes, eventually followed by dropout. These encompass tests, participation and discipline strategies, and even

consequences of poor conduct. However, students can be pulled out when factors inside the school redirect them from finishing school. These happen when factors, such as monetary concerns, out-of-school employment, family needs, or even family changes, such as marriage or childbirth, pull students away from school. They can even comprise illnesses, as these trigger students to put a deeper significance on something outside of school, and thus they decide against completing school.

Finally, regarding the cause of school dropout, high expectations, academic and labour market mismatch, family economic condition, personal health issues, poor school administration, feeble learning culture, and opportunity play a vital role in school dropout. That's why stakeholders need to be thought about to develop a curriculum per the student's basic expectations; they are to be provided ample opportunity for practical learning, and the coordination among vocational schools, CTVET, industries, and the students' families is in need necessary.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I developed themes that answer my research question and discussed them in connection with literature. I discussed the findings of my research question in major themes: causes of dropout and the process of dropout. The causes of dropout were high expectations, respect or recognition, the mismatch between expectation and reality, and dissatisfaction with school administration. Similarly, the process of dropping out was forced.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study finds the reasons behind the dropout of students from a technical school. To find out the actual reasons for dropout, I used in-depth interviews with my research participants, observed the school environment, and reviewed the relevant documents of research schools for my research. I prepared guidelines for an in-depth interview where I also used my personal experience and reflection as the form of data. While preparing themes, I took the help of different pieces of literature along with my experience with it. But, when I was there in the field, I was aware that I would not be bound by those themes. I took those themes as the guidelines to generate information for this study. I selected five dropout students and carried out research using a qualitative case study. I chose this methodology assuming that each dropout student bears their personal and social factors which help me to get the freedom to approach study.

Dropout is a human and societal phenomenon, in my understanding qualitative is the best approach to studying dropouts. It can be assumed that dropout is a context where human behavior is guided by personal and social settings.

In this chapter, I have presented the conclusions and implications of my study on the dropout of technical school leaving certificates. This research mainly discussed the reasons for dropout. The overall purpose of this research was to understand the reason for dropout and identify different contributing factors that cause school dropout. For this, in chapter IV. Presented case stories of five students from different schools.

Conclusion of My Study

Students' participation and coordination with school management are important for better results for dropouts. My concern was to explore the understanding of students about the reason for dropout. They may directly help to improve the overall performance of the study. My research has shown that the main reasons for school dropout are the higher expectation, respect/ recognition, learning objective and syllabus, physical disability, and negligence in school administration. To reduce the dropout rate, the school administration, and industry need to improve the main area which impacts students directly such as – staff behavior, working environment, working modality, and curriculum design.

Parents and students are very aware of which level of school education gives them optimum benefits and they want to join their interested subject. But if that subject does not match their desire, there is a high chance to drop out. Moreover, dropout is also related to health issues, behavior in working place, and student's expectation. Thus, school dropouts in many cases are voluntary decisions.

Students are more likely to drop out of school if the school environment is not found as they thought the reason for the students leaving the school is also a matter of discipline of the students and their expectations which they thought before joining the school. Social position and status are other major causes of the school dropout decision. So, a student-friendly working environment is a vital part to prevent students from dropping out.

In my research, I found the different characteristics of some dropout students such as- attitude problems, high expectations, lack of motivation, and lack of patience, and their characters are also the leading factors of school dropout.

Implications of This Study

The implication of my study includes the following, which could be useful for school administration and students and their parents, as well as for future researchers as follow:

The Implication to School Administration

Good management always brings a positive impact. School administration always be careful with students. There is a gap between the school management committee and interaction with students and their parents which needs to be fulfilled as much as possible. The most significant point is the weakness of the school administration which did not allow the student to rejoin the course after they recovered from sickness. This has discouraged their desire to study which has hurt the student's feelings. A proper plan, adequate orientation, and other support are required for the successful implementation of the study. The school administration should mention to the industry what the learning objective is and what students need to learn there so that the students can learn as per the learning objective and the curriculum of the course. Teacher's role as a guardian helps to control the dropout situation. Finally, regular monitoring and feedback should be in place.

The Implication to Students and their Parents

The family is the first school of the child because Parents teach them all manner since childhood. The parent's role is very crucial to prevent dropout. Parents and students should be very aware of which level of school education gives them optimum benefits. Meeting with school administration is essential for parents to be updated on their child's studies. On the other hand, there should be a healthy discussion between family members to know each other's feelings, interests, and

problems. Sometimes parents' role should be as a coach for their child. Parents should be supportive and encouraging of their son and daughter.

Implications for Industry

The industry is the main place of learning skills for the student of 2 years mechanical sub overseer course, so students' placement to the industry with the desire to learn required skills. In my research, it has found that the expectation that students had during the starting phase was not fulfilled because of the behavior of industrial staff. Based on a complaint from some students, the industry has to provide opportunities to learn as per the course curriculum, and behavior should be as a student not as a lower-level worker. I suggest to industry be clearer on what students should learn there and which purpose they place in the industry.

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My Final Reflection

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It has been 18 years since I started working as a mechanical instructor at the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT), the apex body of Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) in Nepal. During this working phase in different roles like - instructor, head of the department, and trainer, I got opportunities to instruct students from different communities, and visit different TEVT institutions in different parts of the country. During my academy career and my visits, I found large numbers of students dropped out of school before completing the course.

So, I thought "Drop out of pre-diploma students' could be important research for the study. This study focuses on the root causes of dropout of Technical School Leaving Certificate and then suggests to school administration, students and their parents, stakeholders, and further researcher the action that they need to apply to minimize student dropout from Technical School Leaving Certificate level education. In doing so, I carried out research as part of my master's degree course. In this research,

my interest and thoughts kept on escalating and it led me to join Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED) for a master's degree in TEVT. This reflection paved the way to generate the research idea regarding the experience of dropout students. Students come to study with many goals however, they are forced to drop out due to many reasons. As a result, their goals cannot be achieved and their direct impact falls on personal careers and family life. While we want to have economic growth for a nation, we should also focus on increasing youth employment in all technical sectors.

Education is the foundation of development and TVET is a skillful education that supports development. So, without completing the course, students cannot be able to be skilled in human resources and the development process will largely be incomplete since they are also crucial stakeholders. In this context, this study originated from a desire to understand the experience of TSLC students.

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