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# Perception and Practices of Academic Leadership in Technical Schools

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## Abstract

*This qualitative case study research explored leaders' and faculty members' perspectives on the nature of academic leadership at the technical schools in Kathmandu Valley. The study aimed to gain insights about academic leadership as practiced in a Nepalese technical school. Data for the study was collected from leaders and faculty members of technical schools in Kathmandu Valley through semi-structured interviews which were then analyzed thematically. Following an interpretivist worldview and drawing insights from leadership theories enabled understanding of the academic leadership practices at the technical schools. The study revealed that differences in the perspectives of leaders and faculty members on academic leadership at technical schools are influenced by the leadership knowledge, experience and training of leaders. Further, the study illustrated that understanding of academic leadership is affected by the Nepalese culture.*

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**Keywords:** Academic leadership; technical education and technical schools

## Study Context

In the last six decades, the general education system made tremendous progress, but Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), despite the fact that policy document recognized it as “an effective measure to reduce unemployment and alleviate poverty from the country” (National Planning Commission, 2011) remains not much popular among people. In many cases, the learning on TVET has been labeled as suitable for low performers or failing students. Additionally, skill training programs of TVET that are largely supply driven and focused to delivering and assessing the context of standardized curriculum fail to satisfy employers or self-

employment needs (Franchising skills, 2007) of the students. Consequently, the rate of employment after graduation from TVET providing schools is not satisfactory. Additionally, such schools do not have decent learning environments, appropriate physical facilities and training materials to meet the demands of the job market (Kusago & Posner, 2007).

In order to address these challenges, the role of government has been crucial. However, government of Nepal has not worked toward strengthening TVET system (Parajuli, 2013). Moreover, the concern of quality and employability of TVET is often raised. Karki (2012) presented that TVET has not been well

linked to the world of work. This may be the reason why 30 per cent TVET graduates did not get job as indicated by a tracer study (Wagley, 2012). In this situation, the role of Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) would be crucial in taking the lead. But, CTEVT is always at the center of debate regarding corruption and mismanagement (Edu Sanjal, 2013). Corruption and mismanagement do not only disturb the CTEVT operation but also affects the activities of the academic institutions under its umbrella (Edu Sanjal, 2012).

Technical schools are perhaps one of the most important groups of institutions for our TVET sector's future. Effective leadership among them increases productivity, performance and ultimately enhances the quality of students' performance. If leaders as well as faculty members are dissatisfied with their leadership style and also their job, they are likely to quit the job, or start being absent in workplace, or become overstressed, ultimately leading to poor organizational result. At the same time, the degree of academic leadership and ultimately the success or failure of technical schools not only depends on the role of leaders in controlling various activities including administering, guiding and supervising the technical school but also how s/he is influencing his or her subordinates to achieve the common goals. Job satisfaction among the faculty members also very much depends on leaders' integrity and leadership styles.

The government of Nepal is visioning to provide quality TVET. But without having visionary school leaders with highly satisfied TVET teachers, the objective of providing quality TVET would not be materialized. Therefore, to understand the perception and practices of academic leadership styles of principals or leaders or directors of TVET schools, will be the main focuses of the present study so that necessary intervention could be taken.

Currently, there is a lack of knowledge about the nature of leadership at technical schools in Nepal. Limited studies have been conducted to investigate

academic leadership at technical schools. Therefore, it is unclear about leadership approaches that are in practice and the approaches which would be appropriate in the Nepalese technical education context. So, this research tries to explore the academic leaders and faculty perspective on academic leadership at the technical schools in Kathmandu Valley and has set the below stated research question:

1. What are faculty members' perspectives on academic leadership at the technical schools in Kathmandu Valley?

### **Case study as my research method**

The case study as Yin (2003) and Flybjerg (2006) believe, falls under constructivist paradigm. Researching on the nature of academic leadership in private technical school fits here as it focuses to answer process questions (Yin, 2003). A case study is a specific instance that is frequently designed to study a more general principle and practices (Nisbet & Watt, as cited in Qi, 2009); it is also known as the study of an instance in action (Qi, 2009). Case study in true essence explores and as a research method investigates contemporary real life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships (Zainal, 2007). Case studies are considered useful in research as they enable researchers to examine data at micro level. As an alternative to quantitative or qualitative research, case study can be a practical solution when a big sample population is difficult to obtain (Zainal, 2007).

The qualitative case study facilitates to explore the phenomenon within the context using variety of resources. It helps to see the issues through variety of lenses which allows multiple facts of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). So, here researcher tries to explore the phenomena within the context using the variety of resources. As a researcher, I have chosen social constructivist worldview and composed observations and open ended interview (Creswell, 2009). In my research I have taken ten participants purposefully in five were the leaders in technical schools where

as five participants were the faculty members of the technical schools here in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal.

### **Leadership is ambiguous**

Some leaders' and faculty members' comments suggest that leadership at technical schools is ambiguous. Ambiguity is understood as confusion that the members experience and lack of leaders' clear direction in the day-to-day functioning of the schools.

Despite a few leaders' belief that leadership at the schools happens in an orderly manner, there are other leaders who feel that leadership is in a state of confusion such as Radha (Pseudo name) who is a program coordinator in Nursing school in Lalitpur district having 5 years of experience in leadership position in nursing school. By age, she is of 35 years (Female) and holds BSc Nursing and MPH degree and shares:

*"I see the technical school is struggling to institute regulations, policies – to put it very simply; the school at the moment does not even have an HR policy of our own."*

Radha also notes that the school has no policy of its own to plan and guide human resources development. Similarly, Ram shares that there are no other relevant documents, such as proper terms of reference for various leadership positions. This, at times, leads to confusion in the form of duplication of roles among the leaders and neglects some roles.

The comments of Rajan (Pseudonym) also indicate that the leadership at the schools is ambiguous. Rajan, a faculty member in mechanical engineering, male, 32 year and having BE and ME in mechanical, teaching experience of 8 years points out that leadership at the technical schools happens on a "trial and error basis". He observes that the leaders agree on one policy. If that policy does not work, they adopt another. It appears to him that leaders are experimenting with policies. He cites an example of inconsistency in the implementation of a policy regarding detention of students who get a certain number of overdue papers. He observes that at one

time, students with three retake papers were not allowed to write an examination, yet at other times, they were given the opportunity.

Similarly, Rajan explains that leaders are confused when they have to adopt new ways of work. He holds that when leaders have to change their leadership outlook and style as required they experience confusion. He observes that leaders' limited orientation to new systems introduced at the school confuses the members. As a result, some leaders end up not knowing what faculty members are doing. He points out that change has to be systemic for leadership to be effective:

*"The entire system at the school has to be changed: from the top management till the person who is working on daily wage. The approach itself has to be changed. Like I said, everyone is doing everything and at the end of the day nobody is doing nothing, but the good thing is, thank God, the school is running."*

Mukesh (Pseudo name) who is a faculty member in public health, male, 29 years, having master's in public health, teaching experience of 4 years and Bikash, who is a faculty member in pharmacy, male, 33 years, having masters in pharmacy and pharmacology, teaching experience of 7 years in diploma in pharmacy also indicate that leadership at the schools is sometimes difficult to understand, especially when things do not happen as expected.

### **Age gap in leadership**

Interview data and research memos reveal an age gap in leadership at the technical schools in Kathmandu Valley, especially between some senior leaders, such as the Directors, and the middle-level leaders, such as, Program Leaders and Department Chairs. The Directors are over 50 years of age, whereas the age of the middle-level leaders ranges from 30 to 45 years. The way these two groups of leaders think, believe and act is different. At times, they experienced difficulty in reaching a common agreement or decision.

Middle-level leaders at the schools consider themselves more democratic compared to the older top leaders. Pramod (Pseudo name) who is a trade head in technical school in Lalitpur district having 5 years of experience in leadership position in technical school, Pramod, by age is of 34 years (male) and holds BE in Civil engineering observes that most middle-level leaders are open and approachable to faculty members. They view top leaders as autocratic in tending to control, and occasionally overruling a committee's decisions and taking unilateral decisions. This makes the middle-level leaders feel there is no fairness in top leaders' leadership. Middle-level leaders point out that there is often a conflict between their own beliefs and how senior leaders lead. Middle-level leaders attribute the difference in leadership outlook to many factors. For instance, Hari attributes the gap to factors such as age, education, exposure to work cultures outside Nepal, social and peer background, and leaders' ability to adapt to changing systems of work. Gita - a program coordinator in Nursing school in Lalitpur district, Nepal (Pseudo name) observes that the wider the age gap, the more different is the outlook of leaders. She, 38 - female, holds 7 years of experience in leadership position in nursing school and MSc in Nursing. On the other hand, Pramod observes that while top leaders use "fixing strategies", middle-level leaders use more collegial leadership. He and Bikash interpret these fixing strategies as top leaders recording mistakes the members commit and later drawing on these mistakes to penalize them.

A wide age gap is sometimes seen as an obstacle to effective leadership at technical schools in Kathmandu Valley. Gita observes that younger leaders and faculty members hesitate to approach leaders who are much senior in terms of age and experience. This is exacerbated by some senior leaders not approving new ideas and initiatives of younger leaders and faculty members as these ideas and initiatives contradict the senior leaders' beliefs (Hari, Pseudo name, who is a trade head in technical school in Lalitpur district having 5 years of experience in

leadership position in technical school. Hari, by age is of 33 years (male) and holds BE in Civil engineering and M. Sc. in water resource management). In such situations, Hari sees senior leaders as a hindrance to the development of the school and its members. He also notes that some senior leaders hold on to the leadership position until it is time to retire or to handover after their term of office.

Gitashares that the members feel more comfortable working with leaders of their age range. She acknowledges that he is in the age group of most of the faculty members who share similar thoughts and ideas, hence, it is easier to lead them.

Similarly, faculty members, most of whom are young, prefer middle-level leaders' leadership (Mukesh, Anup (Pseudo name) who is a faculty member in computer engineering, male, 31 years, having BE in computer and M. Sc. IT, teaching experience of 8 years and Rajan). As Gita indicated, the age factor seems to play an important role in getting along with the faculty members and leading them. Most faculty members share similar views. They feel that top leaders, who are over 50 years of age, distance themselves, and this gap, combined with the power that the top leaders possess make it difficult for faculty members to interact with them. The faculty members state that even if top leaders invite their views on certain issues, they do it only as a matter of form (Bikash and Rajan). Decisions would have already been made. By contrast, middle-level leaders are considered open and they are honest in seeking the faculty members' views both in formal meetings and in other informal settings and interactions (Bikash and Rajan).

### **Discrimination against faculty members**

There is evidence of some discrimination in the way the leaders approach faculty members. Some leaders differentiate between senior and junior faculty members, and between faculty members and support staff. Research memos indicate that some leaders have stronger regard, respect and trust for expatriate

faculty members who are more experienced and qualified. However, most leaders believe they are fair in their leadership.

Some faculty members, especially younger ones, share similar concerns about leaders' discrimination between senior and junior faculty members and discrepancies in their dealings with faculty members and support staff. The discrepancy between senior and junior faculty members is noticed in terms of distributing training opportunities (Bikash and Rajan). Some faculty members point out that if there is an in-country training opportunity, it is given to the junior faculty members. However, if the same training opportunity or the next phase of it is outside Nepal, it is given to the senior faculty members and leaders irrespective of whether or not the training is relevant to them. Bikash and Rajan also point out a distinction between the top leaders' treatment of faculty members and support staff. Bikash and Rajan observe that support staff are apprehensive of the top leaders. The top leaders tell the support staff that the leaders now have the power to hire or fire members. In this regard, Bikash shares that this has instilled fear and insecurity in support staff and a few of them have resigned. Rajan believes that inequitable treatment of support staff by the top leaders has given rise to alienation. He believes that if corrective measures are not taken by the leaders, the gap may become too wide to bridge. He believes that for the school to function and progress, the efforts of faculty members and support staff should complement and support each other.

A few faculty members (Mukesh and Bikash) observe that top leaders discriminate against some members, especially those who are considered problematic. Bikash holds that the leaders point out the flaws of faculty members, rather than making attempts to understand and take initiatives to solve their differences. Consequently, faculty members start pointing out flaws of the leaders, and this pointing out each other's flaws and weaknesses worsens the situation at the schools.

### **Teachers are leaders**

Both leaders and faculty members of the three Colleges believe that teachers are leaders in their own ways. Some leaders (Radha, Hari and Pramod) believe that faculty members, as teachers, are also leaders. Though they have no formal leadership portfolio, they lead at their personal level. Hari asserts, *"I believe every teacher is a leader. They are taken as a model by students, the rest of the community, and society at large."*

He explains that not many people believe in teachers as leaders; but for him, teachers, like leaders, have a mission to perform their duty to the best of their ability, and do things in the way they think is best. He posits that good teachers will put their heart and soul into their work. Such dedication enables students to draw inspiration from their teachers as they would draw inspiration from good leaders.

Similarly, Hari believes that faculty members whether they take any kind of leadership position or not, are leaders. He claims that he makes an effort to give faculty members the realization that every member in the college is a leader.

Anup believes that faculty members as teachers are leaders. He advises that faculty members, as leaders, must lead themselves and students with good vision. Furthermore, he emphasizes that one should lead himself/herself before leading others. Some faculty members point out the need to recognize the importance of personal leadership. Ramesh adds, *"In fact, leadership does not relate to the people in official leadership position only or who have power. Every individual is a leader in his or her own right."*

### **Teacher-student lineage**

All technical schools exhibit a certain degree of teacher-student lineage among the leaders and the faculty members. A few leaders as Ram (Pseudo name) 67 – male, who is a director of a technical school in Kathmandu Valley having 30 years of experience in leadership position in technical schools and PhD in engineering, and Pramod feel there are



more advantages than disadvantages in working at an institution where they share a teacher-student lineage. Ram says that he feels comfortable to comment and distribute workload to the faculty members who once were his students. He also contends,

*“I did not get any negative feedback because most of the lecturers are young and are my students and they listen to my advice and comments.”*

Leader Pramod shares a similar observation:

*“Some are my students graduated from here, and again they are back as faculty members. It’s easier for them to approach me and vice versa. So, in a way, we have a kind of colleague relationship and also teacher-student relationship.”*

Leader Gita believes that working with the same group of people, especially with the people who have been one’s teachers or students, will help develop a positive institutional culture. However, leader Pramod argues that working for too long under the same leadership does not bring any overall improvement of the school. Pramod believes that change in leadership can bring change and development of the college. He points out,

*“I have been serving him for seven years. Everything seems same: same person, same mind-set and same way of thinking. Now we know how he is and he knows how we are.”*

A few leaders explain that there are disadvantages in leading through a teacher-student relationship. For instance, Ram shares that faculty members who were his students feel greater attachment and, at times, take advantage: they do not carry out their duties in time knowing that they will not be strict with them. Ram also observes that most leaders hesitate to refuse or oppose decisions and suggestions of the leaders who were their former teachers and presently are at higher levels than themselves.

Some faculty members (Mukesh, Bikash and Rajan) see leadership through teacher-student relationship

as a hindrance. The members believe it is inappropriate to argue and defy teacher leaders’ wishes and decisions (Bikash). Rajan posits that the existence of a teacher-student relationship hinders effective leadership at the schools. He mentions casual discussion at the schools that Directors are unable to oppose the Director’s decisions, and the Program Leaders and faculty members are unable to oppose the decisions. Bikash argues that the existence of teacher-student lineage is a challenge when members are unable to express their concerns, when their views are not considered, and when they are not able to deny the teacher leaders’ decisions. Rajan sums up the issue of teacher-student lineage as:

*“At the back of their mind or beneath the lines of whatever they have to say, the teacher student relation is still there. He believes that this hinders effective leadership at the college.”*

## **Findings**

This section looked at characteristic features of leadership at the technical schools in Kathmandu valley. The findings reveal that leadership at the technical schools is ambiguous due to the lack of adequate groundwork in framing technical school guidelines and policies. Leadership appears to be hindered by significant age gaps among the top leaders, middle-level leaders and faculty members. There is also some apparent discrimination against faculty members and support staff, especially by top leaders. Student-teacher lineage seems to impact the leadership at technical schools both positively and negatively.

## **Discussion of the Findings**

The findings and the literature attach multiple meanings to leadership. The similarities include understanding of leadership as involving power/influence, leadership as inspiration, and leadership as management. The findings are unique in seeing leadership as opportunity, as this understanding is not explicit in the literature.

Study participants see leadership as an opportunity for technical school leaders to develop personally and professionally. As leaders, they get an opportunity

to learn to make decisions either through their participation in forums where decisions are made, or when faced with occasions where they have to make decisions. Leadership also affords an opportunity for technical school leaders to collaborate with members of the schools and with agencies outside the schools, resulting in the exchange of ideas, team-building and collaboration. Additionally, leadership also gives leaders the opportunity to develop values and to evaluate themselves. Leaders believe that being role models to the faculty members requires them to develop good values and to constantly evaluate their conduct.

At technical schools in Kathmandu Valley, leadership is power when leaders affect changes they want to bring to the schools; however, the literature views leadership power more subtly as influence, such as a process of influence, interpersonal influence, and an influence relationship in order to achieve common goals. Understanding leadership as power has led top technical school leaders to align with a leadership paradigm that was associated with the early to mid-twentieth century. This older style of leadership involves impressing the will of the leaders and inducing obedience, respect, loyalty and cooperation in the members (Moore, 1927), or leadership as an act of directing and coordinating members (Fiedler, 1967). This has led some faculty members to view leadership power in a negative way. They see leadership as abuse of power in the form of leaders being arrogant, giving orders and unfairly firing members. They also point out that some leaders safeguard and protect their power territory by not accepting members' suggestions that are likely to impinge upon their power. On the other hand, leadership of middle-level leaders who believe in Democratic and Relationship approaches aligns with more recent leadership views such as influence (Gonzalez, 2012; Northouse, 2013), interaction (Bass, 1985) and social relation (Nye, 2008).

The nature of leadership at the technical schools aligns key leadership theories, approaches and styles.

The leaders at the technical schools practice a relationship approach by empowering members to share their views and including their views in making decisions (Uhl-Bein, 2006; Uhl-Bien, Maslyn, & Ospina, 2012). The leaders and faculty members of the technical schools share that leaders need to use a situational leadership approach. However, this approach is not clearly evident at the schools though supporting and delegating styles are visible as they share similarities with behavioral leadership (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1973).

In behavioral leadership, varying degrees of autocratic and democratic approaches are used by the leaders. An autocratic approach is used especially by top leaders while a democratic approach is used by middle-level leaders (DuBrin, 2001). As a result, all the leadership styles of authoritative and consultative, consensus seeking and democratic are practiced. Transformational and authentic leaderships (Bass, 1985; George, 2003) are absent at the technical schools, except for the 'care' that leaders show in their leadership. However, a few leaders and most faculty members look for transformational leadership, especially in terms of inspiration and individual consideration, and authentic leaderships in terms of the leaders' genuine desire to lead and consistency of their deeds with their words. The lack of consistency between the leaders' words and deeds is one of the prominent themes that appeared in the study.

The findings suggest that relational leadership is primarily practiced by middle-level leaders, most of whom are young. The next frequently used style is behavioral leadership, in which top leaders tend to be autocratic, while middle-level leaders are generally democratic in their leadership, reasons for which are discussed in the next section. Most middle-level leaders at the technical schools practice relational leadership. They view relational leadership as the use of their personal relations with members to boost their academic leadership and facilitate the achievement of the technical school goals.

A few faculty members point out that Nepalese culture has not yet come out of an autocratic mind-set as the members experience Autocratic leadership at their workplace. Most leaders and faculty members relate leadership of top leaders to exercise their power (autocratic). On the other hand, the leadership approach of middle-level leaders, such as program Leaders and trade heads differs from that of the top leaders. The middle-level leaders state that they follow a democratic or follower-oriented leadership approach, such as being friendly, considerate and building trust (Drew, 2010) through the use of more consultative and consensus seeking styles. Their leadership ranges from the 'Manager presents tentative decisions subject to change' to the 'Manager defines limits, asks to make decision'. This end is a democratic or follower-oriented leadership approach (DuBrin, 2001). Most faculty members agree that middle-level leaders are more democratic, open and approachable, and they are sincere in seeking members' views before making decisions. Therefore, most faculty members feel more comfortable working with middle-level leaders.

Another possibility why the top leaders use an autocratic leadership approach could be that they have experienced a more intense Nepalese cultural influence in their personal and academic life journeys. Until the 1980s in Nepal, there was limited access to newspapers, radio, television, road transport and airways. These facilities became more available and more efficient much later after Nepal gradually opened its doors to the outside world in the 1970s. Thus, top leaders' immersion in Nepalese culture is likely to have resulted in the cultivation of values different from the values of the younger middle-level leaders who have had more exposure to media and the outside world, and are now generally seen to be open and relationship focused.

An autocratic leadership approach is not preferred by the faculty members of the technical schools. Some middle-level leaders and faculty members consider autocratic leadership as a short-term leadership approach which, in the long-run, would

prove ineffective and produce negative impacts. They see the autocratic leadership approach as inefficient and discouraging for leaders and faculty members who believe in a democratic leadership approach.

This study reveals that not all the six leadership theories examined in this study are enacted at the technical schools at Kathmandu Valley. Transformational and authentic leadership are almost absent. Most faculty members contend that leaders do not motivate and inspire them; rather leaders see leadership as power and opportunity. Additionally, one of the prominent findings of this study is that technical school leaders do not generally lead by example – they do not appear walk the talk (Northouse, 2013). In contrast to transformational and authentic leadership approaches, most leaders seem to lack genuine passion to serve through leadership; rather, some leaders tend to put their rights and benefits before the benefit of the schools.

However, there is a strong need for transformational leadership and authentic leadership at the technical schools in Kathmandu valley. Members look for leaders who can inspire and who are genuinely committed to lead members with clear direction and vision. These two leaderships are necessary as transformational leadership inspires and transforms members to the desired higher level of organizational performance through the leaders' support (Brymer & Gray, 2006), and authentic leaders lead through leaders' genuine desire to lead and consistency of their words with their deeds.

There are visible disparities in the leadership at the technical schools in five distinct areas. First, there is a disparity in the leadership approaches of top leaders and middle level-leaders. Second, there is a disparity between the leadership approaches practiced at the Colleges and the leadership approaches most leaders and faculty members look for. Third, there is an unequal gender representation with fewer female leaders and academic staff. Fourth, there is a lack of leadership development programs despite participants' expression of the need for it. Fifth, there



is an apparent gap between what leaders preach and what they practice in the form of genuine desire to serve members.

According to the findings of this study, there is a difference in the leadership approaches of top leaders and middle-level leaders at the technical schools in Kathmandu Valley. While top leaders' leadership inclines towards an autocratic approach, as evident in a top-down process and a tendency to centralize power, most middle-level leaders are democratic in their leadership approach. This difference in their approaches is a challenge, especially when they cannot find a common ground. It poses a challenge especially for large institutes to bring quick changes to leadership approaches without some kind of resistance (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). On the other hand, middle-level leaders interact with members and are more open to members' views and suggestions. Faculty members, most of whom are young, align with middle leaders' democratic approach to leadership. Additionally, while there is a gap in the personal relationships of top leaders and faculty members, middle-level leaders' close personal relationships with fellow leaders and faculty members boost their leadership effectiveness at the Colleges.

The findings suggest relational and behavioral leadership are practiced at the technical schools. However, the faculty members seek transformational and authentic leadership. Faculty members feel these two leaderships are more appropriate and necessary in the technical education context, where most members are mature and qualified. Moreover, the faculty members view transformational and authentic leadership as superior, as these leaderships cater to higher values such as motivation, inspiration, and sincerity of leaders' beliefs and actions.

The findings reveal that as is the case globally, there exist gender disparities in leadership at technical schools (Avolio, 2011). The findings reflect this gender imbalance as only two of the 10 leaders were female. However, despite the underrepresentation, female leadership shows an important variance

in comparison to male leadership at the schools. First, both the female leaders interviewed have a strong belief in the democratic leadership style. They believe in working as a team, avoid giving orders and prefer to be friendly, approachable and consensus seeking. This agrees with the literature that female leaders prefer interacting with members and have a natural sensitivity to members (DuBrin, 2001). Second, the two female leaders at technical schools shared that besides leading and teaching at the college, they are responsible for their family. Studies on women in leadership use terms such as 'double-day' (Avolio, 2011) to discuss a situation where females are responsible for their family as well as their official job. It is possible that the double day is one of the reasons for the underrepresentation of women in the technical school leadership positions.

Most technical school leaders share a general concern about the lack of leadership training opportunities, and express that they could lead more effectively if they were given some kind of leadership training. Currently, they fulfil their leadership roles either by observing or consulting other leaders, reading about leadership, and mostly through experience. However, leaving leaders to chance and personal experience presents unnecessary risks to the leaders and the organization (Walseth, 2009). Moreover, leading through experience and personal initiative are hard ways of learning to lead (Inman, 2009).

## Conclusion

The research question for this study is 'what is the nature of academic leadership at the technical schools of Kathmandu Valley? The outcome of this study was an empirical understanding of leadership at technical schools, demonstrating a fusion of different leadership's style. This chapter summarizes the study, discusses its contributions, and makes recommendations for future research. The nature of academic leadership at the technical schools is a complex and emergent fusion of different leadership style. None of the six leadership style works on technical schools in Kathmandu Valley. The use of English as the language of instruction in

the Nepalese technical schools and technical education environment has helped leaders and faculty members to gain exposure to and adopt Western leadership approaches. Moreover, most leaders at the technical schools have pursued their postgraduate studies in the west, in countries such as Australia, Canada and the UK. However, there are no western leadership approaches that fit neatly in the technical schools due to the strong influence of Nepalese culture.

The privatizing has put leadership at the technical schools at a crossroads. As a private institution, technical schools has options to develop leadership approaches that will enable it to function as an effective academic institution and as a successful corporate institution.

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