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Original Research

Inspirational Leadership Among Teachers: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Study in the School Setting of Nepal

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Abstract

Inspirational Leadership (IL) is pivotal in the spaces of educational leadership to inspire and motivate teachers to achieve organisational goals. Concerning it, this study intends to explore the existence of inspirational leadership among teachers of Bagmati Province. For this purpose, this study employed explanatory sequential mixed method design, a cross-sectional survey in Quan strands and narrative inquiry in Qual strands. The data in the Quan and Qual strands were gathered via survey questionnaires from 502 respondents and in-depth interviews from four participants, respectively. The collected Quan data were carried out to assess the levels of inspirational leadership and their dimensions (Intellectual stimulation, envisioning, managing impression, moulding follower's expectations) as high levels due to the presence of supportive relationships, appreciative and innovative culture, critical thinking, and emotional attachment among school teachers. However, meaning-making as one of the dimensions of inspirational leadership is recognised as a very high level of supportive relationships, appreciative and innovative culture, critical thinking, and emotional attachment among school teachers. Furthermore, the social exchange relations also inspired teachers to

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perform their job. So the high level of inspirational leadership assists teachers in achieving high job productivity in their school.

Keywords: *Intellectual stimulation; Managing impression; Meaning-making; Moulding follower's expectation*

Introduction

Providing quality education is the crucial aim of all education stakeholders. It is possible when all the stakeholders perform their work in effective ways. One of the key stakeholders is referred to as the teachers, and they all are part of the educational leadership of the school. There are several types of educational leadership practices like instructional leadership, distributive leadership, transformative leadership, women leadership, and ethical leadership in the school (Northouse, 2016). All of these educational leaders are tied to the motivation and inspiration of teachers in some way. However, these all leadership may not adequately illustrate the entire characteristics of inspirational leadership.

Inspirational leadership predominantly inspires and motivate followers to go beyond their interest and desires to achieve the organisational goals for the benefit of the school (Robbins et al., 2013). It principally energises the school teachers to attempt an influential vision of the future by symbolising and approving the organisational values in each facet of their work. It pays huge attention to the concerns of the followers and facilitates depositing the extra efforts to perform better by inspiring and exciting them. Inspirational leadership is determined by five factors: Managing impression, managing meaning, envisioning, moulding followers' expectations, and intellectual stimulation (Bass & Bass, 2008). These all components altogether composite the inspirational leadership and influence followers for high performance in their job.

Furthermore, inspirational leadership is associated with social exchange relations between school teachers. Social exchange refers to the mutual relations between two parties (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), particularly school teachers and their co-workers. The positive relationship between them enables schools to provide quality education in schools. Concerning it, Lagowska et al. (2019) state that social exchange theory is pertinent to inspirational leadership, and it inspires followers to "go the extra

mile" (p. 1). This consideration is also crucial to explore the Nepali context of inspirational leadership in school.

Inspirational leadership is an important factor in accomplishing high academic achievements among schools and in the entire nation. Moreover, the schools with low inspired teachers cannot crackdown on the newly arises crisis and dilemma in the school, which is one of the crucial reasons for the low academic performance in school. For instance, the developing countries like Nepal, where only 51.71% (class 11) and 49.08 % (class 12) students passed Higher Secondary School (HSS) exams (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology [MOEST], 2017). This fact indicates the low school performance as an educational issue in Nepal, one of its reasons is due to the poor school leadership (Jacobson, 2011) particularly, inspiring leadership (Hudson, 2013).

That's why it is an imperative necessity to employ and ensure inspirational leadership as part of the school teachers to achieve desired job performance in the schools. Nonetheless, there are stumpy practices of leadership (Singh & Allison, 2016) in the schools of Nepal due to the absence of inspiration, visioning, supportiveness, and boosting aspects among school leaders (Day & Sammons, 2013). This literature elucidates that when it comes to inspiring teachers to execute their jobs, inspirational aspects are largely absent among school leadership. Based on these academic findings, it can be inferred that a lack of inspirational leadership is one of the primary causes of job performance among Nepalese teachers.

As a researcher, this situation raises many questions in my mind, including: Why aren't school teachers inspired to perform their job? What are the factors that influence teachers' inspirational leadership? In what ways does inspirational leadership occur in the classroom? These questions intrigue me to the point where I believe that there is a need for both identification and in-depth exploration of inspirational leadership among teachers. Concerning it, some academicians investigate the issue of inspirational leadership using solely Qual (e.g., Dinn, 2013; Harris & Barnes, 2006; Searle & Hanrahan, 2011) or Quan (e.g., Salas-Vallina et al., 2020) strands. In this situation, a single method based on the Quan and Qual strands alone will not be able to provide complete answers concerning the inspirational leadership of teachers. In this preamble,

I emphasised that inspirational leadership is a crucial issue, so I addressed it by using a mixed-methods methodology.

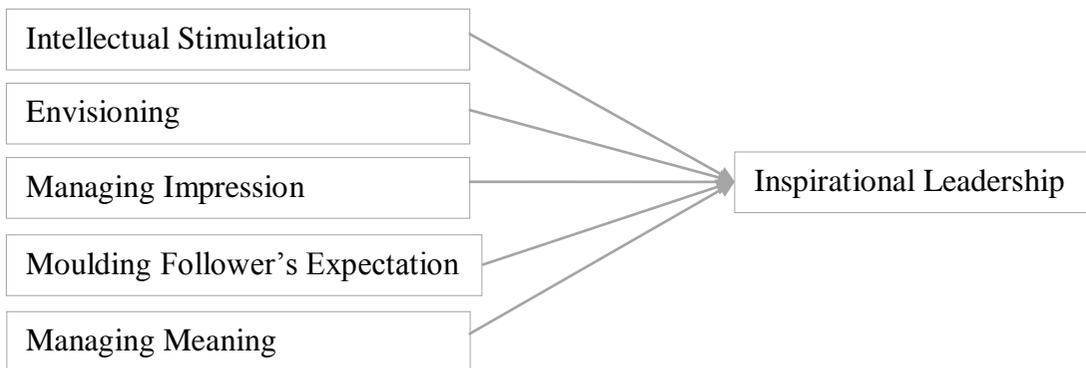
I intend to explore the existence of inspirational leadership among school teachers. For achieving this purpose, I formulated the research question “How does the level of inspirational leadership exist among teachers?” in this study.

Variables of Inspirational Leadership

Inspirational leadership refers to an encouraging relationship between leaders and followers (Awad, 2018), where the followers are influenced by leaders (Block, 2003). This influencing process contributes to employees becoming motivated and highly performing their organisational tasks (Robbins et al., 2013). Considering it, Bass and Bass (2008) included the five indicators: intellectual stimulation, envisioning, managing impression, moulding follower’s expectations, and managing meaning as the dimension of inspirational leadership, as follows in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Inspirational Leadership and Its Dimensions



Firstly, intellectual stimulation refers to the inspiring process of employees to innovate new ideas through creative and critical thinking (Ogola et al., 2017; Thuan, 2020). Innovative ideas contribute to solving problems in more efficient and effective ways. Secondly, envisioning refers to the ability of leaders to create opportunities (Byington, 2016) and perceive the needs of followers (Salas-Vallina et al., 2020) in the organisation. It portrays the future structure and functions of an organisation which is seen as realistic by followers, and they must be inspired by it. Thirdly, managing

impression is the self-presentation of leaders to followers to influence them (Goffman, 1959). It positively influences followers by altering the follower's perception (Peck & Hogue, 2021) of the leader and organisation. Fourthly, moulding followers' expectations define as inspiring employees by creating belief and hope for the organisation to get their high performances (Edwards, 1973). And finally, 'managing meaning' refers to the emotional attachment of leaders and followers to the organisation (Bass & Bass, 2008). Due to affectionate sentiment, the employees give preference to office work rather than employee matters. They were committed to working and bonded by a strong relationship with each other.

Social Exchange Theory in Relation to Inspirational Leadership

Social exchange theory views leadership as social behaviour, and it results in high performances as social and economic outcomes. In this context, Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) elucidate reciprocity rules and negotiated rules as the theoretical propositions of social exchange theory. These assumptions collectively state that when one teacher receives inspiration from leadership obligates them to perform high in their job (Folkman, 2013) as a return to the organisation. This process brings high academic performance when parties get fair outcomes as a return for their investment (inspirational leadership), and it is considered in this study, too. Thus, inspirational leadership contributes to the high job performance on the part of the teachers.

Research Gap

From reviewing the literature, only a few scholars conducted a study on inspirational leadership (e.g. Hudson, 2013; Smith, 2016) concerning school. Similarly, in the context of Nepal, some scholars (Adhikari, 2019; Dhungel, 2020; Kandel, 2020; Pokharel, 2014) conducted a study about the transformative leadership of school teachers. Transformative leadership is analogous to inspirational leadership due to the presence of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation as its indicators (Bass & Bass, 2008). However, transformative leadership didn't completely represent inspirational leadership due to the absence of other dimensions like moulding followers' expectations, envisioning, managing meaning, and managing impression. In this scenario, the available past studies didn't explore all factors of inspirational leadership as explained by Bass and Bass (2008) in the context of school sectors. Thus, there is a necessity for broad research regarding inspirational leadership

in the context of school teachers in Nepal. Moreover, this study is much decisive in this wide-ranging scenery of Nepal to examine the level of inspirational leadership among school teachers. For this reason, the researcher considered this study as a milestone in reshuffling educational leadership by addressing the research problem concerning inspirational leadership among school teachers in Nepal.

Research Design

This study employed Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method, in which I followed both qualitative and quantitative approaches for collecting, analysing, and integrating data to draw new inferences (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). More specifically, the Quan strands deductively confirmed the level of inspirational leaders. Then, it was followed by Qual strands which inductively explored the existence of inspirational leadership in school teachers. For this purpose, I adopted a cross-sectional survey in Quan strands to assess the school teachers' inspirational leadership level. Similarly, I also carried out a narrative inquiry as to the methodological parts of Qual strands. The narrative inquiry was used to explore the inspirational leadership among school teachers via their narration about experiencing how they inspired their co-workers. In this case, the narrative inquiry aids me in providing a more detailed explanation of the Quan strands' results. Thus, I fundamentally employed "Sequential Quan" (Ivankova, 2014, p. 133) mixed-method approaches in this study. This research design contains two phases: the Quan and Qual strands, which are used in order. Then, I mixed both strands in sequence (e.g., Ivankova, 2014) to generate new meaning in this study, particularly at the level of findings. This merging in the level of findings from both strands supports and expands on what we confirm inspirational leadership and how it exists in the real world.

This study confined Bagmati province as the study area, and entire school teachers (N=79,911) within this province (MOEST, 2018) refers to my research population. Similarly, all the individual school teacher of Bagmati province is declared as the unit of analysis in this study.

In Quan strands, I used Cochran's corrected formula (Bartlett et al., 2001) at a 95% confidence limit ($Z=1.96$) and 50% of the proportion of success ($p=0.5$) for determining the sample size (n) of this study. Similarly, I also employed design effect ($deff=1.25$) and 5% non-response rate (United Nations [UN], 2008) in Cochran's

corrected formula. So the modified formula with design effect and non-response rate is expressed in equation 1.

$$n = \left[\frac{Z^2 p (1-p)}{e^2} \times deff \times NR \right] \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Thus, I obtained a 502 sample size for this study. After determining the sample size, I followed multi-stage cluster sampling due to the large numbers of the population and wide geographical areas of Bagmati province. In the first stage of sampling, I divided Bagmati province into three clusters based on the geographical regions; Mountain, Hill, and Tarai (e.g. Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2014), and they consist 4, 9, and 1 district respectively. The obtained sample size is allocated to the weightage of geographical regions of Nepal in Table 1.

Table 1 presents the demography of the final year engineering students and their geographical and educational backgrounds.

Table 1

Allocation of Sample Size based on the Geographical Regions

Geographical regions	No. of teachers (N)*	Weightage (Wp)	Sample (n)	Adjusted Sample (adj n)
Mountain	10200	0.1	64.08	64
Hill	61155	0.8	384.18	384
Tarai	8556	0.1	53.75	54
<i>Bagmati province</i>	<i>79,911</i>	1.0	502.00	502

* MOEST (2018)

In the second stage, I randomly selected each district from those three geographical regions. Then, in the third stage, I randomly picked up each municipality from those selected three districts. In the fourth stage of sampling, I further selected each ward from those three municipalities. Finally, in the fifth stage, I prepared the list of schools and teachers within the selected wards with the help of concerning municipality office. Then, I randomly selected one by one school from the list and continuously picked available teachers from that selected school as a sample until the desired numbers of sample size were fulfilled.

In the Qual strand, due to the data saturation, I am only able to select 4 participants in this study. So, I purposively chose those who demonstrated a high level of inspirational leadership based on Quan's results. These participants were engaged in leadership positions in the school as principal (*Head-teacher*) and coordinators. Then, I used pseudo names (Narayan, Santosh, Rashmi, and Shital) while presenting data related to them in this study to maintain anonymity.

Tools and Data Collection Procedures

I used a survey questionnaire and in-depth interview for Quan and Qual strands, respectively, for collecting data in this study. For this purpose, I developed the questionnaire in Google forms by organising the Modified Delphi approach. More precisely, from the result of the Delphi approach, I incorporated 30 items for measuring the inspirational leadership of school teachers. These all items contain five responses (never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always) arranged in the numerical continuum to make it easy for quantifying purposes. After this, I performed pilot testing to ensure the internal consistency of questions by taking 26 numbers of the pilot sample according to Hertzog (2008), which is 5% of the total sample size. For this purpose, I sent the Google forms consisting of my survey questionnaire to the selected pilot sample via messenger and electronic mail. After obtaining the pilot data, I employed the split-half method and obtained the Cronbach's alpha value of each indicator as higher than 0.7, which ensures that the items in this Likert scale were highly consistent with each other's (Santos, 1999). After the results of piloting, I finalised the tool and employed it for the data collection process via Google forms to messenger and electronic mails.

Similarly, in the Qual strand, I developed the interview guidelines in five sections (first: Intellectual stimulation, second: Envisioning, third: Managing impression, fourth: Molding follower's expectation, and fifth: Managing meaning) for employing in-depth interviews. The interview guideline was semi-flexible, where I asked one broad primary question relating to each dimension. In addition, I also probe some additional questions relating to each broad question for digging in-depth narration from participants. In this interview process, I only solicited those narrations that explained the reasons for my participants' high inspirational leadership derived from Quan strands. So, I employed the “general interview guide approach” (Butina, 2015,

p. 192) to solicit narrative in the interview process. While soliciting narration, I took a minimum of two sittings with all participants until the generated data was saturated.

I separately employed the data analysis process of quantitative (survey) and qualitative (narrative inquiry) approaches. More specifically, I analysed these two strands of data sequentially. Firstly, Quan strand is followed by Qual strand. In Quan strand, I used descriptive statistics like mean for analysing the level of inspirational leadership. Meanwhile, I employed the Best (1977) strategies for categorising the level of inspirational leadership as follows in equation 2.

$$= \frac{\text{Higher score} - \text{Lower score}}{\text{Number of Levels}} = 0.80 \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

So I categorised the obtained mean score of inspirational leadership and its dimensions in five levels as very low (1.00-0.80), low (1.81-2.60), moderate (2.61-3.40), high (3.41-4.20), and very high (4.21-5.00) in the differences of 0.80 score. Similarly, in Qual strands, I transcribed and categorised all the data regards to the situation of inspirational leadership. Then, I employed the thick description and interpretation process of narration and generated meanings. Finally, I merged the findings of these two strands to obtain new meanings for this study.

Results

This study gathered locale as rural (51.8%) and urban (48.2%), gender as male (59.8%) and female (40.2%), the age group in youth (below 40) and middle-age (40-59) as 60.6%, and 40.4% of respondents in this study.

Level of Inspirational Leadership Among Teachers

This part mentions the results related to determining the level of Inspirational Leadership and its five dimensions (Intellectual stimulation, envisioning, managing impression, moulding followers' expectations, and meaning-making) among school teachers. The level of Inspirational Leadership and its dimensions were sorted into five categories: Very high, high, moderate, low, and very low, mainly based on the derived mean score of 1-1.80, 1.81-2.60, 2.61-3.40, 3.41-4.20, and 4.21-5.00 (Best, 1997) respectively. The identified level of Inspirational Leadership and its dimensions are in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2*Level of Inspirational Leadership and its Dimensions*

Indicators of Inspirational Leadership (N=502)	Mean	Std.Deviation	Level
Intellectual Stimulation	3.96	.69	High
Envisioning	4.04	.88	High
Managing Impression	3.96	.69	High
Molding Followers Expectation	3.62	.82	High
Meaning Making	4.50	.65	Very High
<i>Inspirational Leadership</i>	3.88	.52	<i>High</i>

Table 2 elucidates that the meaning-making and moulding of follower's expectations consist of the highest (Mean=4.50, SD = .65) and lowest score (Mean = 3.62, SD=.82) than other dimensions of Inspirational Leadership. It means that meaning-making holds a very high level, but moulding follower's expectation consists only of a high level of Inspirational Leadership. Moreover, the other remaining dimensions of Inspirational Leadership consist also of a high degree of inspiration. Overall, the Inspirational Leadership account high mean value (3.88) and a low standard deviation (.52) which signifies that the school teachers consist of a high level of Inspirational Leadership and they strongly inspire their co-workers to perform the job.

Table 3 portrays the frequencies and percentage of Inspirational leadership and its dimensions among teachers. The majority of the teachers stated that they posed a high level of Inspirational Leadership in school. Inspirational Leadership is the overall mean value of its entire five indicators (Intellectual stimulation, envisioning, managing impression, moulding follower's expectation, and meaning-making) in this study.

Table 3

Frequencies of Inspirational Leadership among School Teachers

Indicators (N=502)	Very Low		Low		Moderate		High		Very High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Intellectual Stimulation	16	3.2	91	18.1	184	36.7	159	31.7	52	10.4
Envisioning	17	3.4	18	3.6	52	10.4	173	34.5	242	48.2
Managing Impression	7	1.4	12	2.4	73	14.5	257	51.2	153	30.5
Meaning Making	0	0	8	1.6	24	4.8	108	21.5	362	72.1
Molding Followers Expectation	14	2.8	50	10.0	133	26.6	209	41.6	96	19.1
Inspirational Leadership	1	0.2	9	1.8	66	13.1	308	61.4	118	23.5

Table 3 mentions that the overwhelming majority of teachers (N=362, %=72.1) demonstrated a very high level of meaning-making as one of the dimensions of Inspirational Leadership. However, there are only 10.4 % of respondents demonstrated a very high level of intellectual stimulation as one of the dimensions of inspirational leadership. In intellectual stimulation, the more numbers of respondents (N=184, %=36.7) show a moderate level, it is followed by a high level, which accounts for 31.7%. Then, a slight majority (51.2%) of respondents exhibited a high level of managing impressions, and it is followed by a very high level which was 30.5%. Besides the meaning-making and managing impression, the other dimensions hold the majority of respondents belong to the combined groups of high and very high except for intellectual stimulation, which holds 47.1% in numbers. More specifically, there is 82.7 %, and 60.7% of respondents belong to envisioning and moulding followers' expectations were the desegregate values of high and very high categories. Overall, the overwhelming majority of teachers have a high level of inspirational leadership (N=308, % = 61.4), whereas tremendously few exhibited (0.2%) a very low degree of inspirational leadership. It means that the majority of teachers in this study have a high spirit of Inspirational Leadership in their workplace.

Underlying Causes of Inspirational Leadership

Concerning a high degree of intellectual stimulation derived from Quan strand, Rashmi claimed that she often aroused her co-workers for doing new things by telling both pros and cons of the newly assigned tasks (*Personal Communication, 2021, March 22*). Access to sufficient information encourages the members to do their assigned tasks, whether old or new. Sital agreed with it and elaborates that;

I always mention the probable benefits after completion of the newly assigned tasks to my co-workers. My cooperation with them builds a supportive relationship between us. So they believe me that I will help them to complete their tasks when they feel tough" (Personal Communication, 2021 March 20).

These efforts contribute to imagining what will happens after the accomplishment of the tasks in the school. Thus, the school teachers were ready to perform their newly assigned tasks with a high level of inspiration. Similarly, there are many ways of addressing the problems raised in the school. My participant Narayan always emphasised his co-workers for revealing the new approaches which are efficient and effective. He says, "*I always try to create the situation where my co-workers explore the innovative ways to address the new challenges in effective ways" (Narayan, Personal Communication, 2021 March 21)*. In addition, Santosh claims that "*My effort makes them (Co-workers) able to think from the new perspectives about problems either they were new or old. They think from multiple perspectives and derive one effective approach to address the problems" (Personal Communication, 2021, March 22)*. These practices regarding intellectual stimulation is able to develop all teachers for performing critical analysis of the problems. It creates a number of choices and confidence levels for solving problems and also contributes to the development of innovative ideas for addressing issues.

In the second aspect of Inspirational Leadership, the envisioning among teachers is explored by the results obtained from Quan strand. Supporting it, in the Qual strand, Narayan narrated experiences about practices of envisioning as:

I always try to explore the gap in developing the vision of the school. The exploration of gaps introduces the reality of existing pitfalls regards the schools. It is crucial thing while envisioning the future looks of the school. For this purpose, I explore and prioritise the needs of the school. Thus, I imagine the ideal outlook of

school when it's all needs will fulfill (Narayan, Personal Communication, 2021 March 21).

The envisioning of the school is drawing its canvass sketching its structure, and answering how it functions in the coming days. Portraying the canvass of school depends on the future scope of the job among teachers. So, I always carry optimistic feelings towards my job due to its evergreen nature of scope as teaching (*Rashmi, Personal Communication, 2021 March 22*). Considering it, all the participants accepted that teaching is a noble profession and is socially recognised. Moreover, Santosh mentioned that teachers always draw the bright future of students and lead society for change (*Personal Communication, 2021 March 22*). He is optimistic about his profession as teaching will always exist. However, it needs continuously updating with regard to rapid changes in knowledge and technology. Considering it, Sital agreed with Santosh and argued, "*We need to update about innovations for the best survival*" (*Personal Communication, 2021 March 20*). Sital further claims that:

I always share information about innovation which happens in my field with my co-workers. Then, I told them what things we needed to update and how we could employ them? What sorts of things will we achieve from it? The raising of these questions contributes me to envision the complete picture of a futuristic school to my co-workers (Personal Communication, 2021 March 20).

Rashmi, Narayan, and Santosh accepted that they participated in the meeting which aimed to identify the upcoming problems in the future. In relation to project issues which may emerge in future, Rashmi further says:

We designed the scheme to address those upcoming problems before their occurrence. This type of preparation contributes to developing skills and solving problems with minimal harm. The notable things are that all participants developed their skills in handling the problems (Personal Communication, 2021, March 22).

The third dimension of inspirational leadership is considered as managing impression. Ensuring a high level of managing impression of teachers refers to how they present themselves among other co-workers. In this context, all participants present themselves as helpful persona to their co-workers. Santosh says, "*I am always conscious about my social good looking among my co-workers. I worry about how*

they view me? How they build their perspectives towards me? In what ways they gossip about me?" (Personal Communication, 2021 March 22). My other participant Sital also agrees with the viewpoint of Santosh about the images of teachers, which is demonstrated among their co-workers. Demonstrating images among co-workers is one of the crucial ways of managing impressions in the field of inspirational leadership. Likewise, the teachers also manage the impression among their co-workers by accepting their views and going beyond self-interest. In this context, Narayan clarified that there were many incidences in the school when he went beyond his interest in performing school work (*Personal Communication, 2021 March 21*). He also accepted others' proposals and declared them as a decision of the meeting in the school. Similarly, Sital and Rashmi imposed their good impression by postponing their household events to accomplish the school tasks. Besides this, Rashmi again claimed that:

I always consider my co-worker's thoughts while making decisions in school. I am aware of whether that decision will harm them or not. If it harms them, I will never be willing to propose the nature of the agenda in the meeting and force others to decide it. However, if the agenda is essential for the organisation, I tried to minimise its risks among co-workers. Due to this unpleasant decision, some of my co-workers were angry with me, but I had no choice. So I tried to convince them about the benefits of that decision (Personal Communication, 2021, March 22).

These contributions of my participants are exemplary work where they go beyond their interest in performing the school tasks. These activities of the teachers inspire their co-workers to high performance on the job. Furthermore, all participants claimed that they gave more preference to group work than individual work. Considering the group work, Sital argues, *"I always involve my co-workers even in the small task. Because their engagement ensures their ownership to the decision what they made and how they performed the tasks" (Personal Communication, 2021 March 20).* She further contended that their engagement also helped her to generate fruitful ideas which are supportive of organisational success. It means that group work has better chances of creating innovative ideas in the organisation than individual work. So, all of my participants felt happy when they were in a group of their co-workers.

As the fourth dimension of Inspirational Leadership, the moulding follower's expectations are also seen high among school teachers. In this context, Sital claimed that she always appreciated her co-workers when they performed a good job. She explained, *"I told my co-workers, this is a difficult task, but you accomplish it excellently. Good job, and congratulations! After my appreciation, they seem happy, and it motivates them to perform an excellent job in the near future"* (Personal Communication, 2021 March 20). Similarly, the other female participant, Rashmi, notified that she experienced doing appreciation as;

When I appreciated my co-workers, some of them were encouraged to learn new things and technology. It flourishes their problem-solving skills and builds self-confidence to address the challenging issues in the job. Moreover, it also helps them to advance their self-development. The advancement in self-development increases their moulding expectation, and it further inspires them to perform high in the job (Rashmi, Personal Communication, 2021 March 22).

Likewise, Narayan has also an analogous argument with Rashmi, and he further said that after his appreciation, their co-workers felt him as their cognate person in the school. He further mentions, *"I always assist my co-workers when they were in a difficult situation regarding school job. I provide them with a suggestion which helps them to overcome the problem. Instead of my assistance, they also help me in my job"* (Narayan, Personal Communication, 2021 March 21). This type of mutual cooperation is useful to tackle challenging tasks in school, which contribute to moulding expectations. Similarly, Santosh divulges, *"I sometimes invest my leisure time to share new information and technology to my co-workers which helps to solve their problems"* (Personal Communication, 2021, March 22). He further claims that his acts of sharing knowledge and skills sometimes inspire co-workers to face challenging tasks on the job.

The meaning-making is the fifth dimension of inspirational leadership. It refers to taking school problems as their own problem and sentimental attachment to the organisations. Narayan stated that he always took the school problem as his problem because he was engaging in that school. He further claimed that the progress in school contributed to increasing his social status (Narayan, Personal Communication, 2021

March 21). Regarding Narayan's arguments, my other participants took school problems as their personal problems. In this context, Sital notified:

I engaged in this school for more than a decade. The notable thing is that I put a lot of effort into building this school in the existing state. So I am sentimentally attached to this school and feel that I am also one part of this school (Personal Communication, 2021, March 20).

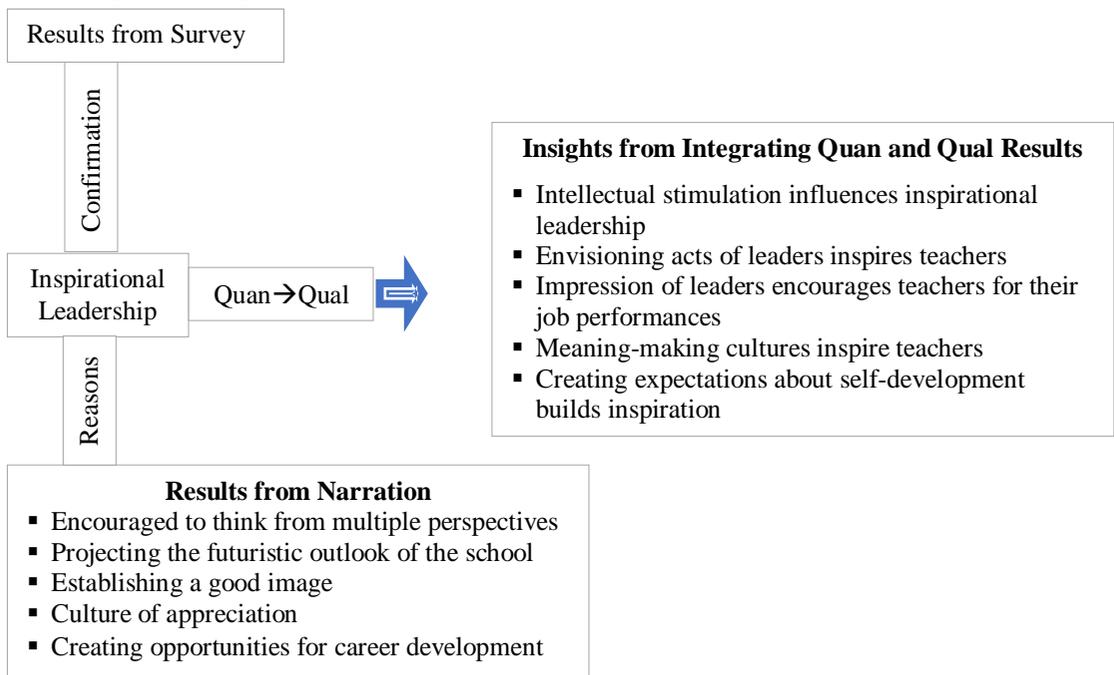
Due to the highly sentimental attachment, all participants took the school tasks as their duties and responsibility. Concerning it, Rashmi and Santosh mention that they always accomplished their assigned tasks with the full energy of effort. Furthermore, their rigorous efforts in school influenced other co-workers to perform the job.

Predicting the High Level of Inspirational Leadership

I derived the high level of inspirational leadership from the Quan strand, which is also supported by the Qual strand (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Joint Display: Integrating the Results of Quan and Qual Strands



In the Qual strand, I explored that teachers were encouraged to consider challenges from many viewpoints, visualising the future appearance of the school, offering themselves as an idol, promoting appreciating culture, and providing an opportunity for self-development in the school. These facts contribute to establishing high levels of inspirational leadership among teachers in the settings of school.

More specifically, the Quan strand, which is also reinforced by the Qual strand, provided me with a high degree of intellectual stimulation. In Qual strand, I obtained that the school teachers were encouraged to think about the problems from multiple perspectives, perform new assignments, adopt new innovative approaches, and think critically about addressing issues. These facts elevate the high level of intellectual stimulation among school teachers. Similarly, the high level of envisioning is derived due to ensuring the projection of the forthcoming outlook of the school concerning its structure and function. As well, establishing social recognition due to the teaching profession and having the opportunity for job advancement contributes to exhibiting a high level of envisioning among school teachers. Likewise, the preference for group work, going beyond the personal interest, establishing a good image among other teachers, and happiness with co-workers contribute to a high level of managing impression among teachers. Moreover, appreciation, cooperation, and creating the opportunity for self-development are the strong causes of demonstrating the high level of moulding followers' expectations. Finally, the culture of appreciation and sense of belongings in the school play a role in determining a very high level of meaning-making, which is one of the aspects of inspirational leadership. Overall, the results derived from Quan strands are supported by the Qual strands where the teachers were high intellectually stimulated, envisioned, managed impression, meaning-making, and moulding follower's expectation contributes to determining the high level of Inspirational Leadership.

Discussion

The verdicts of this study portray the high level of inspirational leadership among school teachers of Nepal. It means the school teachers were highly inspired, motivated, creative, innovative, supportive, and emotionally attached to their job and the organisation. The notable feature of inspirational leadership is that it is analogous to transformational leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008). Moreover, almost all dimensions

of these two leaderships match each other. Considering it, the findings of this study are akin to the study done by Kandel (2020), where he found a high level of transformational leadership, particularly inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation among school teachers.

Intellectual stimulation is framed as the way to encourage followers through generating innovative ideas and critically analysing the issues. These derived assumptions of intellectual stimulation are similar to Sanchez-Cardona et al. (2018), who notify that leaders constantly inspire their followers to employ innovative tactics of actions via re-thinking and critical thinking. Furthermore, the level of intellectual stimulation is derived high in this study. This outcome is similar to the results of the Kandel (2020) study which was also conducted in Nepal. Besides, some scholars (e.g., Abdullah et al., 2018) also found a high level of intellectual stimulation in their study. The high level of intellectual stimulation among teachers was seen due to problem-solving (Bolkan et al., 2011), motivation, self-engagement, and value sharing (Abdullah et al., 2018). More specifically, intellectual stimulation contributes to problem-solving by motivating intrinsically (Bass & Riggio, 2006), and encouraging to think thoughtfully among employees (Bass, 1985). This scenario is equally visible in the context of school settings in Nepal, where Dhanguna (2020) explores that the school gives maximum efforts to develop the creativity and innovativeness of its teachers by providing the opportunity to teachers to present their ideas and thoughts in the meeting. Moreover, the schools of Nepal also assess the pros and cons of teachers for improving their errors (Gautam, 2016) to ignite innovative ideas. These efforts done by schools in Nepal empower their teachers to boost innovativeness and creativity among teachers. In these considerations, the enhancement of innovation, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving ability leads to obtaining a high level of intellectual stimulation as inspirational leadership among teachers. The ensuring of high intellectual stimulation inspires employees to be innovative concerning increasing performance (Yasin et al., 2014) in the school.

Alike intellectual stimulation, this study also derived a high level of envisioning among school teachers. The high level of envisioning refers to the optimism about the future, projecting visions for the future, and creating future possibilities in the school. The finding of this study is aligned with the Singh (2016), which explored that the school of Nepal organises the meeting with several stakeholders (e.g., teachers,

parents, and community) and develops the School Improvement Plan (SIP), five-year plan, annual plan of the schools. Schools constructed these plans by ensuring the active participation and collective decision of all teachers, which poses the existence of envisioning activities in the schools of Nepal. These all features inspire teachers to focus only on ideas to attain visions. This result regarding items of envisioning aligns with the perspective of Mascareno et al. (2019) as the leaders portray the figure of organisations in the future by encouraging followers to invest their efforts. They develop creativity and innovation in the organisation by endorsing goal alignment among followers (Mascareno et al., 2019) for projecting the figure of ideal schools (Singh, 2016) in the future. Leshem (2015) also conceptualises the ideal school from perspectives like ideology, pedagogy, and inter-personal relationship. So projecting the figure of the ideal school contributes to identifying the second dimension of inspirational leadership as envisioning. Additionally, the success story of visualising the ideal school can ensure a high level of envisioning among teachers in this study.

This study also obtained managing impression as the way of presenting self-persona to co-workers to impressing them by school teachers. This finding is like to the Rosenfeld et al. (1995) concepts about impression management which notify that leaders present their image as noble to others for influencing purposes. Similarly, Dhungana (2020) also supported this result when he explored that the teachers of Nepal were impressed when the school assigned the responsibility to the right person in the school. Dhungana (2020) further reveals that the school leaders managed their impression among teachers by providing them extra allowances and incentives, appreciating their work, and establishing their images as the icon of the school. More specifically, the leaders develop their positive images among followers by interacting with them to encourage them to high performance in the organisation. For these reasons, this study derived a high level of Managing Impression among school teachers. A high Managing Impression is obtained due to demonstrating the good images, going beyond self-interest, and giving preference to the group interest. Moreover, Kandpal and Chaubey (2017) also state that developing a positive relationship between co-workers contributes to managing impressions for fulfilling their needs related to the job. The excellent presentation about self to co-workers in the job (e.g., Goffman, 1959) demonstrates a high level of managing impression in this study.

Moulding followers' expectations are established as the fourth dimension of Inspirational Leadership due to ensuring appreciation and self-development, providing constructive feedback, and creating the belief system of cooperation among teachers. In this context, Singh (2016) reveals that teachers of Nepal were motivated considering the consistency of their school leaders. For instance, school teachers see the consistency in; What did their school principal say? What types of integrity do they show? Which nature of behaviour did they demonstrate? So the inspiration among teachers also depends upon the fulfilment of their preferences and expectation regarding the school. This result is also revealed in this study where the creation of high expectations like achieving success in the job shaped the school teachers to become more creative and perform high jobs in the organisation (Qu et al., 2015). The culture of appreciation, encouragement, motivation, assistance in the tasks, and opportunity for self-development help to derive a high level of moulding followers' expectations. The setting of expectation significantly influences the perceptions of the target (Walker, 2016), and its chances of fulfilment inspire them to perform the job (Vance, 2006). It means that moulding followers' expectations in the job are associated with encouragement, inspiration, achievement, and satisfaction (Malik & Sobramanian, 2015). So, moulding followers' expectations are essential to inspire employees to create innovative ideas in the organisation, which is related to inspirational leadership.

Finally, meaning-making is identified as the fifth dimension of Inspirational Leadership by ensuring the sense of ownership and sentimental attachment in this study. This fact as meaning-making is mentioned by Walumbwa et al. (2013) as the "meaningful work" in leadership. According to them, the leaders articulate their vision as the form of values in the organisation to inspire their followers (Walumbwa et al., 2013). Similarly, Varney (2009) mentions meaning-making as the essential task of encouragement to teachers. The encouragement in the task and articulation of values contributes to obtaining a high level of meaning-making among teachers. The high level of meaning-making among the leaders inspires their employees by appreciating and valuing their work. Thus, meaning-making is one of the essential dimensions of inspirational leadership for the survival and longevity of the organisation.

Furthermore, leadership is explained by the social exchange theory (Duger, 2020) and Inspirational Leadership is one of the types of leadership. So Inspirational

Leadership is also associated with the social exchange theory in school settings. The social exchange theory explains the mutual relations between two parties (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) as a teacher and their co-workers. Connecting to this concept, the school teachers inspire their co-workers. Instead of this inspiration, the co-workers were motivated and performed high on the job (Sammons et al., 2014). More specifically, the school teachers encourage, suggest, and support their co-workers, and in return, their co-workers rethink, reanalyse, use intelligence, and solve the problems demonstrating a high level of intellectual stimulation. Similarly, the school teachers demonstrate a high level of envisioning by sketching the outlook of the ideal school, which will be in the future (Leshem et al., 2015). They also design the model for solving upcoming problems in the school. Instead of this, their co-workers develop a high level of enthusiasm to perform the job by advancing their problem-solving skills. It means that the exchange relation develops trust and confidence between both parties.

This theory also ensures mutual benefits among both parties (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) as to the school teachers and their co-workers. For instance, the school teachers manage their high level of impression to their co-workers by presenting their good images (Roberts, 2003). Due to their good images, their co-workers believed them and helped their preparedness to face challenging tasks. Additionally, the school teachers appreciate and provide constructive feedback as part of the high level of moulding followers' expectations. Similarly, their co-workers also exhibit improvement in work and also ensure their self-development (e.g., Abdullah et al., 2018). These mutual benefits between a school teacher and their co-workers are related to social exchange relations. Concerning this theory, the school teachers perform a high level of meaning-making in the school, and it creates some obligation to their co-workers as developing the feeling of ownership and emotional sentiment towards school.

In connection to the social exchange theory, the leadership highly inspired the teacher due to performing supportive relation, appreciation, constructive feedback (Harris & Mujis, 2003), creativity, innovative thinking (Mullen & Browne-Ferrigno, 2018), and sentimental attachment to the schools (Heidmets & Liik, 2014). As a result, teachers are also being committed, satisfied, motivated, and exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour in the school (Shrestha & Subedi, 2020). In the central point of

this study, I derived a high level of Inspirational leadership due to intellectual stimulation, envisioning, managing impressions, moulding followers' expectations, and meaning-making among school teachers. It means that the school teachers highly perform the job and enhance the work productivity of the schools.

Conclusion

Inspirational Leadership encourages teachers to high work performance and builds strong supportive relationships among them. The school teachers exhibit a high level of Inspirational Leadership, and also they hold a highly intellectual stimulation, envisioning, managing impressions, moulding followers' expectations, and meaning-making. So the high level of Inspirational Leadership among teachers was due to the establishment of supportive and appreciative culture, innovative thinking, critical analysis, and the development of sentimental attachment to school. It means that the social exchange relations between teachers and their co-workers were highly inspiring. The highly inspired teachers were more satisfied, motivated, and committed to the school. This fact aids in comprehending the frequency and determinants of inspiring leadership from a broader perspective. This understanding of inspirational leadership supports policymakers in developing strategies that increase satisfaction and motivation among school teachers in their jobs. This turn could enhance the performances of schools. Moreover, the elicited information is also helpful in reviewing literature for those scholars who are doing their studies in school leadership.

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