

## Practices of Local Curriculum at School Level in Jhapa District: A Review

Yonden Sunuwar  
Assistant Lecturer  
Kanakai Multiple Campus, Surunga, Jhapa  
email: sunuwaryonden@gmail.com

### Abstract

Out of the subjects to be taught at the basic level (Grades 1–8) in school-level education in Nepal, one is a local subject. The main objective of this study is to analyze the local curricula developed and implemented by three municipalities (Kanakai, Birtamod, and Damak) of Jhapa district. Based on Taba's model of curriculum development and Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines, 2019, the local curricula of the three municipalities have been reviewed. As per the results obtained, the curricula of the three municipalities have clearly followed the steps of the above model and the framework of the guidelines. It was found that after ascertaining the level-wise competencies based on local needs diagnosis, the present curricula have attempted to match these competencies with the determination of course contents, content elaboration, and evaluation process. The curricula cover topics such as urban-specific social behavior, cultural-religious activities, geographical diversity, occupation and business, local environmental problems, health and yoga, special personality introduction, disaster management, etc.

**Keywords:** local curriculum, stakeholders, themes, competencies, specification grid, evaluation

### Study Context

Curriculum includes all the learner's experiences in or outside school that are included in a program which has been devised to help him/her develop mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and morally (Crow & Crow, 2006, p. 249 as cited in Aryal & Niure, 2010, p. 48). The curriculum guides the teacher and learners through the teaching-learning process and decides the destination. In the present context, the Government of Nepal has made provisions for the development of a local curriculum in addition to the curriculum of other subjects in education at

the school level (classes 1–8). Defining the local curriculum, the Primary Education Curriculum, 2005 has stated, "The curriculum that is developed and implemented with the participation of local stakeholders by incorporating subject matters as per the local needs" (Curriculum Development Center, 2019). Various legal and policy sources have confirmed the rationale for the development and implementation of local curricula.

According to the Constitution of Nepal, 2015, every person and community shall have the right to participate in the cultural life of their community as a fundamental right, and every Nepali community residing in Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script, culture, cultural civilization, and heritage (Nepal Law Commission, 2015, Article 3, Sub-Article 2-3).

The Local Government Governing Act, 2017 provides permission, monitoring, and regulation of the schools to provide education in the mother tongue (Section 11, Sub-Section J. 4) and the protection, promotion, and standardization of educational knowledge, skill, and technology at the local level (Section 11, Sub-Section J. 18) under the tasks, duties, and authority of the Municipality (Timilsina, 2017).

The Report of the National Education Commission, 1992 recommends the following in respect of the future curriculum: (a) The non-implementation of activities related to the rural environment in the curriculum has led to the students dropping out of the school due to a lack of interest in the academic activities of the school; (b) the development of knowledge and understanding in the curriculum adjusting the various aspects of ethnic life. (c) There is a need to make the primary-level curriculum relevant and practical to the needs of the country. It is appropriate to meet regional and local needs (Sharma, 2005).

The concept paper of the fifteenth Periodic Plan (2019/2020-2023/2024) of Nepal mentions the following strategy:

In addition to revising the curriculum and textbooks of school education in a timely manner, implementing an integrated curriculum from Grades 1 to 3 of the basic level, and arranging the use of the mother tongue, local language, or Nepali language as the medium language for basic level teaching and learning as per the needs, the capacity of the local level will be developed by developing the

school level curriculum and text materials from the local level according to the standards set by the federal level.

The Curriculum Development Center, Nepal, in the Primary Education Curriculum, 2005 and 2006, at the primary level (Grades 1–5), included local subjects or mother tongue and maintained 4 weightage and 100 full marks. Similarly, in the Basic Education (Grades 6-8) Curriculum, 2012, it was mentioned as mother tongue, local subject, Sanskrit, or any other subject, and it was fixed as weightage 5 and full marks 100.

In the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2018, the teaching hours in the local curriculum have been allocated 5 credit hours, i.e., 160 hours annually for Grades 1-3, and 4 credit hours, i.e., 128 hours annually for Grades 4–8. In the said framework, the following policies regarding local curriculum have been mentioned: (a) development of local curriculum and textbooks in accordance with local needs; (b) development of local curriculum and textbooks based on the national curriculum framework; (c) amendment of course contents as per the requirements and assessment of learning achievement from local level; (d) to provide child-centric, local need-specific flexibility in the local curriculum; (e) to make the local authorities competent and responsible in the technical and administrative manner for the formulation and implementation of the local curriculum that is structured in the national curriculum; (f) decisions to be taken by the schools regarding its implementation, annual program of the school, classroom management, and instructional strategies; and (g) its approval be made from the curriculum related authority in the provincial or local level (Curriculum Development Center, 2018).

In the same way, in the curriculum of the basic level (Grades 1-3) in 2019, for local subjects from Grades 1 to 8, the credit hours and annual working hours have been assigned according to the national curriculum framework, as well as mother tongue, local history and culture, Sanskrit language, and activities related to subjects based on local knowledge, skill, art, and technology.

The need for a local curriculum in the context of present school education is evident from the study of the above-mentioned legal and policy provisions. Since the local curriculum is based on the principle of place-based education, it can be considered an area-based curriculum. Highlighting on the concept and need of local curriculum, Subedi (2018) claimed that "school-based curriculum development" refers to different

explanations such as "curriculum decentralization", " curriculum localization", "school focused curriculum", "the local curriculum" etc. and in Nepal, school-based curriculum development is considered as the local curriculum and currently its provision is mandatory in teaching learning processes of primary level schools (pp. 57-58). The Curriculum Development Center has made it mandatory to teach a local subject in each class at the basic level (Grades 1–8) of schools across the country. Although the local curriculum has not yet been developed and implemented in all the municipalities and rural municipalities of Jhapa district, the structural analysis of the recently implemented local courses in the three municipalities is the main concern of this study. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to analyze the structural nature of the local curricula currently in operation in Jhapa district. The conclusion of this study can help municipalities, rural municipalities, and schools draw concepts for developing local curricula in their context, and subject teachers can also benefit in terms of implementing local curricula at school. This study has been limited to exploring the introductory references to what level-wise competencies are placed in local curricula and what subject matters or contents are included in the curriculum.

### **Analytical Framework**

Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines (2019) and Taba's curriculum development model have been considered as the basis for the structural analysis of the local curriculum practiced in the schools of Jhapa district.

### **Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines**

The Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines (including Mother Tongue), 2019, published by the Curriculum Development Centre, Government of Nepal, mentions the structure of the local curriculum, potential subject areas, and implementation process. The structure includes (a) competence or objectives, (b) content, (c) class-wise learning achievement, (d) teaching methods and procedures, (e) student assessment, (f) scheduling (course load or weightage), and (g) curriculum elaboration. Therefore, the possible subject areas include (a) mother tongue, (b) culture, social diversity, history, cultural wealth, archaeology, (c) traditional and prevalent local skills and arts, (d) health, cleanliness, environment conservation, and (e) miscellaneous. Likewise, it is stated that under the process of curriculum implementation, in the case of the textbook not being available, the students, teachers, and the entire concerned stakeholders can

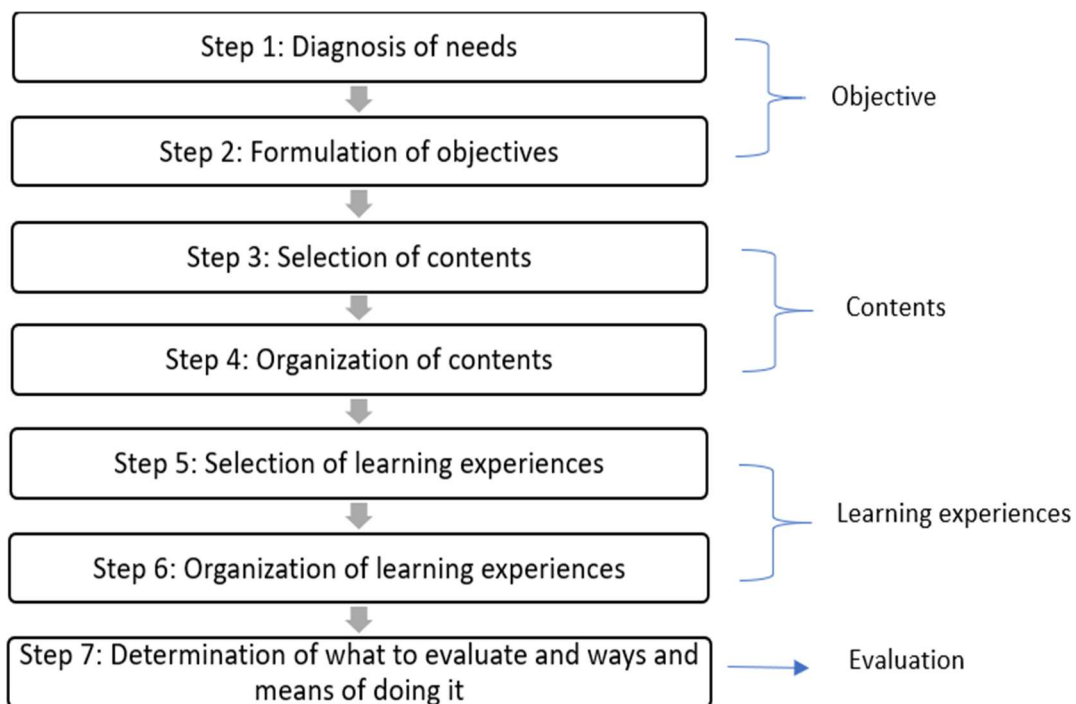
implement the curriculum with joint efforts, and the student can get the prescribed knowledge, skill, and attitude of the curriculum by engaging in direct activities or by discussing with a knowledgeable person or a resource person.

### Taba's Model

This study is based on Taba's model of curriculum development because this model is considered to be more useful when developing the curriculum at the local or school level. This model, propounded in 1962 by Hilda Taba, mentions seven linear steps (Fig. 1) in the context of curriculum development diagnosis of needs (Taba, 1962, as cited in Aryal & Niure, 2010, pp. 77–86).

**Figure 1**

#### *Taba's Model of Curriculum Process*



Since the above curriculum model is considered as a representative model, an attempt has been made in this study to analyze aspects such as whether the implemented curricula have diagnosed the overall needs of learners and the community; what objectives have been set; whether objectives have been chosen and organized as per the

objectives; what methods and activities have been put in place to achieve those objectives; and what means and procedures have been prescribed for assessing the learning outcomes.

### **Study method**

Since this is a critical and qualitative study, the curricula implemented by Kanakai, Birtamod, and Damak municipalities of Jhapa district have been analyzed and discussed in the framework mentioned above. This study has been carried out after obtaining permission from the Education, Youth, and Sports Section of the concerned municipality.

### **Structure of Local Curricula being Implemented in Jhapa District**

The Government of Nepal started implementing new curricula in Grades 1 and 6 at the school level in the academic year 2020 . Although the curricula and textbooks for other subjects are prepared by the Curriculum Development Center, the responsibility for the development and implementation of the curriculum and textbooks for local subjects has been handed over to the local government. Jhapa district has a total of eight municipalities (Nagarpalika) and seven rural municipalities (Gaunpalika). Among them, local curricula of Kanakai, Birtamod, and Damak Municipalities have been purposively selected for the review. The structure of the local curriculum in the above municipalities has been introduced gradually below.

#### ***Local Curriculum of Kanakai Municipality***

Kanakai Municipality has named the local curriculum "Kanakai Gyanmala". The Education, Youth, and Sports Section of Kanakai Municipality has prepared a unified local curriculum for Grades 1 to 8 through the local curriculum development sub-committee, approved it by the Municipal Education Committee on March 28, 2021, and started implementing it in Grades 1 and 6 from the academic session 2020. At present, textbooks are being published and taught in schools according to this curriculum in Grades 1, 2, and 3. The curriculum structure of Kanakai Gyanmala is as follows:

#### **1. Introduction**

This section covers the context of the local curriculum, concept and theoretical basis, rationale, context of the curriculum in the Municipality, national objectives of

school education, curriculum structure of school education, medium of education, and curriculum implementation plan.

## 2. Level-wise competencies

A total of eight level competencies to be achieved at the end of the basic level are specified as follows:

- i. Personality development through discipline, healthy eating, positive thinking, yoga, and practical skills;
- ii. To awaken respect for local festivals, costumes, mother tongue, and living conditions among different castes and to awaken awareness against social evils and superstitions;
- iii. To identify the general geography and geographical specificity of one's own municipal area;
- iv. To develop a positive spirit in identifying and preserving, promoting, and propagating natural and man-made tourist spots and public property within its own municipal area;
- v. To identify local skills, employment, industries, and businesses and create a general framework for the scheme for selecting and operating suitable industries or businesses for the income of their households;
- vi. Inculcating respect for labor and developing a positive attitude towards frugality, savings, and entrepreneurship;
- vii. The development of the habit of linking education to work; and
- viii. To show respect to the nation and the nationality by recognizing the good deeds of the great personalities and martyrs of the local area who have contributed to their country.

## 3. Grade-wise learning outcomes

In this curriculum, grade-wise learning outcomes are determined. According to the curriculum, there are 14 grade-wise learning outcomes in Grade 1, 12 in Grade 2, 12 in Grade 3, 16 in Grade 4, and 14 in Grade 5. Similarly, 18 learning outcomes in Grade 6, 19 in Grade 7, and 19 in Grade 8 have been mentioned as grade-wise.

## 4. The scope and order of the subject matter or content

In the selection and organization of the subject matter in this curriculum, there are only four subject areas divided into (a) positive behavior and social diversity, (b) the geography of the municipal area, (c) tourism and business, and (d) nation and nationality. Lessons based on grade-wise learning outcomes are included within each subject area.

#### 5. Elaboration of the content

In the class-wise form, the curriculum has been elaborated in tabular form in various headings such as subject areas, learning outcomes, content elaboration, teaching-learning activities, evaluation process, and credit hours.

#### 6. Teaching time period

In the curriculum, the credit hour for Grades 1-3 has been fixed at 5 and the annual 160 teaching hours, the credit hours for Grades 4-8 has been fixed at 4 and the annual 128 teaching hours, where 32 teaching hours represent one credit hour.

#### 7. Learning facilitation process

The possible teaching methods in Grades 1-3 have been proposed as demonstration, collaborative class, field observations, project work, storytelling, role-play, dialogue, discussion, games, experimental work, problem solving, creative work, and technology-equipped classrooms, and the proposed teaching methods for Grades 4-8 include discussion, dialogue, project work, field study, problem solving, inquiry, storytelling, role-play, case study, audiovisual material display, debates, and speech.

#### 8. Student evaluation methods, procedures, techniques and tools

The local curriculum mentions the continuous evaluation system and student portfolio management under the student evaluation process of Grades 1-3, while the techniques of evaluation include class participation, oral work, written work, project and practical work, performance and demonstration, peer evaluation, Self-evaluation, feedback from parents, and dialogue and discussions. Similarly, with regard to the tools of evaluation, observation, checklists, rating scales, rubrics, tests, forms, context, event descriptions, pictures, reading materials, audiovisual material, short tests, etc. have been suggested. On the other hand, under the student evaluation process in Grades 4-8, there is a provision for a formative evaluation of 50 percent of full marks and a summative evaluation of 50 percent of full marks. Based on the overall evaluation of Grades 1-8, the student's achievement will be categorized in the student progress report through the letter grading system, which includes six grades from high to low: A+, A, B, C, D, and E, respectively. Outcome indicators from Grades 1 to 5 have also been stated area-wise to record the learning outcomes evaluation of students.



## 9. Annex

In the last part of the curriculum, a summary of the curriculum and the names of the local curriculum development committee and names of the teachers who participated in the curriculum development workshop are mentioned.

### *Local Curriculum of Birtamod Municipality*

Birtamod Municipality has prepared the local curriculum for the basic level (Grades 1–8) by naming it "Acharan Sachetana Shiksha (Conduct Awareness Education)". In the first phase of the academic year, 2019, the implementation of curriculum in Grades 3 and 4 was started in the schools within the municipality, and presently, the teaching has been conducted by publishing textbooks of the local curriculum through Grade 8. The structure of "Acharan Sachetana Shiksha" is as follows:

#### 1. Introduction

Under this title, a brief introduction has been presented mentioning the needs of the curriculum, the components of the curriculum and the aspects emphasized.

#### 2. Level-wise general objectives

After classifying six subject areas in the curriculum, the level-wise general objectives to achieve area-wise at the end of the basic level have been determined as follows:

##### 2.1 Conduct and self-defense (Acharan ra atmaraksha)

- i. To introduce the need and importance of conduct and self-defense;
- ii. Be clear about the methods to be adopted for self-defense.
- iii. To maintain etiquette among oneself, one's family, and the community;
- iv. To express respect and honor for the family, community, and nation;
- v. Be alert against social evils, untouchability, superstition, etc.;
- vi. To identify local distinguished persons, take inspiration from their positive actions, and implement them accordingly.

##### 2.2 Personality development

- i. To develop personality and leadership abilities in the children according to their age group and apply them in practice.

##### 2.3 Nutrition, health, and yoga education

- i. To identify the importance of organic food available in the environment and to conserve and utilize it properly;

- ii. To find ways to prevent disease before treatment to stay healthy;
- iii. To use the importance of physical exercise and yoga in intelligent practice;
- iv. Be aware of the things to know about smoking, drinking, and other substances;
- v. To manage waste to keep the local environment clean and tidy;
- vi. Adopt a simple and scientific procedure for obtaining information regarding fertility education and menstruation problems.

#### 2.4 Our religion, culture, and local folk musical instruments

- i. To make it practical to have a positive attitude towards our religion, culture, and local folk musical instruments;
- ii. To acquire knowledge about their own language, costumes, folk culture, rituals, etc. prevalent in the local community;
- iii. To identify the prevailing superstitions, bad cultures, and orthodox traditions at the local level and strive to end them.

#### 2.5 Transportation and communication technology

- i. Be careful about traffic rules as well as means of transportation.
- ii. To use the correct information while obtaining information about the importance of instruments and means of communication.

#### 2.6 Environment, natural calamity, and pollution control

- i. To make it practical to participate in the awareness programs at the local level to keep the social and family environment healthy and clean;
- ii. To rescue victims of accidents and natural disasters at the local level;
- iii. To play an important role in controlling dust and pollution in the local environment.

### 3. Determination of area and order

In the third part of the curriculum, the area and order of the subject matter have been listed grade-wise and title-wise. The main subject area of Grades 3-6 has already been introduced under level-wise general objectives above, while the main subject area or theme of Grades 1-2 and Grades 7-8 has been introduced under the elaboration of learning outcomes. The main subject areas of Grades 1-2 are conduct and behavior, personality development, nutrition and health, we and our culture, our service facilities, and our Birtamod, while the main subject areas of Grades 7-8 are ethics, leadership development, public health, yoga education, Birtamod Municipality, business and employment, nature and humans, information communication, and technology.

#### 4. Elaboration of learning outcomes

In the fourth order of the curriculum, the elaboration of learning outcomes for Grades 1-2 and 7-8 has been presented in tabular form that includes area, content, learning achievement, elaboration of learning achievement, potential teaching activities, evaluation process, and credit hours, while area, learning achievement, elaboration, possible teaching-learning activities, possible evaluation process, and credit hours have been mentioned for Grades 3-6. The number of grade-wise learning outcomes is 29 in Grade 1, 31 in Grade 2, 32 in Grade 3, 45 in Grade 4, 45 in Grade 5, 44 in Grade 6, 29 in Grade 7, and 29 in Grade 8. Under the teaching time limit, the total teaching hours for Grades 1-2 have been mentioned as 160, while for Grades 3-6 and 7-8, the total credit hours have been stated as 120 and 128, respectively.

#### 5. Evaluation process

The curriculum includes sub-headings such as time limit allocation, student evaluation process, internal assessment, and summative evaluation under the evaluation process. Under the teaching time limit, 5 credit hours and 160 annual hours for Grades 1-3 and 4 credit hours and 128 annual hours for Grades 4–8 have been maintained. In the student evaluation process, the evaluation tools, procedures, and documentation of Grades 1-3 will be followed by the provisions of the basic level (Grades 1–3) curriculum, 2019, while the evaluation of Grades 4–8 will have 50 percent of the formative weightage and 50 percent of the summative weightage. The tools for formative evaluation (internal evaluation) have been mentioned: class work, home assignments, project work, community work, behavior change, observation, creative work, terminal examination, etc. Similarly, the final examination will be conducted by preparing a specification grid for summative evaluation and asking objective, very short, short, and long answer questions by separating knowledge, understanding, application, and higher efficiency levels.

#### ***Local Curriculum of Damak Municipality***

Damak Municipality has prepared the local curriculum for the implementation from the academic year, 2020 in Grades 1-5 with the name "Hamro Damak". The structural nature of this course is as follows:

### 1. Introduction

In this section, the rationale for developing a local curriculum for Damak Municipality and the main topics included in this curriculum are summarized.

### 2. Level-wise competencies

The municipality has prepared only the local curriculum for Grades 1–5 and has decided to fix the eligibility for Grades 1–8 as follows:

- i. General Introduction of Damak Municipality (Geographical condition, borders, population, ethnicity/Jantajanti, language, religion, education);
- ii. Identification and preservation of natural, cultural, and archaeological property and resources within the Damak Municipality;
- iii. Identification, preservation, and following of the culture, language, costume, and social values of the community situated within the Damak Municipality;
- iv. Introduction and preservation of historical and tourist places, monasteries, caves, lakes, etc. located inside the Damak Municipality;
- v. Identification and application of local professions, businesses, entrepreneurship, and technology;
- vi. Identification, preservation, and promotion of local herbs, medicines, and local medical practices;
- vii. Introduction and use of local sports, yoga, and exercises;
- viii. Introduction to the local government system;
- ix. Identification of local-level environmental problems and solutions to them; conservation and promotion of the environment and biological diversity;
- x. Information on measures to identify and manage potential disasters at the local level;
- xi. Identification of local personalities, local organizations, and services provided by them; and
- xii. Basic awareness and use of health and hygiene.

### 3. Content selection, area, and subject matter

Eight areas of content selection as the title of the curriculum, and the topics that are covered under: (a) Our Damak Municipality; (b) Our resources and heritage; (c) Our culture, language, costumes, and values; (d) Our individuals, personalities, and organizations; (e) Our profession, business, entrepreneurship, and technology, (f) Our environment and biodiversity, (g) Our sports, food, health, and sanitation; and (h) Disaster and disaster management.

#### 4. The area and order of the subject matter

Under this heading, the subject area and order of the subject matter have been presented according to the subject area and grade-wise.

#### 5. Elaboration of content

In the next part of the curriculum, the subject matter in tabular form has been elaborated in a systematic manner, which includes areas, subjects, learning abilities, elaboration of the subject matter, teaching-learning activities, evaluation, and weightage, respectively. The number of grade-wise learning competencies in the curriculum is 23 in Grade 1, 22 in Grade 2, 25 in Grade 3, 19 in Grade 4, and 21 in Grade 5. Teaching-learning activities mainly include discussion, oral questions, observation, field visits, project work, demonstration, acting, interaction, feedback by the teacher, etc. Similarly, the model questions that can be asked to students are included in the evaluation.

#### 6. Student evaluation

According to the curriculum, a formative or continuous assessment system for the evaluation of Grades 1-3, 50 percent formative and 50 percent periodic evaluation (written and oral examination) for Grades 4-5, and 40 percent formative and 60 percent periodic evaluation (written and oral examination) will be adopted. Out of the 60 percent marks, a practical examination of 25 percent will be conducted. For the summative evaluation of Grades 4-7, the pass mark is 40 percent, and the time period of the written examination is 90 minutes. In terms of the determination of time, the weekly weightage is 5 periods (credit hour 5) of Grades 1-3 and 160 hours of annual teaching time, while the weekly weightage of Grades 4-8 is 4 periods (credit hour 4) and the annual teaching time is 128 hours. Apart from this, separate teaching hours and marks for Grades 1-3 and Grades 4-8 have also been divided according to the subject area. Similarly, a specification grid consisting of very short, short, and long answer questions has been structured for the criteria of formative evaluation and summative evaluation.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The local curricula practiced in the above three municipalities in Jhapa district have been analyzed by comparing them with Taba's model and the Local Curriculum Development and Implementation Guidelines, 2019, published by the Curriculum Development Center, Government of Nepal (Hereinafter referred to as 'Guidelines').

### **Discussion of Local Curriculum of Kanakai Municipality**

First of all, looking at the components of "Kanakai Gyanmala" of Kanakai Municipality, it is clearly found that the seven stages of Taba have been clearly applied. The participation of the concerned teachers in the workshop on curriculum development, as stated in the name list in the annex section, reveals that the situation has been analyzed for diagnosis of needs, so the curriculum development has been started through collection of needs in representative schools using structured questionnaires. In the second phase, level-wise competencies and grade-wise learning outcomes have been mentioned under the selection of objectives, while in the third and fourth phases, the selection and organization of the subject matter or contents have been adopted by mentioning the area and order of the subject matter based on the objectives.

Similarly, the content elaboration has been mentioned in "Kanakai Gyanmala," just like the selection and organization of learning experiences in the fifth and sixth phases of the Taba's model have been. In the seventh phase, the student evaluation method, procedure, techniques, and tools have been stated under the evaluation process. It seems that inclusion has been addressed in the curriculum by mentioning the facilitation process for differently-abled children in the teaching-learning process. Apart from this, Kanakai Municipality also seems to have implemented the procedural framework of curriculum development mentioned in the guidelines issued by the Government of Nepal to the letter. The framework mentions competencies or objectives, contents, grade-wise learning outcomes, teaching methods and procedures, student assessment, determination of time (teaching weightage), and elaboration of curriculum, respectively, and those components have been also clearly mentioned in "Kanakai Gyanmala".

The local curriculum published by Kanakai Municipality mainly seeks to develop mixed competencies among the children studying at the basic level (Grades 1–8), such as to develop positive behavior, respect for social diversity, recognize their municipality geographically, politically, economically, and culturally, and adapt to the respectable people and their contributions within the municipal area. Even so, with reference to grading system, five grades have been stated in Kanakai Gyanmala while there are eight grades (i.e., A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D, NG) as per the present national criteria. In addition, at the grade-wise level, some contents seem to be repetitive, overlapped, and not learner-centered.

### **Discussion of Local Curriculum of Birtamod Municipality**

Birtamod Municipality seems to be trying to identify its local curriculum by its name. When the curriculum here, known as "Acharan Sachetana Shiksha (Conduct Awareness Education)," is compared with the stages of Taba's curriculum development model, the components of the curriculum seem to have resembled this model. It is clear that the municipality has first named the curriculum with the main objective of improving the behavior of the children studying in the school on the basis of needs collection, which corresponds to the first phase of the Taba model. Then, the mention of level-wise general objectives thematically addresses the second stage of the model, while the provision of grade-wise and theme-wise areas and order of the subject matter appears to include the third and fourth stages of the model, i.e., the selection and organization of the contents. Similarly, the fifth and sixth stages of the model seem to have been the selection and organization of methods by including the elaboration of learning outcomes, while under evaluation as a seventh step, this curriculum does not mention the detailed procedures of evaluation, but it mentions the possible means in the evaluation column of the elaboration of learning outcomes, and in the last page of the curriculum, the student evaluation process has been presented briefly for Grades 1–8. Similarly, this local curriculum seems to have clearly outlined the structure as per the guidelines.

Although the curriculum published by Birtamod Municipality aims mainly to raise awareness about conduct among children, it seems to be trying to develop a sense of self-esteem; develop skills of self-defense and personality or leadership development; be aware of nutrition and health; make proper use of transport, communication, and technology; take information about geographical, social, economic, educational, and profession and vocation; and be aware of environmental problems, but the subject matter is included from a much wider area, which can be studied in other subjects such as social, health, and moral education of the respective classes. This curriculum includes useful topics such as conflict management, smart cities, and the use of social media, however, local mother tongues feel less emphasized in the curriculum. There is no special provision about the learning process in this curriculum for differently-able students. In addition, it seems that the curriculum does not have a vertical relationship within its subject matters, and in some places, the subject matters under the subject area are not relevant.

### **Discussion of Local Curriculum of Damak Municipality**

When compared to the local curriculum "Hamro Damak," published by Damak Municipality, with the curriculum development model of Taba's model, it was found that the curriculum followed the seven stages of this model. According to the response received from the Education Officer of Damak Municipality, after many interactions, discussions, and suggestion collection with the stakeholders, this local curriculum has been prepared, so the diagnosis of needs was found to have been employed in the first phase of curriculum development. The level-wise competencies mentioned in the "Hamro Damak" curriculum (Grades 1–8) appear for the second stage of the Taba model; the selection of subject matter and subject area as well as subject matters for the third and fourth stages; the elaboration of the subject matters for the fifth and sixth stages; and the student evaluation for the seventh stage. Similarly, the structure of this course appears to be in line with the framework laid down by the Government of Nepal under the guidelines.

The local curriculum developed and implemented by Damak Municipality seems to include objectives and contents to develop capabilities in children at the basic level to identify various aspects of their municipality, be aware of the conservation of various resources and heritage available within the municipality, be positive about the rituals and culture of the local community, identify local personalities, adopt local professions, businesses, and technology, be aware of health and sanitation, acquire disaster management skills, and so on. Although the curriculum attempts to keep the subject matters mixed in nature, it does not seem to include the teaching process to be followed for differently-able students, and the subject matters and activities for the protection and promotion of local mother tongues are minimal. In addition, the evaluation system of Damak Municipality does not match with the present evaluation system of Grade 1 through 12.

### **Conclusion**

In Nepal, the concept of local curriculum was first brought in 1992 A.D. and was made mandatory to implement local curriculum in primary level from 2005 A.D. Local curriculum is that curriculum that has been designed to realize the concept of "think globally, act locally" by incorporating local themes and using local expertise with the participation of stakeholders in the school. With the expectation that 'the local curriculum can address those local specialties that the national curriculum cannot', three separate local curricula implemented by three local



governments in Jhapa district were compared to the Taba model of curriculum development introduced by Hilda Taba, and the results indicated that all the curricula have been designed in line with the stages suggested by this model and the procedural framework as indicated by Local Curriculum Development Guidelines, 2019. Apart from this, these curricula have emphasized generic themes such as local social characteristics, behavior improvement, mother tongue, costumes, finance, business, tourism, geographical uniqueness, special personalities, organizations, health and yoga, and disaster management. Although three selected municipalities of Jhapa district have experienced the implementation of their respective local curricula at schools, there is a burning need to have an empirical study of effectiveness of local curriculum implementation at local level, especially regarding to find out what changes these curricula have brought in students and what gaps are there between policy and implementation.

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