DECENTRALIZED SCHOOL GOVERNANCE POLICY:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GENERAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
AND COMMUNITY-MANAGED SCHOOLS IN NEPAL

Mukunda Mani Khanal

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Graduate School of Public Administration
National Institute of Development Administration

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July 2013
ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: Decentralized School Governance Policy: A Comparative Study of General Public Schools and Community-Managed Schools in Nepal

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Degree: Doctor of Philosophy (Development Administration)

Year: 2013

The literature reviewed for this study revealed that school governance policies have changed over time to respond effectively both to national demands and global changes. These changes take place, time and again, due to the shift in roles of the national government and changes in the technological and socio-economic profiles of a nation. As a result, centralized governance policy appears, disappears, and reappears in many countries in a cyclic process. The movement toward decentralizing the responsibility of school governance to communities has become a global phenomenon, particularly since the 1990s. However, the consequences of this are contentious. With the aims of enhancing greater community participation and retaining students in public schools, the government of Nepal has introduced two different policies; namely, the General Public School (GPS) policy and the Community-Managed School (CMS) policy guided by the decentralized school governance policy of 2002. Since then it has remained a problematic domain, with conflicts between choices of centrally-controlled and locally-managed GPS policy or community-owned and locally-governed CMS policy.

Studies conducted in Nepal repeatedly claim that CMSs are better off than their GPS counterparts. Empirical evidence for or against this claim has been scarce for two reasons: one, several studies suggest the generally positive effects of decentralization in education, but no studies have dealt with implementation outputs
due to their methodological limitations. Two, much attention has been paid to the policy-making process, but how the policy is implementing at the school level has been almost neglected. This paper therefore gathers recent empirical evidence in order to fill this gap by presenting the results of a comparative analysis of the implementation performance between centrally-controlled and locally-governed public school governance policies in Nepal. To do so, extensive data were collected at the organizational level of analysis using mixed methods. Notably, the case study approach of the qualitative method was used as the foundation method of this study, with the expectation of gathering empirical data on how implementers respond to the implementation performances of the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. This process helped not only to compare and contrast the concerns surrounding implementation performance, but also confirmed the results derived from two different types of schools.

The results of the qualitative analysis of this paper suggest that there was no substantial difference in the respective policy implementation performance between the two types of schools. Instead, the results of the data collected at the organizational level of analysis largely revealed that actual implementation performance is predominantly influenced by the existence of good practices of effective leadership. Leadership was followed by clarity of policy objectives and established school culture. This result is sufficient evidence to claim that the choice of a best policy may not be a viable strategy, but how it is implemented and what has been achieved is crucial. Surprisingly, the quantitative results also consistently supported the results gained from the qualitative analysis. For example, the quantitative results confirmed that there was no statistically—significant difference in producing better implementation performance between the two types of school governance policies.

On the theoretical side, the key challenge is to find an alternative model to solve the problems encountered in policy implementation. This study has succeeded in pointing out the contextual limitations of the policy implementation models and identified new variables. Based on the results of this study, a new causal model has been developed to test and guide theory development, comprising a strong set of predictors for producing better implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy. However, this model needs to be rigorously tested. The
practical implications of this study suggest that head teachers be given leadership roles rather than limiting them to executing only mechanical tasks to increase implementation performance.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Mukunda Mani Khanal

July 2013
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<td>BPEP</td>
<td>Basic and Primary Education Project</td>
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<td>CDC</td>
<td>Curriculum Development Centre</td>
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<td>CMS</td>
<td>Community-Managed School</td>
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<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Office</td>
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<td>DoE</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>EPC</td>
<td>Education Policy Committee</td>
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<td>ERO</td>
<td>Education Review Office</td>
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<td>et al</td>
<td>And Others</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
<td>General Public School</td>
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<td>HT</td>
<td>Head Teacher</td>
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<td>I/NGO</td>
<td>International/ Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>JSS</td>
<td>Janajyoti Secondary School</td>
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<td>KIRLDSS</td>
<td>Kanti Ishwori Rajya Laxmi Devi Secondary School</td>
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<td>KMO</td>
<td>Kaiser Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy</td>
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<td>KU</td>
<td>Kathmandu University</td>
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<td>LBU</td>
<td>Lumbini Buddha University</td>
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<td>LSGA</td>
<td>Local Self Governance Act</td>
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<td>MEP</td>
<td>Municipality Education Plan</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>NCED</td>
<td>National Centre for Educational Development</td>
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<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Education Commission</td>
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<td>NESP</td>
<td>National Education System Plan</td>
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<td>NFEC</td>
<td>Non-formal Education Centre</td>
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<td>NIDA</td>
<td>National Institute of Development Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>NNEPC</td>
<td>Nepal National Education Planning Commission</td>
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<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Planning Commission</td>
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<td>NPM</td>
<td>New Public Management</td>
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<td>NRs</td>
<td>Nepalese Rupees</td>
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<td>NSS</td>
<td>Nepal Secondary School</td>
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<td>NSU</td>
<td>Nepal Sanskrit University</td>
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<td>OCE</td>
<td>Office of the Controller of Examination</td>
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<td>OLPC</td>
<td>One Laptop per Child</td>
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<td>PCF</td>
<td>Per-Child Fund</td>
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<td>PCL</td>
<td>Proficiency Certificate Level</td>
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<td>PE</td>
<td>Policy Expert</td>
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<td>PM</td>
<td>Policy Maker</td>
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<td>PoKU</td>
<td>Pokhara University</td>
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<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Association</td>
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<td>PU</td>
<td>Purbanchal University</td>
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<td>RC</td>
<td>Resource Center</td>
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<td>RED</td>
<td>Regional Education Directorate</td>
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<td>RSS</td>
<td>Rudrepipal Secondary School</td>
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<td>SESP</td>
<td>Secondary Education Support Programme</td>
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<td>SIP</td>
<td>School Improvement Plan</td>
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<td>SLC</td>
<td>School Leaving Certificate</td>
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<td>SLSS</td>
<td>Sibalaya Secondary School</td>
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<td>SMC</td>
<td>School Management Committee</td>
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<td>SMC-C</td>
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<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
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<td>SSRP</td>
<td>School Sector Reform Plan</td>
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<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strength-Weakness-Opportunity-Threat</td>
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<td>SWSS</td>
<td>Saraswoti Secondary School</td>
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<td>TRO</td>
<td>Teachers' Record Office</td>
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<td>TSS</td>
<td>Tilottama Secondary School</td>
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<td>TU</td>
<td>Tribhuvan University</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>UGC</td>
<td>University Grant Commission</td>
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<td>VDC</td>
<td>Village Development Committee</td>
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<td>VEP</td>
<td>Village Education Plan</td>
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<td>VIF</td>
<td>Variance Inflation Factor</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

This chapter introduces the background of the study in section 1.1, followed by the purposes and benefits of the study in section 1.2. Similarly, section 1.3 deals with an elaboration of the statement and significance of the problem, and section 1.4 provides the research questions of the study. Similarly, section 1.5 focuses on the scope of the study and section 1.6 covers term definitions. The delimitations and limitations of the study are discussed in section 1.7. Finally, section 1.8 presents the organization of the study.

1.1 Background

The formal education for the public in Nepal began after the dawn of democracy in 1951; community people took initiatives regarding the extension of public education, opening a number of public schools and managing them (Sharma, 1986; Ministry of Education, 1997; Ministry of Education, 1999). However, after the introduction of the National Education System Plan in 1971, education governance "became increasingly controlled by the state bureaucracy" (Ministry of Education, 1997: 147) and "emphasized the active roles of the government in the planning, organization, management and financing" of school education (Ministry of Education, 1999: 10). This policy made significant achievements in terms of the expansion of schooling opportunities and improvement of educational inputs, as the government took over full responsibility for educational provisions which had so far been "co-financed through community participation" (Ministry of Education, 1999: 10). However, the plan, knowingly or unknowingly, discouraged local initiatives in education and the role of the School Management Committee (SMC) was extremely minimized. By and large, until the late 1980s, schools remained isolated from communities (e.g., see National Education Commission, 1992: 10;

The reformative era began after the restoration of democracy in 1990. Several endeavors took place during the 1990s. Examples are the formation of the National Education Commission in 1992, the development of the Ninth Five-year Plan (1997-2002) with a vision for 20 years, and so on (National Planning Commission, 2002). These policy documents explicitly envisioned that the authority of school governance would be devolved to local communities "to promote community ownership of schools" (Ministry of Education, 1999: 20). Schools are required to prepare their own School Improvement Plan (SIP), and school funding to be based on the effective implementation of this plan (Ministry of Education, 1999). Despite this effort, the policy of devolving power to lower levels could not be materialized in its implementation process (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008).

However, even lately, a good start took place in school governance policy in 2002, that is, with the 7th amendment of the Education Act, 2002. In order to translate the government’s commitment into practices, this amendment remained a milestone in school governance and management in Nepal (National Planning Commission, 2007). Accordingly, the government has introduced major changes in the formation of the SMC. The parents or guardians of the students became member of the SMC through election process (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004). Moreover, the new legal provision was also made to have at least one female member and a member from the Dalit (scheduled cast) community in the composition of the SMC (Law Book Management Committee, 2002). This was the first time that community people were made responsible to govern local schools (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008).

During the last couple of decades or so, significant gains have been made in providing access to education in Nepal (Ministry of Education, 2009). For example, the number of schools has been increased and schools are made accessible for all children (National Planning Commission, 2010). Despite this achievement, the quality of education in public schools has remained a critical issue. Several studies and government documents have pointed out a number of responsible factors, both at the
policy level and the operational level, for the poor educational quality. For example, the Nepal Development Forum (2004) highlighted some of the factors, such as poor and centralized management systems, lack of accountability and transparency, poorly-motivated teachers, over-politicization of teachers and resource limitations at the school level, and so on.

With a view to enhancing the quality of public schools, the government of Nepal introduced the “Community-Managed School” policy in 2002, guided by a decentralized school governance policy framework (e.g., see Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004; Nepal Development Forum, 2004; Ministry of Education, 2009). The decline in quality of education following nationalization is the main reason for returning to community management (National Planning Commission, 2002, 2007). The SMC was made responsible for overall planning, management, and implementation functions of schools (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004). The expectations of greater community participation, an increase in student numbers and achievement, and transparency and accountability have been stated to be the aims of the decentralized school governance policy (National Planning Commission, 2002, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2009). It is worth mentioning here that the policy of transferring public school management to the community is not a mandatory provision. Schools are given rights of choice as to whether they want to remain a General Public School (GPS) or become a Community-Managed School (CMS).

The government of Nepal is committed to maintaining the present budgetary allocation to both types of schools on equal footing. In addition, the CMSs receive one-time motivational grants from the government on top of the regular grants, and SMCs of CMSs have been given more authority compared to those belonging to GPSs. Both the GPS and CMS policies have been guided by decentralized school governance policy. However, for operating CMSs, an additional directive has been made. The directive provides authority to the SMC to appoint the Head Teacher (HT), and review the HT's administrative performance and implementation of the SIP (Ministry of Education, 2009). Similarly, the SMC has also been made responsible for the teachers' recruitment from the school resources and for review of their performance and regularity (Ministry of Education, 2009). These especial authorities
have not been provided to the SMCs of the GPSs. So far, they have given authority to recruit temporary teachers for vacant positions for a short-period of time.

Notwithstanding the policy intention, decision-making power has remained virtually centralized and as a top-down approach against the intended policy of decentralization in education (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008: 125-126). In this regard, Dhungel et al. (2011: 164) also agree with this and state that the central level agencies or powerful politicians still hold the decision making authority in Nepal. It seems to be a challenge towards the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy. This is the reason why in fact a centrally designed educational target, budget, and timelines are still in operation. The reason behind it is that the practice of policy formulation often lacks policy analysis in terms of its viability and feasibility. Thus, policy analysis is a crucial dimension in materializing policy into effect. Changes can only occur when the intended policy is practiced as expected (Fullan, 2001). This means that policy involves "what governments actually do, not just what they intend to do" (Anderson, 1994: 7). It gives a clear concept that how the policy is implemented is crucial rather than the intention of the policy.

Recently, a new initiative, the School Sector Reform Program (SSRP), has been initiated in Nepal for robust change in the school governance system through the decentralization process (Ministry of Education, 2009). This policy has also envisioned the restructuring of school education for grades 1-8 as basic education and grades 9-12 as secondary education (National Planning Commission, 2010). The SSRP also visualizes that school governance policy through the CMS system will be continued with greater autonomy for the SMC (Ministry of Education, 2009). It can be inferred from the SSRP that the policy of transferring public schools to the community, in fact, is firmly guided by the school-based management concept. Further, it also envisages empowered roles of the SMC by which it is expected to increase community participation in school development and school effectiveness in terms of students' attraction and their retention (Ministry of Education, 2009: 13).
1.2 Purposes and Benefits of the Study

The overall purpose of the study is to assess the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy and on-going practices in Nepal. For this, the intents of policy and on-site views, the opinions and thoughts of policy makers, policy experts, HTs, and chairs of the SMC are added values of this study to examine why they accept or reject the CMS governance policy. For a couple of decades, the school governance system in Nepal has remained as a problematic domain, with conflicts between the choice of a centralized and decentralized policy (Ministry of Education, 1997; Ministry of Education, 2009; Edwards, 2011). This study, therefore, adds value to address concerns raised by various stakeholders as regards the intentions of the prevalent governance policy for school education in Nepal. In doing so, an in-depth analysis on the current policy is carried out through policy document analysis, case study of schools, and the perceptions of the key stakeholders. The outcomes of this study will help find the key determinants of implementing policies, which have never been realized before in the case of Nepal.

Consequently, the findings that are gained from this study would ultimately aim at helping policy makers and implementers reduce possible gaps between the intended and attained policy. Moreover, the perceptions of the grass-root implementers captured by this study are equally beneficial for drawing possible policy implications towards the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. Finally, this study also helps develop grounded theory on decentralized school governance policy based on empirical cases of both GPSs and CMSs in Nepal.

1.3 Statement and Significance of the Problem

Public schools in Nepal were “originally created and governed” by the community (Ministry of Education, 1997: 147). The current movement of decentralized school governance policy in Nepal is a response to address the weaknesses of centralized governance policy (National Planning Commission, 2002). The history of school governance policy in Nepal has shown a swing between
centralization and decentralization time and again. The current policy of management transfer of public schools to the community appears to be a result of these swings. This policy is regarded as a paradigm shift of development strategy—from a centralized to a decentralized school governance system (Ministry of Education, 2009). The government of Nepal has, thus, made strong policy provision with the necessary legal arrangements, but several obstacles have been encountered in the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy, especially the “CMS” policy (Carney et al., 2007; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2009). The major ones are discussed below.

First, teachers’ professional organizations and their unions have been protesting against the policy. Their understanding is that the current policy might be a threat to their professional career and job security because the policy permits the SMC to hire and fire teachers (Carney et al., 2007: 618; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008: 94). Secondly, not only the teachers’ union, but also parent-teacher associations and a few political parties have shown serious concern about the policy; the government wants to reduce its financial support and introduce market competition between the public and private sectors (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009: 29-30). As a result, some of the public schools which were already transferred to community management under the CMS policy are, now in turn, appealing to withdraw the sanctions created between the SMC and the government authority.

Another remarkable fact is that during the past 10 years of the implementation of the policy, only 7,483 out of a total of 32,130 (about 23 percent) schools have been transferred to communities. On the other hand, the annual and five-year plans have not succeeded in meeting the targets set for transferring public schools to communities (see Table 1.1). Mathematically, if the pace of transferring schools to communities remains the same as in the past, it will take another 20 years to complete the implementation phase of the current policy, because the policy intention of the decentralized school governance policy is to transfer all of the GPSs to CMSs. Thus the viability of the policy is one of the major significances of this study.
Table 1.1  Targets and Achievements of Transferring Rates of GPS to CMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Targets (in number)</th>
<th>Achievements (in number)</th>
<th>Achievement (in percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002/03</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/04</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/05</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/06</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/07</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>1023</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>1245</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>1178</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>16400</strong></td>
<td><strong>7483</strong></td>
<td><strong>45.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from the Department of Education, 2012.

Finally, after the introduction of the policy of the “CMS,” it has ultimately created two types of public schools in Nepal. One is CMSs and another is GPSs. Now the justification of operating two types of government public schools is a focus of policy debate in Nepal. The majorities of public schools (about 66% of total public schools) still fall under the GPSs (see Figure 1.1). These statistics provide a clue that the pace of implementation of CMS policy seems pretty slow.
On the other hand, the government has been continuing to scale up the target of transferring schools in its annual plans and programs. The reason given for this is the findings of the studies, which show that access to quality of education, i.e. better student achievement and greater community participation in terms of generating local resources, including student retention, has been enhanced noticeably in many of the CMSs (Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011). Another critical point to be noted here is that out of the total CMSs, the share of primary schools is at 66 percent, whereas its share to lower secondary and secondary schools is only 23 percent and 11 percent respectively (Department of Education, 2012). It would thus be interesting to know why small schools (primary schools) are motivated by the CMS policy.

The interesting point to note here is that these two types of public schools run under two different policies are virtually located in the similar communities; however, they differ in enhancing community participation and in retaining students. Several past researches (e.g., Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011) conducted in Nepal claim that CMSs did possess excellent performance after introducing the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. How far it is true that the CMSs are better-off than their GPS counterparts is the main significance of this study. Moreover, the information related to the above concern is now based on anecdotal evidence; therefore, empirical research based on facts, which

Figure 1.1 Compositions of Schools in Nepal

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education, 2011.
can be checked against indicators, has been a felt need in this area. If the question raised above is true, then it would be further interesting to ascertain why, despite the growing momentum of CMSs, the conflicting pressures between the government and implementers, especially teachers, have been further mounting in recent years, and this represents another significance of this study.

Regarding the governance and management issue, who should govern public schools and how to enhance greater community participation has been answered in many ways. It is often claimed that "experts know the best and that education should be kept out of politics", and on the other hand, it is argued that "the local community should have control over school education" (Ministry of Education, 1997: 147). Ho's (2006) view is interesting to cite here, who claim that "people at the lower level are more knowledgeable about their own needs and problems" (Ho, 2006: 590). Such controversies have been prevalent between policies of the GPS and CMS, particularly focusing on two major dimensions, community participation and student attraction. However, several educational reforms initiated in Nepal have faced a series of challenges at the implementation level. The reasons could be that the government has paid much attention on policy making process (Bista and Carney, 2004: 109), but what is happening at the implementation level is almost neglected (e.g., Smit, 2005: 304; Edwards, 2011: 67). These concerns demonstrate both the challenges of measuring the implementation performance of both GPS and CMS policy. For this, a grassroots-focused study is required to address the issues raised above.

Policy makers often equate "policy intention with policy practice" (Lewis and Naidoo, 2004: 101). Lewis and Naidoo's view is that policy makers often ignore individual actor or agencies as they relate to the implementation practices. For example, the extent to which implementers do agree on the intended policy objectives plays a crucial role in policy implementation (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 459). Edwards (2011: 75) also describes in a similar way that the CMS policy in Nepal rarely reach the core stakeholders, i.e. "the parents of students". Empirical evidence for or against the claims discussed above has been scarce. This paper, therefore, attempts not only to uncover the perceived reality of the implementers, but also to make comparisons between the implementation performance of GPS policy and CMS policy in Nepal.
Finally, many studies in Nepal have taken place, focusing only on CMSs and ignoring many GPSs; this study therefore claims its significance as a new study which contemplates the implementation outputs of decentralized school governance policy between two types of schools. In addition, several researches have explained the achievements of the CMSs, but no studies have compared the implementation performance between two types of public schools. The objective of this study is to fulfill this gap by including pertinent variables which are directly related to policy implementation.

1.4 Research Questions

Intention of a certain policy is not a tough task to measure indeed, but what has happened is the core function to assess the actual implementation performance. For example, Smith and Larimer’s (2009: 157-158) emphasis on understanding why intended outcomes have or have not achieved is critical "if policy success is to be replicated or policy failure to be avoided". The aim of policy evaluation is to measure policy outputs (Dye, 2011: 323-324) and also to measure the performance of the intended policy (Stewart et al., 2008: 132). As stated in the statement of the problem, empirical evidence for or against the implementation performances of CMS policy compared to GPS policy in Nepal has been scarce. This is why the outcome of interest from this study is to examine the policy implementation performance between GPSs and CMSs. In addition, it is equally relevant to investigate the viability of the CMS policy in materializing decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. In doing so, this research uncovers answers to the following research questions:

1) What does the prevalent school governance policy look like in Nepal?
2) What are the intents of policy makers and how do the implementers (end users) perceive the current policy?
3) To what extent have the CMSs been successful in increasing community participation for school improvement and school effectiveness in terms of the student attraction compared to their GPS counterparts that it was intended to produce?
4) What are the factors associated with the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy?
5) Does the “CMS policy” work as a viable instrument in the decentralization process of the school governance systems in Nepal?
6) What are the determinants that have contributed to widening gaps between intended and attained policy?

The first research question aims to examine the basic features of the current policy and to help analyze and compare this policy with the practices of other countries at the macro level. The second question is equally important-to seek the reasons behind the shifting of school governance policy in Nepal. Along with this, this question further explores the on-site reality of decentralized school governance policy at the micro level, which ultimately helps to add evidence for in-depth analysis of the prevalent practice. The third question examines the comparative status of community participation and students’ inflow between GPSs and CMSs. The fourth question identifies the critical factors associated with the performance of policy implementation. The fifth question explores the extent to which the CMS policy is a viable instrument for achieving the desired results. Finally, the sixth question attempts to evaluate the intensions of policy makers against the perceptions of implementers. This will help to identify the factors that contribute to the widening gaps between intended and attained policy, from which valid implications can be drawn for the effective implementation of decentralized school governance policy in Nepal.

1.5 Scope of the Study

Education reform has been one of the prioritized agendas for the government of Nepal. Several policies are being implemented in the name of reform, and the decentralized school governance policy is one of them. This study, therefore, mostly concentrates on the initial implementation outputs of decentralized school governance policy by exploring and evaluating community participation in school development and school effectiveness in terms of students’ attraction, taking the cases of both GPSs
and CMSs in Nepal. This process helps to answer whether decentralized school governance policy has contributed to achieving its intended initial policy outputs.

Obviously, this study does not search for alternative policy options. However, the details of the cases that are discussed in this paper will definitely be useful to draw implications for revisiting either the intention or the implementation of the current policy. The main scope of this study is to analyze what is really happening at local or implementing levels, which is scarce due to the reason that the policy has only recently been implemented. Thus, the findings of this study may be a valuable resource for policy makers and planners in the education sector. The worth of this research is its methodological strengths, for example, the use of mixed methods, which further contributes not only to documenting empirical evidence, but also is sufficient for generalizing the results. The researcher, thus, has a firm belief and confidence that the details of the cases, their implications, and the results of the statistical analysis that are discussed in this paper will definitely contribute to reducing the fragmented hypotheses on decentralized school governance policy and will equally be useful for policy makers and educational planners in Nepal from the practice perspective.

1.6 Term Definitions

Unless found in quotations, the definitions of the terms that are used in this study follow the following definitions and meanings.

Community-Managed School (CMS): A public school already transferred to the community, which receives grants-in-aid from the government on a regular basis, but the management responsibility is taken up by the local community or SMC. The CMS is also interchangeably used in this study as transferring school management to the community.

Community Participation, Community Contribution and Community Involvement: Although the individual phrase has different literal meanings, in this study, all of these phrases are interchangeably used for the same meaning. In this study, in particular, community participation in school finance is regarded as contributions made by the community in the form of school construction and
maintenance, land and labour contribution, construction materials contribution, cash and kind donation, assisting with participation both inside and outside the classroom, participation in the school day and active participation in fund-raising activities. Furthermore, it also captures the idea of a fixed deposit, supply of relevant instructional materials, and other physical facilities.

Decentralization: The simple meaning of decentralization is taken from McGinn and Welsh (1999: 9), who see it as the transfer of authority from one level to another. The meaning of levels the authors give here are "central government, provincial government, regional governing bodies, municipal, county or district governments and schools" (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 17). McGinn and Welsh's definition explain decentralization as the shift and transfer of decision-making authority and responsibility from higher to lower organizational levels. The core philosophy of decentralization is a process of transferring "responsibilities, resources, or authority from higher to lower levels of government" (Falleti, 2005: 328). For this study, decentralization is considered as something designed to make the bottom-up decision-making process closer to the implementing agencies or the lessening of government authority over schools affairs.

General Public School (GPS): This is a public school managed largely by government agencies, which is fully supported by the government for teachers’ salaries and operating funds and receives grants-in-aid from the government on a regular basis, but not transferred to the community.

Governance: Governance can be understood as a process of managing the "economic and social resources" of a country (Kulshreshtha, 2008: 557). Governance in view of Osborn and Gaebler (1992: 24) is the "collective process of solving societal problems". It reveals that governance is constituted by policy-making processes that can be made accountable for its actions. This definition includes some legal authorities. Governance, thus, deals with the assurance of public services in which the government plays a leading role. School governance in this study is considered as one of the parts of this process; however, it has been defined differently depending on the contexts in which it is considered and applied.

Institutional School: This is a private school, which does not receive any kinds of tax revenues (Law Book Management Committee, 2001: 2).
Lower Secondary School: Here is meant that a lower secondary school provides education up to grade eight. A lower secondary-level graduate examination is conducted at the district level (Law Book Management Committee, 2001: 2).

Per-capita Funding: This study follows Hu et al.'s (2009: 37) study in which total educational expenditure was divided by number of students in order to calculate per-capita funding. For example, expenditure on teacher salary, staff salary, capital expenditure and other non-salary expenditures in the school is set against the total number of school children in the respective school in order to calculate per capita funding (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008a: 7).

Policy Implementation: Smith and Larimer's (2009: 157) definition is taken as a representative definition for this study; they explain implementation as a point to look at "what happens after the government declares a formal intent to do something and before a policy outcome has been produced". Policy outputs is the "action actually taken in pursuance of policy decisions" for example, "taxes collected, miles of highway built" (Anderson, 1994: 7).

Primary School: A primary school provides education up to grade five (Law Book Management Committee, 2001: 2).

Public School: This is a government school, which receives grants-in-aid from the government on a regular basis. The meaning of public school in this study thus covers both GPS and CMS.

School Effectiveness: The meaning of school effectiveness in this study is limited to students' attraction in the schools, which is measured in terms of inclinations of students' inflow.

School Management Committee (SMC): An SMC is an elected body by parents from among the parents, which is legally made responsible for overall planning, management, and implementation functions of schools (Law Book Management Committee, 2001: 11).

Secondary School: A secondary school provides education up to grade ten. The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination is conducted at the national level at the end of grade ten (Law Book Management Committee, 2001: 2).
1.7 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

This study is an attempt to focus on the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. Due to the time and resource constraints, the researcher delimited the study to cover only seven districts out of 75 in Nepal. Likewise, no additional researchers were hired for this endeavor, and therefore this study was firmly based on the researcher’s own investigations. For example, the researcher himself worked as the observer, as interviewer, and as field enumerator. Finally, the foundation of this study is the case studies that provided empirical data for the analysis of how implementers respond to the implementation performance of the GPS policy and CMS policy in Nepal.

The first limitation of this study is the coverage of only seven districts out of 75. Secondly, the findings were heavily dependent upon the research participants' own opinions/beliefs, and the researcher’s own investigations and observations. Thirdly, this study did not cover the institutional schools running from the private sector. Consequently, the information related to those schools was beyond the reach of this study, which might be another limitation. Finally, the variables other than those employed in this study might explain significant differences. However, the use of the quantitative method to check the results gained from the qualitative method has definitely permitted the generalization of the findings to other similar populations as well.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research has been structured into seven main chapters. Chapter one introduces the background of the study with an elaboration of the statement and significance of the problem. Chapter two focuses on a general overview of Nepal and a review of related literature. A focus is given on the theoretical concepts on policy implementation, followed by models of policy implementation in chapter three. Chapter four deals with the research design and procedures adopted for the accomplishment of the study. Chapter five deals with the results of the qualitative analysis obtained from the document analysis, interviews, focus group discussions,
observations, and case studies of the schools. Chapter six presents the results of the quantitative analysis obtained from the questionnaire administered to policy implementers. Finally, chapter seven draws a recapitulation of the major findings, along with reflections, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with a combination of a general overview of Nepal and a review of related literature. It begins with general information about Nepal in section 2.1, followed by introducing the education systems in Nepal in section 2.2. Section 2.3 describes the school governance systems in Nepal. Rationales for carrying out the literature review are presented in section 2.4. Section 2.5 discusses governance and public policy, and section 2.6 highlights school governance policy. The centralization-decentralization dichotomy, both at macro and micro levels, is discussed in sections 2.7 and 2.8 respectively. Section 2.9 is reserved for policy implementation and finally, section 2.10 draws a summary and conclusions concerning the review of the literature.

2.1 General Information about Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked country, which borders on China to the North and India to the East, South and West. Geographically, Nepal consists of three different layers of ecological zones, which are: the Himalayas (15 %), consisting of snow-covered high mountains ranging from 5000 to 8848 meters, including Mount Everest, a mountain range (68%) with high hills, and the terai-plain area (17%), a belt of fertile plain land (Ministry of Education, 2010: 11). All of these geographic belts of Nepal run from east to west (see Figure 2.1).
Nepal is a popular home for the highest peak of the world (Mount Everest) and birth place of Lord Buddha, along with a number of rivers, lakes and varieties of birds, animals and plants, some of which are rare species in the world and unique to Nepal (Ministry of Education, 2010: 1). From the administrative point of view, the country has been divided into five Development Regions, fourteen Zones, and seventy-five Districts (Ministry of Education, 2010: 1). Each district has been further divided into Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Municipalities (Ministry of Education, 2010: 1). At present, there are 3,915 VDCs, one Metropolis, four sub-metropolises, and 58 Municipalities in Nepal. These VDCs, Municipalities and Metropolitan city serve as the local-level government (Ministry of Education, 2010: 1-2). According to the census of 2011, Nepal has a population of 27 million with diverse social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, and noted 102 social groups and recorded 92 languages (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

According to the history of Nepal, till the late 18th century, Nepal consisted of small and fragmented kingdoms. In 1781, the King of Gorkha annexed these small kingdoms into a unified greater kingdom, consisting of people belonging to several different languages, cultures, castes, and ethnic groups (Sharma, 1986). According to Sharma, Nepal had remained virtually isolated from the outside world for many centuries until 1950. The political unrest took place and the multi-party democracy

**Figure 2.1** Map of Nepal

**Source:** Ministry of Education, 2010: 1.
was again restored after the people’s movement in 1990 (National Planning Commission, 2002). This popular change remained only for 15 years or so. Again, the king withdrew the multi-party democracy in 2004 and ruled for 3 years. However, the 2nd people’s movement against the autocratic regime in 2006 has restored the democracy again (Ministry of Education, 2010: 12). Very recently, the Kingdom of Nepal was converted into the People’s Democratic Republic of Nepal.

2.2 Education Systems in Nepal

The government of Nepal is now restructuring the schooling governance systems according to the policy envisioned by such policy documents as the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) and the Three Year Interim Plan (2007-2010). These plans envision that Nepali formal school education will be of 12 (8+4) years with two tiers-basic and secondary (Ministry of Education, 2009: 10). According to the Ministry of Education (2009), the basic level will be from grade 1 to grade 8 (ages 5-12), and the secondary level will be from grade 9 to grade 12 (ages 13-16). As a preparatory stage for primary education, there will be two years (ages 3-4) of pre-primary education (Ministry of Education, 2009: 6). As of now, all together there are 32,130 schools operating in Nepal (Ministry of Education, 2012). The current schooling system of Nepal has been structured as 5+3+2+2 and the details are presented as follows.

2.2.1 Primary Education

Primary education in Nepal comprises five years of schooling (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 85). The minimum entry age of children for this level is 5 years; however there is no rigid practice to enter the primary schools. For example, children that could not attend primary school at the age of 5 can enter the third grade provided that they complete a condensed course offered by the Non-formal Education Programs, e.g., school outreach programs (Ministry of Education, 2009: 15). The current five-year primary schooling has been aimed for imparting basic life skills to children (National Education Commission, 1992: 8). Primary level
education is run in 31,555 schools, where 4,627 are institutional (private) schools (Ministry of Education, 2012).

### 2.2.2 Lower Secondary Education

The lower secondary level consists of three years of schooling, i.e. grades six, seven, and eight (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 85). The objective of the lower secondary level is to prepare morally and ethically qualified citizens with adequate knowledge in different subjects such as Nepali, language, mathematics, and science (National Education Commission, 1992: 10; Ministry of Education, 2010: 7). However, this level was known as middle school from 1951 to 1971 and consisted of sixth and seventh grades only (National Education Commission, 1992). There are 11,341 lower secondary schools operating in the country among them 2,892 are institutional schools (Ministry of Education, 2012).

### 2.2.3 Secondary Education

Secondary level education comprises grades nine and ten (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 85). The main aim of this level of education is regarded as creating competent citizens that are able to contribute to economic development as well as proficiency in language, and aware with national traditional cultures, democratic values, and the social environment (National Education Commission, 1992: 10; Ministry of Education, 2010: 8). The SLC examination is regarded as an important national-level examination conducted centrally at the end of grade ten. Similarly, there are 6,928 secondary level schools out of which 2,213 are institutional (Ministry of Education, 2012).

### 2.2.4 Higher Secondary Education

Higher secondary education in Nepal is comparatively a new phenomenon. The National Education Commission recommended the extension of the school education up to grade 12 (National Education Commission, 1992: 10). Since 1992, Nepal began the higher secondary education system, consisting of grades 11 and 12, with the aim of providing education to the students for their career development and to prepare them for higher education (Bajracharya et al., 1998; Ministry of Education,
Before 1992, the secondary education graduates had to join to the program of the two-year Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) of university education. According to the government’s policy documents, the PCL program is eventually to be phased out from the university education and national-level school leaving certificate examination to be conducted centrally at the end of grade twelve (National Planning Commission, 2002, 2007). The PCL of university education, equivalent to grades eleven and twelve, has already been phased out from the university. However, due to the policy conflict between Higher Secondary Education Board and the Department of Education regarding school education, as yet the integration of these two institutions has not materialized. There are 3,383 higher secondary level schools, out of which 541 are institutional (Ministry of Education, 2012).

2.3 School Governance Systems in Nepal

The Ministry of Education (MoE), “as the apex body of all educational organizations, is responsible for formulating educational policies and managing them across the country through the institutions under it” (Ministry of Education, 2010: 12). There are central level agencies (see Table 2.1), such as the Department of Education, the Curriculum Development Center, the National Center for Educational Development, the Office of the Controller of Examination, and the Non-formal Education Center under the Ministry and are made responsible for implementing and monitoring educational policies, plans, and programs (Ministry of Education, 2010: 12). The major roles and responsibilities of related agencies under the ministry are briefly discussed following Table 2.1. The policy implementing agencies under the MoE are as follows:

"Five Regional Education Directorates (REDs) are responsible for monitoring the programs undertaken by the district level organizations. Seventy-five District Education Offices (DEOs), one thousand ninety-one Resource Centers (RCs) at the sub-district level, are the main implementing agencies of the educational policies, plans, and programs at local levels” (Ministry of Education, 2010: 12).
Table 2.1 Educational Agencies under MoE and Their Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Agencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Central Level</td>
<td>1. Department of Education (DoE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. National Centre for Educational Development (NCED)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Curriculum Development Centre (CDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Office of the Controller of Examination (OCE)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Non-formal Education Centre (NFEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. School Teachers' Record Office (STRO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Education Review Office (ERO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Regional Level</td>
<td>1. Five Regional Education Directorates (REDs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>District Level</td>
<td>1. Seventy-five District Education Offices (DEOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Local Level</td>
<td>1. One thousand fifty-three Resource Centers (RCs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Thirty-two Thousand One Hundred and Thirty Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Commissions</td>
<td>1. University Grant Commission (UGC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Teacher Service Commission (TSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>1. Tribhuvan University (TU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Nepal Sanskrit University (NSU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Kathmandu University (KU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Purbanchal University (PU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Pokhara University (PoKU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Lumbini Buddha University (LBU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Just approved to open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Agriculture and Forestry Science University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Mid-Western University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Far-Western University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.1 Ministry of Education (MoE)

According to the job descriptions of the government of Nepal, the MoE is entrusted with the responsibilities for the functions related to "educational policies, plans, formulation of programs, and follow-ups and evaluations" from pre-primary to higher education (Ministry of Education, 2010: 12). In addition, the ministry formulates policies related to alternative modes of education such as distance education, adult education, non-formal education, special needs education, population education, school nutrition programs, and technical and vocational education as well as educational human resource development (Ministry of Education, 2010: 12-13). The ministry also looks after the national and international training, seminars, workshops, conferences on education, and coordination with national and international institutions, and bi-lateral and multi-lateral educational agreements (Ministry of Education, 2010: 12-13).

The MoE also reviews the implementation performance and conducts researches and surveys related to policy research and learning achievements to support into policy formulation and improve service delivery systems (Ministry of Education, 2009: 52). The ministry is also made responsible for human resource development and management (Ministry of Education, 2010: 13). According to the Ministry of Education (2010: 12-13), the core functions of the ministry are of two-fold. One is to study, compare, analyze, and propose education policies and programs for implementation, and to conduct policy-level study and research on education policies and programs. And the second one is to prepare budget structure for proposed plans and programs.

2.3.2 Department of Education (DoE)

According to the Ministry of Education (2010: 28), the DoE "holds the responsibility of implementing and monitoring educational programs". Two main responsibilities are authorized to the DoE (Ministry of Education, 2010: 28). The first role is to prepare the annual plan, budget, and programs related to school education based on the existing policies and regulations and submit them to the ministry for approval. The second is to implement primary and secondary education programs in consonance with the policies and regulations formulated by the ministry. It appears
that the main role of the DoE is to implement the educational policy activities related to primary and secondary education and to submit progress reports to the MoE and other concerned agencies.

2.3.3 Regional Education Directorate (RED)

According to the Ministry of Education (2010: 57), the REDs are made responsible for monitoring and supervising the school-level educational policies within the region. It seems that the role of the RED is merely confined to monitoring aspects, because the policy document i.e. SSRP envisions that the REDs play an important role in monitoring the progress of implementation and in the annual performance evaluation of districts (Ministry of Education, 2009: 52). The REDs are therefore supposed to carry out three major functions, which are explicitly related to monitoring (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 16-17; Ministry of Education, 2010: 57). These are:

1) Supervise the implementation performance of the educational policies and programs within the region
2) Coordinate educational programs within the region
3) Monitor the educational programs within the region

2.3.4 District Education Office (DEO)

The DEO can be taken as the de-concentrated arm of the ministry at the district level. The DEO is authorized to recruit teachers in the approved positions, teacher management, performance evaluation of the teachers, approval of teachers' resignation and leave, teacher data management (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 19-23; Ministry of Education, 2010: 59-60). The main responsibility of the DEO is to "implement the educational policies" (Ministry of Education, 2010: 59). The Law Book Management Committee (2002) therefore envisions that the main responsibility of the DEO is to implement educational policies, plans, and programs as per the directives of the MoE and DoE. It appears that the DEO can have a great impact on policy implementation. According to the existing education regulations, the functions of the DEO are assumed as follows (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 19-23).
1) Implement educational development programs in the district in accordance with the government's educational policy and planning.

2) Supervise schools and provide professional inputs to teachers, HTs, and students.

3) Monitor and evaluate educational progress in the district;

4) Appoint and transfer teachers and maintain their records.

5) Prepare annual and periodic statistical reports on schools, teachers, and students.

6) Establish new schools and strengthen existing schools.

7) Organize short-term teacher trainings, workshops and seminars.

8) Organize extra-curricular activities.

9) Conduct district-level and SLC examinations.

10) Perform other tasks delegated by the MoE, DoE and RED.

11) Conduct capacity-building programs for stakeholders, and

12) Coordinate with NGOs and other organizations to conduct educational programmes.

2.3.5 School Management Committee (SMC)

The latest policy document, i.e. SSRP clearly spells out that "school governance and management are a shared responsibility between the central government, the local government body, and the school" (Ministry of Education, 2009: 92). This document also mentions that an SMC is made responsible for overall planning, management, and the implementation functions of public schools (Ministry of Education, 2009: 91, 93). In addition, it proclaims a shared management responsibility between the SMC and HT. For every public school (both GPS and CMS) an SMC of ten members, consisting of the following members, is constituted for its operation, supervision, and management of school affairs (Law Book Management Committee, 2001: 11).
Table 2.2 Process of SMC Formation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Process of formation</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A person elected/selected by the parents from among themselves</td>
<td>Chair-person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Three persons, including one female, selected by the parents among themselves</td>
<td>Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Ward President of the concerned Ward of the VDC or Municipality where the school is situated</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>One person nominated by SMC from among local intellectuals or educationists</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>One person nominated by SMC from among the founders of the school</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>One person nominated by SMC from among the local donors</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>One person selected by the concerned school teachers from among themselves</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>HT of the school</td>
<td>Member-secretary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The process of SMC formation in both types of schools is the same; nevertheless, some of the roles and responsibilities of the SMCs are different. A comparative picture of the functions of both the SMCs is presented in Table 2.3.
### Table 2.3 Comparison of the Functions of SMCs in Two Types of Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMC of GPS</th>
<th>SMC of CMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobilizing the resources and means available for the operation of the school</td>
<td>Mobilizing the resources and means available for the operation of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining records of both the movable and immovable property belonging to the school</td>
<td>Maintaining records of both the movable and immovable property belonging to the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctioning the annual school budget on the basis of guidelines received from the DoE</td>
<td>Sanctioning the annual school budget on the basis of school's needs and plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigning duties to the teacher appointed by the DEO</td>
<td>Assigning duties to the teacher appointed by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying out auditing of the annual budget of the school and submitting to the DEO</td>
<td>Carrying out auditing of the annual budget of the school and making it public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointing qualified teachers on a temporary basis</td>
<td>Appointing qualified teachers on a permanent basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing teachers' pay and benefits according to the government rules and norms</td>
<td>Arranging the remuneration, facilities and the promotion of the teachers appointed by the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommending to the DEO to fire the teachers in case of violence of rules</td>
<td>Firing those teachers appointed by the SMC in case of violence of rules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepting the HT appointed by DEO</td>
<td>Appointing HTs on the basis of performance contract and notifying the DEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommending to the DEO to terminate the tenure of HT in case of unsatisfactory performance</td>
<td>Terminating tenure of the HT in case of unsatisfactory performance and notifying the DEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommending to the DEO to deduct the salary of teachers who frequently absent in the school</td>
<td>Deducting the salary of teachers that are frequently absent from the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deciding the medium of instruction and receiving its approval from the DEO</td>
<td>Deciding the medium of instruction on the basis of existing directives and notifying the DEO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Law Book Management Committee, 2001: 12-13.

Table 2.3 reveals that the SMC in the CMS is given more authority compared to the GPS. For example, the CMS can directly recruit the teachers, but the GPS is not given such authority. However, the SMC of the GPS holds authority for recruiting teachers on a temporary basis, but the school is obliged to receive pre-approval from the DEO. SMCs in both types, in particular, are made responsible for taking the leadership role in mobilizing community and parental support of and participation in school.

2.3.6 **Head Teacher (HT)**

It is envisioned that "there shall be one HT in every school to work as the administrative chief of the school" (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 86). The latest policy document, i.e. SSRP, 2009-2015, envisions that candidates for HT
position are required "to prepare a proposal for school development and that the proposal evaluation can be a key factor in HT selection" (Ministry of Education, 2009: 85). The SSRP further intended that the HTs be appointed on a contractual basis for a period of four years (Ministry of Education, 2009: 85). The SMC evaluates the HT's performance on the basis of his or her school development proposal annually (Ministry of Education, 2009: 85). The policy further envisions that the contract may extend the tenure of the HTs based on the satisfactory performance. Along with the proposal, the processes of appointing the HT by law have been practices as exhibited in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Criteria for Appointing HT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bases of Selection</th>
<th>Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Qualification</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Capability</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It appears from Table 2.4 that the selection of the HT was transparent. According to the Law Book Management Committee (2002), the SMC was made responsible for giving marks for leadership capacity. It seems that the SMC is given full authority in selecting the HT. The SMC is required to recommend the names of at least two permanent teachers from amongst the teachers working in the same school, who are able to secure at least 70 marks for the District Education Officer for appointment of the HT (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 86-87). The processes are as follows (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 86-87):

1) The District Education Officer shall appoint the HT, who has secured the highest marks amongst those recommended teachers.
2) If no one teacher securing 70 marks can be found in the concerned school, the District Education Officer shall appoint any other teacher working in other public schools within the district having secured 70 marks for the post of the HT.

3) In such a situation, the District Education Officer should receive prior written or verbal acceptance of the SMC in case of the CMS, but for the case of the GPS it is not required.

By law, the power of dismissing the HT is given to the District Education Officer. For example, the District Education Officer may dismiss the HT from the post at any time on the basis of report submitted by the school supervisor (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 87). According to the Law Book Management Committee (2002), the main responsibility given by law to the HTs of both types of schools is to maintain an academic environment, and academic quality and discipline. Several other duties and responsibilities of the HT of both types of schools given by law are the following (Law Book Management Committee, 2002: 88-92).

1) To create an environment of mutual cooperation having coordinated with teachers, other employees, and among teachers and other working staff, students and guardians

2) To prepare programs for running the classes in the school in consultation with teachers, and supervise whether or not the classes have been run as per the program

3) To operate the administrative functions of the school

4) To recover losses incurred to school property from one’s salary if any teacher causes such loss knowingly or negligently

5) To submit reports relating to the conduct, behavior and work performance of teachers and other employees to the District Education Office and SMC

6) To hold teachers meeting at least once a month, hold discussions on school-related subjects, and maintain a record of such meetings and discussions

7) To submit salary reports of the teachers and other employees appointed using the resources of the school to the SMC for endorsement
8) To prepare annual programs of the school and to implement them having received approval by the SMC

9) To prepare monthly, half-yearly, and annual programs relating to the teaching and learning activities in the school and to implement such programs

10) To send teachers to the DEO for training having received approval by the SMC

11) To expel any student violating discipline from the school

12) To implement the educational policies, curriculum, and textbooks as prescribed by the government

13) To spend the budget according to the direction and powers entrusted to the responsible person and to maintain or cause to maintain accounts of income and expenditure

14) To conduct or cause to conduct periodic examinations to be held in the school in a regular, fair, and well-regulated manner

15) If more than fifteen percent of the students fail in any subject taught by any teacher for a consecutive period of three years, to suspend the grade (annual increment in salary) of such a teacher for a period of two years

16) To abide or cause to abide by the directives given by the SMC and the DEO

17) To fill in the work performance evaluation forms of teachers appointed on the school’s own resources and to submit them to the SMC, and

18) To maintain the school records

In a nutshell, based on the existing laws, rules and regulations (e.g., Law Book Management Committee, 2001, 2002), HTs are made responsible for administrative activities, such as overall financial management, management and evaluation of teaching and non-teaching staff, and ensuring the physical environment of the school. There was no such significant distinction of roles or responsibilities of the HTs in the two different types of schools employed in this study.
2.4 Rationales of Reviewing Literature

A critical summary of "what others are saying" can be termed as a literature review (Foss and Waters, 2007: 75). The literature review in Cooper's (1988: 107) view is "a process of describing, critically summarizing, evaluating and also integrating the related contents of the study reports". This process is called "an integrative literature review" (Khoo et al., 2011: 268), which explicitly focuses on methods and results of previous researches. It seems clear that a literature review serves as a tool to compare and contrast the results. The review, thus, helps identify "the existing gaps and raising questions to address the issue" (Boote and Beile, 2005: 257).

Doing a literature review has several critical benefits, for example, first, "it provides the existing facts" in a particular discipline (Rowley and Slack, 2004: 31). Secondly, it helps the researcher identify "appropriate research methods" (Mauch and Park, 2003: 119). In order to take advantage of this, researcher "needs to be selective" to the problems keeping in view of their applicability and appropriateness (Rudestam and Newton, 2001: 59). For this, Rudestam and Newton recommend a Venn diagram strategy of classifying information in terms of three different categories: very relevant, relevant, and less relevant or background information (Rudestam and Newton, 2001: 63-64). The overall inference of the above discussion is that "relevant resources enable researchers to better explain the issue and what is already known and what is needed to be known" (Levy and Ellis, 2006: 183).

Finding the most cited literature; research scientists recommend a "skimming and skipping" technique (Foss and Waters, 2007: 80). Journals are highly recommended sources for a literature review, for example, Webster and Watson (2002: 16) argue that "the major theoretical contributions are likely to be in leading journals". However, major books are also equally paramount (Mauch and Park, 2003: 117). It appears that a complete literature review requires comparing and contrasting the claims and results. In doing so, the literature review needs to be turned into "a coherent piece of text" (Levy and Ellis, 2006: 203). The above-discussed strategies were followed in order to fit the literature review into the conceptual frameworks developed for this study.
2.5 Governance and Public Policy

Governance is not a synonym for government (Osborn and Gaebler, 1992: 24). Governance, in Osborn and Gaebler's view, is the collective process of a government. Governance, thus, is the process of managing the "economic and social resources" of a country (Kulshreshtha, 2008: 557). Elahi (2009: 1169) further extends the scope of governance in terms of "three legs": economic, political and administrative. According to Elahi, economic governance raises concerns of the "decision-making processes", whereas political governance drags its attention to policy formulation processes, and the administrative governance focuses on policy implementation (Elahi, 2009: 1169). Governance, thus, is the process of decision-making and its implementation (Enserink and Koppenjan, 2007: 461).

Robichau and Lynn (2009: 21-22) studied how far the theories of governance and of public policy complement each other. Robichau and Lynn came to the conclusion that public policies and governance are embedded each other. The role of governance is to provide public services, where government plays a leading role (Kulshreshtha, 2008: 566). From Kulshreshtha's (2008) point of view, it appears that the locus of decision making authority—that determines the role of government, is crucial in the function of governance. For example, Langea and Alexiadoub (2010: 444) also claim that governance is "the process of decision-making", and the key governance strategy is to implement the intended plans/programs.

The above discussion, particularly Elahi's (2009: 1169) note, implies that governance is an integral part of public policy. Dye's definition of public policy is relevant in this regard. Dye states that public policy is "whatever governments choose to do or not to do" (Dye, 2008: 1). The central thesis of this definition is to pay attention to both the "actions and inactions" (Anderson, 1994: 240) of the government, which can be seen as the process of governance. Anderson's (1994: 5) view also supplements the linkages of public policy and the governmental units to put policy into effects. Dye (2008: 20) agrees with this and further clarifies a close relationship between public policy and governmental institutions. In this process, Dye believes that the governmental institutions play a role to translate the public policies into practice. According to Dye and Elahi's notes, Howlett et al., (2009: 5) provide a
similar view—that public policy is a decision made by the government to achieve the intended objectives.

It can thus be inferred from the above discussion that public policy involves, as of Dye's (1995, 2011: 1) definition, a choice of governments to realize the intended policy through the process of governance, i.e. decision-making. In this connection, Carl J. Friedrich's view is relevant, and describes policy as "a proposed course of action of a government to reach a goal" (cited in Anderson, 1994: 5). Anderson claims that the Friedrich's definition provides an additional explanation that policy intends to achieve certain goals and objectives (Anderson, 1994: 5). This is why Smith and Larimer (2009: 3-4) state that public policy is "purposive and goal oriented", and it is "a product of demand". It allows us to draw a conclusion from the above definitions that public policy is a statement of the "action or inaction" of a government (Anderson, 1994: 240).

2.6 School Governance Policy

School governance policy can be taken as a public policy domain and it has changed in a cyclic order. Globalization has been playing an important role in changing school governance policies (Mok, 2005: 292). Foreign aid is one of the pertinent examples of this fact, particularly in developing countries. Anderson (1994: 105) therefore highlights interest groups that have a major role in policy formulation. The growing interdependence between each other and development partners' (donors) contributions to education has changed the school governance policy (Mok, 2005: 302). The decentralized school governance policy has become "a global phenomenon" (Fiske, 1996, cited in Gunnarsson et al., 2004: 2), can be taken as evidence. Nepal's current restructuring process in school governance policy is also an example.

Scholars in the field of education have continuously emphasized the importance of changing school governance policy (e.g., see Mok, 2005; Kuiper et al., 2008; Nieveen and Kuiper, 2012). Exemplary is Dale's (1997) framework. Dale's core research questions focus on "how education is financed, how it is delivered, and how it is governed" (Dale, 1997: 275). If we see the history of reform initiatives in education, we can find the central role of Dale's three factors for changing the
governance systems. An example can be taken from the Mongolian case. Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe (2004: 29) provide evidence of a Mongolian decentralized educational reform model before the 1990s, which was introduced just to secure international funding.

The changing preferences of governments started in the 1970s and became more decentralized in the 1990s (Frederickson and Smith, 2003). The Westminster model, in this regard, has contributed to the concept of a minimal state and clearly has demarcated "what the government should and should not be responsible for" (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992: 44). This concept has further reinforced the new role of the state, in which the state is seen as "a facilitator for empowering stakeholders" (Ansell, 2000: 303). According to Ansell (2000: 306), a synergy can be achieved, if the tasks are distributed among stakeholders. In contrast, some call for more centralized control (Zhao, 2007: 13-14). However, Van Horn (1979) points out two essential factors which are often overlooked in the debates over centralization and decentralization. These are "national goals and representation of interest groups" (Van Horn, 1979: 160). The concern of interest groups raised by Van Horn here seems relevant to the problems encountered in achieving a policy regarding transferring public schools to the community in Nepal. The following sections attempt to compare and contrast the centralization and decentralization issues in school governance policy.

2.7 Centralization-Decentralization Discourses on School Governance Policy at the Macro Level

According to Cheng (1993), "decentralization and centralization represent two entirely different principles of management" (Cheng, 1993: 8). Cheng provides an example that centralization is "consistent with the principle of standard procedures to prevent problems created in the school" (Cheng, 1993: 8). In a centralized model, authority remains with the central ministry of education or its wings (Ikoya, 2008: 632). Decentralization is often defined in terms of "four degrees of transfer of authority" through the processes of "deconcentration, delegation, devolution, and privatization" (e.g., see Rondinelli et al., 1989: 72; Welsh and McGinn, 1999: 18).
Rondinelli et al. (1989: 72-76) distinguish these four forms of decentralization very precisely. For example, de-concentration in Rondinelli et al.’s view is the weakest form of decentralization and it merely shifts tasks from the central government ministry to its wings. Delegation in their view is a little bit different from the deconcentration in which the government transfers its responsibilities to the lower level organizations Rondinelli et al. (1989: 74). Rondinelli et al. define devolution as the way in which the central government devolves responsibilities to local governments with full autonomy (Rondinelli et al., 1989: 75). Privatization, in Rondinelli et al.’s (1989: 73) view, is the process of contracting out some of the services to reduce the recurrent costs.

It is widely recognized that both centralized (e.g., France, Japan, Korea) and decentralized (e.g., the Netherlands, New Zealand) systems have "delivered decent results" in school education (Eskeland and Filmer, 2007: 104). However, all of a sudden, decentralized school governance policy gained momentum after the claim of Osborne and Gaebler’s (1992: 251) concept of decentralized government, which works well even in public organizations like schools, if they are allowed to make their own choices. This movement has greatly influenced the education governance systems and decentralization has become "a global phenomenon" (Egal and Sobel, 2009: 164). Decentralized school governance policies presume that the school autonomy brings positive effects on performance and addresses to educational problems timely (Lewis and Naidoo, 2004: 102). The essence of this view also matches Osborne and Gaebler’s (1992: 250) understanding, who claim that implementers can produce the intended results if they do not need to wait until the center makes a decision.

Together with the world’s movement, the government of Nepal introduced “CMS policy” (i.e. transferring public schools to community) policy under the concept of decentralization in 2002 (Ministry of Education, 2009; National Planning Commission, 2010). According to Ministry of Education (2009), it is regarded as a paradigm shift of development strategy—from a centralized to a decentralized school governance system. The government of Nepal has, thus, made strong policy provision with necessary legal arrangements; however, several obstacles have been encountered in the implementation of decentralized school governance policy—teachers’
professional organizations and their unions has become the main barrier of the policy. Teachers' understanding is that the current CMS policy might be a threat to their professional career and job security because the policy permits SMC to hire and fire teachers (Carney et al., 2007; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2009). This conflicting pressure has greatly influenced government plans and programs (see Table 1.1). As a result, the centralization-decentralization discourse on school governance policy in Nepal has been further mounting in recent years.

The case now taking place in Nepal appears more or less similar across the world. Time and again, the policy of centralization or decentralization appears, disappears and reappears in many countries (Kuiper et al., 2008). Several European, Asian, and African countries, and California in the USA, are examples of this fact (see Figure 2.2).

![Figure 2.2](image)

**Figure 2.2** Education Policy Swing between Centralization and Decentralization

**Sources:** Adapted from McGinn and Welsh, 1999; Ministry of Education, 1999; Bush and Gamage, 2001; Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe, 2004; DeGrauwe et al., 2005; Barankay and Lockwood, 2007; United Nations Development Program, 2007; Kuiper et al., 2008; Lo and Gu, 2008, and Sun, 2010.
Figure 2.2 reveals evidence of the education policy swing from centralization to decentralization and again to recentralization in different countries. The figure further clarifies that the policy choice of centralization or decentralization is rather only one of strategies, but is not necessarily the permanent choice for all countries at all time. A country’s socio-political, and cultural contexts, as well as the changing roles of the government and international factors, are equally prevalent for shaping school governance policy (DeGrauwe et al., 2005: 2). This is the reason why the individual countries’ education policy changes overtime.

Nieveen and Kuiper (2012: 378) provide the reasons for adopting centralized governance policy include: (1) enhancing state-wide quality improvement; (2) reducing the achievement gap; and (3) addressing equity issues. Nevertheless, the reason for the Chinese recentralized school governance policy is different. For example, Hawkins (2000: 442, 452) notes that there was a long-standing debate concerning the centralization and decentralization issue, which has eventually created a recentralized policy in China. However, Hawkins's research does not provide apparent reasons for moving toward recentralization. The common reasons for adopting centralized school governance policy across the world, however, are to foster more structure, uniformity, and equity in the education system (e.g., see Zhao, 2007; Nieveen and Kuiper, 2012). In contrast, several authors find critical disadvantages with the centralized governance system. For example, (1) it focuses on a single approach, so that it inhibits diversity (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 20, 36); (2) it concentrates on the intended rather than the implemented domain (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992: 252-253); and (3) it often disregards local needs and aspirations (Minas et al., 2012: 295-296). These findings add support to the trend of a pendulum of school governance policy swings, from centralization to decentralization and eventually to recentralization.

Most of the nations in the world are, therefore, becoming convinced that decentralization helps ensure the accountability of public organizations (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 68, 85). McGinn and Welsh seem to be focused on decentralization and elaborate some of the reasons for decentralization in education. For example, McGinn and Welsh state in their preface that decentralization appears to be the solution to tackle the local issues of teacher deployment, teacher payments, and to generate the
resources. In fact, "economic and financial globalization" has further weakened the roles of the central government (Mok, 2005: 292). Ho’s (2006) argument on decentralization is that "people at the lower level are more knowledgeable about their own needs and problems" (Ho, 2006: 590). Ho thus cites the success example of Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea, where school-based management has developed a new partnership between school and community; as a result, the quality of education has been significantly increased (Ho, 2006: 591).

Barankay and Lockwood (2007) tell a similar story of Switzerland. Barankay and Lockwood studied decentralization and the productive efficiency of the Swiss government and found no evidence for the adverse effects of decentralization (Barankay and Lockwood, 2007: 1216). For example, they claim in their study that decentralization is not only associated with the school improvement, but is also equally paramount in reducing the gender gap in education. However, Barankay and Lockwood doubt how far the targeted population benefited from the decentralized governance policy. They therefore recommend a micro-level research on the benefit from decentralization. Interestingly, a conclusion made by Barankay and Lockwood is that decentralization is more beneficial for the weak states. It seems true that particularly less developed countries (for example, see Figure 2.2) are moving toward a decentralized school governance policy.

In contrast, Levin (2011: 74) provides a gloomy picture of New Zealand, where school reform is made more difficult because of the high degree of decentralization. Levin claims, in theory, that the decentralized school governance model helps develop competition among schools, but in practice, especially in the case of New Zealand, a large number of small schools located in rural areas could not compete as intended (Levin, 2011: 74-75). It has further caused a visible inequity in student achievement, Levin (2011: 75) concludes. However, the average student achievement in New Zealand remains high in international assessments (see also Thrupp et al., 2002: 486). The key message is that there are difficulties in making reforms through decentralization. A similar reason can also be observed in Mongolia, where the government enforced a recentralization law in education in 2002 (Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe, 2004: 36). These findings add support the problem statement
raised in this study concerning the viability of the decentralized school governance policy in the case of Nepal.

There are many arguments and counter arguments about the pros and cons of both centralization and decentralization school governance policy. For example, Zhao (2007: 13) states that "the United States’ education is now moving toward more centralization", keeping in view increasing students' learning achievement, "while Asian countries are focusing on decentralization". Kauneckis and Andersson (2009: 24) provide the statistics that about 85% of developing countries have undergone some type of decentralization reform. Zhao’s view also matches the policy of the then government of Nepal, which established a uniform system of education by nationalizing all of the educational institutions of the country in 1971 (National Education System Plan, 1971: 33) and continued for two decades on the assumptions that "education was one of the prime functions of the state" (Ministry of Education, 1997: 124). It was also expected to maintain a regional balance and enhance the uniform learning achievements of students through centralized education systems (National Education System Plan, 1971: 4, 33).

To summarize, there are several reasons for shifting school governance policy in pursuit of excellence. However, decentralization in education has been mushrooming because it is expected to solve problems timely compared to centralized systems. These benefits are also explicitly reflected in Osborne and Gaebler (1992: 252-253). Interestingly, it can be seen in Figure 2.2 that most of the developed nations are moving toward recentralization, whereas developing countries are largely concentrated on decentralization in education (except Mongolia). Mukundan and Bray's (2004: 226) findings in the case of the decentralized education system in India are relevant here. They found that decentralisation has not been strongly implemented as expected. They then raised the question, why not? Their simple answer is that the benefits from decentralisation are less than its claims (Mukundan and Bray, 2004: 226). Zhao’s (2007) result further reiterates Mukundan and Bray's (2004) research findings. Both of these results seem counterproductive for those that often view decentralization as a panacea to the problems encountered in education systems. Although school-based management in the name of decentralized school governance policy has been widely implemented Edwards (2011: 67), what is happening at the
implementation level is extremely marginalized from research (Smit, 2005: 304). However, the Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy (2008: 31) studied social mobilization for participation in the CMS in Nepal and found better student achievement, including community participation and efficiency in retaining students, in many of those community-transferred schools. Given this controversy, as a researcher, it was interesting to explore the empirical evidence concerning the initial outputs of the decentralized school governance policies in Nepal.

2.8 Centralization-Decentralization Discourses on School Governance Policy at the Micro Level

From the macro-level perspective, many international comparative researchers have highlighted international pressures on governments to decentralize the education sector (Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe, 2004: 30). In a positive sense, this is a kind of pressure for school to demonstrate good performance. However, putting too much emphasis on decentralized school governance policy has raised several pertinent issues related to education disparities and inequalities in the society (Mok, 2005: 306). Mok therefore suggests carefully examining both the positive and negative consequences when school governance policies are formulated. Once again Zhao’s (2007) results and Nepal’s school governance policy before the 1990s further received support. Scholars advocating a centralized governance system see benefits, including a common understanding of the aims and purposes of the intended policy, which eventually appear to support the equity and uniformity in education (e.g., see Zhao, 2007; Nieveen and Kuiper, 2012).

Conversely, Hanson believes that decentralization is driven by the political, economic, and educational objectives of individual countries (Hanson, 2006: 11-12). For example, the role of the school stakeholders in school governance has become "an emerging policy concept" in education (Burd, 2004: 75). The reason in Cheng's (1993: 8) view is that decentralization focuses on the problems to be solved in time.

There is a surprising degree of similarity regarding school-based management between Taiwan and South Korea. For example, the new initiative in Taiwan has changed from the conventional "parent-school relationship" to a "parent-school
partnership”, in which "parents become directly involved in school management” (Lo and Gu, 2008: 514). This has created a different echelon in school governance, because the domination of the principal has been sharply reduced in school management. In a similar way, South Korean school-based management initiatives have made a mandatory provision of the SMC in school management. The members include "students' parents (40-50%), teachers (30-40%) and community members (10-30%), while the school principal is an ex-officio member of the committee” (Lo and Gu, 2008: 515).

Recently initiated school governance policy in Nepal seems to be quite closer to the above-discussed cases of both Taiwan and South Korea. Both of them have been moved towards school-based management, in which teachers and parents are viewed as key actors in school governance. Nepali education policy also envisions that the SMCs are entrusted with the responsibilities for the management and operation of schools, and community participation in school management is an essential phenomenon. The experience of Taiwan and South Korea is crucial here to note is that the policy of decentralization emphasizes the fitness of "the local settings" (Lo and Gu, 2008: 523). This can be connected with Fullan’s “need and fit” dimension for fostering effective implementation of change, i.e. "change in practice" (2001: 25).

Cheng (1993) identifies two basic models of school-based management. First, the "school is the major decision-making unit" (Cheng, 1993: 7). According to Cheng, this model advocates school autonomy regarding finance and the management of the school, and second, "ownership is the major requirement of school reform" (Cheng, 1993: 7). According to Cheng, this model focuses on the participation of concerned members to make decisions. With the concept of school-based management, provincial governments in the USA and Japan, with their own board of education, offer guidance, advice, and funding public and private schools within their catchment area (Wieczorek, 2008: 103). One of the encouraging characteristics of these two countries’ education is student achievement. The reasons identified by Wieczorek for such success are motivated teachers and the obligation of meeting national standards. In contrast, Ainley and McKenzie (2000: 144) found an extreme variation among highly-decentralized schools than that of the schools operated under the centralized
systems in Australia. This evidence supports the advocates that believe in centralized school governance policy. However, school-based management in Hong Kong has been gaining momentum simply because of the fact that school principals and teachers are convinced with the policy objectives (Cheng, 2009: 67). The reason here matches the opinion of Brever and Deleon (1983: 66), who believe that implementation performance depends on the implementer’s understanding of the policy intention. This has a close connection with the CMS policy in Nepal, which intends to shift the authority of school governance from the central government to the local school level. However, teachers and their professional unions have time and again campaigned and demonstrated against the policy. The government of Nepal has not yet been able to convince the teachers and their professional organizations about the positive consequences of the intended policy.

The Chinese school reform initiatives in the early 1980s were guided by a decentralized framework (Sun, 2010: 320). According to Sun, this policy had limited the role of the central government over basic education from the middle of the 1980s. For example, villages, townships, and counties were made responsible for primary schools, junior secondary schools, and senior secondary schools, respectively (Sun, 2010: 321). It seems that individual schools in China are operated with a greater autonomy of local counties. However, the mix of a centralized planning and decentralized implementation seems to be chaotic in the implementation of the intended policy. In this regard, very interestingly, Hawkins provides a phrase for Chinese school governance policy: "walking on two legs" (Hawkins, 2000: 442), i.e. a mixture of both centralized and decentralized approaches to education. The literature suggests that devolving the power and responsibility from the central government to the local school is equally paramount in decentralization.

Interestingly, the result captured from the case of Chicago school reforms initiated in 1988 is different. The reform at first involved decentralization of authority to school sites, followed by strengthening authority for accountability at the district level and retaining the authority of school operations in a "Local School Council" (Ainley and McKenzie, 2000: 145). According to Ainley and McKenzie, the reform program concluded that several improvements emerged when authorities transferred from the central to the district level. The case of Israel also provides a similar result,
where school-based management has increased competition among schools (Resh and Benavot, 2009: 87).

The international evidence confirms the hypothesis underlying that the school autonomy has a positive impact on school performance (Agasisti, 2013: 2). The story of charter schools in the USA would be interesting to discuss. According to Ainley and McKenzie (2000: 146), these schools are "publicly funded, but autonomously managed under a contract or charter system". The policy of the charter school theory is based on the assumption that schools produce better results if they are made publicly accountable (Finnigan, 2007: 504). Finnigan (2007) therefore states that the involvement of parents or community in school helps ensure the school performance. Robinson et al.'s (2011: 725) study in the case of New Zealand also demonstrates that higher levels of school autonomy are associated with higher performance.

Zimmer and Buddin (2009: 831-832) used longitudinal student-level data in their study, but surprisingly, did not find consistent results regarding the academic effectiveness of charter schools. This finding repeats the story that Ainley and McKenzie already told, in which they also capture a similar situation that has persisted in Britain, where "locally-managed schools" have not shown better performance compared to other types of schools (Ainley and McKenzie, 2000: 146). However, decentralization in school management in the UK explicitly increased the participation of parents (Bush and Gamage, 2001: 42). In a nutshell, the performance of the decentralized schools has been illustrated as a critical concern of decentralization in the education governance system. Zimmer and Buddin (2009: 522), therefore, propose future research on examining the benefits and limitations of high levels of autonomy in schools. This study tries to explore this issue to some extent.

The above discussion provides a clue that the issue of centralization and decentralization is a more contextual phenomenon. Increasing disparities and low educational quality (Zimmer and Buddin, 2009) are precisely the unintended results of the decentralized school governance policy (Mukundan and Bray, 2004). For instance, the academic achievements of students in locally-managed schools were not found significant in the USA, the UK, and Australia (Ainley and McKenzie, 2000). This has opened further discussion on decentralization, particularly in the case of Nepal.
Decentralization may not be a solution to all the problems; however, it is the proper time to rethink the arguments among Nepalese education policy makers whose intention is to move toward a decentralized governance policy keeping in view more school autonomy.

The main intention of decentralizing school governance policy seems to establish school culture so that innovations can be ensured at the school level. "Organizations are cultures" (Morgan, 2006: 6), because organizational life is guided by its "values, beliefs, norms, rituals, and patterns" (Scott, 1987: 493). In Scott's view, this process can be treated as the institutionalization of organizational values, norms, beliefs, and social behaviors. Institutions are defined as "regulatory structures, for instance, government agencies, laws, courts and professions" (Oliver, 1991: 147). For example, a traffic sign can be considered as an institution, which regulates the driving behaviour of people (Meyer and Rowan, 1977).

Institutional theory asserts that organizations are not only "viewed as production systems"; but they are also "characterized as social and cultural systems" (Scott, 1987: 507). The social and cultural characteristics are beyond the control of the organizations; that is why "organizations are compelled to adopt the rules and practices" created by such external environments (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 148). Organizational culture therefore can be viewed as the social practices. Naranjo-Valencia et al.’s (2010: 468) research finding drew a conclusion that organizational culture motivates members of the organization to accept the new changes.

A third school of thought has also emerged in the contemporary field, which is a combination of centralized and decentralized school governance policy. No organization is "completely self-contained" (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978: 2). Pfeffer and Salancik further added that organizations must acquire resources from their environment, which is called resource dependence theory. It means that organizations need to transact with other elements in their environment to survive (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978: 93). This is true in the case of China, where balanced support is searched for to sustain the improved achievement of students (Hawkins, 2000: 442). Wong (2000) calls it “integrated governance” (cited in Ainley and McKenzie, 2000: 145). It is noteworthy to mention here that “integrated governance” would be an appropriate approach in the Nepali context to enhance community participation, to
maintain equity in access and uniformity in the learning achievement of students, and to retain students in public schools.

The government of Nepal’s policy documents, such as the Three-year Development Plan, 2010-2013, the SSRP, 2009, also envision a kind of similar concept of integrated governance (National Planning Commission, 2010). For example, school governance and management at the local level will be "the shared responsibility of the central government, the local government body, and the school" (Ministry of Education, 2009: 92). The policy (i.e. SSRP) explains that while school decentralization policy in Nepal has been taking place, a close link has been established between the school community and the government (Ministry of Education, 2009). As a result, community participation and student achievement have demonstrated positive results across the nation (National Planning Commission, 2010). Based on the assumption of gaining meaningful participation of the community and in response to the quality issue to retain students, the government of Nepal has continued the existing policy of the decentralized school governance policy. With its focus on raising quality in public schools, the government of Nepal has prepared a seven-year SSRP, 2009-2015, which firmly envisions that the local governments/communities "are expected to play an increasing role in the decision-making, planning and implementation of public education" (Ministry of Education, 2009: 4).

There are a number of conflicting claims regarding the outcomes from the decentralized school governance policy across the world (e.g., see Ainley and McKenzie, 2000; Zhao, 2007; Zimmer and Buddin, 2009). The researcher therefore agrees with Falleti’s (2005: 344) research finding, who proposes a question: although the policy reforms in decentralization are "being granted larger amounts of resources and responsibilities", why are the results not very encouraging? To answer this question, an in-depth study of the ground reality is required. In doing so, this study focuses on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in Nepal.

The above summary provides a somewhat gloomy picture of decentralization. It seems clear that the majority of countries, especially developing ones, are moving toward decentralization; however, the research results on this are not so inspiring.
However, several researchers have also highlighted some hope (e.g., Ho, 2006; Cheng, 2009; Resh and Benavot, 2009). Most of them have proposed future research on the implementation of decentralization, which implies outputs and impact. To understand which systems of school governance policy (i.e. centralization or decentralization) work better, it requires analysing the initial outputs as to whether the intended policy has been implemented accordingly. To recall again the reviewed literature, the majority of research findings have referred to either the concerns of teachers or to organizational dynamics, such as capacity, policy clarity, adequate budget, and so on, as barriers to implementing change in schools (e.g., see Cheng, 2009; Zimmer and Buddin, 2009). Coincidently, the findings of the related studies support the issue that was augmented in the problem statement, which states that teachers have been seen as a critical obstacle in implementing the CMS policy in Nepal.

2.9 Policy Implementation

The above discussion explicitly permits the inference that the impacts of centralized or decentralized school governance policy are not conclusive. They appear and disappear for a certain period of time; though, the period could be a short or a long span of time. The central thesis of these two schools of thought rests upon the implementation of the intended policy. How they are implemented or what happens when an intended policy has been implemented is paramount rather than weighing the theoretical assumptions of both centralization and decentralization. Bardach (1977: 9) believes that a number of political factors take place at the level of implementation. Therefore, Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989: 25) claim that every policy decision should be able to structure the implementation. Public policy by nature puts its concern on "what a government actually does" i.e. implementation (Anderson, 1994: 7). Policy implementation is therefore simply a view of Barrett's “translating policy into action” (Barrett, 2004: 251).

Birkland's (2011) definition of policy implementation is worth mentioning here. Birkland defines the implementation of public policies as "the process by which policies enacted by the government are put into effect by the relevant agencies"
(Birkland, 2011: 263). Smith and Larimer (2009) further serve as a good representative definition. They explain that implementation is a point to look at in terms of "what happens after a government declares a formal intent to do something and before a policy outcome has been produced" (Smith and Larimer, 2009: 157). This kind of policy output is the main concern of this study. Policy output is the "action actually taken in pursuance of policy decisions" for example; "taxes collected, miles of highway built" (Anderson, 1994: 7).

Both Birkland, and Smith and Larimer follow Pressman and Wildavsky (1979: 181), who describe policy implementation as a process of translating "a policy mandate into action" or transforming "prescriptions into results". However, the results can be analyzed in different stages (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983: 22). Policy implementation, thus, focuses on the actions taken to achieve the intended objectives. What "a government says or appears to say" can be taken as the goals of the public policy (Anderson, 1994: 244). Nevertheless, it is frequently argued that adopting a good policy is a necessary but not sufficient condition, because what has been achieved is crucial. This is the reason that scholars focus on the actions taken to achieve the goals, i.e. what has been done (Smith and Larimer, 2009: 130) is the main crux of assessing the results of policy implementation. An important part of the implementation process is the actual measurement of the policy outputs (Balzarova, 2004: 391). This research therefore follows Smith and Larimer's concept, i.e. what has been done to assess the extent to which the adopted decentralized school governance policy in Nepal has been realized.

Many scholars have a common belief that policy implementation has a close connection with the intended results (e.g., see Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979; Dye, 2011; and Birkland, 2011). The reason claimed by Birkland (2011: 264) is simply to enhance the intended policy into a realized one. According to Anderson, the study of Pressman and Wildavsky can be taken as an example of researching the implementation of public policies (Anderson, 1994: 188-189). This study has expanded the scope of the study of policy implementation, keeping in view identifying Smith and Larimer's (2009) reasons why some policies have been successfully implemented and others have not. For this purpose, scholars of policy
studies pay attention to the top-down and bottom-up perspectives of the policy implementation system (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1989).

From Smith and Larimer's (2009: 156-173) point of view, there are three eras of policy implementation research. Smith and Larimer believe that the first era occurred in the early 1970s and mainly focused on individual case studies, so that problems of generality remained unanswered. Smith and Larimer's second era began in the middle of 1970s and focused on the problems of generality. Birkland (2011: 265) claims that the second era remained a landmark for developing "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches in policy implementation research. According to Smith and Larimer, the third era began after 1980s and focused on testing hypotheses. At this stage, Smith and Larimer (2009: 171) claimed that rigorous theory development and empirical testing were explicitly focused. This study is more concerned with the top-down and bottom-up approaches in the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. The reason for this is that scholars of policy implementation suggest considering both approaches when studying the results of policy implementation (e.g., Elcock, 1990: 71).

2.10 Summary and Conclusions of the Review

The literature reiterates time and again the fact that what is happening at the implementation level is the main crux of assessing the results of policy implementation. Table 2.5 summarizes the main findings gained from the literature reviewed for this study.
**Table 2.5** Summary of the Major Findings of the Related Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Topic</th>
<th>Research Scholar(s)</th>
<th>Major Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do community-managed schools work? An evaluation of El Salvador's EDUCO Program</td>
<td>Jimenez and Sawada (1999)</td>
<td>The finding indicates that the intensity of community involvement is significantly related to students' academic achievements and community participation had a positive effect to monitor teachers' time-on-task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralization and marketization of education in Singapore: A case of school excellence model</td>
<td>Mok (2003)</td>
<td>The finding shows that the process of recentralization is the cause of fear of losing control from the center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community initiatives in education: goals, dimensions and linkages with governments</td>
<td>Bray (2003)</td>
<td>In 1972, the government of Pakistan nationalized all private schools to create centralized education system. But, the scheme encountered several administrative, political and financial obstacles, and in 1979 the regulation was amended. Since then, private and community schools have been operated through decentralized scheme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2.5 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Main Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The decentralization of education in Kerala State of India: Rhetoric and</td>
<td>Mukundan, and Bray (2004)</td>
<td>The main finding of this study is that even in a society with high levels of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reality</td>
<td></td>
<td>education and strong traditions of community participation; decentralization</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>is difficult to achieve in terms of intended objectives. The simple reason</td>
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<td>they found that implementers are confused about how to implement the intended</td>
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<td>policy successfully.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational decentralization in three Asian societies: Japan, Korea and</td>
<td>Ho (2006)</td>
<td>Decentralized school governance policy in Hong Kong, Japan and Korea has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td></td>
<td>developed a close relationship between school and community; as a result, the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>quality of education has been significantly increased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based management and paradigm shift in education: an empirical study</td>
<td>Cheng and Mok (2007)</td>
<td>The school-based management has developed a stronger commitment of implementers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to the policy objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making decentralization work: a cross-national examination of local</td>
<td>Kauneckis and Andersson (2009)</td>
<td>The empirical results of decentralization have been mixed. It was expected to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>governments and natural resource governance in Latin America</td>
<td></td>
<td>improve governance; the result has not been as supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Study on Effectiveness of Community-Managed School in Nepal</td>
<td>Full Bright Consultancy (2011)</td>
<td>CMSs in Nepal are continuously exhibiting better performances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recalling Figure 2.2 once again and relating it with the findings of Table 2.5 helps derive the conclusion that neither centralization nor decentralization is a shortcut. Instead, the policy process changes over time due to the shifting roles of the central government. It can also be inferred from the literature that there are two different concerns observed in the decentralization process. The first one is the concept of the developed countries, where responsibilities have been devolved to local communities or schools in order to provide service more quickly. For example, in New Zealand each school is governed by its own elected board of trustees, "but salaries are set nationally" (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 33). Another concern is the story of the underdeveloped countries which are compelled to adopt a decentralization policy due to external pressures (e.g., see Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe, 2004).

A conclusion can be drawn that policies need to be adapted to each country’s own context, because it is not a panacea (DeGrauwe et al., 2005). In a nutshell, the findings produced from the literature review are neither encouraging nor discouraging in terms of rationalizing the policy of decentralization in education (see Table 2.5). However, there are some successful stories that have taken place in the decentralized school governance systems.
CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter focuses on the theoretical concepts on policy implementation in section 3.1, followed by models of policy implementation in section 3.2. Section 3.3 introduces the anticipated variables for this study. Finally, section 3.4 deals with the conceptual framework, and section 3.5 draws research hypotheses based on the conceptual frameworks developed for this study. Finally, section 3.6 depicts the models for testing the hypotheses.

3.1 Theoretical Concepts on Policy Implementation

Policy implementation can also be defined in terms of outputs or "the extents to which programmatic goals have been satisfied" (Goggin et al., 1990: 34). Simon (2007) explains the importance of policy implementation to produce the intended outputs (Simon, 2007: 172). Implementation is related to the actual action of a particular program (Love, 2004: 63-64). Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) sketch a broad definition of the policy implementation in which they state the following:

"Implementation is the carrying out of a basic policy decision... that decision identifies the problems to be addressed, stipulates the objectives to be pursued, and in a variety of ways, 'structures' the implementation process" (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983: 20).

Along with the definition of implementation, Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) provide three perspectives for building implementation theory. Mazmanian and Sabatier's first perspective is policy makers, termed as the "center," followed by
implementers, termed as "periphery," and finally the people whom the policy is aimed at, termed as the "target group" (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983: 12). The explanations of these three perspectives in terms of implementation are distinct from one another. For example, Mazmanian and Sabatier state that implementation is considered as a top-down approach from the center perspective in order to translate the intended policy into attained.

According to Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983), from the periphery perspective, implementation is all about how implementers perceive the policy. Finally, the explanation of the implementation from the third perspective is about how far the target groups' life has been changed (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983). Smith and Larimer (2009: 166) argue that Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) three perspectives provide the best root for building implementation theory. Some of the pertinent theories related to policy implementation are discussed below.

3.1.1 Top-down Theory

Pressman and Wildavsky (1979) define policy implementation as "a process of interaction between the setting of goals and actions geared to achieve them" (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: xxi). Younis and Davidson (1990) agree with Pressman and Wildavsky's (1979) definition of policy implementation and state that there are three approaches to policy implementation. These are; "the top-down approach," "the bottom-up approach," and "the policy/action continuum" (Younis and Davidson, 1990: 5, 5-12). According to Younis and Davidson (1990: 5), the first approach, i.e. the top-down approach, assumes that policy makers at the top formulate the policy and then it is supposed to be implemented at the bottom. Hill (2005) further postulates the top-down approach in the following way:

"Policy is taken to be the property of the policy makers at the 'top', who are then given advice on how to secure more effective implementation" (Hill, 2005: 178).

Pülzl and Treib (2007) also agree with Hill's approach. Pülzl and Treib advance that the top-down models place "their main emphasis on the ability of
decision makers to produce unequivocal policy objectives" (Pühlz and Treib, 2007: 90). It appears from the definitions that top-down theory assumes that "one can understand policy implementation by looking at the goals and strategies" of the intended policy (Birkland, 2011: 265). In this regard, Birkland seems to follow the theoretical account developed by Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 12) center perspective. However, Bardach (1977: 49-50) strongly emphasizes its consequences, because several complications may emerge in implementing the top-down policy if the implementers at the local level are not ready.

While analyzing Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983), Younis and Davidson's (1990), and Hill's (2005) views, it can be inferred that the top-down theory deals with the centrally defined models and the procedures for its implementation. Birkland's (2011) observation also represents a common ground and explains that top-down theory permits the study of policy design in terms of setting goals by policy makers and "implementation of the policy through the lowest-level implementers" (Birkland, 2011: 265). This study therefore uses top-down theory for two reasons:

1. First, it helps to explain the reasons behind adopting and implementing the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal from the “center” perspective as suggested by Smith and Larimer (2009: 166).

2. Secondly, it supports this study in its focus on the gaps between intended and attained policy as proposed by Birkland (2011: 265).

### 3.1.2 Bottom-up Theory

This theory completely contrasts the top-down approach. For instance, Birkland (2011) states that the top-down theory is more concerned with the compliance of the intended goals, whereas bottom-up theory emphasizes the abilities and motivations of implementers and also stresses minimizing conflicts between policy makers and implementers (Birkland, 2011: 268). It is noted that the gap between policy formulation and the implementation has been observed as the weaknesses of the top-down approach (Hill, 2005: 179-180). Bottom-uppers view "local bureaucrats as the main actors in policy delivery and conceive of
implementation as negotiation processes” between policy makers and implementers (Pülzl and Treib, 2007: 90).

Simon (2007) therefore argues that the intended policy outputs may not produce due to "limiting opportunities for administrators to tailor policy to specific needs" (Simon, 2007: 142). To address this issue, Younis and Davidson (1990: 8) propose the bottom-up approach in which individuals working at the implementation levels are focused on. Younis and Davidson precisely claim that "implementation is the perception of where government action stops and where the action of implementation begins" (Younis and Davidson, 1990: 5-6). This definition clearly indicates that policy makers should not seek control over implementation processes (Birkland, 2011: 265).

Smith and Larimer suggest that "the bottom-up theory can be used to make cases for understanding implementation" (Smith and Larimer, 2009: 166) by using Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 12) second and third perspectives of implementation; these are the “periphery” and the “target population.” This study also uses bottom-up theory to compare the cases of GPSs and CMSs in Nepal. In addition, this theory further helps search the perceived attitudes of the target groups; these are HT or teachers and the SMC chairs on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, because the bottom-up theory is "relatively free from predetermining assumptions" (Hill, 2005: 183). The researcher therefore convinced by Barrett and Hill's perspective, who explains that bottom-up mode of analysis not only helps "reflect better empirical evidence", but also reveals a strong "method of identifying more clearly who seems to be influencing what, how and why" (Barrett and Hill, 1981: 19, cited in Hill, 2005: 184) from the implementers' perspective, that is, putting policy into effect. In doing so, this study employs qualitative tools such as document analysis, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and observations (details of these tools are discussed in the following chapter).
3.2 Models of Policy Implementation

A general definition of the decentralized school is treated as the transfer of decision-making power to the local school level (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 18). This definition is simple and easy to understand, but it does not tell how the intended policy can be translated into the attained policy. The following models on policy implementation are relevant in response to the question raised above.

3.2.1 Van Meter and Van Horn's Model

Van Meter and Van Horn define policy implementation as "the actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions" (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 447). This definition focuses on policy objectives that need to be clear in order to achieve the intended aims. At this point, Birkland (2011: 267-268) doubts the feature of the top-down model, which emphasizes clear objectives from the top and assumes a clear division between policy enactment and policy implementation. A gap can occur between enacted and perceived policy because of the perceptual understanding between policy makers and implementers, Birkland (2011) suspects. However, Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 13) provide a solution—that the top can develop necessary guidelines for enhancing effective implementation performance.

Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 462) model basically falls under the top-down theory of policy implementation and identifies six variables that could lead to either the success or failure of policy performance. They are: standards and objectives, resources, characteristics of the implementing agencies, economic, social, and political conditions, intergovernmental communication and enforcement, and dispositions of the implementers (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 463). For example, the gap becomes wider in its proper implementation if the objectives are not clear enough and the resources are not available to the implementers.

3.2.2 Mazmanian and Sabatier's Model

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 22) proposed a framework of policy implementation with the identification of the variables which affect the achievement
of the intended policy in action. However, some scholars find that the framework proposed by Mazmanian and Sabatier tends to reflect a center perspective bias (e.g., see Ryan, 1996; Smith and Larimer, 2009). The reason given by Ryan (1996: 34) is that the framework views the achievement of the policy objectives as the key dependent variable, not the behaviour of the implementers. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 21) themselves, however, and Smith and Larimer, have raised similar concern and focused on "the crucial role of implementation analysis is the identification of the variables which affect the achievement of legal objectives" (Smith and Larimer, 2009: 165).

The variables that are involved in the implementation process are classified by Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 22) into three broad categories; these are: (1) tractability of the problem in which four variables, such as technical difficulties, diversity of target group behaviour, the target group as a percentage of the population and the extent of behavioural change, are taken into account; (2) the ability of the statute to structure implementation in which seven variables, such as clear and consistent objectives, incorporation of adequate causal theory, initial allocation of financial resources, hierarchical integration within and among implementing agencies, decision rules of implementing agencies, recruitment of implementing officials, and formal access by outsiders, are considered as central factors; and (3) the non-statutory variables affecting implementation, in which five variables—socio-economic condition and technology, public support, attitudes and resources of constituency groups, support from sovereigns, and commitment and the leadership skills of implementing official—are central to policy implementation. Mazmanian and Sabatier's belief is that these predicted variables influence the implementation process at five different stages (i.e. dependent variables). These stages are sketched as policy outputs of implementing agencies, compliance with policy outputs by target groups, actual impacts of policy outputs, perceived impacts of policy outputs, and major revision of the statute (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983: 22). Youngs and King's (2002) study adds leadership skills as a key variable. Youngs and King's study recognizes that when HTs foster relationship between the community and school, "school capacity is likely to be strengthened" to achieve the intended objectives (Youngs and King, 2002: 648).
Ryan (1996) views that Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) model is guided by state control of policy and programs, but they have equally emphasized the crucial roles of the implementers (Smith and Larimer, 2009). One of the strengths of this model is that they attempt to unify “top-down” and “bottom-up” perspectives on implementation by incorporating some “bottom-up” concerns into a “top-down” model (Ryan, 1996: 35). This study is typically based on the model developed by Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 22). There are two reasons: one, as claimed by Ryan (1996), this model is blended of both a top-down theory and bottom-up theory. The second one is the comprehensiveness of the model, which covers a wider range of variables involved in the policy implementation process (e.g., see Ryan, 1996; Smith and Larimer, 2009).

3.2.3 Leithwood and Menzies' Model

Leithwood and Menzies (1998: 340) examined 83 empirical studies of school-based management and identified four different models of decentralized school governance policy. This model is also recognized by Barrera-Osorio et al. (2009: 5); these are:

Model 1: Administrative control in which the school HT is dominant
Model 2: Professional control in which teacher force receives the authority
Model 3: Community control in which the community or the parents, through a board, are in charge
Model 4: Balanced control in which both parents and professionals (teachers and principal) are in balance

The current school governance policy of Nepal falls under Leithwood and Menzies' model 3; however, the degrees of autonomy vary between the GPS policy and CMS policy. One of the main reasons for decentralizing school governance policy is to obtain community participation and to retain students by ensuring quality education (National Planning Commission, 2002). A similar reason is reflected in the USA, where the charter school policy was initiated with two basic assumptions (Finnigan, 2007). First, schools serve better if they are made publicly accountable; and the second hypothesis is that the possibility of school's improvement depends
upon the close relationships between the schools and the parents, or communities (Finnigan, 2007: 504). The charter school policy has also been popular in the case of Qatar under the community control model (Barrera-Osorio et al., 2009: 5). They claim that teachers and principals are more responsive to parents in the community control model of school governance policy (Barrera-Osorio et al., 2009: 24).

Israeli policy of school-based management also appears quite similar to the concept of the American charter schools. According to Resh and Benavot (2009), the new initiative of school autonomy in Israel has significantly increased competition among schools (Resh and Benavot, 2009: 73, 83). In this connection, transferring public schools to communities in Nepal is that the government of Nepal has aimed to increase involvement of parents and local community people in the management of schools. This policy has started to demonstrate positive results (Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011). Unfortunately, this reform initiative in public school management has been a center of criticism and thus has remained a policy problem in Nepal.

There is tremendous pressure from the teachers and their unions to stop the CMS policy in Nepal because teachers want to be administered by the government, not by the local community. It shows that putting policy into action is central and it can be inferred that the intended policy may not be implemented if the implementers or end users are perceived differently (Bardach, 1977: 259-260; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181). Here, Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975) claim is essential to examine that implementation may not produce the expected performance if there are conflicts between policy makers and implementers; as a result, "implementers refuse to do what they are supposed to do" (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 482). This argument precisely represents the Nepal's case, where the teachers and their professional organizations time and again appeal to stop the CMS policy. Bardach's (1977: 42) research therefore asserts that it normally happens while implementing a new policy because of the perceptional differentiation among the implementers. The simple example Bardach provides is that implementers are concerned about the possibility of increased overload i.e., implementers are more concerned with "what they in particular might lose than with what all in general might gain" (Bardach, 1977: 42). A similar case appears in Nepal.
The models of policy implementation discussed above may be applicable in different context. This study, therefore, employs those variables which have the capacity to consolidate the variety of variables impacting policy implementation performance. In order to assess the factors that contribute to achieving the initial outputs of the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal, both Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975) and Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) theoretical models of implementation of public policies seem appropriate.

Implementation primarily focuses on how the program is carried out. Love (2004: 67) calls it "program success or failure". Following Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 22) model, the policy output of the decentralized school governance policy is taken as the dependent variable for this study. The term policy output refers to "the extent to which programmatic goals have been satisfied" (Goggin et al., 1990: 34). This definition reveals the objective of this study i.e. the implementation outputs of the intended policy. A policy output, according to Anderson (1994), is the "action actually taken in pursuance of policy decisions" for example; "taxes collected, miles of highway built" can be taken as policy outputs (Anderson, 1994: 7). This study therefore compares the status of the community participation in school improvement, and school effectiveness in terms of student attraction between the GPS and CMS. The literature suggests that study of school effectiveness relies very much on the physical resources and achievement of schools (e.g., see Townsend, 1997; Von Hippel, 2009). However, for this study, the yardstick of effectiveness is taken as the tendency of students' attraction and retention. This process can be treated as a process evaluation of the policy implementation (Love, 2004), which examines the gaps between intended and perceived attitudes of the policy and observes the on-going progress, i.e. initial output (Vedung, 1997).

3.3 Anticipated Variables in the Study

Since the aim of the study is to determine whether the introduction of CMS policy ultimately leads to improved performance compared to GPS policy. The variables associated with the policy implementation models have their own individual contribution to policy implementation. It is also true that each model may better fit in
different settings. The inherent limitation of this study does not permit uncovering all of the variables; that is why, some of the pertinent variables captured by the qualitative analysis of this study and the literature reviewed for this study are left out. For example, Ryan (1996: 37-38) identifies the commonalities between the models developed for policy implementation, which are summarized as follows:

1) Policy formulation:
   a) Consistency and clarity of objectives/directives
   b) Valid theory of cause and effect
2) Structures:
   a) Adequate resources
   b) Integrated policy delivery system
3) Relationships:
   a) Commitment of implementing actors
   b) Conflict between implementing actors
4) External influences:
   a) Conflicting environmental factors
   b) Disruptions to the policy environment

The factors related to policy implementation grouped by Ryan (1996) into four categories seem to consolidate the unifying models of policy implementation, which emphasize accommodating both the Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) “top down” control and the “bottom up” concept as that of Younis and Davidson (1990) and Hill (2005). Keeping in view Ryan's (1996: 36, 36-38) group of commonalities of variables, the results of the qualitative analysis of this study and the suggestions made by several research findings based on the case of Nepal (e.g., Carney et al., 2007; National Council for Economic and Development Research, 2008; Edwards, 2011; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011), the variables anticipated for this study are described as follows.
3.3.1 Dependent Variable

Implementation performance in terms of initial outputs of decentralized school governance policy is taken as the dependent variable for this study. This variable is supposed to measure the two initial outputs: community participation in school development and school effectiveness in terms of student attraction. Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 22) model has taken policy outputs as one of the dependent variables. Similarly, Goggin et al.'s (1990: 32) model also takes the policy-implementation process as the dependent variable. The government of Nepal has continued to scale up the target of transferring schools in its annual plans and programs (e.g., see Table 1.1). The sole reason given for this is the research findings of the studies, which show that access to and the quality of education, i.e. greater community participation in terms of generating local resources, including student attraction, are significantly enhanced in many of those CMSs (e.g., Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011).

3.3.2 Independent Variables

3.3.2.1 Clarity of Policy Objectives

From Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 463) model, it can be inferred that clarity of policy objectives is a crucial variable in achieving the intended policy outputs. This is quite close to Ryan's (1996: 37) consistency and clarity of objectives/directives variable. It also corresponds to Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 25) model, which explains that clear objectives can serve as a resource for the implementers in the implementation process. However, the teacher community, which is supposed to implement the CMS policy in Nepal, has interestingly protested against the policy. Teachers' understanding is that the current policy might be a threat to their professional career and job security because the policy permits the SMC to hire and fire teachers (Carney et al., 2007; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2009). It might be the cause of a lack of clarity regarding policy objectives. Brever and Deleon (1983: 66) therefore claim that "faithful implementation depends on the implementer's understanding" of such objectives. Brever and Deleon further elaborate that clarity of policy objective helps to produce better implementation performance. This is because the implementation
performance can only realize upon the acceptance of the end users (Bardach, 1977: 259-260; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181).

3.3.2.2 Capacity of Implementers

The capacity of the implementing agency and organizational capacity can be used interchangeably (Goggin, et al., 1990: 182-183). Their view of organizational capacity is fundamentally treated as the capacity of human resources. Goggin, et al. defined organizational capacity as "the ability of a government" to enhance policy implementation performance (Goggin, et al., 1990: 118). They have used organizational capacity as an independent variable to predict its effect on the policy implementation process and the study concluded that the capacity of implementers was positively related to the policy implementation. The success of decentralization in Gropello and Marshall's (2011: 164) view "is also heavily dependent on local capacity". They raise several issues of the failure of policy implementation due to the ignorance of the capacity of teachers and school heads.

Graziano and Winkler's (2012) study made a comparison between the Czech Republic and Italy regarding governance and implementation of activation policies. Their findings confirm that in both the countries the lack of the capacity of the implementing agencies has led to several implementation failures in the decentralized governance policies (Graziano and Winkler, 2012: 347). The Italian case further validates that top-down governance reforms have never been implemented unless the capacity of local implementers has increased (Graziano and Winkler, 2012: 349). This result further strengthens Pick et al.'s (2007: 158) claim; they state that if policy makers overlook the role of the real implementers, then it limits the scope of implementation. Howlett et al. (2009: 6) therefore quote Jenkins and Dye's work, on which the capacity of the implementing agency is considered as a significant component of policy implementation.

3.3.2.3 School Size

Blau (1972) defines size as the scope of an organization and its responsibilities. Blau further adds that there are chances of an increase in problems of communication and coordination in big organizations compared to small ones (Blau, 1972: 3). Very specifically Kinnberly (1976) provides an operation definition of size. Kinnberly states that the number of employees or number of clients served can be
taken as a good measure of size (Kinnberly, 1976: 583). Hall (1972: 139) concludes that size as a variable impacts organization performance. Having identified several dimensions of size, it can be inferred that the definition of size may vary according to the function of the organization. This study therefore adopts the Kinnberly's measure of size, i.e. student numbers. Small schools can make decisions faster than the big ones, which is often the case in Australia for example (Ewington et al., 2008: 546), and they prescribe 100 or fewer students as the small school. Their view is consistent with Nepal's case of the CMS, where 66 percent of the community-transferred schools are small in size, called primary schools.

3.3.2.4 Adequacy of Budget

Many scholars have emphasized the budget and have identified it as a critical factor in realizing the intended policy outputs. For example, Edwards (1980: 148) stresses the resources for realizing intended policy outputs. Regarding the issue of resources and incentives, Younis and Davidson (1990: 8) clearly indicate that "if the system is given enough money and enough instruction, implementation will be effective". Ryan (1996: 37) agrees with this and asserts that adequate resources have been a common variable among the highly-cited models developed for policy implementation. Edwards III and Wayne (2010: 305) also consistently claim that the implementation of policies is likely to be ineffective if resources are limited. A study in Nigeria also found inadequate budget as the main constraint for implementation of decentralized educational management programs (Ikoya and Ikoya, 2005: 511). This finding rightly accords with Anderson’s (1994: 165) claim that "effectiveness of public policies often depends considerably upon the amount of funds provided for their implementation".

3.3.2.5 Teacher Commitment on Policy Implementation

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 34-35) incorporate the commitment of the implementing officials as a non-statutory variable affecting implementation in their model. Goggin et al. (1990: 108) also state that "street-level actors" are the central actors in policy implementation. According to Ryan (1996: 38), Winter's model also suggests that implementation should accommodate interest groups, organizations, local-level implementers in order to enhance their commitments. Smit's (2005: 300) study identifies the key role of teachers whose understanding of policy
increases their commitments and eventually impacts implementation. This finding correlates with Elboim-Dror's (1973: 15) claim, who finds that the teachers and their unions exclusively influence the implementation of educational policies. Elboim-Dror further argues that teachers' acceptance of the policies is the crucial factor in determining the implementation performance of the intended policy.

In Cheng and Mok's (2007: 529) comparative study between the "high school-based management schools" and the “low school-based management schools" of Hong Kong, teachers' commitment was found to be a highly significant factor which has contributed to adopting high school-based management. In contrast, Carney et al.'s (2007: 618,622) study found Nepali teachers and their union against the CMS policy in Nepal. This contradiction further encouraged selecting teacher commitment as an independent variable for this study. Table 3.1 summarizes the anticipated variables and the relationships between the dependent variable and independent variables.

Table 3.1 Summary of Selected Variables and Their Theoretical Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Related Theories</th>
<th>Theoretical References</th>
<th>Relationship between dependent and independent variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy</td>
<td>Clarity of Policy Objectives</td>
<td>Public Policy Implementation</td>
<td>Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) Brever and Deleon (1983)</td>
<td>Positive relationship with policy implementation Directly influence the policy outputs The clearer the policy the better are chances of achieving policy outputs The clarity of policy objective has a positive impact on the implementation performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy</th>
<th>Capacity of Implementers (Also used as Organizational Capacity, or Capacity at policy delivery)</th>
<th>Public Policy Implementation</th>
<th>Goggin, et al. (1990)</th>
<th>Positively associated with the policy implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy</td>
<td>Size of School</td>
<td>Public Policy Implementation</td>
<td>Hall (1972)</td>
<td>Size as a variable impact on the organization performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Policy Implementation</td>
<td>Van Meter and Van Horn (1975)</td>
<td>Younis and Davidson (1990)</td>
<td>The greater the size of the organization, the greater the chance of an increase in problems and lower performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy</td>
<td>Adequacy of Budget</td>
<td>Public Policy Implementation</td>
<td>Goggin, et al. (1990)</td>
<td>Positive effects on policy implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher Commitment (Also used as Commitment of Implementing Officials)</td>
<td>Public Policy Implementation</td>
<td>Elboim-Dror (1973)</td>
<td>Prime determinant of implementation performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Policy Implementation</td>
<td>Street-level actors play vital role</td>
<td>Goggin, et al. (1990)</td>
<td>A direct impact on policy outputs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 Conceptual Framework

Basically, it can be inferred from the literature review that there are two schools of thought on school governance policy. One is centralized policy, which stands for ensuring equity, uniformity, and homogeneity in education standards (e.g., see Zhao, 2007; Nieveen and Kuiper, 2012). Another school of thought is decentralized policy, which advocates providing more autonomy to schools with room for their own choices (e.g., see Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Welsh and McGinn, 1999). Particularly, in the education sector, decentralization has been observed as a popular reform policy agenda with a view that local community people know better their educational problems and can solve with better solutions (Ministry of Education, 1997; Lewis and Naidoo, 2004; Ho, 2006). In line with this, a new law was enacted in Nepal to decentralise education responsibilities in 2001 (National Planning Commission, 2002). As already mentioned, the main intention of decentralized school governance policy is to enhance community participation in school development and school effectiveness in terms of student retention. Carney et al. (2007: 618, 621) claim that a number of success indicators have been identified, including significant increases in the number of CMSs, community participation, promotion and learning achievement of students. This study therefore employs two initial outputs; namely, community participation and student attraction, in order to compare the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy between two types of school policies in Nepal.

3.4.1 Community Participation in School Development

Van Horn (1979: 141) believes that participation of stakeholders is not only essential for increased local accountability, but is also equally paramount for ensuring organizational survival. Community people are the real owners of the schools located in their locality (Welsh and McGinn, 1999: 33). McGinn and Welsh state that parents contribute cash and kind support to school for the education of their children, as a part of the community (McGinn and Welsh, 1999: 40). This implies that there is a linkage between community participation and school effectiveness. Community participation can thus be treated as a means to ensure the effectiveness of the school. However, the
meaning of community participation varies from non-monetary support in the form of land, labour, and materials to monetary forms, for example, cash donation (Patrinos and Ariasingam, 1997).

Community participation in school governance not only acts as a bridge between the community and the school (Van Horn, 1979), but also benefits resource generation (Welsh and McGinn, 1999). Indeed, the better-run schools are those where there is a good relationship among the community, HT, and teachers (DeGrauwe et al. 2005: 12). Though Burde (2004) suspects that much reliance on community participation may produce social inequalities, but Burde agrees and emphasizes that "strong communities and strong states need one another" (Burde, 2004: 84).

Bray (1996) indicates that community participation in public schools has existed in Nepal for a long time. Community participation in school construction providing material and financial resources for school rehabilitation, and paying locally recruited teachers is common in Nepal (Secondary Education Development Plan, 2001). For example, from 1952 until 1990, the communities bore about 100 percent of the costs of school buildings (Ministry of Education 1997: 580) and the practice has continued until now, because currently the accepted ratio for the construction cost is 40 percent community participation and 60 percent government assistance in Nepal (National Planning Commission, 2010; Department of Education, 2012).

Studies (e.g., Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011) show that CMSs have improved their management practices through community participation. Community participation can also be seen in renovation of classrooms, public display of school information, and student achievements (Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008). This indicator, thus, would be a viable tool to measure the level of community participation in terms of assessing the initial outputs of the decentralized school governance policy.

3.4.2 School Effectiveness in Terms of Student Attraction

Stoll and Fink state that “a school as effective if it enhances all aspects of pupil achievement and development” (Stoll and Fink, 1995: 28). Von-Hippel (2009:
suggests that student attraction, learning rates, and impact on learning are the major ways of measuring school effectiveness. While reviewing a study report on school effectiveness in other case of Nepal, it was observed that quality of education has dramatically attracted students (e.g., see Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2004: 107; National Council for Economic and Development Research, 2008: 22). This is common in international cases as well. For example, Barankay and Lockwood's (2007: 1209) study of a Swiss case fairly established an association between decentralization in education and higher educational attainment. School-based management in Australia has improved educational outcomes (Bush and Gamage, 2001: 39). The case of Israel is also similar, where financial autonomy for schools has increased competition among the schools (Resh and Benavot, 2009: 73).

Very interestingly, a program similar to that in Nepal was observed in Nicaragua, where a program of transferring public schools from central authorities to local councils started in the 1990s (Bardhan, 2002: 199). Bardhan mentions that an evaluation study of this program suggests that school autonomy has a significant positive effect on student performance. However, a mixed result appears in the case of Nepal. In this regard, Massey (2009: 14) conducted a study in Nepal and found a significant difference in student achievement between public schools and institutional (private) schools. She therefore proposes a study of measuring the performance of the both types of schools—general and community-managed schools—at first and the comparison with institutional schools to examine the students' performance in all types of schools.

Per Capita Funding (PCF), on the other hand, plays a major role in achieving the school performance (Patrinos and Ariasingam, 1997). A lot of the literature shows a causal relationship between PCF and student attraction in decentralized school governance systems (e.g., see Kochar, 2004; Crampton, 2009; Hu et al., 2009). Kochar's (2004: 128) study in the Indian context is an interesting example of this fact. She studied state-level differences in school quality in India and found visible differences in both rural and urban areas of the states. The main reason she identified was the per capita expenditure of elementary schools. Similarly, Hu et al. (2009) studied the efficiency of primary schools in China. For this, they used several
variables to evaluate school efficiency, such as student-teacher ratio, total educational expenditure per student, teachers’ average teaching experience, excellence rate in mathematics, Chinese and English, and so on (Hu et al., 2009: 37). They found a significant positive influence of total educational expenditure per student on school efficiency (Hu et al., 2009: 40-42). Crampton (2009: 316-317) conducted research on public elementary—secondary education finance in the United States and found a positive impact on student achievement with an increase in PCF. The above examples illustrate the fact that student attractions are closely related to PCF.

The case of Nepal is also similar, where the amount of per student expenditure determines the quality of schooling to a large extent (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008a: 5). The practice of calculating per capita funding in Nepal appears similar to Hu et al.'s (2009) method, i.e. expenditure on teacher salary, staff salary, capital expenditure, and other non-salary expenditure in the school is set against the total number of school students in the respective school (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008a: 7). The government of Nepal provides financial support to both GPSs and CMSs; for example, it includes 100 percent salaries for all approved positions of teachers working in those schools. However, other amounts vary by type of school; particularly grants provided to schools are divided into two categories: earmarked and block grants. Teachers' salaries, scholarships, and infrastructure grants fall under the earmarked, whereas administrative and stationery grants, SIP grants, and free-textbook grants fall under block grants. An interesting point to be noted here, from the finding of the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (2008a), is that many CMSs in Nepal, which have been receiving only partial support from the government, were found to be able to afford per capita funding on an equal footing with their counterpart GPSs (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008a: 2).

With the intention of measuring the dependent variable by employing the above two initial outputs envisioned by the decentralized school governance policy discussed above, this study conceptualizes its framework guided by the "top-down" and "bottom-up" theories of Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) and Younis and Davidson (1990) on the basis of the models developed by Van Meter and Van Horn
Most policy implementation studies accept Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 463) model, in which policy implementation performance is the dependent variable and the forces which affect policy implementation, such as clarity of policy objectives, level of available resources, commitment of the implementers, and the characteristics of implementing agencies, are the crucial variables in achieving the intended policy performance (e.g., see Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983: 22; Younis and Davidson, 1990: 5-10; Johnston and Moore, 1993: 30; Ryan, 1996: 37-38).

The government of Nepal has continued to scale up the target of transferring public schools to the community in its annual plans. The reason given for this is the findings of the studies, which show that CMSs have noticeably improved their performance, compared to their GPS counterparts (e.g., see Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011). Despite such noticeable achievements, teachers and their unions have protested against the policy (Carney et al., 2007; Edwards, 2011). It shows that teachers, in particular, are not entirely supporting the CMS policy. As already mentioned, Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 482) view once again appears definitely critical here—that implementation may not produce the expected performance if there are conflicts between policy makers and implementers. It is therefore interesting to compare how far teacher commitment has influenced the implementation performance in case of both GPS and CMS policy.

Policy implementation is positively correlated with resources according to Cheng and Cheung (1995). Cheng and Cheung basically identify the prime factors that contribute to successful implementation are: "human resources and monetary resources" (Cheng and Cheung, 1995: 17). Among them, Edwards's (2011: 74) study captures monetary resource as the principal factor. These claims further encouraged the selection of the availability of the budget as an independent variable for this study. While interpreting the distribution of the CMSs on the basis of school size in Nepal, it heavily falls under primary schools (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008; Department of Education, 2012). The reason could be that due to their small size, primary schools in Nepal are able to make quick decisions. In this
regard, the size of the school also appeared as a critical variable to assess its strength in policy implementation.

Following several theories and research findings, which have shown a positive relationship between policy clarity and its implementation success (e.g., see Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975: 464; Brever and Deleon, 1983: 66; Pick et al., 2007: 158), also encouraged the selection of clarity of policy objectives as an independent variable for this study. Similarly, Gropello and Marshall's (2011: 164) study finding, which raises several issues regarding the failure of policy implementation due to the limited capacity of implementers, has further motivated the present researcher to use the capacity of implementers as an independent variable for this study. Since the main aim of this study is to assess the achievements of the initial outputs of decentralized school governance policy between the GPS and CMS, a separate conceptual framework was developed to make the comparisons easier.

**Figure 3.1** Conceptual Framework Developed for the GPS Policy

**Figure 3.2** Conceptual Framework Developed for the CMS Policy
3.5 Research Hypotheses

A hypothesis is a testable statement "about empirical reality that ought to be observed in the real world if the theory is correct" (Babbie, 2013: 70). Based on the conceptual framework shown in Figures 3.1 and 3.2, the following hypotheses were developed and tested accordingly.

3.5.1 Research Hypotheses for GPS Policy

H1: Clarity of policy objectives has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through GPS policy.

H2: The strong capacity of implementers has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through GPS policy.

H3: The smaller the size of the school, the greater is the impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through GPS policy.

H4: The adequacy of budget has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through GPS policy.

H5: Teacher commitment has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through GPS policy.

3.5.2 Research Hypotheses for CMS Policy

H6: Clarity of policy objectives has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through CMS policy.

H7: The strong capacity of implementers has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through CMS policy.

H8: The smaller the size of the school, the greater is the impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through CMS policy.
H₀: The adequacy of budget has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through CMS policy.

H₁₀: Teacher commitment has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through CMS policy.

3.6 Models for Testing the Hypotheses

Taking into account the overall aims of the hypothesis developed for this study, the dependent variable was measured by adopting the models and details of the explanations of the models, as seen in Table 3.2.

GPS Model: \( \text{IPDGPS} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{CLAPO} + \beta_2 \text{CAPAOI} + \beta_3 \text{SCHOLS} + \beta_4 \text{ADEBUG} + \beta_5 \text{TCOMIT} + \epsilon_0 \)

CMS Model: \( \text{IPDCMS} = \beta_6 + \beta_7 \text{CLAPO} + \beta_8 \text{CAPAOI} + \beta_9 \text{SCHOLS} + \beta_{10} \text{ADEBUG} + \beta_{11} \text{TCOMIT} + \epsilon_1 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2</th>
<th>Explanations of the Models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPDGPS</td>
<td>Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy Through GPS Policy (i.e. dependent variable for GPS Model)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy Through CMS Policy (i.e. dependent variable for CMS Model)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAPO</td>
<td>Clarity of Policy Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPAOI</td>
<td>Capacity of Implementers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOLS</th>
<th>School Size</th>
<th>Significantly positive impact on its respective dependent variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADEBUG</td>
<td>Adequacy of Budget</td>
<td>Significantly positive impact on its respective dependent variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCOMIT</td>
<td>Teacher Commitment</td>
<td>Significantly positive impact on its respective dependent variable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter deals with the research design and procedures adopted for the accomplishment of the study. It describes the research design in section 4.1. Section 4.2 reveals the qualitative methods, followed by the quantitative methods in section 4.3. Finally, conclusions are drawn in section 4.4.

4.1 Research Design [Mixed Methods]

The research design for this study was of mixed methods following the suggestion of Patton (1990: 466), who recommends mixed methods for comparative research. However, the qualitative method was taken as the major method for this study. As was mentioned in the statement and significance of the problem, particularly, the main outcome of interest from this study is to investigate the extent to which the CMS policy is better than its GPS policy counterparts in terms of exhibiting initial outputs of decentralized school governance policy. Moreover, how end users (implementers) have perceived the current policy (Bardach, 1977: 259-260) is equally paramount for identifying the determinants that have contributed to widening gaps between intended and implemented policy. These outcomes of interest may not be fully achieved with the use of a single method.

Babbie therefore argues "a complete understanding of a topic often requires both techniques" (Babbie, 2005: 25; 2013: 26). A recent study by Pitts and Fernandez (2009), focusing on the scope of different methodologies pursued in public management research, demonstrates the usefulness of mixed methods. For example, data generated through mixed methods have produced more reliable result on the performance appraisal of educational inputs to outputs (Pitts and Fernandez, 2009: 406). This research finding further supports Patton's (1990: 188) claim, who
recommends "a cross-inquiry approach" to achieving triangulation in social science research.

Equally the researcher was convinced by the work of Bacharach (1989), who explains the usefulness of the combined methods in research. Bacharach argues that the mixed methods are useful for both explaining the causal relations and confirming the predictions (Bacharach, 1989: 509). Bergman (2011) follows Bacharach (1989) and emphasizes mixed methods because of "multitude of choices within and between the qualitative and quantitative components" (Bergman, 2011: 275). This argument further persuaded the researcher to use mixed methods as a complementary research strategy, keeping in view reducing the methodological limitations of both the qualitative and quantitative methods (Bergman, 2011: 274). For example, the conclusions drawn from interviews or observations may contradict or support the conclusions captured from statistical analysis. In such a situation, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 12) recommend the use of mixed methods to be appropriate, by which such problems can be explained and the results obtained from the qualitative and quantitative methods reconciled.

A mounting trend in social science research on the one hand and Babbie's (2013) suggestion on the other hand further encouraged the researcher to use mixed methods. Babbie explicitly claims that "every observation is qualitative" in nature and further clarifies that "none of these things is inherently numerical or quantitative, but converting them to a numerical form" could be useful in social science research (Babbie, 2013: 24). Jick (1979: 606) since long ago has encouraged using mixed methods in order to ensure the usefulness of social science research. However, the nature of this study requires more in-depth investigation than simply a statistical result in understanding policy implementation performance in terms of increasing both community participation and students' attraction. This is why the quantitative findings were utilized to supplement the qualitative results. Supplementing the quantitative findings with qualitative results helped in obtaining a deeper understanding of why one school was better than another.
4.2 Qualitative Method

Qualitative research helps enquire deeply "into the subjective qualities" (Holliday, 2002: 7). For example, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) state that "what the policy intentions are and how they are currently implemented or function can be typically measured qualitatively" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 10-11). Newman and Hitchcock therefore claim that the quantitative method "lacks any qualitative decision making because of its reliance on comparison, distributions and mechanical procedures" (Newman and Hitchcock, 2011: 384). The central question of this study, what is the intention and what actually is happening in the field when decentralized school governance policy has been implemented, can thus be answered using the qualitative method. The researcher also was convinced by Weimer and Vining's (1999: 297) document research technique, which is an effective tool to gather evidence of policy implications. For example, Weimer and Vining suggest that the use of the document analysis technique helps in understand intentions and also provides ways to move ahead.

The main qualitative method taken for this study was a case study approach. However, keeping in view of Peek and Fothergill’s (2009: 33) suggestion, this study was carried out with a combination of case study with document review, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and observations. It can be treated as a combination of triangulating data in qualitative research (e.g., see Denzin and Lincoln, 1994: 2; Janesick, 1994: 214-215). For example, Denzin's triangulation intends to use a combination of multiple methods in order to get a better understanding of a particular issue in a single study (e.g., see Denzin and Lincoln, 1994: 2; Janesick, 1994: 214-215). This study used Denzin's data triangulation technique, which offers a variety of data sources for a study. For this, policy documents were reviewed in order to compare and contrast the data gathered from case studies, individual interviews, focus group discussions, and observations. This combination helped to obtain the intention of the policy and to perceive the reality of implementers of both GPS policy and CMS policy. In order to ascertain the ground reality concerning whether the policy has produced initial outputs as planned and
from which a conclusion has derived for this study, the following queries were administrated.

1) What are the policy intentions of the current school governance policy?
2) What are the basic features of the prevalent school governance policy in Nepal?
3) How do local stakeholders, especially HTs and the SMC chair perceive and implement the current policy?
4) What are the fundamental elements associated with the effective implementation of GPS and CMS policy?
5) What are the factors contributing to the widening gaps between intended and attained policy?

The first two inquiries aim to examine the policy intension and to picture the basic features of the current school governance policy at the macro level. In addition, they also seek the reasons behind formulating the current policy and the intended implementation strategies to be applied. The third question explores the perceptions of various stakeholders of the current policy in order to add evidence for assessing the implementation performance. The fourth inquiry helps to determine the factors related to the implementation performance of GPS and CMS policy and the differences that have occurred. Finally, the fifth inquiry identifies the factors that contribute to the widening gaps between intended and implemented policy.

After capturing the fundamental information on the policy intentions, perceived realities, and gaps between intended and attained policy on decentralized school governance policy, comparative cases of both GPSs and CMSs were analyzed intensively in order to find the initial outputs of policy implementation. For this, an intensive focus was given to the following inquiries:

1) Why did you adopt/not adopt CMS governance policy?
2) Does the current decentralization policy help enhance greater community participation in school development and increase students' attraction?
3) Do CMSs seem better than GPSs?
The first question identifies the reasons behind adopting or not adopting the CMS policy at micro levels. The second and the third questions help compare the empirical evidence and analyze community participation in school development and school effectiveness in terms of students’ attraction between GPS and CMS policies.

### 4.2.1 Research Settings

All together seven districts out of 75 districts were purposively selected, representing from all three different ecological zones of the country. Four schools were chosen representing two each from the GPSs and CMSs from four different districts located in the pockets of mountain, hill and terai/plain land for the case studies. To cover the seven districts, one school each from the rest of the three districts was chosen for observations. However, the research participants for interviews were selected from all seven districts. Selection of all ecological zones was made in order to create wider representations from different corners of the country. For example, terai/plain land consists of heterogeneous ethnic groups of hill migrants, including local native people, whereas hill and mountain areas are relatively dominated by homogeneous ethnic groups.

### 4.2.2 Nature of the Data

Basically, this study was based on primary data. However, secondary information was also substantially used. The researcher himself worked as an enumerator and physically visited the study area to collect the necessary information.

### 4.2.3 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in Babbie's (2013: 120) view is "the people or things whose characteristics social researchers observe, describe, and explain". It may be "an individual, a social group, a formal organization or a social artifact" (Babbie, 2005: 117; also see Patton, 1990: 166-167). The school as a formal organization was employed as the unit of analysis for this study, keeping in view of the purpose of the comparative analysis between two types of school policies in Nepal.
4.2.4 Research Participants

Since the unit of analysis of this study is organization i.e. school, the research participants were considered as informants instead of respondents following Babbie's (2013) view. An informant in Babbie's (2013: 131) note is "a member of the group" that can provide information "directly about the group per se". Keeping in view this fact, policy makers (member of Education Policy Committee, former secretary for Ministry of Education, and joint secretary) were employed as central level informants to analyze the intentions of the policies from policy perspectives. Policy experts on the other hand were employed to make a critical evaluation of the current policies from research perspectives, and finally, school HTs, a few teachers, and SMC chairs were taken as local level informants to gather information focusing on the perceived dimension of the policy implementation from a practical perspective (for details see Table 4.1). The ecological districts, HTs, and SMC chairs were purposively selected for viewing "information-rich" areas (Patton, 1990: 169), accessibility, and the nature of schools (i.e. GPSs and CMSs). One of the major benefits of these three perspectives experienced during the study was that it firmly assisted in drawing conclusions and identifying the gaps between intended and implemented policy.

Table 4.1 Research Techniques, Research Participants, and Purposes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Techniques</th>
<th>Research Participants</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Rationales for employing the technique</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document analysis and literature review</td>
<td>PM        _    PE    HT    _    SMC-C</td>
<td>To examine the principles of and approaches to the current school governance policy</td>
<td>Yin (1984, 2003) claims that document analysis can assist in confirming the evidences from other sources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus Group Discussion (FGD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

To identify the major contributing factors for ensuring the implementation performance.
To find out the gaps between intended and perceived policy.

Patton (1990: 25) emphasizes people’s response and states that “what people say is a major source of qualitative data”.

Wilkinson (2004) finds FGD to be a useful technique for collecting qualitative data through group interaction.
Litosselite (2003) argues that the FGD helps understand the reflections of stakeholders on policy matters and to evaluate policy choices.

Patton (1990: 203-204) explains that observation is an alternate source of triangulating data.

To inquirer perceived attitude of HTs and Chairs of SMC on the current policy and implications towards its operational practice.

To review the information gathered through interview, focus group discussion and document analysis, because, observation helps collect first hand experiences and real practices of the school activities.
4.2.5 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is "a process which makes possible the drawing of valid inferences or generalizations on the basis of careful observation of variables within a relatively small proportion of the population" (Best and Kahn, 1999: 13). Sampling techniques vary from design to design and from researchers to researchers to some extent. However, Patton's (1990) view encouraged the present author to select the purposive sampling technique, who suggests that "information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (Patton, 1990: 169).

On viewing the various sampling choices and nature of this study, a purposive sampling technique was used following Miles and Huberman (1994). According to them, "qualitative researchers must characteristically think purposively and conceptually about sampling" (Huberman and Miles, 1994: 441). It is difficult to study a large population in a limited time, and with limited money. That is why this study was conducted in a small area with a small sample drawn through purposive sampling to accomplish the study.

4.2.6 Data Collection Instruments

4.2.6.1 Document Analysis

Best and Kahn (1999: 191) assert that "document analysis in a case study serves a useful tool to the fields of inquiry and in explaining certain social
events". Patton states that “document analysis in qualitative inquiry yields excerpts quotations entire passages from organizational, clinical, official publications and reports” (Patton, 1990: 10). Similarly, Yin (1984: 80) claims that document analysis can assist in confirming the evidence from other sources. However, several authors follow Denzin and Lincoln (1994) and recommend using triangulation technique to confirm findings when carrying out document analysis.

Document analysis is crucial for identifying the variables associated with program success or failure (Love, 2004: 68). Weimer and Vining (1999: 297) also describe the utility of document analysis in a similar way—that it is one of the effective ways of gathering evidence for policy reform. According to Weimer and Vining, the process includes searching relevant literature, verification of documents, and content analysis. The processes aforementioned were followed while searching and verifying related documents and research reports for this study. For example, government policy documents, papers and publications, and research articles were intensively reviewed. For this, the researcher used authentic government policy documents such as the SSRP, the Master Plan of School Education, the Five-year Development Plan, and the Education Act and Regulations. Several other secondary sources were also used to compare and contrast the findings from the interviews, the focus group discussions and observations as suggested by Yin (1984, 2003) and Patton (1990).

Similarly, for other relevant literature, the researcher visited full-text databases such as ABI Inform, ERIC, EMERALD, and Education Research Complete through NIDA library and Google Scholar to search for scholarly literature. The researcher also undertook archival research of documents of the Ministry of Education, which were accessed through on-site visits. Government publications were analyzed in order to examine the principles of and approaches to the decentralized school governance policy and the reasons behind adopting the policy. Research reports on education decentralization and CMS policy were also considerably employed to generate current factual information.

Document management and their verifications are regarded as an essential part of document analysis by which related information can be ensured (Salminen et al., 1997: 644). Keeping this fact in view, focus was placed on selecting
research-based documents and the authentic government documents. For example, first, ministry-level policy documents enabled the researcher to obtain the details and specific policy intentions and rationales behind introducing decentralized school governance policy. Secondly, the research reports provided information concerning the intentions of the policy makers and descriptive information on the implementation process. Finally, the researcher experienced from analyzing the documents that the information collected from the document analysis not only supported the collection of factual information, but also assisted in conducting interviews and focus-group discussions as suggested by Best and Kahn (1999).

4.2.6.2 Interviews

Interviews are considered as a strong "alternative method of collecting survey data" (Babbie, 2013: 250). An interview is one of the best ways to collect "informed opinions, perceptions, and facts from people" about the intended subject area (Love, 2004: 72). Fontana and Frey (1994: 362-263), therefore, claim that interviews are a widely-used tool in qualitative research. In this connection, Patton also emphasizes people's response as follows:

"What people say is a major source of qualitative data, whether what they say is obtained verbally through an interview or in written form through document analysis or survey responses" (Patton, 1990: 25).

Social scientists have suggested several benefits of interviews (e.g., see Patton, 1990: 25-26; Fontana and Frey, 1994: 362-363; Babbie, 2013: 250-251). For example, the interviewer on the spot can clarify the intention of the question and obtain relevant information (Babbie, 2013: 250). The purpose of interviewing is, thus, to find out "what is in someone's mind" (Best and Kahn, 1999: 199), because Best and Kahn view that it is difficult to observe a person’s feelings and experiences without listening to them. The forms of listening through interviews can be divided into three categories: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (Fontana and Frey, 1994: 361). According to Fontana and Frey, a structured interview is an interview that has "a set of pre-established questions" and
the questions are supposed to be asked in the same direction for all informants, whereas semi-structured interviews in their view are guided by some potential questions and are more flexible in nature, and unstructured interviewing provides a greater flexibility than the other two types (Fontana and Frey, 1994: 363-365; also see Sekaran 1992: 190). What is crucial to mention here is that an interview guide can be used in all three types of interviews.

A semi-structured interview guideline was prepared for this study as suggested by Fontana and Frey (1994: 363), in which a series of tentative questions were developed. The procedures and steps followed for carrying out the interviews are presented in Appendix I. The reason for using semi-structured interviews was to direct the interviewing process because Fontana and Frey suggest that there are flexibilities in the way of putting questions and gathering answers in the semi-structured interview setting. The overall aim of the guideline was to focus on intentions of decentralized school governance policy and the perceived attitudes of the implementers. The guideline helped to concentrate on the intended areas within which the researcher was free to move back and forth related to policy implementation performance (Patton, 1990: 283-284).

On the basis of the guideline, necessary information was collected by taking systematic notes during interview and a written report was immediately made. The interview guideline served as a basic checklist during the interview to make sure that all of the relevant areas were covered. However, the interview guide technique is also no exception to having problems. For example, in Patton’s (1987: 114) view, interviewer flexibility may be overlooked some important issues. Patton's recommendation was followed to overcome the stated weaknesses. For this, the following two techniques were adopted.

1) First, a field logbook was kept to collect immediate responses during interviewing and to verify the collected information according to the interview guidelines to ensure whether the intended issues were covered or not.

2) Secondly, the responses gained from the interviewees were instantly reviewed. In addition, an open discussion session was also carried out by gathering available interviewees after finishing the interviews in some cases.
The interviews for this study were conducted in three different settings. In the first setting, an individual face-to-face interview was conducted for policy makers. As already mentioned, one of the members of the Education Policy Committee, former secretary for the Ministry of Education, joint secretary, and the Director of the Department of Education were employed as central-level informants for analyzing the intentions of the policies. The researcher made in-person contact with the informants mentioned above and explained the purpose of the interview. These interviewees were purposively selected for two reasons. First, the expected informants were directly related to policy making, and secondly, accessibility was also a reason. Time and venue were arranged according to their convenience.

The second setting was organized for policy experts. All together there were two experts that participated as interviewees for this study. The researcher experienced that it was more interactive while conducting interviews with policy experts compared to policy makers. It could be the reason that Garton and Copland (2010) emphasize the process of interviewing, by which the interviewer and interviewee feel comfortable in the process of exploring ideas.

In the third setting, HTs and SMC chairs were purposively chosen as informants to make sure of representation from both GPSs and CMSs. All together there were 18 HTs and four SMC chairs employed for this study, as the interviewees came from all ecological zones of the country. The researcher first made in-person contact by telephone with potential informants, explaining the purpose of the interviews. For this, the DEO also reminded the expected informants several times. At the individual interviewees' convenience, the venue was finalized. Mostly interviews were conducted in their respective schools except in Parbat and Chitwan districts. In these two districts, the interviews were conducted at the DEO because they had an HT monthly meeting at the DEO. This opportunity was also taken advantage of for this study by conducting a joint review session, including all informants in Parbat and Chitwan districts, before leaving the place.

4.2.6.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussion, in Kitzinger's (2006) view, can be treated as a form of group interview by which necessary data can be generated through a close communication between informants (Kitzinger, 2006: 104). Kitzinger further
mentions that the main benefit of focus group discussion is to encourage research participants (informants) to share their experiences, i.e. the interaction between and among research participants. This technique allows a group of 6-8 members to be recruited at a time (Patton, 1990: 335). According to Patton, research participants in focus group discussion are allowed to make arguments or counter arguments on a particular issue.

The focus group discussion method is one of the widely-used techniques in qualitative research (Wilkinson, 2004: 178). For example, Moloney (2010: 64) conducted research using focus group discussion and found it useful in terms of enabling "new information by making group interactions" lively. Litosselite (2003: 2) also emphasizes focus group discussion and views that it helps generate "insightful information to evaluate policy choices". Moloney's and Litosselite's recommendation for using the focus group discussion instrument exactly matches the issue raised in this study.

Keeping in view supplementing the information gained from other sources and realizing a number of advantages, three focus group discussions were carried out for this study. Conducting focus group discussions helped to make possible the collection of the perspectives of many individuals in the same time frame. In addition, research participants’ arguments and counter arguments helped the researcher to explore the responses in a focused way. Focus group discussions were conducted for this study with aim of generating information on the perceived attitudes of implementers regarding decentralized school governance policy in the form of GPS policy and CMS policy in Nepal (see Table 4.1).

All together three focus group discussions were conducted covering all three eco-zones of the country. The first setting of the focus group discussion was composed of a homogeneous set of participants. It was held at the RC of Janajagriti Secondary School in Chitwan district. A group of five members of HTs, including one HT from CMS, was formed for conducting the first focus group discussion. The RC contacted all expected participants by issuing letters. The research participants in the second setting were completely different from the first setting. However, this setting was also homogenous in nature, in which SMC chairs were employed as key informants. In this setting there was a group of six members comprising three
members each from the GPSs and the CMSs. The DEO contacted each participant by telephone and received their confirmation two days prior to the discussion day. Upon mutual agreement, the focus group discussion was conducted at the DEO, Parbat district.

The third setting in contrast to other two settings was made a heterogeneous group of both HTs and SMC chairs. Among two HTs one represented the CMS and the other two SMC chairs participated from the GPSs. It was conducted at Saraswoti Secondary School, Gorkha district. The participants of this setting were requested in advance through phone calls for the appropriate time and venue. For facilitating the discussions, a focus group discussion guideline was developed. In doing so, a set of open-ended questions was developed (see details of the guideline in Appendix II).

While initiating the focus group discussions, the researcher introduced himself and requested all participants to give a self-introduction. This helped participants to get to know each other. Then the researcher explained the basic purposes of the focus group discussion, and areas of discussion and expectations. It was also clarified that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions and each participant was free to express his/her own views, which could be similar or different from other’s point of view. Participants were also assured about the confidentiality of the information. The group agreed on the process of discussion and code of conduct, such as one person speaking at a time, respect for each other’s views, making constructive comments on other’s opinions, and so on.

The researcher began with introductory background questions in order to encourage them to start thinking about the topic. The questions were: Do you remember your school life or your community school? What did it look like? The introductory background questions were linked with the transition question, that is, how would you compare the schools in the past and with the schools in the present? After that the researcher displayed some of the pictures in which community people actively participated in school construction and the monitoring of the teaching-learning activities of schools. This helped to draw their attention toward the communities’ roles for school improvement.
When the participants became accustomed with the core area of discussion, the researcher entered into the key question, focusing on the major areas of concern, i.e. how do you characterize a good school? This question was linked with the transition question, i.e. do you think communities’ roles are crucial for making a better school?, and so on. During the discussion, the laddering technique of probing was frequently used, asking for example do you agree with this view, and if not why, is there anything else you would add?, and so on. The probing techniques helped to encourage the research participants to add or to elaborate on the suggested solutions.

The main advantage of the focus group discussions experienced by the researcher was that the research participants could successfully open up a discussion and even encouraged more reserved people to comment. Another benefit experienced was that the participants shared their experiences among themselves and elaborated on the concerns raised in the discussions. In this situation, the probing technique, for example saying “go on,” “do you agree?,” “is there anything else?,” played a vital role in the discussions. In a nutshell, the guidelines developed for the focus group discussions were a key instrument in their smooth movement.

4.2.6.4 Observations

Observations are carried out by the researchers to capture the untold stories (Best and Kahn, 1999: 199), and data from observation are usually rich (Mason, 2002: 89). The researcher himself worked as the field observer of this study. The purpose of observation in Patton's (1990: 202) view is to gather the factual information. Mason (2002: 55, 85) therefore explains the importance of the observer in qualitative research that it helps observe at "first-hand experience" of a particular phenomenon. Adler and Adler (1994) clarify the observation technique as follows:

"Qualitative observation is fundamentally naturalistic in essence; it occurs in the natural context of occurrence, among the actors who would naturally be participating in the interaction, and follows the natural stream of everyday life...Qualitative observers are not bound, thus, by predetermined categories of measurement or response, but are
free to search for concepts or categories that appear meaningful to subjects" (Adler and Adler, 1994: 378).

It can be inferred from the above statement that observation requires looking and listening very carefully, and therefore the observer's role in observation is crucial. Patton (1990: 202-205) explains several benefits of observation in qualitative research. According to Patton, the most pertinent ones are: it is a valuable alternate source of data for triangulating data; and it is an effective technique for getting current information. To witness what is going on in a particular setting is paramount for comparing and contrasting the events, which is one of the main tasks of the observation technique (Mason, 2002: 86). As suggested by Cohen et al. (2007), a semi-structured observation checklist was developed as an instrument (see Appendix III) for making the observations central to the research questions.

Three schools, including one CMS, were purposively selected as research schools for two reasons. One was that they represented three ecological zones, and the second one was that the districts were not covered by case studies of this study. The main aim of the observation for this study was to gather the current information on how the policy implementation was going on.

The researcher introduced himself and the HT briefed all staff members about the visit. When the class bell rang, the teachers went to their respective classrooms. After this, the HT asked about the process of observation. After discussing the process, the researcher asked the HT for his permission to move around the school premises. The HT agreed and allowed the researcher to observe both the external and internal environments of the school. The researcher kept notes from the beginning to the end of the observation process.

The process of observation began with the physical facilities of the school, including school buildings, the condition of toilets and the playground, provision of drinking water, the status of classrooms, the compound walls, and so on. After observing the physical facilities, the researcher entered the human setting, asking about such things as time on task, the division of work, meetings with the SMC, teachers and parents, and the implementation of the SIP. During the final stage
of the observation process, the researcher focused on the students’ participation and teacher’s motivation in the classroom.

Observation helped to collect the real practices of the school activities and to compare the information gathered through the interview, the focus group discussion, and document analysis. This technique, thus, further enabled the researcher to triangulate the data. This proved Patton’s (1990) view, who explained that observation is an alternate source of triangulating data against information gathered through other means. Following Adler and Adler (1994), the observations of this study also remained supportive in terms of comparing the two types of school policies. The observations carried out in three schools remained instrumental for comparing and contrasting the information. The researcher experienced a view similar to that of Tjora (2006), who has asserted that the "interview leads to the researcher’s observations, while observations suggest probes for interviews" (Tjora, 2006: 430). Tjora's view became true for this study in that the complementary roles of observations for interpreting the data generated through other means.

4.2.6.5 Case Study

The most frequently-used definition of case studies in Yin's (2003) view is "to illuminate a decision or set of decisions, i.e. why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result" (Yin, 2003: 12). This definition ties with the problem stated in this study, i.e. the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. In addition, the reason for selecting the case study approach is its effective application for describing "real life phenomenon in depth" (Yin, 2003: 13 & 2009: 18) and it explains "present status" (Best and Kahn, 1999: 10,184). It appears that case studies possess the strength of integrating qualitative and quantitative information (Love, 2004: 82), which is the intended objective of this study. Similarly, the cross-case analysis carried out for this study helped to compare and contrast the information gained from the four different schools.

Keeping in view the applicability of the case study, four schools were selected representing two each from GPSs and CMSs from four different districts. The researcher spent two to three days per school to develop the individual case of the selected schools. The focus of the case was on the variables identified by document
analysis and literature reviews in order to create a uniform pattern for the cases. In doing so, the history of and community participation in school development, the school environment, clarity of policy objective, existing capacity for implementing policy, availability of budget, and the orientation of teachers and their commitments were focused on. For this, activities such as formal and informal discussions with HTs, teachers, and SMC chairs, the records of the school, the goodwill of the school, time on task, implementation of the SIP, the orientation of the teachers, the school outlook, the students' motivation to learn, transparency, and so forth helped to develop the cases of the schools. This method in a nutshell assisted in comparing and contrasting the policy outputs achieved by four different schools through cross-case analysis.

4.2.6.6 Field Logbook

A field logbook was kept throughout the period of data collection. It assisted in recording the current information and researcher's own impressions. Patton (1990) emphasizes taking field notes as the best way of gathering information. Patton states the main benefit of keeping notes, as the researcher also experienced, is to recall the pertinent information while summarizing and interpreting the collected data (Patton, 1990: 239).

4.2.7 Data Analysis Procedure

"Organizing the data" in a sequential form is the first step in analysing qualitative research (Best and Kahn, 1999: 203). Babbie (2013) calls it "classifying or categorizing pieces of data" (Babbie, 2013: 396). To do so in the present study, all interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and translated into English. At the beginning, the collected data were organized according to the responses of the informants. After processing the data, the necessary interpretation was made in a descriptive way. According to Patton, “interpretation involves explaining the findings, answering why questions, attaching significance to particular results, and putting patterns into an analytical framework” (Patton, 1990: 375).

In order to capture the information related to the intentions of decentralized school governance policy, a summary of policy intention was recorded from the policy and plan documents beginning in 1950. After recording the summary, the
necessary interpretation was made in a descriptive form. The interpretation of documents helped to gather the potential variables related to policy implementation. Cross-case analysis was carried out to compare and contrast the information gained from the four different schools. A cross-case analysis, according to Babbie (2013: 391), is "an analysis which involves an examination of more than one case". To do so, different cases of CMSs and GPSs were compared and analysed. In particular, Huberman and Miles's (1994: 436) technique of the case-oriented analysis was adopted. The aim of applying case-oriented analysis was to compare and contrast the cases of the schools (e.g., see also Huberman and Miles, 1994; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Babbie, 2013).

In order to process the data, the researcher used Miles and Huberman's (1994: 10) three interrelated parts of analysis; namely, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Regarding the first part of the analysis, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994: 10), the data reduction technique was used through summarizing the collected information. Data reduction technique helped in sequencing the data. Following Miles and Huberman's (1994: 11) technique, in the second part of the analysis, the data display technique was utilized through the use of a number of matrices, tables, and graphs of relevant information. In the third part of the analysis, Miles and Huberman's (1994: 11-12) conclusion-drawing and verification technique was employed to arrive at a conclusion through interpretation of the collected information.

Regarding the data gathered by means of the interviews and focus group discussions, the information collected from the policy makers, policy experts, HTs, and SMC chairs was analysed separately. However, individual perceptions combined with the common perceptions gained from the interviewees and research informants (participants) were combined. For example, keeping in view the data reduction technique (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 10), the views of one policy maker were combined with the views of the other two policy makers, which helped to summarize the needed information. However, in the case of the distinct views, these were separately analysed and interpreted accordingly.

To sum up, a combination of these three interrelated components of analysis was employed— from data collection to conclusion drawing—as suggested by Miles.
and Huberman (1994), and also reflected in Huberman and Miles (1994), and Best and Kahn (1999). To make interpretations as simple as possible, the researcher used Miles and Huberman's three steps for analysing the information in a systematic order. This study therefore organized the data in the first step, described the data in the second, and the final step was interpretation of the data (see Figure 4.1).

![Interactive Model](image)

**Figure 4.1 Interactive Model**

**Source:** Adapted from Miles and Huberman, 1994: 12.

### 4.2.8 Data Triangulation

In accomplishing this study, the researcher used multiple tools following Denzin’s (1978: 291, cited in Jick, 1979: 602) methodological triangulation, in which document analysis, interviews, focus group discussions, and observations along with field notes were employed to gather the necessary information. Triangulation refers to "the combinations and comparisons of multiple data sources" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 27). Newman and Hitchcock (2011: 390) also suggest that triangulation serves as a tool for "converging evidence from multiple data sources". Patton (1990: 187) explains triangulation as an important technique to make an effective study design. In this regard, Stake (1994) cites Denzin's view of triangulation is useful:

"To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, we employ various procedures, including redundancy of data gathering and procedural challenges to explanations. For qualitative case work, these procedures generally are called triangulation" (Stake, 1994: 241).
The most important benefit of using triangulation is that "it allows researchers to be more confident of their results" (Jick, 1979: 608). There are four types of triangulation prescribed by Denzin (1978, cited in Janesick, 1994: 214-215). These are as follows:

1) Data triangulation
2) Investigator triangulation
3) Theory triangulation
4) Methodological triangulation

On viewing Denzin’s triangulation and the nature of the study, this study employed three triangulations, except investigator triangulation. Regarding data triangulation, the information from different sources, for example, primary sources, secondary sources, and document analysis, were incorporated (Janesick, 1994: 214). In the case of the theory triangulation, different literature, theories, and models in decentralized school governance policy were reviewed (Janesick, 1994: 215). Regarding methodological triangulation, different methodological tools were employed to capture the necessary information on the same object of study (e.g., Janesick, 1994: 215; also see Cohen et al., 2007: 142).

Data triangulation in this study assisted in enhancing the reliability and internal validity of the findings as McKenney et al. (2006) claim. Keeping in view the ensuring validity and reliability of this study, the data triangulation technique was adapted to collect information from different sources. Data triangulation further helped to reduce the potential risks as Stake (1994) claims. This study extensively employed the methodological triangulation (e.g., see Janesick, 1994; Stake, 1994) technique to ensure reliable data by using various sources of information. For example, policy documents developed in different eras of education were analysed, and interviews were conducted with the main actors, who were directly related to decision making and its formulation process and implementation activities. In the due course of time, particularly, case studies, document analysis, and interview techniques helped with the in-depth analysis of the current school governance policy in terms of the policy, research, and practice perspectives.
4.2.9 Validity and Reliability

Best and Kahn (1999: 208, 217) have indicated that "a test is valid if it measures what it aims to measure" and "a test is reliable to the extent that it demonstrates a consistent measurement". In Babbie's (2013: 191) view, validity is a measure that accurately measures the intended concept. Patton (1990: 244) believes in a combination of different data sources, such as observations, interviews, and document analysis, which enables the researcher "to validate and cross-check findings". Yin (2003: 34) affirms that using multiple sources of evidence demonstrates construct validity in case studies. Construct validity is established by convergent and discriminant techniques (Cohen et al., 2007: 138). According to Cohen et al., the convergent technique should possess high inter-correlation, whereas the discriminant technique should yield low inter-correlation for the same construct.

Upon the advice provided by several social scientists for checking validity and reliability, the researcher employed the following arguments for ensuring the validity and reliability of this study.

First, the researcher himself worked as the observer as well as the enumerator of this study's field survey, as Miles and Huberman (1994: 105) claim that the researcher is the main instrument in qualitative research. For this the researcher went necessary times into the field as enumerator. Regarding the characteristics of qualitative case study, Stake (1995: 242) states that researchers are required to spend "substantial time, on site, personally in contact with the activities and operations of the case" to capture the real information of "what is going on".

The second argument is the strength of the research design, which follows Patton (1990: 244). For example, this study employed various sources of information such as document analysis, interviews, focus group discussions, direct observations, and case studies. These tools helped the researcher to crosscheck the information obtained from other sources as Rudestam and Newton (2001: 100) claim. For example, checking out the consistency of findings from individual interview and focus group discussion contributed to verification and validation of the information gathered from other sources (Patton, 1990: 464) and thus assisted in establishing construct validity as Yin (2003: 34) claims.
Third, a systematic and rigorous observation was carried out. In Patton’s (1990) view, one of the main advantages of the observation technique is that the researcher can gain current factual information. Babbie (2013: 408) also suggests the usefulness of observations to ensure validity. That is why the observation technique utilized in this study enabled the researcher to make a comparison between the GPS and CMS.

Fourth, people’s opinions, thoughts, beliefs, and experiences cannot be observed directly. However, these are the major sources for drawing conclusions in qualitative research. In this regard, Patton (1990: 25) suggests that "what people say is a major source of qualitative data". Keeping in view this fact, the researcher conducted interviews and focus group discussions to collect that information, which was not directly observable. Finally, the use of the matrices, graphs, and narratives heavily contributed to the validation of the findings. In the same line, Miles and Huberman (1994: 11) argue that "better displays are a major avenue to validate qualitative analysis".

In order to address the threats that hampered in ensuring validity, the researcher followed Patton's (1990), Mason's (2002) and Best and Kahn's (1999) strategy of keeping field notes. In addition, a proper attention was also paid to minimize the potential bias of the researcher. To address this issue, several measures were taken, as suggested by Maxwell (2012: 134-145). Following Maxwell, audiotapes were used to transcribe the data accurately in order to ensure descriptive validity. For ensuring interpretive validity, the researcher followed Maxwell's strategy and rechecked the interpretations with the participants. Finally, Maxwell's theoretical validity was ensured by triangulating data using different sources of information.

The concern of reliability in qualitative inquiry varies from researcher to researcher. For example, Cohen et al. (2007) emphasize the degree of accuracy and view that reliability in qualitative research can be regarded as "a fit between recorded data and actual data" (Cohen et al., 2007: 149). Babbie (2013: 409) follows Lincoln and Guba (1985) and calls it "an inquiry audit" for establishing the consistency of information. Yin (2003: 37-39) in this regard emphasizes on producing the same results in terms of a series of repetitions. Newman and Hitchcock (2011: 391) followed Yin's suggestion and determined whether there was inter-observer
agreement in their study. It appears that the goal of reliability is to minimize bias or error. In this connection, the following two techniques were adapted to ensure reliability.

1) The need to emphasize "thick description," which helps with the generalizability of the findings (Rudestam and Newton, 2001: 98-99). Thick description in Holliday's (2002: 78-79) view is to explore a particular phenomenon from different perspectives. It is a kind of "richness and holism" of the data (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 10). A thick description assisted in generalizing the findings of this study.

2) The need to reduce the researcher's biasness, in doing so; Yin (2003: 62) suggests consulting the findings to colleagues or experts. This process helped reduce bias.

In a nutshell, employing Denzin’s data triangulation, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation helped to secure both the validity and reliability of this study. The researcher was personally involved in all of the data-collection processes following Cohen et al. (2007: 134-135), who claim that the researcher's own involvement in collecting information helps secure a sufficient level of validity and reliability.

4.3 Quantitative Method

This study demanded quantitative inquiry for two reasons. First, the main concern of this research is what has happened at the field after introducing the decentralized school governance policy in the form of GPS and CMS policy in Nepal. In such a case, Teddlie and Tashakkori’s (2009) reference is vital; they claim that "whether the policy has met its overall goals can be typically measured quantitatively" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 9). In doing so, the expected initial outputs of decentralized school governance policy, such as community participation in school development and students' attraction, were taken into account. These indicators were assessed quantitatively in order to measure the implementation performance of the
policy outputs and to compare the performance between GPSs and CMSs. The research site for the quantitative analysis of this method was the same as that of the qualitative study settings, but the schools were different because they are randomly selected in quantitative research.

The second reason for employing the quantitative approach is that qualitative inquiry explains causal relations but does not test these relations in terms of confirming or disconfirming predictions (e.g., see Bacharach, 1989: 509; Newman and Hitchcock, 2011: 393). For example, Best and Kahn (1999: 193) suggest that testing the variables derived from the case study would strengthen validity of the research. Here the researcher's intention was to compare and contrast the results gained from the qualitative case study and in-depth interviews with the results from the quantitative analysis. For example, whether community participation in terms of school development and school effectiveness in terms of student attraction differed from GPSs to CMSs was assessed quantitatively. For this, the researcher developed a data set of questionnaires and administered it to the HTs, a few teachers that were acting as HTs, and SMC chairs.

4.3.1 Population and Sample

The target population of this study was comprised of all HTs, and SMC chairs of all GPSs and CMSs of Nepal. All together seven districts were selected representing three ecological regions of the country. The researcher followed Rudestam and Newton's (2001: 80) power analysis technique in order to ascertain the number of subjects to be employed. For example, Rudestam and Newton suggest that sample size calculations based on a 5% significance level and 80% power are acceptable. To make it simpler, Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007: 123) technique was followed in calculating sample size, i.e. "N ≥ 50 + 8m" (where m is the number of independent variables). Since this study envisioned five independent variables, the sample size to be needed was 90 cases in order to run the multiple regression tests. In this regard, Bartlett et al. (2001: 45) recommend a sample size of more than 120 for an alpha level of .05. Based on the established practices discussed above, the sample size for this study contained 123 cases for the CMS compared to 132 cases in the GPS
data. The combined data set contained 255 cases, which satisfied the basic assumption of the sample size mentioned above. The details are provided in Table 4.2.

### Table 4.2 Sample Districts and Research Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ecological Region</th>
<th>Number of Districts</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Number of Informants</th>
<th>HT</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>SMC Chair</th>
<th>Total Informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terai/Plain land</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>212 (83%)</td>
<td>13(5%)</td>
<td>30(12%)</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.3.2 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in Foss and Waters's (2007: 187) view is a concept that "illuminates the significant feature of the data". Any formal organizations, such as "colleges, army divisions, academic departments, and supermarkets", can be taken as the unit of analysis to represent a population of all organizations (Babbie, 2013: 100). Since the aim of this study was to compare the two types of public schools, the unit of analysis employed for this study obviously was the school. The informants were HTs, teachers, and SMC chairs. The researcher followed Patton's (1987: 50-51; 1990: 45, 76, 167) and Babbie's, 2013: 131) view, who recommend that data collection sources may be individual people, even if the unit of analysis is the organization. This not only accords with Foss and Waters's (2007: 187) significant feature of data, but also reproduces Sekaran's (1992: 106) claim, who asserts that "the unit of analysis refers to the level of aggregation of the data".

Due consideration was paid to the safeguarding against the drawing of invalid conclusions. For this Babbie's (2013: 103) concern of "faulty reasoning" was
addressed. For example, ecological fallacy problem, which is in Babbie's view, is simply the case when a researcher draws "conclusions about individuals solely from the observations of groups" or organizations (Babbie, 2013: 103).

4.3.3 Sampling Techniques
Sampling is "a process which makes possible the drawing of valid inferences from a small proportion of the population" (Best and Kahn, 1999: 13). Since this research focuses on the comparison between two types of schools in order to observe the policy implementation performance and to ensure the generality power of the results, the schools and informants were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. For example, all of the schools of the sample districts were divided into two strata: (1) GPSs, and (2) CMSs. The needed numbers of schools were selected randomly from each stratum to make sure that there was a proportional representation of schools (see Table 4.2). To collect the data, the researcher himself visited each school to administer the survey form and to collect the necessary information.

4.3.4 Research Tools/Instruments
The study tool employed for this study was survey questionnaires. The survey form was administered to HTs, teachers, and SMC chairs of the sampled schools. The survey instrument used for data collection consisted of three sections. The first section captured general demographic information of the informants such as gender, position, experience, school location, and school type. The second section included the instructions and the statements of latent variables that were developed for this study. The researcher used seven-point Likert-type response categories, keeping in view its advantage for analyzing statistical techniques. For this, the responses were categorized starting from "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Somewhat Agree," "Neither Agree nor Disagree," "Somewhat Disagree," "Disagree," to "Strongly Disagree"—assigning values from 7 to 1 respectively. This scale examined how strongly subjects agreed or disagreed with the statement on the implementation of the current school governance policy. The scores gained from each scale, ranging from 7 to 1, were mathematically calculated to gather the total score of each scale. The third section was
the open-ended type of question with the intention of providing room for informants to offer their opinion on the implementation of the current school governance policy.

### 4.3.5 Validity and Reliability

The survey questionnaires developed for this study were pilot-tested in order to ensure whether they yielded the consistent results while being administered repeatedly, which is termed reliability (Yin, 2003, 2009), and whether the items measured what they were expected to measure, which is termed validity (Best and Kahn, 1999). Schuerman states that "reliability depends upon the stability of the measuring process" (Schuerman, 1983: 24). In Schuerman's (1983: 24) view, reliability is concerned with random error whereas validity on the other hand is concentrated on systematic error.

So far as validity is concerned, this study ensured two types of validity concerns. First, content validity was ensured by consulting experts and conducting a pilot test (Cohen et al., 2007) in order to make sure that the concept was measured as intended (Babbie, 2005: 149). Secondly, construct validity was checked through the factor analysis technique (Babbie, 2013: 483) and ensured that the factor loading value was ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). "A factor loading indicates the degree of association between a given empirical variable and a given factor" (Babbie, 2013: 494). Following Pallant (2002: 173, 174 & 2011: 182) and Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007: 608) recommendation, construct validity was ensured through Exploratory Factor Analysis using the technique of Principal Component Analysis and varimax rotation for extraction, which also helped reduce the factors into a smaller number. The details of the factor loadings are discussed later on in this section.

As suggested by Pallant (2011: 183, 286) several other assumptions, such as normality, strength of the inter-correlations among the items, i.e. correlation matrix, multicollinearity, Bartlett’s test of sphericity, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), measuring sampling adequacy were extensively considered for both not violating the assumptions and ensuring goodness of the data in order to use the bivariate and multivariate analyses. At first, descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, range of scores, and skewness and kurtosis, were used for testing the
assumptions (e.g., see Pallant, 2002; Cohen et al., 2007; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007).

The normality of variables can be assessed by either statistical or graphical methods. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007: 79) recommend two components of normality: skewness and kurtosis. Tabachnick and Fidell suggest that a distribution is normal when the values of skewness and kurtosis are almost zero. Keeping in view their suggestion, skewness and kurtosis were used to assess the distribution of scores on continuous variables, and both of their values were confirmed to be less than ±1, i.e. tends to zero. In addition, the histograms were also used to check the normality assumptions, as suggested by Pallant (2011: 126).

Following Tabachnick and Fidell (2007: 614), the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using correlation matrix and ensuring that all of the coefficients were greater than .3 and less than .7 (also see Pallant, 2011: 183). In addition, following Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007) recommendation, Bartlett’s test of sphericity was ensured by confirming the significance level at 5% (p<.05) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy at a cut-off value of ≥ .6 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007: 657; also see Pallant, 2011: 183).

Pallant (2011: 151) claims that multicollinearity problem exists "when the independent variables are highly correlated (r=.9 and above)". Multicollinearity problems were assessed for this study to make sure that the critical assumptions are not violated. This study mainly concerned the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, while assessing the multicollinearity problem. In this regard, Pallant (2011: 158) recommends that the values for Tolerance should be less than .10 and it should be greater than 10 for the VIF value in order to avoid a multicollinearity problem. Regarding the cut-off value of VIF, Vogt (2007: 175) recommends that a VIF of 5 would be a good cut-off point to escape from a multicollinearity problem. The data generated for this study satisfied both the conditions mentioned above and thus escaped the multicollinearity problem. For example, the Collinearity Statistics of the data for this study showed that the tolerance values for each independent variable were not less than .10 (range from .692-.950) and the VIF values were well below the cut-off point of not greater than 10 (range from 1.052-1.446), indicating not having
violated the multicollinearity assumptions. The details of the figures are presented in chapter 6.

"The reliability of a scale indicates how free it is from random error" i.e. the consistent results (Pallant, 2011: 6). Two techniques were adopted for reliability checking. First, following Pallant (2011: 6), the Cronbach Alpha was checked for reliability of items and ensuring that the Alpha value was ≥ 0.7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). Secondly, test-retest reliability was administered through pilot testing and ensuring the value that correlation between test and retest was ≥ 0.8 (e.g., see Pallant, 2002, 2011; Cohen et al., 2007). Last, the triangulation technique was also used to ensure both the validity and reliability of the results. For example, Jick (1979) claims that Denzin's (1978) methodological triangulation is equally useful for the quantitative method and state that "triangulation essentially involves cross-checking for internal consistency or reliability" and also "tests the degree of external validity" (Jick, 1979: 603).

After confirming all of the assumptions, a standard multiple regression was performed between the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies as the dependent variable and the five independent variables; namely, Clarity of Policy Objectives (CLAPO), Capacity of Implementers (CAPAOI), Size of School (SCHOLS), Adequacy of Budget (ADEBUG), and Teacher Commitment (TCOMIT) by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version-20.

### 4.3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

The analytical model for this research was based on the conceptual frameworks (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2) developed for this study comprising one dependent variable and five independent variables for both types of schools. The data were analyzed by using SPSS version 20 to administer univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses. For example, bivariate analysis was run to assess the degree of the relationship between the dependent variable and one independent variable, whereas standard multiple regressions were run to observe the association between the dependent variable and the predicted independent variables at a time (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007: 27). This process helped produce results concerning "how well a set
of variables was able to predict a particular outcome” (Pallant, 2002: 140). The means of different samples collected from two different schools were compared using t-statistics in order to observe the differences between GPSs and CMSs (Pallant, 2002: 205).

4.3.7 Operational Definitions and Observed Variables

Schuerman states that the process of operationalization overlaps the process of developing measurement through observed variables (Schuerman, 1983: 22-23). For example, operationalization means "the exact operations involved in measuring a variable" (Babbie, 2013: 71). Simon's (2007: 173) view on operationalization is a method used to observe and measure the concept. Measurement of a concept in Schuerman's view is a kind of method, which helps to determine the values of the intended variable (Schuerman, 1983: 22). The details of the measurement of the selected variables are described in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Operationalization of Variables and Their Measurement Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>Operationalization</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable:</td>
<td>The simple meaning of decentralization is taken from McGinn and Welsh (1999), who see it as the transfer of authority from one level to another.</td>
<td>Greater autonomy leads to improved educational outcomes, strengthening the roles of community in school management and enhancing the quality of education (Bush and Gamage, 2001).</td>
<td>Bush and Gamage (2001) Carney et al. (2007) McGinn and Welsh (1999)</td>
<td>Question Numbers 31 to 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable:</th>
<th>Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) and interpret that clear objectives can serve as a resource in implementation.</th>
<th>Provision of rules and regulation, and guidelines on norms and parameters are critical factors in policy implementation</th>
<th>Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983)</th>
<th>Question Numbers 6 to 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of Policy</td>
<td>Smith and Larimer (2009) state that public policy is the statement of the future course of actions and inactions thus the perception of the implementers is crucial.</td>
<td>DeGrauwe et al. (2005)</td>
<td>Gonzalo et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Question Numbers 11 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Capacity of implementing agency and implementers' capacity can be used interchangeably (Goggin, et al., 1990). They defined the organizational capacity as the ability to obtain policy implementation performance.</td>
<td>Graziano and Winkler (2012) confirm that top-down governance reforms have never been implemented unless the capacity of local implementers has increased. Simply it is the capacity to convert a policy message into a set of real achievements.</td>
<td>Graziano and Winkler (2012)</td>
<td>Question Numbers 11 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td>Blau (1972) asserts that greater the size of the organization lessens the chance of implementing policy effectively. For Hall (1972) the number of clients served is a good measure of size.</td>
<td>Kinnberly (1976) provides an operation definition of size and states that the number of employees or number of clients served can be taken as a good measure of size.</td>
<td>Blau (1972) Hall (1972) Kinnberly (1976)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Question Numbers 16 to 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td>Resources and incentives are the means of achieving the targets (Younis and Davidson, 1990). Edwards III and Wayne (2010) argue that implementation performance is likely to be ineffective if resources are limited to carrying out policies.</td>
<td>If the system is given enough money and enough instruction, implementation will be effective (Younis and Davidson, 1990). Edwards III and Wayne (2010)</td>
<td>Younis and Davidson (1990)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Question Numbers 21 to 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td>Pressman and Wildavsky (1979) define commitment as translating a policy mandate into action. It depends upon the acceptance of implementers (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983). Goggin et al. (1990) state that street-level actors are the central actors in policy implementation.</td>
<td>Teachers’ responses to the educational change in terms of; accepting the change, participating in school activities, and time on task (Ng, 2011) Hung and Liu (1999) argue for supportive behaviour of teachers regarding the school mission.</td>
<td>Pressman and Wildavsky (1979) Goggin et al. (1990) Ng (2011) Hung and Liu (1999)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Question Numbers 26 to 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.7.1 Dependent Variable: Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy

The main aim of decentralized school governance policy is to enhance greater community participation in school development and to increase student attraction in public schools. The implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy was taken as the dependent variable for this study. This policy was measured by two indicators for both types of schools: (1) by a six-item scale in which HTs, teachers, and the SMC chairs of both schools reported their perceptions of the ability of their respective schools to obtain increased community participation in school development; and (2) by a four-item scale in which HTs, teachers, and the SMC chairs of both schools reported their perceptions of the ability of their respective schools to increase school effectiveness in terms of students' attraction to the school. Finally, both perceptions were combined and added to measure the dependent variable.

The dependent variable was thus measured against the aforementioned two indicators in order to check the expected outputs of the intended policy (see questions 31-40 of Appendices IV & V for the GPS and CMS respectively). This scale was able to measure the extent to which the initial policy outputs of the decentralized school governance policy were achieved. Table 4.4 depicts the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the dependent variable of the GPS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all ten questions were retained with due consideration of the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings at ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy for the GPS.
### Table 4.4 Factor Analysis of Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy through the GPS Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are wide discussions among stakeholders while taking the decisions on school affairs.</td>
<td>.553</td>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have sufficient room to manage the school in line with our own plan.</td>
<td>.555</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both interest and participation of community into school affairs have increased.</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>.867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-community relationships have strengthened.</td>
<td>.503</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community people frequently visit the school.</td>
<td>.547</td>
<td>.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parent-teacher association is active in our school.</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school is successfully moving forward to achieve the intended goals.</td>
<td>.539</td>
<td>.873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students' attraction has increased.</td>
<td>.504</td>
<td>.872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition among schools has increased.</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>.856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' flow from private schools has increased.</td>
<td>.589</td>
<td>.858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .909, Variance Explained = 48.15%, p<0.000

Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .312 to .629

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .312 to .629 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were relatively compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s
test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .909 against the recommended value of .6, which also appeared to be a highly-appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all ten constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking reliability of items. Table 4.4 exhibits the Alpha levels of items, which were comfortably above than .85 against the recommended Alpha value .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90) and was also consistent with the preferred value of .8 (Pallant, 2011: 100). This result suggested that the value of Alpha demonstrated very good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

Table 4.5 represents the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the dependent variable of the CMS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all ten questions were retained with due consideration to the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy for the CMS.

**Table 4.5** Factor Analysis of Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy through the CMS Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are wide discussions among stakeholders while taking the decisions on school affairs.</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td>.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have sufficient room to manage the school in line with our own plan.</td>
<td>.671</td>
<td>.867</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.5 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Variance Explained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both interest and participation of community into school affairs have increased.</td>
<td>.649</td>
<td>.868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-community relationships have strengthened.</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community people frequently visit the school.</td>
<td>.689</td>
<td>.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parent-teacher association is active in our school.</td>
<td>.767</td>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school is successfully moving forward to achieve the intended goals.</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td>.876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students' attraction has increased.</td>
<td>.563</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition among schools has increased.</td>
<td>.786</td>
<td>.857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' flow from private schools has increased.</td>
<td>.767</td>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. =.911, Variance Explained =48.49%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .303 to .609

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .303 to .609 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were relatively compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .911 against the recommended value of .6, which also appeared to be a highly-appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all ten constructs for further analysis.
The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.5 exhibits the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .85 against the recommended Alpha value of .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90) and also preferred value to be greater than .8 (Pallant, 2011: 100). This result suggested that the value of Alpha demonstrated very good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

4.3.7.2 Independent Variables

1) Clarity of Policy Objectives

Most policy implementation studies accept Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 463) model, that policy implementation performance is a dependent variable and the factors which affect policy implementation performance, such as clarity of policy objectives, level of available resources and the characteristics of implementing agencies, are crucial variables in achieving the intended policy performance (Johnston and Moore, 2007: 30). Johnston and Moore also follow Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) theory and interpret that clear objectives can serve as a vital resource in implementation. In this regard, how far the decentralized school governance policy is clear enough at the implementing level is critical to assess. For this, five items were developed (see questions 6-10 of Appendices IV & V for the GPS and CMS respectively).

The intention of this scale was to measure the extent to which the implementers such as HTs, teachers, and SMC chairs, were aware of the intended policy objectives. Table 4.6 describes the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the clarity of the GPS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as clarity of policy objectives.
Table 4.6 Factor Analysis of Clarity of Policy Objectives of the GPS Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementers are clear on the policy objectives and their operation.</td>
<td>.824</td>
<td>.794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have already received the implementation guidelines so that they were able to demonstrate the results.</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers frequently discuss the outputs and the implementation procedures.</td>
<td>.753</td>
<td>.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers were confident that the educational practices were on the track of the intended results.</td>
<td>.786</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers were happy and satisfied with the on-going implementation.</td>
<td>.807</td>
<td>.802</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. =.842, Variance Explained =61.30%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .447 to .590

The result of inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .447 to .590 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .842 against the recommended value .6 and appeared to be a highly-appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.6 shows that the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .79
against the recommended Alpha value of .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result suggested that the value of Alpha demonstrated very good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

Table 4.7, on the other hand, presents the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the clarity of the CMS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as clarity of policy objectives.

Table 4.7 Factor Analysis of Clarity of Policy Objectives of the CMS Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementers are clear on the policy objectives and their operation.</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have already received the implementation guidelines so that they were able to demonstrate the results.</td>
<td>.733</td>
<td>.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers frequently discuss the outputs and the implementation procedures.</td>
<td>.783</td>
<td>.825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers were confident that the educational practices were on the track of the intended results.</td>
<td>.827</td>
<td>.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers were happy and satisfied with the on-going implementation.</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .827, Variance Explained = 61.39%, p < 0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .416 to .600

The result of inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables
ranged from .416 to .600 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.005. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .827 against the recommended value .6 and appeared to be a highly-appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.7 shows that the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .79 against the recommended Alpha value of .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result suggested that the value of Alpha demonstrated very good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

2) Capacity of Implementers

The school’s capacity in King and Bouchard's (2011) view "includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of individual teachers" (King and Bouchard, 2011: 655). Schools with stronger implementation levels of capacity are more likely to achieve greater performance (Youngs and King, 2002: 647). For example, Robinson et al.’s (2011: 731, 733) empirical findings suggest that developing capacity at the point of delivery is the prime factor for the effective implementation of the intended policy. Robinson et al.’s main finding is that the limited capacity of schools sharply delayed the improvement efforts in New Zealand. In this regard, how far the capacity of implementers is essential in implementing policy is critical to assess. For this, five items were developed (see questions 11-15 of Appendices IV & V for the GPS and CMS respectively).

The intention of this scale was to measure the extent to which the implementers’ capacity was acute while realizing the intended policy. Table 4.8 represents the factor loadings and Cronbach’s Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the capacity of implementers of the GPS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of the acceptable cut-off value
for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as the capacity of implementers.

**Table 4.8** Factor Analysis of the Capacity of Implementers in the GPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have received capacity building trainings.</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers are administratively and technically competent enough.</td>
<td>.694</td>
<td>.723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The capacity-building trainings received by implementers have helped them to achieve the intended results.</td>
<td>.710</td>
<td>.716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school has developed the school improvement plan.</td>
<td>.726</td>
<td>.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school revisits its school improvement plan annually.</td>
<td>.754</td>
<td>.701</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .784, Variance Explained = 51.06%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .340 to .540

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .340 to .540 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .784 against the recommended value of .6, which appeared to be a highly-appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and
Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.8 shows that the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .7 against the recommended Alpha value of .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result suggested that the value of Alpha demonstrated very good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

Table 4.9, on the other hand, reveals the factor loadings and Cronbach’s Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the capacity of implementers of the CMS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of drawn acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as drawn capacity of implementers.

**Table 4.9** Factor Analysis of the Capacity of Implementers in the CMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have received capacity building trainings.</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers are administratively and technically competent enough.</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td>.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The capacity-building trainings received by implementers have helped them to achieve the intended results.</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>.778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school has developed the school improvement plan.</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school revisits its school improvement plan annually.</td>
<td>.757</td>
<td>.739</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .754, Variance Explained =51.06%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .318 to .635
The result of inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .318 to .635 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .754 against the recommended value of .6 and appeared to be a highly-appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking reliability of items. Table 4.9 shows that the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .71 against the recommended Alpha value of .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result suggested that the value of Alpha demonstrated very good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

3) Size of School

Blau (1972: 3) defines size as the scope of an organization, whereas Kinnberly (1976: 583) provides an operational definition of size and states that the number of employees or clients served can be taken as measure of size. Hall (1972: 139) concludes that size has a variable impact on the organization’s performance. Having identified several dimensions of size in relation to organizational performance, this study therefore adopted size as the number of clients served, i.e. student numbers. Small schools can make decisions faster than big ones, which is often the case in Australia (Ewington et al., 2008: 546). Ewington et al.’s view is consistent with Nepal’s case of the CMS, where 66 percent of community-transferred schools were small in size and were called primary schools. In this regard, how far the size of the school has influenced implementation performance of policy is critical to assess. For this, five items were developed (see questions 16-20 of Appendices IV & V for the GPS and CMS respectively).

The intention of this scale was to measure the extent to which the size of the school has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. Table 4.10 shows the factor loadings and
Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the size of the school in the GPS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, $\geq 0.5$ (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as size of school.

**Table 4.10** Factor Analysis of Size of School in the GPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to implement decisions in a small school.</td>
<td>.652</td>
<td>.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it had a big number of students, it would be difficult to achieve the intended results.</td>
<td>.680</td>
<td>.707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation performances are better in small schools.</td>
<td>.723</td>
<td>.712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders meet frequently to solve problems.</td>
<td>.724</td>
<td>.712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a small school, Implementers have confidently achieved the intended results in a given time.</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.710</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .764, Variance Explained =49.0%, $p<0.000$

Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .316 to .523

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .316 to .523 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at $p<.000<.05$. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling
adequacy, on the other hand, was .764 against the recommended value of .6, which appeared to be a highly appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It is therefore the researcher decided to retain all the five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.10 exhibits the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .7 against the recommended Alpha value of .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result fairly suggested a good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

Table 4.11, on the other hand, demonstrates the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the size of school of the CMS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration to acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as size of school.

### Table 4.11 Factor Analysis of Size of School in the CMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to implement decisions in a small school.</td>
<td>.736</td>
<td>.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it had a big number of students, it would be difficult to achieve the intended results.</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td>.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation performances are better in small schools.</td>
<td>.698</td>
<td>.712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders meet frequently to solve problems.</td>
<td>.726</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a small school, Implementers have confidently achieved the intended results in a given time.</td>
<td>.733</td>
<td>.728</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .302 to .488 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .783 against the recommended value of .6, which appeared to be a highly appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher's decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.11 exhibits the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .7 against the recommended Alpha value .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result fairly suggested a good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

4) Adequacy of Budget

Resources in terms of budget are considered to be the most influencing factor in policy implementation. For example, Younis and Davidson (1990: 8) state that "enough money and enough instruction" are essential factors for ensuring effective implementation. Ryan (1996: 37) agrees with this and asserts that adequate resources have been a common variable among the models developed for policy implementation. This evidence is consistent with Anderson (1994: 165), who claims that the effectiveness of public policy depends on resources. One recent study indicates that "incentive grants have played a strong role in moving reforms forward by providing schools with an attractive incentive for converting" GPSs to CMSs in Nepal (Edwards, 2011: 74). It would be interesting to know the extent to which this
claim is valid. For this, five items were developed (see questions 21-25 of Appendices IV & V for the GPS and CMS respectively).

The intention of this scale was to measure the extent to which the adequacy of the budget had a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. Table 4.12 reveals the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the adequacy of the budget in GPS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as the adequacy of budget.

**Table 4.12** Factor Analysis of the Adequacy of Budget in the GPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The adequacy of the budget has helped to produce results in a smooth way.</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>.721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers also receive additional budget from the community.</td>
<td>.689</td>
<td>.722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have a sufficient budget.</td>
<td>.703</td>
<td>.716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school improvement plan has been effectively implemented.</td>
<td>.734</td>
<td>.707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school reallocates its budget according to need.</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td>.700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .785, Variance Explained = 50.86%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .333 to .538

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .333 to .538 against the recommended range of .3 to .7,
indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .785 against the recommended value of .6, which appeared relatively appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher's decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.12 exhibits the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .7 against the recommended Alpha value .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result fairly suggested a good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

Table 4.13, on the other hand, demonstrates the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the adequacy of budget in CMS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as the adequacy of budget.

**Table 4.13**  Factor Analysis of Adequacy of Budget in the CMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The adequacy of the budget has helped to produce results in a smooth way.</td>
<td>.678</td>
<td>.730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers also receive additional budget from the community.</td>
<td>.681</td>
<td>.730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have a sufficient budget.</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school improvement plan has been effectively implemented.</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school reallocates its budget according to need.</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note 1: K.M.O. = .788, Variance Explained = 51.33%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .330 to .552

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables ranged from .330 to .552 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .788 against the recommended value of .6, which appeared to be a highly appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.13 exhibits the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .7 against the recommended Alpha value .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result fairly suggested a good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

5) Teacher Commitment

A comparative study between the “High School-based Management Schools” and the “Low School-based Management Schools” in Hong Kong revealed that teacher commitment was found to be a highly-significant factor, which has remained one of the strong contributing factors in adopting high school-based management (Cheng and Mok, 2007: 539). The teacher community in Nepal believes that the school transfer policy does not secure the professional rights and benefits of teachers (Carney et al., 2007; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008). For example, teachers are extremely disappointed with the provision of making the SMC responsible for the hiring and firing of teachers (Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008). Finally, it would also be interesting to
know the extent to which this claim is valid. For this, five items were developed (see questions 26-30 of Appendices IV & V for the GPS and CMS respectively).

The intention of this scale was to measure the extent to which teacher commitment had a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. Table 4.14 reveals the factor loadings and Cronbach’s Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the teacher commitment in GPS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of the acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as teacher commitment.

**Table 4.14  Factor Analysis of Teacher Commitment in the GPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are satisfied with the outputs gained so far.</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are happy with the implementation of hiring and firing teachers centrally.</td>
<td>.679</td>
<td>.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teachers hired centrally are professionally competent.</td>
<td>.793</td>
<td>.763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers willingly participate in school activities.</td>
<td>.628</td>
<td>.726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are committed to school improvement.</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.706</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .742, Variance Explained =49.86%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .303 to .612

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables were ranged from .303 to .612 against the recommended range of .3 to .7,
indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .742 against the recommended value of .6, which appeared relatively appropriate value for further analysis. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher’s decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.14 exhibits the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .7 against the recommended Alpha value .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result suggested relatively good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

Table 4.15, on the other hand, demonstrates the factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha for the observed variables or items developed to measure the teacher commitment in CMS policy. After running the factor analysis, only one component of the scale was produced, in which all five questions were retained with due consideration of acceptable cut-off value for factor loadings, that is, ≥ 0.5 (Pallant, 2002). This component was thus categorized as teacher commitment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are satisfied with the outputs gained so far.</td>
<td>.779</td>
<td>.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are happy with the implementation of hiring and firing teachers centrally.</td>
<td>.735</td>
<td>.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teachers hired centrally are professionally competent.</td>
<td>.690</td>
<td>.806</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.15 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value 1</th>
<th>Value 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers willingly participate in school activities.</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td>.772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are committed to school improvement.</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.765</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: K.M.O. = .828, Variance Explained =58.19%, p<0.000
Note 2: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Note 3: Correlation Matrices among Variables Ranges from .351 to .576

The result of the inter-correlation among variables was checked by using a correlation matrix. The results revealed that the coefficients among variables were ranged from .351 to .576 against the recommended range of .3 to .7, indicating that the correlation values were remarkably compatible for the factor analysis. The Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also confirmed, which showed a highly significant level at p<0.000<.05. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy, on the other hand, was .828 against the recommended value of .6, which appeared to be a highly appropriate value for yielding reliable factors. All of the results thus met the basic criteria for the factor analysis as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). It was therefore the researcher's decision to retain all five constructs for further analysis.

The Cronbach Alpha was used for checking the reliability of items. Table 4.15 exhibits the Alpha levels of items were comfortably above .76 against the recommended Alpha value .7 (Pallant, 2002: 90). This result fairly suggested a good internal consistency and thus supported the data set for further analysis.

4.4 Conclusions

The researcher was convinced by Denzin and Lincoln’s (1994: 2) and Janesick (1994: 214-215) triangulation process of comparing and contrasting data from
different sources of information. This process helped to confirm the findings. For example, Tjora’s (2006) view in this regard also strengthened the researcher's intention of using varieties of data sources. Tjora asserts that "interview leads to the researcher’s observations, while observations suggest probes for interviews" (Tjora, 2006: 430).

On the other hand, the reason for employing mixed methods research was to ensure a valid comparative picture of the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. For example, mixed methods complement the information derived from both qualitative and quantitative techniques (e.g., see Bacharach, 1989; Bergman, 2011). This argument is quite conclusive for using mixed methods as a complementary research strategy, which ultimately has helped to reduce the methodological limitations. This study therefore used mixed methods for finding out what has happened in the field after introducing the decentralized school governance policy in the form of GPS and CMS policy in Nepal with reference to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), who claim that results obtained from the qualitative and quantitative methods can be reconciled whether the policy has met its overall goals (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009: 9, 12).
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with the overall results obtained from the document analysis, interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and case studies of the schools. The findings are presented in five different sections. Section 5.1 describes the document analysis of the educational plans and policies. Similarly, the interviews conducted with policy makers, education policy experts, and school HTs and SMC chairs are presented in section 5.2. Section 5.3 is reserved for the outcomes acquired from the focus group discussions, and the researcher's own observation is presented in section 5.4. The case studies carried out in four different schools are discussed in section 5.5.

5.1 Document Analysis

The literature reviewed for this study suggests that the policy of centralization or decentralization in education appears, disappears, and reappears in many countries due to the shifting roles of the central government. Keeping in view this fact, an attempt is made to explain how the schools were governed and in what direction the changes occurred in different periods of time by analyzing policy and plan documents.

5.1.1 The Early Era (1951-1971)

Historically, individual Guru and the religious institution such as the Gumba, as well as Ashram, ran education in Nepal (Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008: 23). Basically, religious institutions; particularly, Hindus and Buddhists supported education systems (Sharma, 1986). For good reasons the people were supporting the public education system through donations in cash and
in kind. Government investment in education was quite insignificant. For example, public investment on education during the period of 1951-1971 was only 5 percent of the total national budget (United Nations Development Programme, 2002) at the macro-level. Modern education in Nepal began with the establishment of the Durbar School in 1853 (Sharma, 1986). According to Sharma, it was opened for the children of the Rana rulers; however, the expenditure for the school was borne by the national treasury. Nevertheless, it can be regarded as the emergence of school governing systems in Nepal.

The establishment of the Durbar School in fact opened eyes for the general public, and people took initiatives in the extension of public education; as a result, the community opened a number of public schools and managed them (Sharma, 1986; Ministry of Education, 1997; Ministry of Education, 1999). According to Sharma (1986), the then government of Nepal formed the Nepal National Education Planning Commission in 1954 to suggest viable education policies to the government. The commission made several recommendations, Sharma (1986) cites. For example, it was realized that unless the local communities involved in school management, government alone could not provide education to all (see chapter 19: summary and recommendations, recommendation 9, Nepal National Education Planning Commission, 1954).

A study conducted by the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (2008: 25) also concluded that the school governance policy during the early era was a joint venture of both the government and community. The roles to be played by these two actors were also identified (Nepal National Education Planning Commission, 1954). According to the recommendations 9 and 10 of the Nepal National Education Planning Commission (see chapter 19: summary and recommendations, recommendations 9 and 10, Nepal National Education Planning Commission, 1954), the government's role was kept for technical and financial support, whereas the community was assumed to take responsibility for school operations. Two critical points that can be inferred from the analysis of the commission's report and research findings are discussed above. First, the role of communities is crucial in school operations. Second, the clarity of policy objectives appears as the key factor in implementing education policy.
5.1.2 The Centralized Era (1971 - 1990)

The centralized era began with the introduction of the National Education System Plan (NESP) in 1971, which was one of the means used to control national education systems (Sharma, 1986). However, after the introduction of the NESP in 1971, school governance systems "became increasingly controlled by the state bureaucracy" in the planning, organization, and management and financing of school education (Ministry of Education, 1997: 147). In fact, on one side, this policy made significant achievements in terms of the expansion of schooling opportunities, as the "government took over full responsibility" for financing education (Ministry of Education, 1999: 10). On the other hand, the plan knowingly or unknowingly discouraged local initiatives in education (National Education Commission, 1992: 54-55). By and large, until the late 1980s, schools remained detached from communities (Ministry of Education, 1997: 168). It can be revealed that the plan indirectly nationalized the education system of the country, which resulted in a sharp decrease in community participation and the major responsibilities of the public education went onto the shoulders of the government.

The Eighth Plan (1992-97) recognized the growing awareness among the public has made high demand for education (National Planning Commission, 1992). As a result, the proportion of government resources had to be increased to meet the demand for education. Despite the increment in the government budget, several public schools faced financial crisis because of the rising demand for education. The Ministry of Education thus states:

"When the government starts supporting schools through grants, communities find themselves marginalized and supports from them begin to gradually erode. Thus, the support from the government has not added to the resources available and schools face severe under-financing" (Ministry of Education, 1999: 16)

This kind of financial crisis in public schools in Nepal observed since long ago; for example, the Third Five-year Plan, 1966-71, therefore committed to decentralizing school governance policy with the active cooperation of communities
(National Planning Commission, 1966: 8). Pointing out several benefits of decentralization, the then government conversely continued to control, centrally, school governance policy with its de-concentrated local organizations, such as DEOs (Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008: 27). But, interestingly, the DEOs remained ineffective due to their limited capacities in planning and monitoring school activities (Ministry of Education, 1997: 154). Due to the centralized control, the Ministry of Education therefore reiterates, "community participation in school operation has been a rhetoric rather than a reality" (Ministry of Education, 1997: 159).

The centralized era predominately focused on capacity development and budget for effective implementation of the intended policy. For example, the Fifth Five-year Plan (National Planning Commission, 1975) expressed the improvements with respect to resource mobilization and the implementation capability of school leaders, especially HTs and SMC chairs. The sixth and seventh five-year plans therefore continuously reaffirmed that the government should play an active role in developing local level capacity (National Planning Commission, 1985). These three development plans, in essence, give credence to capacity development and the adequacy of the budget to ensure better policy implementation.

5.1.3 The Reformative Era (1990 - 2000)

According to the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development, (2008: 27), the reformative era began after the restoration of democracy in 1990 and this movement introduced the rights of the people in education. It has created several echelons in educational policy. Examples are the formation of the National Education Commission in 1992, the development of the Eighth Five-year Plan (1992-1997), and Ninth Five-year Plan (1997-2002) with a 20-year vision for national development (National Planning Commission, 2002). In the meantime, the Local Self-Governance Act, 1999, was enacted, which clearly stated that the VDCs at the grass-root level are the educational stakes of local bodies (Law Book Management Committee, 1999). The intended principal policy of the act was to devolve the central level responsibilities and resources "to make the local bodies capable and efficient in local self-governance" (Law Book Management Committee,
This act made a clear provision of the rights to and autonomy for the local communities to manage the public services including schools (Law Book Management Committee, 1999: 5, 9).

The National Education Commission has recommended that the SMC should be given clear-cut responsibility for managing public schools (National Education Commission, 1992: 55). The commission also repeated that the Ministry of Education should become involved in creating policy, not implementation. For this, the report strongly stresses the need of the capacity building of the HT and SMC chairs, which is essential for effective implementation of educational policy, projects, and programs (National Education Commission, 1992: 7). It can be argued from the analysis that the capacity of local stakeholders was viewed as the prime factor for materializing school governance policy.

The Eighth and Ninth Five-year Plans predominantly focused on decentralization. These plans explicitly envisioned that authority needs to be devolved to promote community ownership of schools (National Planning Commission, 2002). For example, the Eighth Plan also clearly made a provision that schools should prepare their own quality-improvement plan locally and the government funds to be tied with the school performance (National Planning Commission, 1992). Similarly, the Ninth Plan (1997-2002) was committed to introducing decentralization policy for transferring the school management authority to local community (National Planning Commission, 1997). It appears that these plans tried to regain the lost community participation in public school governance. However, it was blamed by several study findings, that in reality the policy of devolving power to lower levels was not be materialized in its real form (e.g., see Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008). Two pertinent issues were identified from the analysis of the documents during this reformative era. One, central level bureaucracy appears very slow in delivering services. Two, Evidence showed that local issues can be tackled locally and in a timely way. To do so, emphasis was to be given in increasing the efficiency of HTs and SMC chairs in school management and governance. This finding allows the conclusion that leadership quality and capacity building at the local level were viewed as essential factors in enhancing policy implementation performance during the reformatory era.
5.1.4 The New Era (2000-now)

Lately a good start has taken place in school governance policy in Nepal, that is, the 7th amendment of Education Act in 2001. In this era, the government has initiated its reforms by introducing major changes in the formation of the SMCs, i.e. SMC representatives only from students' parents (Law Book Management Committee, 2001). This policy has become a milestone, in which the real stakeholders have made responsible for governing public schools and the SMC has given a new role (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009). For example, the SMCs have further made responsible for developing their own SIP by determining the vision, strategies, and priorities of the schools (Ministry of Education, 2009). In order to translate the government’s commitment into practices, this amendment remained a milestone in the school governance system in Nepal (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004: 26, 28).

It appears that this new era has functionally departed toward decentralization. A major policy document of Nepal, i.e. the Tenth Five-year Plan (2002-2007), considered decentralization as "the backbone of the democratic exercise based on the basic principles of people's participation and empowerment" (National Planning Commission, 2002: 606). With this guiding vision, the plan focused on school management responsibility through CMS policy, which needs to be devolved to the SMCs to increase the community participation in the policy implementation process (National Planning Commission, 2002). This policy document made a quantitative target of transferring 8,000 public schools to the community during the Tenth Five-year Plan period (National Planning Commission, 2002: 460).

The Tenth Five-year Plan recognized the problems encountered while implementing education policy during the Ninth Five-year Plan period (National Planning Commission, 2002: 453). These were: lack of resources, low capacity of SMCs, and little focus on results. This plan therefore explicitly mentioned that "the responsibility for managing public schools would be held by the SMCs" and that the government would provide necessary financial and technical support to achieve the intended policy objectives (National Planning Commission, 2002: 464). Very interestingly, the plan clearly mentioned its aims to promote community-based school management systems by introducing CMS policy (National Planning Commission,
The expected outcomes of the policy were visualized, as CMSs would have their own SIP, and it will increase both community participation, and teacher commitment to the school improvement (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009: 59-60). However, clear understanding and acceptance of the policy and the capacity to implement the policy were documented as high-potential risks (National Planning Commission, 2002). It appears here that clarity of policy objectives and acceptance of the implementing agency are crucial factors in policy implementation.

Education for All (EFA)—National Plan of Action introduced in 2004 remained another key document in influencing school governance policy in Nepal (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004). For example, this document states that the decentralized planning process will be "the main strategy for achieving the goal of the EFA" (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004: 26). For this, the document further states that VDCs and municipalities will be made responsible for developing the Village Education Plan (VEP) and Municipality Education Plan (MEP) to address local issues (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004: 26). It is interesting to note here that the National Plan of Action firmly envisioned an empowered SMC that would be capable enough to take ownership of school operation (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2004: 26).

The Ministry of Education initiated an integrated reform plan in 2009, i.e. the SSRP, to improve the quality and relevance of public school education in Nepal. The SSRP has become a major instrument not only in meeting new challenges and demands in education, but also in supplementing the government’s decentralization policy initiatives, which are gaining momentum through CMS policy (Ministry of Education, 2009: 1-4). This policy document explicitly envisions that public school governance and management would be "the shared responsibility of the central government, local government, and the school" (Ministry of Education, 2009: 92). To do so, the central level government ensures resources and provides national-level policies and programs, whereas the local government is made responsible for developing the SIP and implementing it accordingly (Ministry of Education, 2009: 96). Two key points to be noted from the SSRP policy are, first, school autonomy has taken as the strategy for promoting good governance in school management, and
second, institutional capacity building programs for the HTs and SMC chairs have considered as a vehicle for enhancing effective policy implementation.

In essence, this new era has led the education policy—shifting focus from centralized control to community-based school management. The government of Nepal introduced the CMS policy in 2002 with the aim of enhancing greater community participation in school improvement (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009: 2). In order to encourage communities to transfer the GPS to the CMS, the government provides one-time motivational grants worth of 100,000 NRs. (equivalence to 1,200 USD) per level on top of the regular grants (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009: 61).

5.1.5 Discussion

Literature suggests that governance is the process of managing economic and social resources (Kulshreshtha, 2008: 557). It seems that school governance deals with the accountability and responsibility of school operation. The policy documents reviewed for this study have recognized the SMC as one of the main actors of governance in school management. However, the degree of authority to be provided to the SMC differs from one era to another, as in the case of China (Hawkins, 2000: 452). Basically, two key issues are raised in policy documents regarding the governance of public schools in Nepal. Model 1 deals with the publicly-funded and publicly-managed school governance model and emphasizes bureaucratic control over school. The centralized era discussed above falls under this model. This is merely the Rondinelli et al.’s (1989: 75) de-concentration, a weakest form of decentralization. This type of decentralization simply involves the shifting of the workload from one level to another.

Model 2, on the other hand, which can be generated from the policy documents, is a publicly-funded and community-managed model. This model brings the government and community together to manage school affairs jointly. Both, the reformative era and the new era discussed above, fall under this model. This policy model envisions that local people know better ways of operating schools if they receive autonomy in implementing educational policy. This finding is consistent with Ho's (2006: 590) study, who claims that "people at the lower level are more
knowledgeable about their own needs and problems”. This policy further resembles the charter school practice in the USA, which assumes that the schools serve better if they are made accountable to public (Finnigan, 2007: 504). This can also be connected with Fullan’s (2001: 25) “need and fit” dimension for fostering effective implementation of change. The government of Nepal seems to move toward Model 2 with the expectation of enhancing community participation in school improvement, increasing students’ attraction, and retaining them in public schools (National Planning Commission, 2002, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2009).

Very interestingly, lack of needed capacity at implementation level, limited budget, policy confusions, and lack of the readiness of implementing agencies/actors were visualized as potential risks while implementing education policy across the four different eras. This finding reflects Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 463-465) model, in which clarity of policy objectives is taken as a crucial variable to achieve policy implementation performance. This is quite close to Younis and Davidson’s (1990: 8) argument—that the system requires "enough money and enough instruction" for realizing the intended policy outputs. Gropello and Marshall (2011: 164) therefore raise several issues concerning the failure of policy implementation due to the ignorance of the capacity of HTs and teachers.

There are several competing theories in public policy, but the concept of elite theory has been found to be an influential theory while developing educational policies in Nepal. The elite theory states that public policy is determined by "ruling elites" (Anderson, 1994: 29). Dye (1995: 28, 2011: 21) thus argues that "elites influence masses more than masses influence elites." A fundamental conflict of interest between the two eras' policy visions discussed above can be an example. It seems obvious to draw an inference from the document analysis that the central era tried to maximize bureaucratic control whereas the new era has envisioned maximizing local stakeholders' participation to manage public schools.

5.1.6 Conclusion

First, very interestingly, the early era of school education in Nepal was completely governed, managed, and even funded by local communities. It has appeared that the role of government was a kind of a passive provider. This gives
credence to the idea that schools in Nepal in the early era were community owned, thus current CMS policy is not a new endeavor. However, this practice could not continue for a long time. All community schools were nationalized after the introduction of the NESP in 1971. However, the decentralization process has been initiated time and again when the nation experienced different political movements. This is why the policy documents examined for this study permit the conclusion that the history of school governance and management in Nepal shows swings between centralization and decentralization.

Secondly, it can be inferred from the analysis that policy documents have not come up with clear policy objectives. For example, on one hand, it is often claimed that school education is the state’s responsibility and the capacity of local implementers is severely questioned. On the other hand, it is argued that the local community should have control over education through the SMCs because distant operation is always ineffective. This conflicting pressure toward both centralization and decentralization has been controversial in the school governance systems in Nepal. Notably, almost all policy documents reviewed for this study have strongly spoken in favor of decentralization. Nevertheless, the efforts towards decentralization so far in practice have hardly taken the Rondinelli et al.’s (1989) form of de-concentration, the weakest form of decentralization.

Finally, a remarkable finding that can be captured from the policy and plan documents is that there were some factors that contributed to continuing centralized management practices in the name of decentralization. For example, the lack of needed capacity at the implementation level, limited budgets, poor perception of policy objectives, and the readiness of implementing actors were viewed as potential risks while implementing education policy. This finding supports the appraisal report of the basic and primary education program, which has seriously picked up the issue of the limited budget and poor capacity of schools in Nepal (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997: 8).
5.2 **Interviews**

5.2.1 **Interpretation of Policy Makers Regarding Current School Governance Policy**

Regarding the analysis of the current school governance policy, one out of three policy makers evaluated it as highly decentralized in terms of its intentions and development processes; whereas two of them argued that it was a little bit of a mixed policy because current policy envisages centrally-prescribed plans and programs. However, all three policy makers were in favor of maintaining a balance between prescriptive and local demand-based governance systems. The reasons behind it were:

1) A nationally-defined policy can only provide intended standardized governance systems and then national level measurements help to deduce policy performance.

2) A national standardized policy can integrate and promote national unity, and its values and cultures.

3) A national policy intervention is still necessary to bridge past imbalances.

4) Local levels are not ready now in terms of technical and academic capacity.

Mr. Mahashram Sharma, Joint Secretary, Planning Division, Ministry of Education, clearly mentioned that current GPS and CMS policies were both guided by decentralized governance systems; nevertheless, CMS policy provided more room for the autonomy of schools. His view was that the government's intention is to divide the responsibility of public school management. According to him, the government is made responsible for ensuring financial and technical resources, whereas the community is made responsible for managing those resources through the close supervision of schools. He made it clear that education is the state’s responsibility and that the government never intends to escape its accountability for public education. Another policy maker, Dr. Ram Swarup Sinha, former secretary for the Ministry of Education, opined that diversity in demand for education has compelled the move toward decentralization (for example, mother tongue education), with the aim of
empowering local stakeholders. The intention of the current policy, in his view, is only to transfer the management responsibility of school operation in order to maintain the school’s performance. The third policy maker criticized current policy and uttered that it lacks discriminatory visionary interventions, because every child, every school, and every district is unique. So, all of them cannot be treated through a trickle down approach. However, all of them had a similar understanding—that the current school governance policy has a strong base for enhancing community participation and retaining the public schools' goodwill.

From the policy makers' point view, it can be inferred that the current school governance policy is neither merely a form of de-concentration nor is it a full form of devolution. It is rather considered as a mixed policy, in which the government transfers its management responsibilities to the local SMCs. Adopting such kind of mixed policy could be of two motives:

1) Transferring schools to community with the concept of devolution without capacitating local stakeholders would have an adverse effect on policy implementation.

2) Local levels are not ready to manage schools in their own way.

One of the policy makers, Mr. Sharma, therefore indicated that the policy choices between the GPS and CMS would lead to the strong will of schools to achieve the intended policy. He was of the opinion that decentralization allows for more local community involvement in deciding school affairs. To be more precise, he mentioned that the current policy would address the diverse needs and aspirations of the people. In this regard, all three policy makers therefore argued that national politics and globalization have greatly influenced the current school governance policy, whereas social and cultural factors have also remained key factors while adopting the current policy. The three interviewed policy makers analyzed the current policy as follows.
Table 5.1 SWOT Analysis of Current School Governance Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Broader vision and defined objectives</td>
<td>• Lack of wider dissemination of the consequences of the policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Finding a balance between prescriptive and local demands</td>
<td>• Ignorance of capacity of implementers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Limited resources</td>
<td>• Limited resources</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Flexibility in terms of choices between GPS and CMS</td>
<td>• Technical expertise and financial availability at local level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Government’s commitment to ensure financial and technical supports</td>
<td>• Readiness of local school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers’ professional organizations</td>
<td>• Recently changed politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Private schools</td>
<td>• Private schools</td>
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Table 5.1 confirms that the present school governance policy is decentralized in nature, with the intention of finding a better balance between prescriptive and local demands. It indicates that the intention of the government was not to move toward a complete devolution. The reasons, such as availability of budget at local level, clarity of policy objectives, readiness of the schools, capacity of implementing agencies, and policy acceptance of implementers, were identified as the potential risks in the effective implementation of the policy.

5.2.2 Perceptions of Policy Experts on Current School Governance Policy

According to Professor Dr. Bidya Nath Koirala, a policy analyst/expert, the current school governance policy is completely centralized because the central government and its agencies at the central level still holds authority to prescribe educational plans and to categorize the resources to be spent on. Yet, he argued that
the trend of the current policy is towards decentralization, because to some extent it opens room to provide some operational autonomy to schools. He was critical of providing power to the SMC instead of empowering the HT. In his opinion, the current policy can just be considered as political decentralization not the educational decentralization, because teachers and teachers' professional organizations are not happy with the CMS policy on the one hand, and on the other hand HTs can do nothing in the GPS. He strongly argued that unless the HTs are given full autonomy with school affairs, no one best decentralization will work in Nepal. He was critical of policy makers that have intentionally framed the current policy in the form of a centralized concept for the following reasons:

1) Traditional bureaucratic tendency
2) Centralized political systems
3) Influence of change resisters
4) Unfaithfulness of central level agencies toward schools and teachers
5) Intention of not losing power from central-level organizations

Dr. Vishnu Karki, another expert in education, more or less accepted Dr. Koirala's opinion. He mentioned that the current school governance policy is the outcome of donors' pressure and the wrong decision of the government because the readiness of local levels regarding both GPS and CMS policies was completely ignored. He blamed to the policy makers because they followed the subsidiarity from donors, which is a non-core activity. In doing so, policy makers focused on global interests and forgot local issues, he added. He was of the opinion that education should be guaranteed by the state and added that there is no accountability of the SMC because it does not represent the public. He therefore suggested an urgent need for moving toward that type of decentralization which can foster school district concept and provide greater autonomy for the HT.

Both experts were critical of the current policy because of the centralized nature and development procedures of the current policy and its intention of fulfilling donors’ interests rather than the expectations of the ground stakeholders. Their opinion was that without having consent of parents and community people, it is quite
difficult to implement public policy. The main point they remarked was that the current policy overlooked teachers' interests and failed to take them into confidence, especially in the case of CMS policy. Another critical point that they pointed out was that teachers and their professional organizations have taken the objective of CMS policy as a threat, because decentralized school governance policy, basically CMS policy, permits the SMCs to hire and fire teachers. This provision has further demotivated the teachers' community, since teachers have shown a great concern for professional security. Thus, the motivation and commitments of implementers or implementing agencies are a prime factor in implementing policy in line with the policy intention as Bardach (1977: 259-260), and Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 41) claim.

5.2.3 Perceptions of HTs and SMC Chairs

The HTs and the SMC chairs' perceptions varied. The HTs, Mr. Mahendra Paudel, Maruf Khan, and Krishna Prasad Sapkota, from Chitwan district, Mr. Prem Bahadur Basnet, Mr. Ghanashyam Pathak, and Mr. Govinda Gnawali from Rupandehi district, and the SMC chair Mr. Rajendra K.C. from Kavre district, viewed current policy as centralized because it confines the categorical headings of the programs to be carried out and expenditure to be made. Particularly, Mr. Basnet was more concerned about the limited authority given to the HTs. Ms. Madhu Kala Khanal, an assistant HT from Kathmandu district, revealed that the current policy was highly centralized because HTs were not given needed authority. For each step, the HTs were bound to follow the instructions of the DEO, according to her experience. A similar case was experienced by another assistant HT, Mr. Juddha Bahadur Pachhain from Rupandehi district. His school has suffered during the past six months concerning the case of the HT's appointment. The CMS policy directive has made a provision that the school can select and appoint the HT, but the DEO did not approve the file for the appointed of the HT. The DEO stated that the SMC cannot appoint the HT and he therefore strongly argued that the current decentralized school governance policy merely remains on paper, but practice is far away. This can be taken as an example to spell out how schools are compelled to follow centralized ruling in the name of decentralization.
Nevertheless, other HTs, namely, Ms. Mamata Sharma from Baglung district, Mr. Prithivi Narayan Sharma, from Parbat district, and Mr. Purusottam Aryal, Mr. Lal Prasad Shrestha, and Mr. Purusottam Babu Bhattarai, and the SMC chairs Mr. Gir Bahadur Rana, Mr. Narayan Khatri, and Mr. Arjun Pratap Jabara from Gorkha district, saw the current policy as mixed because it not only envisages nationally-developed core policies and their implementation guidelines, but also provides room for locally-offered plans and their implementation. The majority of them perceived current policy as a good starting point toward more decentralization.

Particularly, the informants from the GPSs showed their satisfaction toward the current policy, whereas the informants from the CMSs were disappointed with the current policy. The informants believed that decentralization has been made only in documentation, but in practice key activities such as budget, HT appointment, and decision making were all controlled by government agencies such as the DEO. Very interestingly, the majority of HTs participating from all seven districts were found to be in favour of mixed policy in order to maintain a uniform standard of education, to enhance equity in education, and to ensure the financial and material resource support from the government. In this regard, they sighted that there was a shortage of expertise at the local level and therefore central level guidance was required in order to implement educational policies properly.

5.2.4 Factors Associated with the Effective Implementation of the Policy

Dr. Koirala, a policy analyst, provided a straightforward answer—that the policy reforms focused more on changes at the system level than at the school level. He gave an example that the assumption of the trickle down approach was wrong because, it was assumed that improved performance at the system level automatically affected the institutional levels. However, this was not true. Since the school’s organizational practices and capacities are crucial in implementing reforms, they were completely overlooked while introducing the decentralized school governance policy. Dr. Karki, another policy analyst, also opined that the local-level capacity of individual schools is a critical factor in achieving the objectives of the policy. He further added that every school needs to be treated separately because of their uniqueness and cultural aspects. Both of them arrived at a point where capacity
building at the institutional level is seen as an essential factor in bringing about the required changes. The main essence was that a lack of capacity is one of the reasons for the reluctance of schools to adopt the new policy.

Both experts' views acceded with the majority of HTs' opinions. The HTs from the CMSs argued that without assessing the SMC's capacity and ability, the authority of recruiting teachers has been given to the SMC. Ms. Mamata Sharma, an HT from Baglung district, was disappointed with that policy since the SMC did not have the capacity or ability to choose qualified teachers. A similar observation was made by other HTs from Rupandehi and Gorkha districts.

Dr. Koirala also saw the current policy as ambiguous and has become an obstacle to its effective implementation. He mentioned that on the one hand teachers are in doubt to receive regular grants once the management would be transferred to the community. On the other hand, teachers in the GPSs have felt more secure in terms of salary and job security, even if they did not produce the required results. In both cases, the government became ineffective in making clear the policy objectives. Dr. Koirala therefore claimed that the current policy has not been implemented as expected because of lack of wider policy dissemination.

The majority of the HTs from Parbat district were found to be particularly focused on the availability of a budget for effective implementation of the policy. HTs from GPSs shared a miserable story of financial crisis in their schools. Several schools had started computer education at the secondary level last year, but the school could not purchase computers due to the lack of budget for the approved program headings. This shows a gloomy picture of the GPSs even in the current age of technology. A similar story was told by another HT, Mr. Man Bahadur Tamang from CMS, Chitwan district. His school was transferred to the community three years ago with aim of increasing community participation in school development. According to him, the community did not look at the public school because those that had a good income source sent their children to a private school. Only children from poor families had enrolled in his school. He further stated that since the grants received from the government were entitled to be spent on the specified categories, the school had little chance to reprioritize the programs. He thus claimed that the sources of the income were the major factors for the effective implementation of the policy.
The Acting Director General of the Department of Education observed two key factors for effective policy implementation. These were: school leadership and the commitment of the teachers. He cited several successful schools that were doing better simply because of school leadership. He exemplified one of the schools' codes of conduct. It has helped increase the regularity and decreased the absenteeism of both teachers and students. Listening to the Acting Director General, it can be inferred that the effective role of HT not only influences the improvement of school activities but also motivates teachers to act in the right direction.

5.2.5 Factors Contributing to Widening Gaps

Both education policy experts observed some acute technical gaps, such as validation with end users in the process of developing CMS policy; as a result, it could not reduce the gaps between intended and perceived policy. Dr. Koirala further blamed to the government for not escaping from the rooted traditional process and following bureaucratic rather than participatory procedures. Dr. Karki, another expert, also pointed out that the process minimized the role of real actors such as parents, community people, teachers, and their professional organizations. They both blamed the government's intention, which tried to please donors and not the implementers. Consequently, an information gap was noticed in creating gaps between intended and perceived policy.

Regarding the GPS policy, Dr. Koirala found two great weaknesses of the government. One, the government could not differentiate the schools running under two different policies. Both schools were considered as public schools and entitled the same criteria to receive grants from the government. Two, the government did not have a strict rule for regulating the poor-performing GPSs. It has produced a wrong message that teachers who were in GPSs were paid even they did not produce a minimum result. An HT Mr. Purusottam Aryal from the GPS, Gorkha district also agreed with the second weakness mentioned above while implementing policy in his school. He added that the policy did not have a clear-cut scheme for raising the quality of the GPSs. Unclear policy has supported the poor implementation performance of GPS policy, he thought. He also mentioned that the distance control system persisted in the GPS and has further contributed to widening gaps between
intended and perceived policy. A similar gap was perceived by Mr. Rajendra K.C., an SMC chair from Kavre district, and Mr. Ram Bahadur Achhami, an assistant HT from Gorkha district.

A crucial issue of the knowledge gap between policy makers and implementers was pointed out by Mr. Prem Bahadur Basnet, an HT from CMS, Rupandehi district. For example, he mentioned that the new policy intends to apply information and communication technology, but teachers perceived it as burden due to poor infrastructures in school. Additionally, his SMC decided to run primary levels in the English medium, but teachers were not ready to teach in English. He strongly remarked on the lack of assessing the system’s ability while developing policy has contributed to widening the gaps between intended and perceived policy. More or less in a similar way, Mr. Prithivi Narayan Sharma, an HT from GPS, observed that a lack of research-based policy contributed to the widening gaps between intended and perceived policy. Both of them even though they had adopted two different policies, arrived at a common point—that capacity of teachers and their accountability regarding both the GPS and CMS policies adversely contributed to adopting new changes. This finding gives a clue that poor teacher commitment continued to be a barrier to materializing intended policy in practice.

5.2.6 Motivations for Adopting/Not Adopting CMS Policy

Dr. Koirala, a policy analyst, explicitly stated that public schools were transferred to community only for the sake of financial assistance. He verified his argument by citing examples of several rich public schools which were not transferred to the community. No one school had demanded CMS policy in the absence of a financial package, he added. He suspected that if the rich schools would have transferred to the community, then their vested interest would be appointing teachers from their relatives or party followers. This view also resembled that of Ms. Mamata Sharma, an HT from Baglung district. She clearly specified that her school had a great insurgency situation of financial crisis that compelled the transfer of the school to the community. It appeared that the intention was merely to receive the motivational grants worth NRs. 300,000 (Approximately 3,700 USD) from the government.
Mr. Purusottam Babu Bhattarai, an HT from GPS, Gorkha district, sees plenty of autonomy in the GPS policy; that is why his school decided not to adopt the CMS policy. He pictured out the status of community people in terms of income and education. Most of the community people of his school catchment area were from low income groups and daily wage earners. The socio-economic condition of the community and teachers' interest were considered while adopting the GPS policy, he added. According to him, his school won a regional excellence shield three times from the Ministry of Education for achieving the best results at the national level school leaving certificate examinations. He further mentioned that there was no need to ask for additional autonomy because the provisions that were made under the GPS policy were enough to improve school effectiveness in terms of students' attraction. He showed evidence that a huge number of students have enrolled in his school. This evidence was sufficient to argue that how a policy is implemented and what has been achieved are crucial for determining policy outputs.

Likewise, one school in Kathmandu district adopted CMS policy, as stated by Ms. Madhu Kala Khanal, an assistant HT. She shared the idea that the school had lots of income from rents, so there was no need for additional funds to run the school. The only reason that the SMC and the HT easily chose the CMS policy was to receive motivational grants of worth NRs. 300,000 (about 3,700 USD) from the government and to appoint their relatives in the teaching force. This result accords with Dr. Koirala's assumption of motivating rich schools to adopt CMS policy. Ms. Khanal further mentioned that neither has her school succeeded in increasing community participation, nor has student attraction increased after implementing the CMS policy. The new policy had no effect at all, she declared.

To sum up, three basic reasons can be inferred for not opting CMS policy. First, the community people were afraid of the financial burden in running the schools. Second, school stakeholders, such as teachers, parents and SMC members, were not—well informed about the pros and cons of the CMS policy. The final reason detected was that since teachers were seriously concerned about their job security and professional development, they thought that their service and promotion would be more secure with GPS policy compared to CMS policy.
5.2.7 Perceptions on Community Participation and School Effectiveness in Two Types of Schools

The initial policy outputs of decentralized school governance policy were envisioned to enhance community participation and to increase student attraction to public schools. One of the directors of the Department of Education claimed that decentralized school governance policy has significantly contributed to school improvement. He especially focused on CMS policy. The foremost achievement of CMS policy, he pointed out, was the development of a sense of ownership of the school among the parents, teachers, and community people. He therefore claimed that the policy has contributed to improving school community relations. A competitive environment among schools has occurred while implementing the decentralized school policy, and he referred several research findings.

Dr. Koirala, a policy expert, viewed it differently. He referred to several researches and remarked that they were carried out in the past and were largely biased in their samples. Methodologically—weak research has shown that CMSs have enhanced greater community participation and increased student attraction because researchers selected better community schools in their samples, he supplemented. He therefore claimed that if independent studies would have carried out, the results would definitely come in opposite direction. His main focus was that some CMSs have succeeded in increasing community participation and student attraction due to the fact that these schools have constantly exhibited better results in these areas irrespective of the cause of policy. He named a number of GPSs which have enjoyed better community participation in school development compared to CMSs. He therefore argued that the CMS policy should be stopped at any cost and that it has created great confusion in policy implementation.

Even though schools adopted two different policies, the HTs had similar observations of the outputs of policy implementation. For example, Ms. Mamata Sharma, an HT from CMS, Baglung district, observed a sharp decrease in community participation. The main reason she noticed was the parents' motivation toward English-medium private schools. It has compelled her to begin using English in her school, she said. After starting an English medium, students' attraction had radically increased, and she compared the past two years' enrolments. A similar observation
was made by Mr. Purusottam Babu Bhattarai, an HT from GPS, Gorkha district. He conducted entrance examinations to control the pressures of students’ enrolment. According to him, his school hours have increased, beginning in the morning at 6 and closing at 6 in the evening. Student fees were the main source for paying teachers for their extra teaching hours, he added. It gives a clue that changes have occurred due to the effective leadership in schools.

Mr. Prem Bahadur Basnet, an HT from CMS, Rupandehi district, observed that community participation increased after implementing the CMS policy. He experienced that community people become involved actively in school activities if they are made responsible. According to him, his school has become a model of the CMS because there was heavy pressure to enroll the students across the district. He was proud of the CMS policy by which he was able to bring back 36 students from private schools to his school last year. However, the story of a similar CMS in the same district was quite awful. Mr. Judda Bahadur Pachhain did not see any changes after implementing the CMS policy in his school. Every year the number of students has decreased, he added. It is now difficult to conclude that the CMS policy has contributed to an increase in community participation and student attraction.

Mr. Binod Prasad Adhikari, an HT from GPS, Chitwan district, witnessed lots of examples of a complete failure of CMS policy. He stressed the need of firm commitment of HT and SMC to enhance community participation and to increase student numbers, which is possible under the GPS policy. He therefore shared his own school’s example and said that his school has been successful in increasing community participation under the GPS policy for two reasons. One, community participation would automatically increase if the government assured the support of the schools, financially and technically. He was of the opinion that the attitude of community people was to avoid financial burden. Two, the role of HT is crucial in increasing student attraction to public schools. He finally declared that the initial outputs, as envisioned by CMS policy to enhance community participation and to increase number of students, would simply be possible to achieve under GPS policy. He rather suggested stopping the CMS policy, where he observed plenty of opportunity for political interferences in school management.
5.2.8 Comparative Views of Informants between Two Types of School Policies

As mentioned over and over again, there were controversial arguments upon the initial outputs of CMS policy. Mr. Sharma, a policy maker, observed that CMS policy has remained as an instrumental to increase the local ownership, responsibility, and accountability of the community toward school improvement. Dr. Karki, a policy expert, was strongly opposed to that claim. Obviously, a couple of schools have succeeded in increasing community participation and student attraction after implementing the CMS policy, but a huge number of suffering CMSs have not been counted, he complained.

Mr. Rajendra K.C., an SMC chair from Kavre district, claimed that there have been visible improvements in physical facilities, such as classrooms, furniture, playgrounds, and sanitation, along with teachers’ and students’ regularity, and admission rates have increased after adopting the CMS policy. He further added that the introduction of English as a medium of instruction has dramatically attracted parents and students. Despite some changes observed in the school, Mr. K.C. showed keen concern about the sustainability of the school in terms of finances. An SMC chair, Mr. Gir Bahadur Rana from Gorkha district, also noticed that lots of changes have taken place in his school in terms of physical facility development, parents’ visits to the school, and the feeling of ownership of the school among stakeholders. He recalled that a two-storey building was constructed with the money collected from local community people. He said that his school had succeeded in achieving highest results at the national level school leaving examinations. He experienced that there was no difference between the GPS and CMS in terms of enhancing community participation, because he did not see any noticeable achievements gained by the CMSs in the district. Very interestingly, both of the SMC chairs were highly focused on the leadership of HTs in making the school effective.

Mr. Sharma, a policy maker, recalled the intention of the government of Nepal and amended the Education Act in 2001 to enact the policy of educational decentralization in practice. According to him, the amendment offered two types of policies, the GPS policy and CMS policy, to govern and manage public schools locally. He basically emphasized CMS policy in reviving public schools, which had
failed to meet mass expectations. In doing so, the SMC has been made responsible for closely monitoring school activities and improving overall performance of the schools, he added. He thought that CMS policy has helped to reduce the gap between public and private schools, and increased students' attraction and improved the quality of education.

However, interestingly, both HTs from the CMS, Mr. Gyalchhang Lama, and Ms. Sita Devi Timsina, Kavre district, showed their unawareness of the amended education act and procedures of forming the SMC. According to them, they formed the SMC representing members from local political parties in order to minimize the conflicts. Another point that they disclosed is that they succeeded in making quick decisions because of the small size of the school, i.e. a primary school. They explicitly mentioned that they were not aware of the provisions made under CMS policy because they had not yet received the policy document in hand. They knew about the offer of motivational grants from the newspapers and approached the DEO to transfer their schools to the community, and they did it. In contrast, Mr. Narayan Khatri, an SMC chair from the GPS, Gorkha district, was quite aware of the policy. He said that he knew what he and the HT were supposed to do. He also opined that the GPS policy was easy to understand, and that the roles and responsibilities to be performed have been clearly written. He therefore claimed that policy clarity has helped develop a clear vision; as a result, the intended policy has been smoothly implemented.

A regular source of income was found to be effective in materializing policy, according to Mr. Prem Bahadur Basnet, an HT from CMS, Rupandehi district. He showed that his school's local sources of income were precisely the school fees levied on students for English-medium instruction, rents from business complex/shutters, and new enrolment fees. According to him, he focused on locally-generated resources for capitalizing quality-raising activities and the grants received from the government channeled to salaries and administrative costs. With a proper combination of these two sources, the school has succeeded in achieving the objectives of the policy, Mr. Basnet stated.

It should not be a coincidence that the majority of the HTs from different districts viewed unanimously a shortage of capacity, particularly for developing the SIP. For example, Mr. Prem Bahadur Basnet, who has been successfully running the
CMS, also realized that there were several complications while developing the SIP. He repeatedly experienced technical difficulties, he said. Mr. Judda Bahadur Pachhain had a similar experience and was surprised to see the government's practice of putting capacity development in a low profile. He thought that lack of adequate capacity had harshly hampered the implementation of the CMS policy. Mr. Mahendra Paudel, an HT from GPS, Chitwan district, took this issue differently. He confidently agreed with the shortage of capacity at the school level, but he simultaneously argued for the team working culture that has led his school to achieve the intended objectives effectively and efficiently. He thought that the existing capacity could create synergy and help implement the policy objectives if there was good harmony between the SMC, HT, and teachers.

Ms. Madhu Kala Khanal, an assistant HT from CMS, Kathmandu district, described two reasons for the teachers' reluctance regarding the implementation of CMS policy. First, the teachers did not send their children to the community school. She believed that if the policy would have made it mandatory to enroll teachers' children in community or public schools, it would certainly have forced teachers to implement the policy. Second, teachers are fearful of being controlled by the local community. A similar opinion was offered by Ms. Sita Devi Timsina, an HT from CMS, Kavre district. She reminded that the reform process did not pay attention to the teachers. She had a firm belief that the actual implementation of the CMS policy would adversely affect the job security of teachers. She thought that it should be stopped in order to regain the teachers' commitment to school development. The one of the reasons she cited for the high motivation of the GPS teachers was the clear provision of teacher service conditions under the GPS policy.

This analysis provides evidence that teachers were found to be happier with the GPS policy compared to the CMS policy. The teachers believed that the CMS policy would force teachers to be controlled by the local community and also doubted the capacity of the SMC. The teachers felt more secure with the GPS policy in this respect.
5.2.9 Discussion

The majority of interviewees participating in this study mentioned that the intention of the current school governance policy was influenced by top-down features. Very interestingly, especially the HTs from both types of schools sighted that there was a shortage of expertise at the local level and therefore central level guidance is required in order to implement educational policies properly. This resembles Pressman and Wildavsky’s (1979) and Younis and Davidson's (1990) top-down theory of policy implementation. The results also indicate that the government's intention is to divide the responsibility of managing public schools. In doing so, government is made responsible to formulating policies, whereas the community is made responsible for implementing the policy in line with the centrally-developed guidelines and directives. This process looks closely like Hill's (2005: 178) top-down process of policy implementation, which states that policy is taken as the property of the policy makers and they control the implementers for its effective implementation.

However, some of the policy makers and HTs interpreted current school governance policy rather as a mixed policy. Basically policy makers were found in favor of maintaining a balance between prescriptive and local demand-based governance systems. Two basic reasons were identified for adopting a mixed policy. One, central interventions are essential, because local levels are not yet ready in terms of technical and academic capacity. Two, diversity in demand in education has contributed to the move toward decentralization with the aim of empowering local stakeholders. The intention of the decentralized school governance policy reflects Ryan's (1996: 35) interpretation of Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) model, which is basically guided by state control of policy implementation.

One of the results of the interviews deserves a critical point of concern on the intention of the decentralized school governance policy. The concern was observed by the policy experts, who stated that the current policy can be considered as a political decentralization, but not educational decentralization, because it is the product of donors' pressure. This interpretation seems valid for two reasons. One, the motivation and commitments of implementers or implementing agencies are a prime factor for effective implementation of the intended policy (Bardach, 1977: 259-260; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983: 41). Two, "interest
groups" (Goggin et al., 1990: 36), predominantly development partners in case of Nepal, influence education policy because they hold the resources. This finding appears consistent with both resource dependence theory (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978: 2) and interest group theory (Anderson, 1994: 105; Dye, 2011: 19).

The results identify a number of variables such as the leadership of the HT, the clarity of policy objectives, the availability of the budget at school, the capacity of implementing policy in schools, school environment, the readiness of the schools, and the policy acceptance of teachers as the main factors associated with the implementation performance of the intended policy. These factors can be treated as independent variables. Among them, the informants from the GPSs focused more on the availability of budget and capacity development, whereas the informants from the CMSs emphasized the policy clarity and commitment of teachers. For example, the majority of the HTs and the SMC chairs, especially from the GPSs, along with policy experts, observed that capacity building at the institutional level was the prime factor to bring the required changes. Their point of concern was that the lack of capacity of teachers at school level had forced them to resist the new changes. For example, the finding shows that the teachers perceived the burden to apply the new technology due to the lack of needed capacity. This result is consistent with Graziano and Winkler's (2012: 8) study finding. Graziano and Winkler made a comparison between the Czech Republic and Italy on governance and the implementation of activation policies and confirmed that the lack of the capacity of implementing agencies has led to several implementation failures in the decentralized governance policies in both countries.

The result of this study was closely consistent with Simon's (2007) view of diverse human understandings, that is, "change does not occur in a uniform manner" (Simon, 2007: 154), which has adversely contributed to materializing the intended policy objectives into action in both types of schools. For example, on the one hand, HTs were in doubt concerning whether schools would receive regular grants once the management was transferred to the community. On the other hand, the teachers in the GPSs have felt more secure in terms of their job security even in the case of producing the worst results. It appears that in both cases there was a large information gap between policy makers and implementers. Two reasons might be guessed. One, there was a lack of wider policy dissemination and the existence of poor policy
implementation support systems. This finding repeats Pick et al.’s (2007: 158) study results, which confirmed that policy confusions on the part of implementers limit implementation performance. Two, the policy was supply driven instead of making it demand based.

The main purpose of the decentralized school governance policy was to empower the community people and to enhance greater community participation (Ministry of Education, 2009). The findings contrasted the intention of the above mentioned purposes. For example, especially the HTs chose the GPS policy to become secure in their job and not to be controlled by the local community. On the other hand, some schools purposefully transferred to the community just for receiving the short-term benefits of motivational grants and retaining the power of appointing teachers locally. Failing to disseminate the policy intentions to the mass levels and to develop proper implementation guidelines was recognized as the main barrier between policy intention and its action. The results also point out that distance between policy makers and end users further contributed to widening gaps between intended and perceived policy, because the intended implementation performance could only be achieved upon the acceptance of the implementers (Bardach, 1977: 259-260; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181). Smit's (2005: 300) study also confirms the key role of teachers for achieving better implementation performance.

The results of the interviews carried out for this study demonstrate a lot of evidence that sample bias contributed to producing a false conclusion. For example, there was no such evidence that CMSs were better-off than GPSs. Leadership was the main factor for achieving intended objectives. The result of this study also contradicts the views of policy makers and implementers. For example, policy makers urged that CMS policy has remained as an instrument for increasing community participation and student attraction, but the information received from interviewees did not support this. This finding helped Burde (2004: 84) to acquire additional evidence in an international context, which counters the findings captured by the Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy (2008), the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (2009), and the Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited (2011) in the national context.
Cheng and Mok's (2007) comparative study confirms that teachers' commitment was found to be a highly-significant factor in high school-based management in Hong Kong. In contrast, the analysis of this study provides evidence that HTs were found to be more committed to the GPS policy compared to CMS policy. Coincidentally, this finding correlates with Carney et al.'s (2007) study, which also found fewer committed teachers in the CMSs in Nepal. The results of this study reveal two reasons behind it. One, the teachers believed that the CMS policy would force them to be controlled by the local community and two, the teachers also doubted the capacity of the SMC to manage school affairs. It seems that the teachers supposed more secured in the GPS policy compared to CMS policy. The reason could be that teachers do send their children to private schools. To solve this problem, an environment that could be created to motivate teachers to enroll their children in public schools would be a good strategy to retain teacher commitment.

5.2.10 Conclusions

The fundamental aim of decentralized school governance policy is to promote community participation in school development, and to increase students' attraction (Ministry of Education, 2009). Interestingly, however, the field-level data could not reveal any distinct changes that have occurred in the CMSs compared to the GPSs. The overall results show that there are no notable comments on superiority of CMS over GPS policy. Apparently, the results of the interviews allowed the conclusion that the majority of HTs participating from all seven districts were found to be in favour of mixed policy in order to maintain a uniform standard of education, to ensure financial and material resource support from the government, and to enhance equity in education. HTs were found to be more concerned about the shortage of expertise and budgets at the school level in implementing educational policies properly.

In a nutshell, so far as the possible barriers are concerned, the practice of a distance control system has contributed to produce a huge gap between policy makers and implementers. As a consequence, paper work has remained on bottom-up approach, but a top-down approach has deeply remained in actual practice. Fullan's (2001) observation seems valid here. Fullan states that educational decentralization hides several failure cases. The lack of proper orientation has forced implementers to
avoid new changes. Apparently two reasons can be observed for producing the gaps between intended and perceived policy in CMS policy. One, the policy did not validate the parents, community members, or teachers. Two, the poor commitment of teachers remained an acute problem for the CMSs to translate intended policy into actual action. On the other hand, inadequate budget and lack of capacity have largely resulted in an adverse effect on implementation performance of GPS policy.

5.3 Focus Group Discussion

5.3.1 First Setting of Discussion in Chitwan District

This setting comprised a homogeneous set of five HTs, including one HT from the CMS. Most of the informants’ views were similar on the characteristics of a good school. They outlined some of the features, such as effective leadership, a conducive school environment, good harmony between HT and teachers, committed teachers, a cooperative SMC, and finally the school’s good will in terms of performance. Among them, three also acknowledged the vital role of communities in school development. In contrast, when the issue of the CMS policy came into discussion, they firmly opposed it. One of the research participants raised a critical counter question, that is, “Is the community capable enough to manage the schools?” All of them then began arguing against the decentralized school governance policy and raised some notable issues. For example, one of the big issues they raised was the role conflict between the HTs and SMC chair. It seems that the HTs were more concerned about the adverse effect of role conflict.

The other vital issue that the participants raised was whether the purposes to decentralize the school education were to save money for the central government or for the efficiency and quality of education, or was it to collect money for the education from the community? The central issue that the HTs raised was whether real decentralization is impossible in the Nepali context. From this finding, it can be inferred that the issue of ownership, accountability, and sustainability of the school system is critical.

All four HTs from the GPSs emphasized two barriers while implementing decentralized school governance policy. One, community participation could not
increase due to the declaration of free education up to the secondary level. One of them mentioned that free education policy has forced schools to depend only on government grants. Two, English-medium private schools motivated parents; as a result, the students' inflow has gradually decreased. One of the HTs that participated in the CMS added that the CMS policy failed to motivate teachers. He rather suggested stopping the dual policy that currently persisted in school governance systems and observed that there were numerous possible improvements that could be carried out through the GPS policy.

As regards the differences between GPSs and CMSs, two HTs mentioned that competition among schools has increased. However, one of the HTs from a CMS disagreed with their view. He presented a gloomy picture of his school regarding the financial situation—that neither was the community capable enough to raise fund nor was the government able to increase the budget ceiling. He continued and shared the idea that teachers consider the powerful SMC as a threat to their jobs. The CMS policy does not function well, he added, because his school purposefully transferred to the community just for receiving the motivational grants. Another HT from the GPS pointed out that his school's teamwork has uninterruptedly demonstrated a good result. None of the five participants observed any kind of visible differences between these two types of schools.

Interestingly, the HT from the CMS enlisted three causes for not achieving policy outputs as expected. First, the government did not provide budgetary support to schools as per the provisions made in the directives. Second, schools were made upwardly-accountable, and as a result, community participation did not increase. Decision-making power still exists in the DEO, he added. Finally, the SMC, which has three years' tenure, was entrusted and given more responsibility compared to a permanent HT. Almost all the research participants agreed with the above three points and emphasized an urgent need for shifting the governing roles of the SMC to supportive roles. It can be inferred that the HTs expect more power for school governance compared to the SMC. It seems true to some extent that the HTs' visionary leadership has demonstrated a significant impact on policy implementation.
5.3.2 Second Setting of Discussion in Parbat District

The research participants in the second setting were completely different compared to the first setting. In this setting, a group of six SMC chairs, comprising three members each from the GPSs and the CMSs, was formed. The results contrasted with the first setting. The participants in the second setting were found to be in favour of the CMS policy. However, the SMC chairs mentioned that there should be a clear division of authority between the HT and the SMC. While participants were asked why they had accepted the current government’s move of the CMS policy, they claimed that community people could be effectively involved if the management is transferred. One of the members participating from the CMS shared his experience related to his school, saying that the parents visit the school and that the teachers and students' regularity has improved after implementing the CMS policy. The SMC chairs mentioned that community people could observe the school activities closely and frequently. The participants from the CMSs also added that after the management transfer, the community has been able to recruit teachers as per the needs of the schools.

The main argument pointed out by the SMC chairs from the CMS was that the CMS policy certainly helped to develop community ownership, because this policy provided authority to the SMCs to develop their own plans and programs. Nevertheless, their core concern was the sustainability of schools from the financial point of view. The availability of the budget was thus viewed as a strong factor for ensuring implementation performance of the policy. However, two of them viewed that their schools suffered from the absence of an effective leader. The SMC chairs from the CMS named some of the successful HTs that had initiated both physical and instructional improvements in the schools. It can be inferred from the discussion that the main concern was the availability of the budget and the effective roles of the HT in producing better implementation performance.

More or less at the same line, the research participants from the GPS particularly focused on—the clearly specified roles and capacity of both the HT and the SMC chairs in achieving the policy outputs. The role conflict has produced an adverse effect on the implementation performance of policy, they added. They even mentioned that due to the limited roles given to the SMC, the HT has not brought all
of the agendas to the SMC meetings. The SMC chairs from the GPS also said that they did not know the roles or responsibilities that were to be played by the SMC. Two members complained that the documentation and dissemination of policies and programs were the most lacking part in the GPSs. The participants from the GPSs found documentation activities more arranged in the CMSs.

The discussion permits one to state that the ownership and responsibility of community people increased to some extent after introducing the CMS policy. Good practices such as regularity of students and teachers, regular meetings of SMC, consultations among stakeholders for developing the SIP, and community participation in physical improvements, have become more functional in the CMSs. However, the lack of teachers' commitment in implementing policy has caused an adverse effect on policy outputs. On the other hand, absence of documentation and dissemination of policies in the GPSs were recognized as hindering factors for enhancing the intended policy outputs.

5.3.3 Third Setting of Discussion in Gorkha District

The third setting was made a heterogeneous group of four, consisting both HTs and the SMC chairs. Among two HTs, one represented the CMS and the other two SMC chairs participated from the GPSs. Very interestingly, three out of the four research participants that represented the GPSs provided two new arguments for not adopting CMS policy. First, the members of the SMC are subject to change every three years. If the current SMC decides to transfer the school to the community, and the next elected SMC does not honor the previous decision, this situation naturally will create problems in school operation. Second, the SMC chairs had doubts about the intention of the government—that is, if the CMS was a better policy, then why would the government not have transferred all of the GPSs to the community? The conclusion can be drawn that the schools might have chosen the CMS policy only to receive the motivational grants.

The participants from the GPSs on the other hand shared the notion that they were happy with the policy. The SMC chairs also disclosed that about 250 GPSs in the Gorkha district have begun medium-of-instruction English in the primary grades. They also added that the GPS policy was enough to mark visible changes in schools.
To validate this, one of the members cited an example that the top twenty schools in terms of achievement in the national-level school leaving examination in the district were from the GPSs. He added that his school hours began at 6 AM in the morning and closed at 6 PM in the evening. A school-day meal was provided to all of the students, but the parents should pay for that, he mentioned. Unlike other GPSs, one of the chairs from the GPS noticed a lot of changes that had taken place in his school in terms of increasing community participation, number of students, and parents’ visit to the school. He indicated that his school had succeeded in achieving the highest results in the national-level school leaving certificate examination. The HT that represented the CMS also accepted what he said. The HT revealed that his school has not succeeded to competing with the GPS even after implementing the CMS policy. The only reason he pointed out was that the teachers are against the policy—they want the policy to fail, he highlighted.

The SMC chairs from the GPSs therefore urged that if the schools are doing better under the GPS policy, then it would be worthless to switch from this policy to the new CMS policy. There were two reasons why they strongly wanted the continuance of the GPS policy. One, the roles and responsibilities of the SMC and the HT were clearly defined. Two, the majority of community people fall in the low income group, so it would be safer to remain under the GPS policy to receive regular grants from the government. It seems that both the SMC chairs and the HTs from the GPSs were clear about what they were supposed to do and what they were not supposed to do. This was the reason why the GPS policy was implemented very confidently compared to the CMSs. This finding somehow contradicts the results gained from the second setting.

### 5.3.4 Discussion

The results sketch some of the features of effective schools, such as effective leadership, a conducive school environment, good harmony between HT and teachers, and a cooperative SMC. Surprisingly, mostly these features persisted in both types of better-run schools. The HTs and the SMC chairs were divided into two groups while arguing about the CMS policy. The group of HTs strongly opposed the CMS policy, whereas the SMC chairs intensely favored it. The HTs’ argument was that the
communities are not capable of managing the schools. Conversely, the SMC chairs claimed that community people could closely and frequently monitor the school activities, which helps improve student enrolment and the relationship between the school and community. However, both of the parties agreed on the roles and responsibilities among the central level agency, and the SMC and HT that needed to be clearly specified, because a role conflict between the SMC and HT in the CMSs was found to be one of the barriers to policy implementation. Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 482) interpretation appears critical here—that implementation may not produce the expected performance if there are conflicts between policy makers and implementers.

On the one hand, poor commitment of the teachers was found to severely persist in CMSs while implementing the policy. On the other hand, poor documentation and dissemination of policies in the GPSs were recognized as hindering factors in producing low policy outputs. It is possible that the government did not make a serious effort to raise awareness about the intended policy in general or the roles of the SMC in particular. However, some overriding factors, such as leadership crises, a limited budget, and inadequate capacity at the implementation level have found to be key factors in limiting the scope of the intended policy in action. This result is consistent with Cheng and Cheung’s (1995: 17), which established a positive correlation between adequate budget and policy implementation. The focus group discussions provide a strange result—that the majority of HTs were found to be more committed to the implementation of the GPS policy compared to the CMS policy. There could be two reasons. One, HTs wanted to have limited authority over the SMC. Second, HTs perceived that the GPS policy was more secure compared to the CMS policy in terms of job safety.

The results of the focus group discussions largely draw three causes that adversely affected implementation of the CMS policy. These were inadequate budgetary support from the government, upward accountability of school, and over-entrusted temporary SMCs in terms of school governance compared to a permanent HT. However, several good practices, such as the regularity of students and teachers, regular meetings of the SMC and parents, consultations among stakeholders for developing the SIP, and community participation in physical improvements have
increased in the CMSs. Remarkably, many changes were also noticed in terms of increasing community participation, the number of students, and parents’ visits to the school in the GPSs. This finding contradicts the study findings of the Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy (2008) and the Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited (2011) in Nepal. The results of this study even captured the idea that some GPSs were found to be effective in terms of achieving highest results in the national-level school leaving certificate examination compared to the CMSs. Similar results were observed by Levin (2011: 74) in the case of New Zealand, and Mukundan and Bray (2004: 226) in the case of India. Two reasons can be seen from the results of this study. First, implementers were quite convinced by the GPS policy objectives. Second, the teachers were more motivated by the GPS policy.

5.3.5 Conclusions

The results of focus group discussions allow the deduction of a central issue—that who is supposed to do what is critical in policy implementation. Role conflicts may produce poor results. This could be the result of the poor dissemination of the intended policy. Other pertinent reasons, such as the lack of the adequate budget and the needed capacity of implementers, have extremely contributed to poor implementation performance of the policy. For example, the lack of capacity of the teachers in English language was clearly realized in the GPSs, whereas failing to motivate the teachers has yet remained an unsolved issue in the CMSs. The overall results derived from the focus group discussions confirm seemingly that there was no substantial evidence regarding the superiority of CMS policy over GPS policy.

5.4 Observations of Schools

It has already been discussed in the methodology section that there were all together three schools selected for carrying out the observation. Among them two were from the GPSs and the other one was from the CMS. The main aim of the observation for this study was to gather current information on how things are going particularly in the areas of the physical setting (physical environment of the school),
human setting (student, teacher, and staff management), and the program setting (policy implementation, planning, and resource utilization).

### 5.4.1 Saraswoti Secondary School, Gorkha District

The Saraswoti Secondary School (SWSS) was established in 1960. It is located in the high hills of Nepal. This was a GPS. The internal environment of the SWSS was not so attractive, but the physical facilities appeared sufficient. There were two blocks; one block was reserved for the primary grades, which was quite an old building. The other building was comparatively new, in which the lower secondary and secondary levels were run. The secondary-level classrooms were observed to be more comfortable compared to the primary-level classrooms. The classrooms were not decorated with learning materials and were not clean enough. The school compound was not fenced and it seemed to be difficult to fence because of the nature of the landscape area. A notable point was that the code of conduct was firmly followed by the students. This was the reason that students were seen in their school dress. A peaceful external environment has contributed to retaining a conducive learning environment in the school. Comparatively, the office room appeared pretty attractive. There was a big office room where the graphs and figures of students' pass rates in different grades, enrolment rates of students, daily routines of the school, and income and expenditure patterns of the school were visibly displayed on the wall of the office room. However, the chairs and tables in the office room were not well maintained. Observation helped draw the conclusion that an acute problem of utilization of resources was noticed in the SWSS.

Without caring about those poor physical facilities, the teachers were found to be remarkably committed to school development. The SIP was developed especially on the teachers' initiative. The SIP can be viewed as the main document of the school activities. While going through the plans, a unique point that was learned was that the teachers conducted a household survey to prepare the SIP. In addition, both teachers and members of the SMC visited homes in order to convince the parents to enroll their children in the SWSS. Eventually they succeeded and increased the number to 16 students in the current academic year. The parents’ visits to the school increased. One of the best practices that was observed was the activity of the SMC, the
transparency of the financial audit, and the motivation of the teachers. Nevertheless, the HT was found to be not so active. The reason for this it was guessed is that he was newly appointed and had come from different district. The shortage of teachers on the other hand was extremely noted. There were two locally-hired teachers, but school could hardly paid them on time. The school had a good plan, but was seriously affected by financial crisis. The block grants provided by the government were just enough to pay for the salaries of the teachers and for some administrative costs.

The school record showed that the SWSS started resource generation through donation and collection of funds from local community people. An amount was collected through student alumni. The leading initiation for this process was also the outcome of the active SMC chair and teachers. It was found that the teachers were more committed to implementing the GPS policy. Unlike other GPSs, lots of new changes were initiated; for example, preparation of codes of conduct, resource generation for school development, assurance of transparency through social auditing, parents’ gathering, and most importantly, the accountability of teachers. The observational data of this school helped to draw the conclusion that the effective leadership of the SMC contributed to an increase in teacher commitment, which had a strong impact on policy implementation performance. However, the capacity development programs for both teachers and SMC chair were a felt need in order to achieve the intended outputs of the GPS policy. There was a need for capacity-building programs for two pertinent reasons. One, the school had prepared its SIP to involve merely the school staff; it might require some technical support and professional guidance to make the plan implementable. Second, the school had a plan to introduce English-medium instruction, but for this a strategy for both capacitating the existing teaching staff and recruiting some new English language competent teachers might be needed. An interesting result captured from the observation was that the SWSS exceptionally succeeded in enhancing community participation, promoting the accountability of teachers, and increasing student numbers due to the sole reason of teacher commitment.
5.4.2 Kanti Ishwori Rajya Laxmi Devi Secondary School, Kathmandu District

The Kanti Ishwori Rajya Laxmi Devi Secondary School (KIRLDSS) was established in 1950. The name of the school was given after the name of the late queen of Nepal. It is a girls school and is located in the middle part of the capital city of Nepal; it is a CMS. This school was transferred to the community in 2006. The physical facilities of KIRLDSS were found to be incredible. There were two buildings; of them, one was two-storey and the other one was a one-storey building. However, these buildings were quite old and renovation may not work anymore it is supposed. The number of classrooms per grade was found to be adequate. However, the playground was found to be quite insufficient. Drinking water and sanitation were adequately made available to all students, and the school compound was well fenced. Another interesting thing that was observed was the classroom management in the primary grades. The rooms were well furnished and the walls of the classrooms were well displayed with figures, charts, alphabets and numbers both in Nepali and English languages. The code of conduct was found to be strictly followed by both teachers and students. For example, school dress was made compulsory for all students, teachers and non-teaching staff. Late-comer teachers had to take a half-day leave, and there was no chance of excuse, and as a result, the regularity and punctuality of teachers were exceptionally maintained. There were separate rooms for the HT and for the teaching staff. These rooms were also well furnished and equipped with basic materials. However, one interesting point witnessed was that the HT never entered the teachers' common room. It obviously showed poor team culture and weak leadership.

Overstaffing was noticed the KIRLDSS; the teacher-student ratio was about only 1:17. About 90 percent of the students were from daily wage-earner families, and the student number has continuously decreased. There were only 12 students in grade one. Possibly there could be two reasons for this. One, the dropout rate could be high, because if the labor force migrated then the children were compelled to drop out of school. Two, the teachers were found to be uncooperative with the HT due to his passiveness. It was also noted that the SMC chair seldom visited the school, the teachers shared. One of the senior female teachers, who also graduated from this school, remembered the days when KIRLDSS was considered as one of the best
schools in the capital, and now it had become one of the worst. She may be correct, because a cut in student numbers can be taken as one of the indicators of not achieving the initial outputs of the CMS policy.

The established school practice of the punctuality of teachers seemed to be the best practice of KIRLDSS, but a big gap was observed between the parents and the school due to the poor leadership. Even parents' day was not celebrated formally. The KIRLDSS had a regular income of about 80,000 NRs. (approximately 1,000 USD) per month from its rented business complex. Unlike other CMSs, the KIRLDSS had no budget deficit problems. They have not updated the SIP. Two reasons were surmised. First, the KIRLDSS might have found technical difficulties in developing and implementing the SIP. The needed capacity of the school to implement the CMS policy was clearly noted. The researcher also observed the shortage of the capacity for resource utilization. Second, the government only provided motivational grants for the management of transferred schools, but did not orient the implementation techniques. This can be seen as the poor dissemination of the policy. Similarly, teacher support of policy implementation was found to be unsupportive because of the situation of conflict between the HT and the teachers. Here, leadership crisis and teachers' commitment appeared as the key contributing factors for not achieving policy outputs as expected; however, contributing established school culture or organizational culture had a strong impact on policy implementation. The institutionalized school culture had been playing a supportive role in sustaining the school’s code of conduct.

5.4.3 Sibalaya Secondary School, Parbat District

The Sibalaya Secondary School (SLSS) was established in 1985. It was located in the middle hills of Nepal. This was a GPS. While observing the SLSS, its physical facilities appeared to be comparable to a private school. There were three two-storey buildings with plenty of rooms. The primary, lower secondary and secondary blocks were separated, and the school compound was well fenced. The classrooms were well ventilated and the space for students was sufficient. It is interesting to note here that the students' code of conduct was hung on the wall of each classroom and all students were in school dress. Surprisingly, however, the teachers were not found in school dress. There were in rooms separate from the HT
and for the teaching staff, and one big room close to the staff room was reserved for meetings and seminar purposes. Both the external and internal physical environments of the SLSS were impressive.

The main gate was not properly maintained. It seemed that anyone could enter the school premises without asking for permission from the school administration. It was observed that the HT, teachers, and students were not punctual. Some of the teachers were talking in front of the secondary block when the researcher entered the school. Students were playing on the ground. It would be interesting to know why such things were happening. One of the reasons could be the absence of the HT; he had gone to a meeting. However, the researcher found that one of the secondary level teachers was teaching in grade two. The researcher asked him why, and the teacher replied that he was engaging the class because the class teacher was absent on that day. About 90 percent of the teachers were trained and the majority of them had more than seven years of experience. However, the majority of teachers did not use lesson plans while teaching. Homework was not compulsory. Possibly leadership might be one of the root causes of demotivating the teachers in the SLSS.

The researcher also had a chance to go through the SIP, which was updated last year. The plan had envisioned certain school reform programs, such as an enrolment campaign to increase the number of students, remedial classes for weak students, compulsory provision of school dress for students and teachers, the introduction of English-medium instruction, and community mobilization for resource generation. These programs were supposed to be implemented by academic session 2012/013. However, the practice was quite far away. From the researcher's reading, these programs were made to fulfill the requirements of releasing the funds from the government, not more than that. Two reasons might have contributed to the failure to materialize the policy into action, the researcher supposed. One, the lack of regular orientation and monitoring had caused poor commitment on the part of the teachers. Second, the capacity of teachers was detected to be severely poor; for example, teachers were unable to prepare their lesson plans. This result firmly reveals that attractive physical facilities may not necessarily bring the expected results; there could be several other factors equally paramount. The observational data derived from the SLSS thus help to deduce the three key determinant factors—policy confusion, the
capacity of implementers, and the commitment of teacher—that substantially contributed to producing the poor performance of the policy outputs.

5.5 Case Study

A critical review of the policy documents was made for conceptual clarity of the decentralized school governance systems and the pertinent variables envisioned for policy implementation. Since the focus of this study is the policy implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in two different types of public schools, several variables from the review of the documents, such as clarity of policy objectives, the capacity and readiness of implementing agencies, the availability of a budget, and the commitment of the implementers to implement the policy were recognized as potential variables. As stated in the methodology section, keeping in view gathering both quantitative and qualitative information (Love, 2004: 82) to describe the real life context (Yin, 2003: 13), two schools each from the GPSs and CMSs were selected for conducting the case study. A separate case study was conducted for each school, keeping in view their uniqueness. Centering on the stated research questions and the variables derived from the documents and the literature reviewed, the cases were largely confined to those areas that included community participation and school effectiveness, clarity of policy objectives, availability of a budget, the capacity of school actors to implement the school policy, and teacher commitment to policy implementation.

5.5.1 Nepal Secondary School, Chitwan District

Nepal Secondary School, referred to below as NSS, is a GPS located in Ratnanagar Municipality of Chitwan district, in the southern part of Nepal. It takes about six hours’ drive (150 kilometers) to reach it from the capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu. The school catchment area was a mixed area of heterogeneous ethnic groups of hill migrants and native terai people: the Tharu. Agriculture was the main occupation of the community, followed by others such as tourism, business, industry, fishery, and livestock.
5.5.1.1 History of and Community Participation in School Development

It was already discussed in the document review that establishing a public school in Nepal is very daunting in terms of financing and operational issues, because the government's role was very passive in opening schools before 1950. It was of the researcher's interest to learn how the NSS was established and operated. When the researcher entered the school and asked this question to the HT, he, Mr. Gopal Prasad Paudel, presented the record of the school and told the researcher the history of its establishment. Referring to the records available in the school, he mentioned that native terai people, the Tharu community, had contributed two hectares of land to establish NSS in 1966 for two reasons. One, the native Tharu community was a religious group of people that had the feeling that support of public education would ensure heaven for them. Two, they were the leaders of the local political bodies.

The zeal of community contribution for public school increased during the 1960s with the inflow of hill migrants. The Tharus gave their lands and the hill migrants raised the money, a kind of mutual collaboration. The situation found in the study area directly matched the claim of the Secondary Education Development Plan (2001). The plan states that communities initially established 78 percent of the public schools in Nepal. In the same line, Singh (1978: 168) also claims that, “historically about 95 percent of schools came under public initiative in Nepal.”

School records also showed that there were more privately-hired teachers than government-approved teachers in 1969/70. It was only after 1971 that the government started providing block grants to the school. The underlying point here is that NSS was not only created and managed by the community people in the past, but also the practice has continued until now. An example can be cited from the record of the NSS, which exhibits persistent proof of community contribution in school development (see Table 5.2).
Table 5.2 Forms of Community Contribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Contributions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Classroom construction, endowments, fixed deposits, and free labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local donor</td>
<td>Computers, reference books, construction materials, cash and kind donation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and scholarships for poor, deprived and brilliant students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>Block grants, educational materials, school dress and bags for students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 5.2 reveals that households, community people, local donors, and local governments were the key contributors that had helped to cover the cost of the schooling. This evidence proves that the existence of the local ownership of school management and the generation of local resources are characteristics that are rooted in the Nepali school governance systems. On the other hand, former HT, Mr. Purna Bahadur Basnet, who served 20 years as HT and retired in 2011, provides a gloomy picture of the diminishing syndrome of community participation in school development:

Children from rich families are motivated to attend private schools due to their medium of instruction in English. Now our school has become laborers/workers' school. The school cannot charge any fees for them, because, it is beyond the parents' affordability. Parents do not care about their children's education. Parents give pressure to promote their children who were declared to fail. Parents say this is a government school, you can't charge a single penny; education is free.

Mr. Basnet kept on indicating his dissatisfaction with the current dual policy of the government. He strongly opposed the CMS policy. In this situation, how will community participation increase and how can the community take the lead in school improvement? His counter question was why do we need to change the policy;
what are the weaknesses of the GPS policy? This policy has also given us plenty of autonomy to manage our school, according to him. He suggested that the government stop the CMS policy; instead, several reforms can be initiated (if needed) to make the GPS policy viable for the present context. He further mentioned what types of additional authorities were needed, because we are doing well under the current GPS policy, he indicated. This was the reason that the flow of students has been increasing (see Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3** Students' Enrollment in Different Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Session/Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Increase or decrease (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

Table 5.3 justifies Mr. Basnet's argument. It reveals that the flow of students in lower secondary and secondary levels has continuously increased. It was interesting to learn that what were the factors associated with the better performance of NSS. Ms. Sabita Paudel, a primary level teacher stated the following:

Better performance of the school is due to the monitoring of teachers' presence and their duties. Generally the office time of the school is 10:00 AM in the morning, but the HT arrives at 9:00 and inspects school environment. I have seen him several times going to class in the absence of class teacher. The HT frequently talks with the students during break time and enquires about the progress of their study. I heard from the students that sometimes he also enquires about the
teachers' performance in teaching. His rigorous efforts toward school improvement have made us punctual, honest, and dutiful.

According to Sabita's opinion it can be inferred that the HT's role is crucial in implementing educational policies. The researcher personally agrees with Sabita and also observed that the HT of NSS treats equally each teaching and non-teaching staff member. There is always good harmony between the teachers and staff. A good point to be noted here is that the extra coaching classes were run for weak and needy students. It has also helped the school to achieve better performance. Not only teachers, but also the SMC chair claimed that this school is doing better in comparison to other GPSs and CMSs. A teamwork culture has persisted in the school, where the HT has uninterruptedly demonstrated an effective leadership role.

It was also witnessed that several local donors supported the school because of its rapport with the community. In fact, computers were out of reach for students in the GPS, but access was made free to all students in NSS. Similarly, the science laboratory room was well organized with sufficient equipment. The role of the HT was found to be a critical factor in school improvement and the roles of the SMC were noticed to build rapport with the community and local donors. The school was famous for the punctuality of all students, teachers, and non-teaching staff. The school community was proud of the success of their students in universities and the examinations for the public service commission. Some have become government officers, engineers, and doctors.

5.5.1.2 School Environment

Observation of the school environment revealed that the school compound was well fenced. Several improvements, such as the construction of new classrooms and the renovation of the playground were also under progress. NSS had two separate buildings for two levels of education. The secondary block was conducted in a big building because of the heavy pressure at this level. The primary grades were conducted in a small building. Two separate gate keepers were appointed to check especially the students' movement to and from the school. The gate keepers were found to be very strict in two matters. One, they do not allow students to go out
of the school gate during class hours. Two, visitors need to take prior permission from the school administration to enter the school premises.

Another interesting fact observed was the classroom management in the primary block. The rooms were well furnished and the walls of the classrooms were well displayed with figures and numbers. In addition, the classrooms were in such that the teachers could have easy access to monitor the students' learning activities. It was also observed that both teachers and students were in school dress. It seems that NSS is one of the best GPSs in Nepal, which had a notable conducive school environment.

5.5.1.3 Policy Clarity

The HT and other teaching and non-teaching staff were found to be quite aware of the current GPS policy implementation guidelines. The HT stated that "we are very clear on what we are supposed to do." According to him, he was forced by the officials from the DEO to transfer the school to the community in 2006. He was therefore compelled to call a general meeting on this issue. It was widely discussed among SMC members, parents, and the community leaders about the transferring of CMS policy in 2006; nevertheless, all had a single voice that indicated the desire to stick to the GPS policy. He further added the following:

The GPS policy has provided us with sufficient rooms to govern and manage school in our own ways. For example, we can hire temporary teachers based on our own plan. We have now seven school recruited teachers whose salaries and benefits are covered by the school's own income. We have a plan to recruit two English teachers for primary level, because we will run primary grades I, II and III in the English medium from the next academic session. For this we have never asked support from the government. We can mobilize our own resources. If we have been doing better and we have a great hope of doing better in the future then it would be worthless to switch from this policy to the new CMS policy. I know our community may not able to afford as we expect, but if I ask
them to support, they willingly do their best. The teachers, the community and the SMC members are now in favor of the GPS policy. There are two reasons. One, the school will receive grants from the government on a regular basis. Two, the roles and responsibilities of the SMC, HT, and teachers are clearly defined. If we adopt CMS then a power game may start and we would lose the current goodwill of the school.

It seems that the GPS policy also intends to empower local stakeholders to manage their school. The SMC was found to be autonomous in terms of developing its own SIP, implementing the plan, and evaluating it in line with the policy objectives. The HT worked as liaison between the teachers, the SMC, and the school community. The SMC chair frequently visited the school and provided necessary suggestions. The NSS was found to be quite clear on GPS policy and implemented the policy very confidently.

5.5.1.4 Availability of the Budget

The NSS receives permanent teachers' salaries and regular block grants from the government. The school also generates its own funds from various sources. The most important and permanent local source for this school is rental income from its one-storey business shutters/complex constructed alongside the main road. The teachers hired by the school were paid by the school's local income. Regarding the budget and its implications in implementing intended policy, the HT mentions the following:

Yes, the budget is crucial in policy implementation; however, sometimes adequate budget may not be sufficient to accomplish the task. That is why I believe in participation. I do not do anything alone. I put my agenda and discuss it with the teachers at first. After getting the teachers' consent, I invite the SMC and the community members when the school faces with problems. I won't say we do not have financial problems, but if community people and local donors get convinced, it can be
solved very easily. That is why, in my opinion, the role of communities in school development is crucial. We cannot ignore it. The school cannot be detached from the community. You can see our composition of the school budget. If we depend only on government grants, we cannot do more than just pay salaries for the teachers.

It appears that the HT successfully managed the school affairs in collaboration with, and with the cooperation of, the SMC, parents, teachers, and local donors. There was a good understanding and solidarity among them. This provides a clear notion that both the HT and the SMC chair perceived joint responsibility for looking into the matters related to school improvement. The composition of the school budget demonstrates evidence of this fact (see Figure 5.1).

![Figure 5.1 Sources of School Revenue](image)

**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

5.5.1.5 Capacity of Implementers

The DEO organized a 3-day training program on educational planning and management in order to capacitate especially HTs and SMC chairs. Fortunately the HT, the SMC chair, and one teacher had received that training during the previous year. They had a very good planning team. As a result, NSS has developed its own SIP and updated it annually. Each year they formed a task force involving...
experienced staff to revise the plan. One of the trained teachers, Mr. Sushil Bhusal, explained as follows:

We are doing our best, yet we do not know whether we are on the right track. Our school has initiated engaging all teachers in different activities. For example, we form different committees. These committees include an examination committee, a scholarship distribution committee, a planning committee, an extra-curricular committee, and an enrollment campaigning committee. Such a division of work has made all teachers responsible for their assigned tasks. It has also helped individual teachers to build their capacity and to search for innovation.

It was observed that there was good cooperation among the teachers. It was also witnessed that the teachers reviewed and discussed the school activities related to their committee tasks. For example, all teaching and non-teaching staff members were quite aware of the SIP. It seems that the teachers themselves learned from each other. However, it was interesting that the technical support system was found to be very weak.

5.5.1.6 Teacher Commitment

Smiling teachers and cheering students were the beauty of NSS. An interesting thing to note here is that both teachers and students have their own code of conduct. The teachers were active in two ways. First, they were committed not only to teaching, but also to maintaining their code of conduct. One of the teachers, Mr. Ananta Bhattarai, told the following story:

If we follow our code of conduct, students are compelled to follow theirs too. In the past we did not have a code of conduct and we used to force the students to follow their code of conduct. Nevertheless the students did not follow it seriously. We teachers used to come to school in casual dress and then students also started doing so. Gradually, we faced
several disciplinary complaints. After that we had a staff meeting concentrating on how to solve this kind of problem. Our meeting decided that we also should develop a code of conduct and follow it strictly. After doing so, now no teachers and students come late or go early from the school, and everyone you can be seen in clean school dress. Students are now able to regulate their code of conduct themselves. Now we are in a good school environment.

The second one is the teachers' commitment to better teaching performance; i.e., the responsibility of the teachers. The teachers had their own lesson plans and teaching materials in their hands. Homework was regularly assigned and checked accordingly. This could be the outcome of the good harmony between the HT and the staff. A primary-level teacher, Ms. Shanti Shrestha remarked:

Now we have to compete with private school. For this we have to work hard. If we are not serious about students learning achievement, we may not retain our children in our school then who knows, the SMC may transfer our school to the community. If it happens, our job security will be at high risk. We are happy in one sense that our school won't go to the community because our school has been continuously exhibiting better performance, even compared to our neighbor CMSs, in the school leaving certificate examinations.

The team working culture and the participation of all the teachers in developing the SIP were found to be some of the examples that demonstrated the teacher’s commitment to school development. Very importantly, the teachers' disagreement on CMS policy was clearly visualized. The teachers were found to be too much concerned about the GPS and CMS policy. In fact they were fearful of the provisions made under the CMS policy.
5.5.2 Rudrepipal Secondary School, Baglung District

Rudrepipal Secondary School, referred to below as RSS, was a CMS located in Baglung district, in the western hills of Nepal. It takes ten hours' drive (350 kilometers) from the capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu. The district elevation ranges from 1,000 meters to 5,000 meters. The school catchment area was a mixed area of heterogeneous ethnic groups. Agriculture was the main occupation of the community people, followed by others such as tourism, business, and livestock.

5.5.2.1 History of and Community Participation in School Development

A few educated people originated mass talks about the establishment of a school for their children. After a series of discussions, the RSS was established in 1971 with strong community initiation. Particularly, Mr. Khadga Bahadur Khadka, Mr. Shakti Bahadur Khadka, and Narayan Datta Upadhyaya were the pioneers of that mission. It was fortune that the school received approval from the government in the same year and started receiving a teacher's quota for a primary teacher from early 1972. Two challenges severely persisted at that time, Mr. Lok Prasad Sharma recalled. One was teacher scarcity, and the second one was the lack of a school building. The local community continued to manage those challenges and started campaigning for collecting both in-kind and in-case resources to build the school building in 1972. They succeeded in constructing a one-storey building with five rooms. The community did not rest and initiated the upgrading of the school to the lower secondary level. Nevertheless, all of the expenses related to this level were completely borne by the local community, and the community was fully supportive of the school until 2000. When school started facing financial crisis after 2000, the RSS transferred to the community in 2007. The HT, Ms. Mamata Sharma, remembered the strong community participation in the school’s development:

The RSS was a popular school in the district and had a reputation for quality teaching-learning, commonly known as a center of excellence. Parents were satisfied with the progress made by the school. The students graduated from this school have become doctors, engineers, and high-level bureaucrats.
This was the reason that not only the local parents, but also the parents from a distance preferred sending their children to this school. The community people used to look at the school as a common social property and school development was seen as community development. As the local community people took the school as an integral part of the community, from the very beginning they have been supporting the school in the forms of both cash and kind. Very surprisingly, after 2000, the community contribution sharply decreased. One of the reasons in my opinion is the establishment of private schools. Private schools started providing bus service to pick up the students from their home to school. Children were found happy to ride the bus and go to school. Parents were also motivated by English-medium schools. Even parents from low income group started to send their kids to private schools. Mostly, our children moved to private schools. As a result, one temporary teacher who was hired by the school was also terminated because of a financial crisis. We tried our best to convince parents not to move their children from our school, but they did not listen to us and continued switching their kids to private schools. We were serving those students whose parents were mostly wage laborers, so that the parents could rarely spare time for their children’s learning or school visits. Garbage politics started in the school and the majority of SMC members dominated by local politicians were in fact not the parents of the students. They were taking the position of doing nothing. This is how our school became detached from the community and we severely faced a financial crisis in school operations.

The above story provided by the HT reflects a gloomy picture of the CMS in Nepal. On the other hand, the HT, Ms. Mamata, had the quality of a transformative leader. She had a strong belief that her school could provide education
as good as the private schools, so she took initiatives for school improvement after consultation with the parents and the SMC. She convinced the parents and SMC members of her plan and decided to adopt CMS policy in 2007. The parents agreed and the SMC approved it and the school became community managed. Parents also agreed to pay fees. On top of that, the school received motivational grants worth NRs. 300,000 (equivalent to 3,700 USD) from the government to implement CMS policy. Surprisingly, the RSS renewed its physical infrastructure after transferring the school to the community. Not only this, but school recruited four additional English teachers from its own source. Now the RSS has been running English-medium classes for primary and secondary levels.

An interesting point to be noted here is that Ms. Mamata has enrolled her daughter in grade nine and her son in grade six in her school. Formerly they were in private school. The SMC has made the decision that all teaching and non-teaching staff and the SMC members must enroll their kids in this school. It has been made mandatory. For this reason, two teachers took a transfer from this school to another school. Ms. Mamata is a good leader as well as a good teacher. Table 5.4 exhibits evidence of this.

Table 5.4 Time Budgeting of the HT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Major tasks</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Classroom Teaching</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Administrative Work</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SMC Meetings</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Staff Meetings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Meeting with Parents</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Visit to DEO</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Interaction with Students</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Training/Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 5.4 reveals the commitments of the HT to school affairs. The time budgeting mainly focuses on teaching-learning and school development.
activities. Now the school has become famous among English-medium community schools. She feels proud that the parents now request her to enroll their children in the school. There has been an increasing trend of moving children from private schools. The school always receives more applications than the capacity of the school. The reasons she shared were as follows:

The first reason I would say is the low cost quality education. I claim it is only half the cost and we are providing education as good as the private schools. I would tell you the second reason—that is introducing, laptops in the classroom. It has changed the students’ learning process and has increased the capability of the students. In fact, computers were out of reach for students from low income families, but we were able to materialize it. I fought with the DEO to receive the "One Laptop per Child-OLPC" program in our school. Eventually, I succeeded. Now our students have got the opportunity to learn the present-day technology starting from the primary grades. This has helped the lesson plan for integrating knowledge and skills at a time. Though the OLPC program is confined to grades two to six, I have managed to make it available for all students. Internet access has also been made available to the students to make them aware of searching for reference materials online. The third reason I will cite here is library facilities. First of all, I would like to thank Room-to-Read, an NGO working in Nepal, which has funded the library equipment and books for RSS. It has massively developed a habit of reading on the part of the students. We are regularly receiving students from both public and private schools. This is our great achievement.

From the above story, it can be inferred that the parents' contribution and the HT's role were crucial factors for the school’s effectiveness in terms of
retaining students. In the later era, though community participation in RSS was not strong, the school has demonstrated effective achievements. Mr. Bhojendra Bahadur Khadka, the SMC chair, was of the opinion that upper—and middle—income groups have sent their children to private schools. Even public school teachers have become shareholders of the private schools. These were the reasons that community people did not look at the school. People thought this was a school for poor parents. Nevertheless we were never demotivated and continued trying hard to make it an effective school.

The researcher also witnessed that a couple of students from private schools have been admitted to RSS and had a short conversation with them. The new students stated that it was worthless going to a private school to get so-called quality education, as the low cost quality education is here and we are enjoying English-medium classes, they added.

In a nutshell, there was good understanding and co-operation between the HT, teachers, and the SMC. Even for a small task they discussed among themselves in the staff meeting. One uniqueness found in the RSS was that the SMC was mainly focused on obtaining and optimizing resources, whereas the HT was fully concentrated on academic affairs. This kind of division of labor might have helped them to move forward. Another critical point captured is the active role of the HT. One of the teachers, Ms. Sita Nepali, mentioned about the HT—that she frequently meets parents and discusses the progress of the children. As she assumed the position of HT seven years ago, it was evidently observed that since her takeover there have been lots of improvements in the school, she added. The incoming flow of students in the school can be taken as evidence. Students dramatically increased in recent years at all levels.
Table 5.5  Students' Enrollment in Different Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Session/Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Increase or decrease (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5.5.2.2 School Environment

Both the external and internal environment of the RSS looked appealing. The HT and the SMC chair had a new feeling of responsibility after adopting the CMS policy. Their motto was to give a new look to the school, like a private school. This dream has led the school to a series of activities such as new classroom construction, repair, and simply making classroom environment more attractive to the students. They did these things by renovating the old buildings and constructing a three-storey building with 12 new rooms, including computer and science laboratories. This has helped change the attitude of parents to participate and contribute to the school development activities. Sufficient washrooms for both boys and girls were found to be another striking example of the conducive environment in the school. The physical settings observed of this school can be taken as a prototype for the schools located in the hills of Nepal.

The office and staff room of RSS was decorated with attractive graphs and charts. These graphs and charts were displayed to exhibit their SIP, examination plan, the daily time table of instruction, student achievement in the school leaving certificate examination, student enrollment, teachers' experiences and qualifications, teachers' code of conduct, the income and expenditure of school, and the roles and responsibilities of the HT and SMC. An example of the displays is given in Table 5.6.
Table 5.6  School Days and Average Attendance of Students and Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Days and Attendance</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Opening Days</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Working Days</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ Attendance</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Attendance</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


One of the interesting points captured is that there was a separate table and a chair for the chairperson of the SMC. The HT, the SMC chair, and teaching staff shared the same room. This demonstrates the good harmony and transparent systems among them. They had open discussions about the teaching and learning environment of the school. The most interesting and impressive part observed was classroom management, i.e. sitting arrangement. The students themselves do the daily sitting and cleaning routines of the classroom.

5.5.2.3 Policy Clarity

It was very difficult to find out the clarity of policy objectives, mainly because of inconsistency among the teachers' voices. The HT, Ms. Mamata, said that she had received a CMS operation directive, which has helped her to move ahead. Several other teachers disagreed with this. The teachers said that the directive was worthless, that it did not discuss the job security of teachers, a crucial issue they raised. This is a great challenge that has been faced by the government during the implementation of the CMS policy. One of the senior teachers, Mr. Ambar Singh Khadka, opined the following:

Actually we were and even today are not clear about the policy. Yes, it is true that we wanted to have autonomy to make our own decision in school affairs. Since the beginning we have been felt insecure in our job when the school decided to adopt the CMS policy. We feel that the government tries to escape
from its liability. We are really demotivated. We are doing hard work because most of us belong to the local community and students come from our community. It's our duty and responsibility to make our students qualified citizens. Please do not think that our school is doing better because of adopting the CMS policy. Today's progress is the product of the parents' contribution to school development, teachers' commitment to teaching, and the SMC's clear vision for developing the school. No third party has been involved in this endeavor. We do not want to be community-managed anymore. We are ready to withdraw this decision. The decision we took in 2007 to adopt CMS policy was a blunder. Fortunately, we have a good HT.

The perceived understanding of the government is that after transferring the school to community, parents began visiting the schools more frequently, observing teaching and learning activities, and looking at the infrastructure to be repaired or reconstructed. On the other hand, the story told by Mr. Ambar reveals a gloomy picture of CMS policy. While teachers were asked why they had accepted the CMS policy and their direct reply was that it was merely the intention of getting motivational grants worth NRs. 300,000 (Approximately 3,700 USD) from the government, they said that the rest they do not know. The researcher was astonished to learn the reality and again went to see the HT. She also expressed her confusion, as shown by other teachers. She disclosed the reality that the then insurgency situation of financial crisis compelled them to transfer the school to the community.

5.5.2.4 Availability of the Budget

Even though the RSS was a CMS, the major source of its revenue came from government grants. The school used to receive government funds for regular expenses such as teachers’ salaries, stationery, and administrative expenses. It was expected that the local bodies would contribute to the CMSs, but the reality was different in the case of RSS. The SMC chair, Mr. Bojendra, never had the experience of receiving support from local bodies during his past six years' period in this school. He added that the budget has a critical role in accomplishing the policy objectives. In
order to meet the school’s expenses, they have levied school fees for the students with
the consent of the parents, he indicated. The composition of sources of school revenue
shown in Figure 5.2 further supports this notion.

![Figure 5.2 Sources of School Revenue](image)

**Figure 5.2 Sources of School Revenue**  
**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

It was evidenced from the composition of the school revenue that
parental support was found to be higher than the community support in the case of
RSS. It is worth mentioning that CMS policy has increased the parental contribution
in school development. However, the HT, Ms. Mamata, showed her dissatisfaction
about the budget and stated:

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Responsibility for resource generation has become a
burden to the school. I argue that school autonomy is necessary
for other activities such as deciding the medium of instruction,
reference books, curricular activities, and teaching methods, not
for ensuring school funds. If you see our composition of
sources of revenue, the sustainability issue is acute. On the one
hand, our constitution envisions that there will be free
education up to the secondary level, but on the other hand, we
are heavily dependent on school fees. I think it won't go for a
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long time. I have been receiving many threats from student unions to stop charging fees from students. If I listened to them I would have a financial crisis in school operations. I have shared this kind of difficulty with the government officials, but they did not give any solutions. Frankly speaking I will withdraw the CMS policy. There are no differences between GPS policy and CMS policy in terms of receiving grants from the government. So why do we need to take lots of burden just by being community managed?

The above story reflects the real situation of the CMS in Nepal. The CMSs were compelled to run with a limited budget. The directive says that the CMS will receive other performance grants. RSS developed its SIP in line with the directive's provisions and initiated several reforms. However, the school did not receive any additional funds as per the directive, and as a consequence the school suffered from a financial crisis. The assurance of the budget was viewed as a critical factor for effective policy implementation.

5.5.2.5 Capacity of Implementers

Capacity ensures the ability of the people to accomplish tasks effectively and efficiently. The capacity-building component of the CMS policy directive envisions the orientation program for local stakeholders and community members, and school supervisors and resource persons, to enable them to be competent in planning and monitoring educational activities. There was a three-day training and orientation on SIP preparation. Moreover, school supervisors and resource persons also provided necessary support. The training program was confined to a limited number of teachers. The majority of teachers in the RSS were unaware of the knowledge and techniques involved in developing the SIP. One of the teachers, Ms. Sita Nepali, indicated the following:

We have adopted CMS policy, but we are not sure how it works and in what direction we have to move. I have served for 15 years in this school, and hardly have I received trainings
and orientation related to school management and planning except my in-service training. We have good teamwork and that is why we are able to develop our own plan. I disagree with the government's CMS policy. On the one hand, the SMC members are not very efficient in acting according to the objectives of the policy and on the other hand, we teachers are quite unaware of the policy objectives for its effective implementation. In this situation, the HT alone cannot lead the school successfully. I think a capacity-building package, including intensive training, workshops, study tours, technical and professional support on a regular basis, are essential factors for enhancing the policy outputs. I will give you another burning issue. Our school has offered both Nepali—and English—medium classes. The majority of us are weak in English. We want to learn. We never get a chance to learn English. Our school cannot afford it and the government does not look at us. How can we develop our capacity and make our school a complete English-medium school?

If we carefully look at Ms. Nepali's opinion, the capacity at the school level seemed to be extremely weak. However, only with the leadership of the HT and the SMC's vision, the teachers appeared to be cooperative in participating in every endeavor of the school activities. It was not evidenced that substantial efforts have been made to develop the capacity of the teachers.

5.5.2.6 Teacher Commitment

Unexpectedly, the teachers working in RSS were found to be committed to achieving the stated goals of the SIP. Teachers found regular in teaching during the researcher's three consecutive days of visiting the school. The monthly record of December, 2012 showed that the attendance rates for teachers and students accounted for 93 percent and 86 percent respectively. Two reasons observed for having increased the regularity of both teachers and students are the following. One, the SMC has adopted transparent teacher recruitment and evaluation practices.
Second, codes of conduct for students and teachers have strictly been followed. It was also observed that all of the teachers made their daily lesson plan on the basis of the annual teaching plan. Their weekly lesson plans had to be submitted to the HT and had to receive approval in advance. This has also forced teachers to prepare their lesson plans.

The case of this school, two reasons were revealed regarding the responsibility of the teachers: accountability and being dedicated to policy implementation. One, the HT and the SMC chair both were very kind enough to all teaching and non-teaching staff. They had a good culture of sharing. Second, the children of both the teaching and non-teaching staff studied in the school, where they were obliged to focus on teaching and learning. Regarding teacher commitment, Ms. Nepali disclosed the following:

I am telling you a common view of all teachers. At first we did not know the consequences of the CMS policy. In fact we adopted this policy in haste, because we had an acute problem of money to renovate our school building. We did not consult or discuss much about this matter. We thought that this policy like other policies may not go in the long run. If we miss this motivational grants worth NRs. 300,000 (about 3,700 USD), we never would get such an opportunity again. Today we are in trouble. We are undecided about the future outcomes. We are too worried about our job security. We have a great hope for our pension after our retirement. We are committed to our teaching and learning processes for two reasons. First, our HT is very punctual and has innovative ideas. We want to support her. Second, we are also members of our community. If we do not do well enough in our school, community people will look at us differently. We will do our best. We do not want to be managed by the community anymore.
After listening to Ms. Nepali, the researcher approached the teaching staff during their break time and shared what she said. All the staff agreed with that. It indicated that the teachers preferred the GPS policy to the CMS policy.

5.5.3 Janajyoti Secondary School, Kavre District

Janajyoti Secondary School, henceforth called JSS, was a GPS located in Kavre district, in the central hills of Nepal. It takes a one hour drive (40 kilometers) from the capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu, to reach the school. The school catchment area was a mixed area of heterogeneous ethnic groups from the community, with a majority of Chhetri. Agriculture was the main occupation of the community people, followed by business, and livestock. Though the area is very close to the capital city of Nepal, the educational status of the area in general can be compared to a remote district. Nevertheless, this is one of the very few villages in Nepal in which a school has remained in operation for the last 50 years.

5.5.3.1 History of and Community Participation in School Development

JSS was established in 1960 with the initiation of the then social motivators. Later on Mr. Bishnu Hari Sharma, Mr. Sano Babu Thapa, Mr. Dhruba K.C., and Bir Bahadur Khadka worked as promoters of the school. At the very beginning the community conducted grade 1 in a temporary building constructed by local people. A teacher was recruited and paid by community people on a lump-sum basis. The payment was both in cash and in kind. The neighbor school was located two-hours walking distance from the school. Those that graduated from grade one did not go to that neighbor school and discontinued their study. Again a prestige issue came to those social leaders. These leaders gathered a mass meeting to find out the solutions for running the school up to grade three. The mass meeting decided to acquire land near Janagal area. Mr. Pawan Thapa, who had served 32 years as a primary-level teacher, recalled that local community people were ready to donate whatever resources they had.

It was a coincidence that JSS received permission to run the school and the community constructed a three-room building in 1969. Mr. Ek Bahadur Khatri, one of the oldest community citizens, remembered that two teachers were paid by the
grants received from the government. According to Mr. Khatri, a group of school well-wishers visited door to door, asking for a contribution to school. He added the following:

Accordingly, community people provided resources total capital costs of the school construction on their own initiatives. Not only this, villagers occupied five hectares of land for the school. Community people contributed more than their ability to pay for the sake of their children's education locally. Besides cash, the community people contributed kind in the form of construction materials, free labour and technical support to resources school. I could recall that that community people made bricks in their house and supplied them to construct the school building. I am telling you, even parents donated corn to the school. Such food grains were collected to provide teachers with a non-monetary salary to meet the full salary of teachers.

The history of JSS reflects a strong community participation in public schooling in Nepal. It also gives a clue that parents were an integral part of the school. Parents' keen interests in school development seemed unique in this school; however, this kind of pleasant situation did not continue for a long time. The current HT Mr. Sadhu Ram Dahal shared the following:

I am very new; last year I was appointed as the HT, but I have already served for this school about 18 years. I could see the differences between the past and the present. For example, earlier the community people used to think that the school was a community property and they had keen interests in the school development. Now their perception has completely changed and they feel that schools are government property. This kind of perception has been continuously growing. Ten years ago or
so, this school was famous around the community and even in adjoining villages for quality education. At that time, parents from government employees, teachers, and even the business sector wanted to send their children to this school. Now it has become a history. There is only one reason I guess, and that is the influence of politics on the school. Even our school cleaner, Ms. Urmila Karki, decided last year to pull her two children out of this school and to send them to private school. It gave me a lot of torture, and I tried to gather the community people to regain the past community concerns about school affairs. Only a couple of parents showed up. No more community people take interest in our school. Our SMC chair works at a labor job. The SMC chair does not have time to visit the school. His two daughters are studying in our school. We have many complaints about his daughters' learning progress. He never cares. I want to regain the history of this school, but how, I do not know. Budget is the main problem I am facing.

The researcher observed the school activities very closely. There was no common understanding or cooperation between the HT and teachers. It was also observed that the daily timetable was displayed in the office room, but the teachers hardly followed it. The HT was just looking at the situation and could not take action against them. One of the secondary level teachers, Mr. Nava Raj Acharya, mentioned that the role of the HT was very inactive. He added that you can see the outflow of students from our school. At least the HT can initiate the movement of enrolment campaigns. There were sufficient evidences for Mr. Acharya's points. There were only seven students in grade two and nine students in grade three. The school showed a radical decrease of students in recent years at all levels. Table 5.7 shows the miserable condition of JSS in terms of student numbers. Community people might have felt that the education provided at JSS was not sufficient to advance to higher levels of schooling.
Table 5.7  Students' Enrollment in Different Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Session/Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Increase or decrease (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5.5.3.2 School Environment

JSS had a plenty of land and the wide school premises seemed to be a very natural environment. The physical facilities appeared sufficient. The school even reserved separate rooms for the Red-cross and the library. There were separate buildings for running primary grades, and lower secondary and secondary grades. However, the school compound was not well fenced. It seemed that people or cattle could easily enter the school premises. The school location was pretty quiet, even though it was not so far from the highway.

The office room was a shared room of both the HT and the teaching staff. A couple of graphs and charts were displayed in the office, but not updated accordingly. The HT said that they have a teacher code of conduct, but it was not documented. Unexpectedly, the well-maintained classroom appeared to be quite stimulating. Students were made responsible for cleaning their classrooms on a routine basis. The class teacher was supposed to look after the cleanliness of the classroom.

5.5.3.3 Policy Clarity

Regarding policy clarity, the HT showed his alertness about the GPS policy. The HT told that both the teaching and non-teaching staff were well-informed about what they were supposed to do. The HT further added that the school has been running under the current policy for a long, as he remarked:
I am familiar with the GPS policy. The policy is not ambiguous. Everyone can understand it easily. I think that this policy also deserves a decentralized school governance policy. For example, I can prioritize school plans and programs and reallocate the budget accordingly. I have never experienced any kind of interference while implementing the educational policy and programs. The only problem I am facing now is to find the ways to make the teachers more accountable. The teacher's code of conduct is clearly defined in the existing education regulations, but they do not follow them accordingly. For example, some teachers take leave without prior notice.

It seemed that the HT was quite aware of the current policy. The story of other teachers was pretty opposite the opinion of the HT. Almost all of the teachers indicated their unawareness of the current policy. They said that they had served more than ten years in this school, but never received any types of orientations on the policy issues. In this connection, Mr. Pawan Thapa, who has already served 32 years in this school, never experienced policy discussions in the school. The absence of policy dissemination was identified as an obstructing factor to making teachers accountable to the school and community.

5.5.3.4 Availability of the Budget

JSS was heavily dependent on government sources. The government funds received by the school were mostly predetermined categories of expenditures such as teachers’ salaries, stationery, textbooks, and scholarships. The school had autonomy in reallocating the budget received in terms of the block grant, which was provided on the basis of per capita funding. The block grants vary according to the student numbers. JSS had received a small amount of the block grant due to its low number of students.

JSS was found to be a severely affected school in terms of financial shortage. The school record showed that it had almost no savings at all. The grants provided by the government were just enough to pay for the salaries of teachers and administrative costs. The school had lots of underutilized land. It was noticed that if
the school could make a good plan and mobilize that unused land, it would be a permanent source of income for the school. It appeared that the JSS has suffered from the lack of the visionary management of the school. It had lots of potentialities, but the willpower of the school management was observed as the main hindering factor to moving ahead. The current composition of the revenue of the JSS is illustrated in Figure 5.3.

**Figure 5.3 Sources of School Revenue**  
**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

Figure 5.3 reveals that the government sources were the central source of income of the school. It is interesting to mention that community contribution was recorded as even less than local donor and NGO support. JSS has had a sister relationship with Daroku Kasai Primary School, Japan. This Japanese school has been providing one thousand dollars per year to JSS. From this amount, the school had recruited two secondary-level teachers. The HT, Mr. Dahal, said that the budget plays a crucial role in school development. He had a firm belief that the government policy of a decentralized school governance system could not be materialized without a sufficient budget.

**5.5.3.5 Capacity of Implementers**

The decentralized school governance policy through school-based management envisions the strategy of building the capacity of policy implementers to
make them capable enough in educational planning through training, facilitation, and regular support mechanisms. In contrast, the HT, teachers, and the SMC members were not technically efficient for developing educational plans. For example, the school had a SIP, but it was not updated. It was developed in 2009. It has been a mandatory provision that both CMSs and GPSs were required to submit their updated SIP to receive regular grants from the government. A funny story is that the JSS only updated the date of the plan and submitted it to the DEO for the academic years 2010, 2011, and 2012. The contents were same. The researcher thought that it would be interesting to know the reasons why the school did so and the HT, Mr. Dahal, disclosed the reality:

I was appointed as an HT last year, but never received any types of capacity development trainings or workshops. In fact we three teachers, including the HT at that time, sat together and developed this plan in 2009. To be frank, we have not incorporated any new programs since then. We have made it just for meeting the requirement, not for implementing the policy. We are unable to send our teachers to develop their capacity elsewhere due to the cost issue. The SMC doesn't look at these areas. Parents are merely interested to see their kids promoted to the next grade. I have seen that some GPSs in our district have shown exceptional performance due to their effective SIP. I am also planning to visit those schools and learn the best practices. If I could develop a good plan, I am sure that our school could turn into a new face within a couple of years. In my opinion, the capacity has been a felt need to improve our situation. I am convinced that our school cannot make progress without developing the capacity of all teaching and non-teaching staff. I am therefore desperately seeking ways to enhance the needed capacity.
Regular meetings of the SMC, the formation of a parent-teacher association, a school calendar, students’ individual records, and teachers’ commitment to policy implementation were remarkably absent from the JSS. Interestingly, the teachers were all trained, but their skills were not reflected in the classroom. It seems that resource capitalization was the main problem of JSS. Teamwork was absolutely absent. In addition, the HT was unable to monitor the teacher’s time-on-tasks.

5.5.3.6 Teacher Commitment

All teachers were permanent and trained at JSS. The majority of them had experience of more than ten years. It seems that the teaching staffs were qualified. However, the regularity of teachers was found to be a serious issue. The record showed poor attendance of the teachers, which is shown in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8** School Days and Average Attendance of Teachers and Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/Year</th>
<th>School Opening Days</th>
<th>Teachers’ Attendance</th>
<th>Students’ Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November, 2012</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 2012</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 2013</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

Table 5.8 reveals the commitment of the teachers to their teaching. Very interestingly, an uncommon feature reflected at JSS was that teacher absenteeism was higher than that of the students. The HT, Mr. Dahal, indicated that the increased irregularity of teachers was the cause of political influence. He added:

Most of our teaching staffs are engaged in other business, for example, cooperatives, trade, and tourism. This is the reason that they frequently take a leave of absence. Sometimes they inform me in advance, sometimes not. If they informed me in advance, I could search for alternatives. Our
teaching staff is reluctant to make new changes in the school. The majority of teachers did not show up with their plans. And those that have started preparing lesson plans also stopped doing so, because there was no difference between hard-working teachers and others.

It appeared that the HT was very committed to the school’s improvement. It was observed that the SMC was not active. The SMC chair was a labor worker and did not have time to look after the school activities. In this connection, both Mr. Pawan Thapa, a primary-level teacher, and Mr. Iswor K.C., a secondary-level teacher, simultaneously mentioned the following:

We teachers are fully aware of our tasks. We can easily regain the past reputation of school. We have the skills and experience of teaching and learning. Only the problem is who will take the initiative? There are several other parents that have a good vision of and experience with school affairs. The school would have requested them to be in the SMC. Our HT lobbied to elect the current chair, keeping in view of his own interest for two reasons. One, the SMC chair is very innocent and just a literate. Two, the chair makes decisions based on what the HT says. All we teachers are worried about our school development. We have been suffering from a leadership crisis. We are not familiar with the current policy and its new changes. It has never been disseminated involving us. Our HT never shares the outcomes of the meetings and seminars that he attends.

After listening to them, it seemed that some teachers had a strong will to improve the school, but the school environment was not favorable to them. Leadership was viewed as the main effective factor for school development. This caused a compromise with poor implementation of performance. The story of JSS
reveals that without involving community people and parents in the process of delivering education, the policy may not yield the expected results.

### 5.5.4 Tilottama Secondary School, Rupandehi District

Tilottama Secondary School, henceforth called TSS, was a CMS located in Rupandehi district, western terai of Nepal. It takes a seven-hour drive (300 kilometers) from the capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu, to reach the school. The school catchment area was a mixed area of a heterogeneous ethnic group, with the majority hill migrants. Business, industry, and agriculture were the main occupations of the community people in the school area. There were various small—and medium—scale manufacturers of woodwork, iron-sheet, and metal-ware, and several rice mills in operation. The remittance that comes from Gorkha Soldiers employed by the Indian and British Armies was one of the main sources of income for the community.

#### 5.5.4.1 History of and Community Participation in School Development

TSS has remained in operation for the last 50 years. A business person, Mr. Saraswati Prasad Sherchan, was the pioneer of the school. Being a business person he had frequent interactions with local native terai people and hill migrants. In fact Mr. Sherchan acted as a liaison from person to person and community to community. He selected two representative social workers, Mr. Buddi Bahadur Thakali from the local people, and Mr. Om Shrestha (later on he became the chair of the then Village Panchayat) from hill migrants, to communicate and connect to their respective communities. A general mass meeting of the community people was gathered on the bank of the local Tinau River. This meeting decided to establish a school at center of the village and to give the name as TSS. As a result, TSS was established in 1963. In the beginning stage, the community recruited two teachers paid by the funds collected from the local community endowment and grants from the then Village Panchayat, Mr. Chitra Man Gauchan, one of the members of the current SMC, recalled.

The community people did not take a rest and continued to discuss to find land for the school building. They found public land near the highway and
decided to construct a building. School wishers collected both cash and kind support from the community and business people. The school record showed that the manufacturing companies provided wood, iron-sheet, and metal-ware free of cost, and community people collected money for the school building. The assistant HT, Mr. Juddh Bahadur Pachhain, who has served for 12 years, further added:

The community people have been continuously devoted to school development. They kept on increasing funds for the school. As a result, community people constructed a two-storey building with a total of ten rooms. Our school building was recognized as the first concrete building with adequate benches and desks around the neighboring villages. The TSS was renowned for the discipline of the students and the quality of teaching-learning. There was mutual cooperation and good understanding between the school and the community. The support received from the local community, the manufacturing companies, and parents was significant. Even some of the manufacturing companies offered scholarships for bright and poor students, several of whom took advantage of them. I could say that not only economically was TSS strong, but also its performance in terms of the student achievements it exhibited time and again was incomparable in the district. For example, TSS was certified as the highest scorer in the district-level examinations. This was the reason that parents' first choice was TSS.

It appears from the above findings that today's TSS was the outcome of yesterday's community participation. The participation was so strong that the entire school building was constructed by the community. The government support seemed to be only a token. The community people and manufacturing companies had contributed their land, money, and kind support to the school. The community people seemed to be accountable for the school development, with a feeling that the school
was the community property. This golden age of the school gradually eroded after 2000. Mr. Pachhain told a miserable story of TSS in the following:

The school was growing continuously with the close connection and supervision of the community people. This process unexpectedly dropped down in recent years. There were many incidents and stories to produce that result. One, when private schools were opened nearby our school area then the community people gradually transferred their children to the private schools. This is the main cause of the community detaching itself from the school affairs. Second, local political leaders were selected for the executive body of the SMC. The SMC started unfair treatment of the teachers if they belonged to a different political ideology. It had eventually divided the teaching staff into various groups. Third, at the time of high financial crisis, without looking at the consequences, the SMC decided to transfer the school to the community. We were worried about the downfall of our school. Even our gatekeeper, Santa Bahadur, took his two children out of the school and enrolled them in private school.

Looking at Mr. Pachhain's opinion, community participation sharply eroded in the case of TSS. It appears that no change has occurred after the implementation of CMS policy. This finding provides evidence that it was worthless to delegate the management responsibility to the school without making the school technically equipped. It was equally noticed that TSS could not capitalize on its resources due to the leadership crisis. Mr. Pachhain was also correct—that the rate of student enrollment in TSS had continuously decreased in recent years. The evidence is shown in Table 5.9.
Table 5.9  Students' Enrollment in Different Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Session/Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Increase or decrease (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5.5.4.2 School Environment

TSS was located in the middle of the city along the highway. Sound pollution was noticed. The physical facilities appeared to be sufficient. There were two separate, two-storey buildings. The primary grades were run in one building and another one was used for lower secondary and secondary levels. The secondary-level classrooms were seen to be more conducive compared to the primary classrooms. It was interesting to note that there was a complete absence of teaching-learning materials in the classrooms. The space for the school premises was extremely congested. There was no playground. However, the school compound was well fenced and the gate was locked during school hours. Interestingly, most of the students were seen in school dress.

To some extent, the office room appeared inspiring compared to classrooms. The HT and the teaching staff shared the office room. Several graphs and figures, such as the students' pass rates for the school leaving certificate examination, enrolment of students in different years, promotion, dropouts, and repetition rates of primary grades, and daily routines of the school were displayed on the wall of the office room. However, the information related to the income and expenditure of the school was not displayed, which is required to regain and sustain community trust. Transparency was viewed as one of the burning issues at TSS.
5.5.4.3 Policy Clarity

It was observed that the teachers indirectly showed their disagreement with the CMS policy. The teachers said that the policy could ensure school effectiveness and they were excited about discussing the issues of their school, which have been remained unsolved for six months. Ms. Bishnu Joshi, a senior primary-level teacher, stated the following in this connection:

We were told that if the CMS policy was adopted, the school community would hold total ownership of the management of the school. We were convinced and adopted the CMS policy. Now we are suffering from HT's appointment. Our SMC has appointed the HT and sent to get its approval to the DEO. The DEO says that the SMC has no authority to appoint the HT. Instead of approving the school's proposal, the office later on sent another HT from a different school. Now we have two HTs. Our SMC is stuck on its decision. This is how we have been running our school for about six months. We are very clear that we have adopted this CMS policy merely to receive NRs. 300,000 (about 3,700 USD) from the government. This was the last resort to survive at that time.

The above facts indicate that the policy dissemination was extremely lacking at the implementation level. Teachers were confused about the intension of the policy. This kind of practice has produced an adverse effect on CMS policy. It was true that TSS functioned better and students improved their achievement scores when community people and parents were active in the school development. The above findings allow the inference that school effectiveness and community participation are positively correlated with implementation performance.

5.5.4.4 Availability of the Budget

The main source of funds for TSS was government grants. TSS had received 100% of the salaries and benefits for the approved teachers' positions working at primary, lower-secondary, and secondary levels. This was the earmarked
grant, which was entitled to be spent on teachers’ salaries. It means that the reallocation of this fund was not possible. If savings occurred, the remaining funds were subject to refund to the government account at the end of the fiscal year. There was a provision of block grants to the public school from the government on the basis of student enrollment. The school was given authority to reallocate these grants according to its own need. However, TSS received only a small amount of money due to its low number of students.

TSS was severely underfinanced, even though it charged some school fees to lower secondary and secondary students. The non-teaching staffs were paid from these sources. Looking at the size and sources of the income, TSS was largely dependent on government funds; therefore, the funds available to be spent on other activities were extremely limited. The real picture is shown in Figure 5.4.

![Figure 5.4 Sources of School Revenue](image)

**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

The findings reveal that the percentage of community support was low, but there was plenty of room in which it can be increased. Three reforms were viewed. One, the transparency of the school income and expenditure were clearly noted. The improvement in the quality of the education was an immediate need of the school to attract students. The third reform detected was that a mass meeting could be called to build business shutters/complex alongside the highway to create a permanent income
source for TSS. For this effective leadership is required. Thus, on the one hand, the budget deficit was observed as a hindering factor in implementing the policy and on the other hand, an effective leader that could capitalize on the scattered resources was really a felt need of TSS.

5.5.4.5 Capacity of Implementers

Most of the teachers expressed the idea that they had received different training and technical support from both governmental and non-governmental organizations. The major ones were teacher training, curricular material dissemination, and student evaluation techniques, but the teachers complained about the weak support and follow-up systems. The assistant HT, Mr. Pachhain, shared similar experiences:

The government sent us a CMS policy directive without disseminating it. I heard that it was disseminated at the DEO to a small group, including some of the influential HTs. The directive made for CMS difficult to read and understand. This directive does not describe extensively about the process of receiving funds or incentives, the techniques of improving quality education, or developing the SIP. We are forced and told to do this and do that. How is it possible to do things without adequate knowledge and skills? I think that capacity development should be the first priority of implementing CMS policy. In my opinion, this policy came in haste without evaluating the readiness of implementing agencies like ours.

After listening to all the teachers' voices, it can be inferred that a weak implementation mechanism of educational policies has created a misconception among the implementers. Neither teachers nor the HT was well informed about the policy implementation. The school had prepared its SIP, but had not updated it. Several teachers even showed unawareness of the plan. The lack of a regular orientation had caused little orientation on the part of the teachers. This is how both
capacity and the commitment of implementers were found to be extremely poor in the case of TSS.

5.5.4.6 Teacher Commitment

Teachers were not found to be proactive in the school activities. Even though the school charged annual fees of the students for extracurricular activities, there were no routines or plans to conduct them. The lack of a sufficient number of teachers could be one of the reasons. It seemed that the teachers were not very careful about their duties and responsibilities. Ms. Bishnu Joshi gave her opinion as follows:

I am very shocked with the decision taken by the school last month. Without evaluating the teaching performance, our school awarded three teachers who were politically influenced, careless in timing, and irresponsible to their duty. It has made all of us upset. Even students were surprised to hear that news. You might wonder how an honest teacher can work in this situation. We are not satisfied with the result of the school, but the HT and the SMC do not care about it. We are committed to teaching, but then again the school environment is not conducive. I see lots of potentialities to improve the students' achievement, increase community participation, and optimize available resources, but the lack of willpower on the part of the HT made us lag behind. Since our new HT has not taken charge yet, I am telling you about our former HT, who had never shared school activities with the teaching staff. We are not happy with this CMS policy. Our community is not capable enough to manage the school. We have not seen the policy document of the CMS yet, what it looks like. Let's see how the new HT will go ahead.

Ms. Joshi's view indicates that there was a big information gap between the school administration and teachers. On the one hand, teachers had no access to information and on the other hand, teachers were not happy with the current CMS
policy. It was clear that the teachers preferred the GPS policy to the CMS policy. It was understood that teachers' regularity can be taken as one of the major contributing factors of the school’s effectiveness. Table 5.10 demonstrates evidence of this.

Table 5.10  School Days and Teachers' and Students' Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/Year</th>
<th>School Opening Days</th>
<th>Teachers’ Attendance</th>
<th>Students’ Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November, 2012</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 2012</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 2013</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 5.10 displays the lower attendance of teachers than during the school opening days. This information primarily helps show the teachers' commitment to teaching and learning. The teachers' morale was not found to be stimulated because of the messy management of the school. No teamwork was observed at TSS. It was seemingly observed that TSS neither succeeded in retaining community support nor enhanced the confidence of teacher commitment to produce better implementation performance.

5.5.5  Cross-case Analysis

Since this study aims to compare the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy between the GPS and CMS, the cross-case analysis was therefore primarily focused for the comparative analysis of the commonalities and differences that have occurred in the cases of the four schools.

Community participation remained instrumental not only in improving physical facilities, but also in resource generating. For instance, from 1950 until 2000, both types of schools enjoyed community contributions in the form of both cash and kind. Nevertheless, such practice could not continue and community people remained indifferent due to the downturn of educational standards in the public schools.
Particularly, the communities' contribution was dramatically reduced in both types of schools, and interestingly, the situation was found to be even worse in the CMS against the policy intention. Evidence can be traced from the cases of the NSS and the RSS. However, both the NSS and the RSS have produced an uncommon feature amongst public schools in Nepal; i.e., an increase in student numbers. In contrast, both community participation and student numbers have sharply decreased in the cases of JSS and TSS, even though these two schools had followed two different policies. This cross-case finding helps to arrive at more reliable results than the two separate policies; in other words, GPS and CMS have not shown significant differences in their implementation performance. Instead, the HT's role and parents' contribution were found to be crucial factors in achieving intended policy outputs.

School effectiveness in terms of students’ inflow was one of the major factors to make a comparison between the GPS and CMS. The results revealed that the inflow of students both in the RSS and NSS had tremendously increased. The identified factors associated with this result were effective leadership, schools' achievements in the school leaving certificate examinations, and the classes run in the English medium. Regular monitoring of teachers' presence and their duties, and provision of extra coaching classes for weak and needy students, were also additional attractions for parents and students. However, the records of JSS and TSS showed a radical decrease (some 12.7 percent and 7.6 percent respectively) of students in the same year. The obvious reason is that community people might have felt that the education provided in at JSS and TSS was not sufficient to compete at the higher levels of schooling.

Cross-case findings indicate that the SMCs in GPSs were more confident on policy objectives compared to the CMSs. For example, the RSS, which was documented as a better-run CMS, was found to be confused about policy objectives, but the NSS was found to be confident in them. It is true that the TSS functioned better when community people and parents actively participated in school development. This finding therefore suggests that school effectiveness and community participation are positively correlated with the clarity of policy objectives.

The existing capacity in the both types of schools was found to be very limited and inadequate in terms of implementing educational policy in a proper way. For
example, the RSS implemented CMS policy, but the management was in doubt concerning whether or not the school was moving in the right direction. In addition, the teachers in the RSS, who have already served 10 years or so, never received training or orientation related to school management and planning, except for their in-service trainings. The situation was reversed in the case of the NSS, where a teamwork culture was established. Remarkably, the story of JSS and TSS was similar even though these two schools had implemented two different policies. These schools had developed their SIPs just to meet the requirements of the government to receive grants. Both resource constraints and poor capacity of resource capitalization were identified as the main problems behind the low implementation performance of both JSS and TSS. The finding suggests that the existing capacity of all the schools to implement educational policies was in question.

The government was the central source of income for both types of schools. However, government sources were just enough to pay for the teachers' salary and for some administrative costs. It is true that available resources were underutilized in the GPSs. An example is the case of JSS. In contrast, potential resources were highly exploited in the CMS. The case of the RSS is evidence. Surprisingly though, it is interesting to note that community contribution was recorded even in a lesser amount in the CMS compared to the GPS. For example, the community contributions in the NSS accounted for 8 percent, whereas it was recorded at only 2 percent in the case of the RSS.

Another difference was observed in the composition of the school revenue. A huge number of school fees collected from the students was exhibited as the second major source for the CMSs. It is evident from the results that the school fees contributed about 12 percent and 8 percent in the cases of the RSS and TSS respectively. However, only 2 percent was recorded in the cases of the NSS and JSS. Nevertheless, the CMSs were severely underfinanced, even though they charged fees to students, because these schools were compelled to spend their additional revenues for paying local-recruited teachers and non-teaching staff. The problem of a budget deficit appeared similar in both types of schools. For example, the JSS was observed to be one of the ineffective GPSs due to a leadership crisis and scarcity of budget.
A wide variation was observed in the levels of commitment of teachers in implementing the educational policy. For example, teachers were found to be committed to implementing the intended policy in both the cases of the NSS and RSS; however, the reasons were different. In the case of the RSS, two reasons were identified that have made teachers more committed to implementing the policy. One, the HT and the SMC chair had a good culture of sharing. Second, the children of both teaching and non-teaching staff were enrolled in the same school where they teach and work. A team-working culture, participation of all teachers in developing the SIP, enforcement of codes of conduct, and periodic interactions were some of the examples that contributed to teacher commitments toward school development in the case of the NSS. Notably, teachers from both types of schools showed their disagreement concerning the intentions of the CMS policy. The teachers were overly concerned about job security and they thought that the CMS policy was against their professional career development.

Unexpectedly, the cases of the JSS and the TSS were similar regarding teachers' commitment, even though they had adopted two different policies. The teachers did not pay attention to the policy implementation that the school had adopted. A big information gap appeared between the school administration and teachers. For example, the teachers in the JSS blamed the HT for not sharing in the school activities. On the other hand, the HT blamed the teachers for not implementing the decisions taken by the school. However, it was noticed that effective leadership was viewed as an acute problem of the JSS. It is evident from the cases of both the NSS and the RSS that their respective policies have been effectively implemented due to the HT's effective leadership. Regarding the case of the TSS, the teachers had no access to information on school activities and teachers were extremely unhappy with the CMS policy. They showed their strong dissatisfaction to the SMC for adopting CMS policy without their consent. It is clear that the teachers were not supportive of the implementation of the CMS policy.
Table 5.11 Cross-case Comparative Pictures of Four Sampled Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>NSS</th>
<th>RSS</th>
<th>JSS</th>
<th>TSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Strong leadership</td>
<td>Strong leadership</td>
<td>Weak leadership</td>
<td>Weak leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Clarity</td>
<td>Clear on policy objectives</td>
<td>Partially clear on policy objectives</td>
<td>Clear on policy objectives</td>
<td>Poor perceptions on policy objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>School had sufficient budget and it has played significant role in policy has played significant role</td>
<td>Limited disposable income and available budget</td>
<td>Survival budget</td>
<td>Underfinanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Culture</td>
<td>Established norms, values and persisted self-discipline and mutual understanding</td>
<td>Poor self-discipline and mutual understanding</td>
<td>Poor self-discipline and mutual understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Inadequate capacity, but optimally utilized the existing capacity</td>
<td>Inadequate capacity, but optimally utilized the existing capacity</td>
<td>Underutilized capacity</td>
<td>Shortage of capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Commitment</td>
<td>Highly committed teachers to implement the policy</td>
<td>Committed teachers, but motivated nor demotivated teachers against the CMS</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>Demotivated teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.11 presents evidence from the cross-case analysis that leadership was the prime factor for achieving the implementation performance of the decentralized
school governance policy. The cases of both the NSS and RSS showed strong evidence to back up this claim, even though they had implemented two different policies. This proof is further sufficient to plead that how a policy is implemented and what has been achieved are crucial for determining policy outputs. On the other hand, gaining the confidence of the teacher in terms of implementing the policy was extremely lacking in both the cases of TSS and JSS due to the existence of weak leadership. In sum, strong leadership, clarity of policy objectives, availability of the budget, school culture, and the capacity of implementers were found to be largely substantial in producing the intended policy outputs. In addition, the school environment was also identified as an influencing variable to ensure the policy outputs in both types of schools.

5.5.6 Discussion

The cases of all four schools help to derive the common and most interesting result—that HT is the key actor in effective implementation of educational policies and programs. Irrespective of the two policy provisions introduced in Nepal, the results of the cross-case analysis show that leadership effectiveness had a vital and significant role in enhancing community participation, increasing student attraction, retaining students, and mobilizing resources. As the cases of this study reported, the HTs of both types of schools have shown a deterministic aim; for example, English-medium and extra remedial classes increased the implementation performance of the adopted policy. The successful schools have been found to have actively implemented policies with several self-initiated innovations. This finding resembles several research results. For example, Youngs and King's (2002: 648) study revealed that significant differences were observed in the leadership between schools due to their leadership qualities. In-country research, for example, the National Council for Economic and Development Research (2008: 23), also exhibits similar results. The inter-case analysis of the cases of schools carried out for this study also helps to derive the conclusion that the HTs were instrumental in the effective implementation of policy. It is evident from the cases that leadership crises caused to the low profiles of public schools with poor school improvement. This result is consistent with
Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 22) model, which visualizes leadership skills as a non-statutory variable which is central to policy implementation.

The results reveal that the concept of community participation is deeply rooted in school governance and management in Nepal. The evidence collected from the cases of all four schools demonstrates that public schools were solely created and governed by the communities in Nepal. The Secondary Education Development Plan (2001) therefore states that the community initially established 78 percent of the public schools in Nepal during the 1960s. The cases of this study showed that the process continued until 2000. The history of community participation in school governance seems to be compatible with Van Horn's (1979: 141) view, who claims that people participation not only helps increase local ownership, but also ensures organizational survival.

The CMS policy was introduced to boost community participation, and to increase the efficiency of the school (National Planning Commission, 2002). In contrast, the cross-case analysis of the NSS and RSS reveals that community participation was effective in the GPS compared to the CMS. However, parental support dramatically increased in CMSs compared to the GPSs. The evidence is the case of RSS. This finding demonstrates a new form of partnership between the school and the parents. This result reflects a surprising degree of similarity to Taiwan's school-based management. Taiwan has changed from the conventional "parent-school relationship" to a "parent-school partnership" (Lo and Gu, 2008: 515).

School effectiveness in terms of students' attraction was taken as one of the measures of the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in this study. The results of this study reveal that the inflow of students in both the cases of the RSS and NSS had tremendously increased, though they had implemented two different policies. On the other hand, the students' inflow had dramatically decreased in the cases of the JSS and TSS, which were also implementing two different policies. The results of the NSS and TSS contradicts those of Bush and Gamage's (2001: 39) study on school-based management, which found that greater autonomy on the part of schools in Australia had improved educational outputs. Likewise, the result of this study not only counters the Australian case, but also counters national studies. For example, a study conducted by the Research Centre
for Educational Innovation and Development (2009: 34) recognized that the effectiveness of the CMS has been improved in terms of increasing student achievement, and also returning students back from private schools. The Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited (2011: 64) also claimed a similar finding. In contrast, the result of this study confirms that the CMS policy was not significantly different, with its counterpart policy of the GPS, in terms of attracting students. The evidence captured from the case of Mr. Santa Bahadur, an employee (gate keeper) of the TSS, is sufficient to prove the above fact. He decided to pull his two children out of this school and sent them to a private school. The main reason could be the use of English. This argument can be backed up by the case of the RSS. There was an increasing trend of moving children back from private schools to the RSS because it had become famous for English medium instruction in the community school.

Notably, the cross-case analysis reveals that school culture, such as values, beliefs, norms, rituals, and patterns, has been established and institutionalized in effective schools. This process can be linked to the institutionalization of organizational values, norms, beliefs, and social behaviors (Scott, 1987: 493). The cross-case findings also exhibit that there were several self-initiated innovations that occurred in the better-run schools due to their established school culture. This result is consistent with Naranjo-Valencia et al.'s (2010: 468) research findings, which drew the conclusion that organizational culture motivates members of the organization to accept the new changes. Despite the above-discussed fact, while looking at Mr. Ambar's narrative from the case of the RSS, a gloomy picture of CMS policy can be visualized. The continuity of this policy has remained a major concern for the government and required an end to policy confusion. The version of one of the HTs, Ms. Mamata, was found to be quite miserable; she said that the intention of adopting the CMS policy was to receive motivational grants. The resource dependence theory (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978: 2) applies here, which states that organizations seek resources from their environment to survive. This finding allows the drawing of the conclusion that the teachers’ attitude was not supportive of the CMS policy for two reasons. One, the policy objectives were not clear to all. Second, the teachers were reluctant to move to the new policy due to fear for their job security and career development. However, the school-based management in Hong Kong has been
gaining momentum simply because of the fact that school principals and teachers are convinced by this policy (Cheng, 2009: 67). The reason here matches the opinion of Brever and Deleon (1983: 66), who assert that effective implementation of policy depends on the implementer’s understanding of policy intention. It appears true that the government of Nepal has not yet been able to convince the teachers or their professional organizations about the positive consequences of the CMS policy.

The results of the cases also show that policy clarity had positive effects on the policy implementation performance. The cases of the JSS and NSS are evidence. Brever and Deleon's (1983: 66) claim once again shows its strength. The cross-case findings help draw the inference that the GPSs were more confident about the policy objectives compared to the CMSs. For example, the NSS implemented its GPS policy very confidently, whereas the assistant HT and teachers of the TSS showed a lack of knowledge about the provisions of the CMS policy. Even the HT and teachers from the RSS, which was recognized as a better-run CMS, expressed their confusion about the policy objectives. The teachers were asked why they had accepted the CMS policy and their simple answer was that it was merely with the intension of obtaining motivational grants worth NRs. 300,000 (about 3,700 USD) from the government. This reflects Simon's (2007: 142) view, which stresses that more attention to be paid to the dissemination of policy with a clear guidelines to have a uniform understanding of the policy objectives. It seems that all of the efforts carried out for promoting the CMS have failed to convince the real implementers of the policy. It demonstrates the poor dissemination of the policy. This is the great challenge that has been faced by the government while implementing CMS policy in Nepal. It is because the implementation performance can only be realized upon the acceptance of implementers (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181).

The capacity of resource capitalization was identified as a critical factor for implementing educational policies. The cross-case analysis showed that the existing capacity in both the types of schools was very limited and inadequate in terms of implementing the educational policy in a proper way. It is interesting to note from the cross-case findings that the school has not received any technical support with regard to the implementation of the policy. Pick et al.'s (2007: 158) study can be cited here which states that if policy makers overlook the role of the implementers, then it limits
the performance of the implementation. However, a team-working culture, the leadership of the HTs, and the SMC’s clear vision have contributed to bringing about the intended outputs in the cases of both the NSS and RSS. This result is supported by Youngs and King’s (2002: 647) research finding, which states that the strong capacity of implementers firmly supports the enhancement of reform outputs.

The cross-case findings also detected that the teachers’ capacity has played critical roles in policy implementation. For example, the RSS has offered both Nepali—and English—medium classes; however, the majority of the teachers were weak in English. Consequently, the school was compelled to recruit additional English teachers to run the English-medium classes. This result reflects Gropello and Marshall’s (2011: 164) study, where the success of decentralization was seen to depend upon the capacity of the implementers. Graziano and Winkler (2012: 8) also confirmed that the lack of the capacity of implementing agencies has led to several implementation failures in the decentralized governance policies in the case of both the Czech Republic and Italy. Particularly, the result of this study reiterates that poor capacity at the school level has largely resulted in an adverse effect on implementation performance. Goggin et al. (1990) therefore claim that the capacity of the implementing agency or organizational capacity is a fundamental factor in converting "a policy message into a set of real achievements" (Goggin et al., 1990: 118).

Evidence collected from the cases of the NSS and RSS also demonstrated that the availability of the budget plays a significant role in materializing the intended policies. These two schools were found to have succeeded in collecting additional resources on top of the government’s grants so that these schools were able to reallocate the resources according to their own needs and plans. This result is consistent with Cheng and Cheung’s (1995: 17) study, which establish a positive correlation between adequate budget and policy implementation performance. This could be the reason that many scholars have emphasized the budget and have identified it as a critical variable in realizing the intended policy (e.g., see Younis and Davidson, 1990; Anderson, 1994; Ryan, 1996; Edwards III and Wayne, 2010). The past research of Nepal also confirms a strong correlation between the adequacy of a
budget and better policy implementation (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008: 5).

The results captured from the cases of the NSS and RSS also tie with Australian schools, which have improved educational outputs under school-based management with greater financial autonomy (Bush and Gamage, 2001: 39). A similar case also can be observed in Israel, where the financial autonomy of schools has increased competition among them (Resh and Benavot, 2009: 73). In contrast, schools such as JSS and the TSS, which were heavily dependent on government grants, had little chance of reallocating the resources. The size and sources of the income of both JSS and TSS were found to be less compared to the two other schools. This result thus challenges the finding of a study conducted in Nepal by the National Council for Economic and Development Research (2008: 2), which identified that per-capita funding in CMSs was higher in comparison to GPSs.

The results suggest some variations among teachers in their commitment to school development. Teachers were found to be very happy with the GPS policy compared to the CMS policy. For example, teachers in the NSS were devoted to achieving better performance for the reason that the SMC did not transfer their school to the community. They appeared more committed for the sake of GPS policy. The result of Elboim-Dror's (1973: 15) study is further valid here. Elboim-Dror claims that the policy acceptance of the end users is the crucial factor for determining the implementation performance of the policy. Surprisingly, the teachers in the RSS were also found to be equally committed, but for different reason. The teachers were more committed due to the mandatory provision of enrolling their children in their school. However, teachers were not convinced by the CMS policy. The story of JSS and TSS therefore reveals that without involving teachers in the process of school activities, the policy may not yield the expected results. This finding correlates with Cheng and Mok's (2007: 539) comparative study between high school-based management of and the low school-based management of schools of Hong Kong, which firmly confirms that teachers' commitment is a significant factor in effective policy implementation.

Remarkably, it can be inferred from the cases of all four schools that leadership quality, clarity of policy objectives, availability of resources, school culture, and the capacity of local-level implementers have played critical roles in
producing better policy implementation performance. However, the commitment of implementers varied according to the school environment. The capacity was documented as an acute problem in all types of schools. The intention of decentralized school governance policy aims to capacitate the implementers, but access to and opportunity for teachers remain extremely limited; they are supposed to implement the educational policies at the grass-root levels. The school environment on the other hand had a strong impact on policy implementation.

Since the basic objective of this study was to identify the superiority of decentralized school governance policy by comparing the implementation performance between GPS policy and CMS policy in terms of greater community participation and students' attraction, the answer may possibly lie with the context of the schools in general and leadership quality in particular. It is a great pity that there is no relative superiority of the CMS over the GPS. As a corollary, the better policy implementation performance results of the CMSs seem to be entirely due to their constantly having better performance since long ago. The cases of both the NSS and RSS further support this. For example, the inflow of students has significantly increased in both types of schools. However, several good practices were noticed in the CMS, but surprisingly, these changes were also perceptibly seen in the case of the GPS too. For example, both the NSS and the RSS provide computer labs and adequate computers for all students and this can be taken as an uncommon feature amongst the public schools in Nepal. It gives a clue that the changes have occurred due to the dedication of the HT. A comparative picture of the results of the cross-case analysis is depicted in Table 5.12.

**Table 5.12** Assessing the Implementation Performance of the Policy Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Community Participation and School Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>NSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>RSS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Field Survey and Cross-case Findings, 2013.
The comparative picture shown in Table 5.12 indicates that there was no superiority of CMS over GPS policy. The NSS-type and RSS-type schools were found to be better even though they had adopted two different policies. On the other hand, JSS-type and TSS-type schools were found to be weak in terms of materializing policy outputs compared to the other two types of schools. These contradictions have further opened up discussion on the context, forms, and factors of decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. The information gathered through the interviews seems to be true, because some of the informants pointed out the false conclusions of the past researches because of biased samples. The cross-case analysis therefore questioned the continuity of these dual policies because it has shown a major concern for the government and required an end to policy confusion. This result also provides a clue that changes have not occurred because of the choice of policy; rather, there could be certain predictive factors associated with policy implementation that contribute to achieve policy outputs.

To sum up, it can be inferred from the results of the qualitative analyses that a number of variables for creating the above-mentioned four types of schools were identified. These factors were primarily: the leadership of the HT, followed by clarity of policy objectives, the availability of the budget at school, school culture, the capacity of implementers, the readiness of schools, the school environment, and the policy acceptance of teachers. These variables had a strong association with the policy implementation performance.

5.5.7 Conclusions

Several changes, such as the regularity of students and teachers, the English medium of instruction, regular meetings of SMC, and consultations among stakeholders for developing the SIP, and parents' visits to schools, were perceptibly observed in both types of better-run schools. Similar results also were observed by Levin (2011: 74) in the case of New Zealand, and Mukundan and Bray (2004: 226) in the case of India, but the results refute the study findings of the Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited (2011: 64) in the case of Nepal. Two reasons can be seen from the results of this study. First, the implementers were quite convinced by the GPS policy objectives. Second, the availability of a budget and the motivation of
teachers have contributed to producing intended policy outputs. The result of this study thus indicates that the CMS policy was not significantly different from its counterpart GPS policy in terms of enhancing community participation, and attracting and retaining students.

The results pinpoint a number of factors, particularly the leadership of HT clarity of policy objectives, the availability of a budget at school, organizational culture, the capacity of implementers, the school environment, and policy acceptance by the teachers, which are strongly associated with the implementation performance of the intended policy; however, leadership was the most important factor contributing to the achievement of the intended performance of the policy objectives. These factors can be treated as independent variables. Besides leadership, the interviews and the focus group discussions conducted for this research suggest that informants from the GPSs focused more on the availability of the budget and capacity development, whereas the informants from the CMSs emphasized policy clarity and the commitment of teachers. The following chapter attempts to test those variables derived from the qualitative analyses of this study.
CHAPTER 6

RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with the overall results obtained from the questionnaire administered to policy implementers. The main aim of this chapter is to analyze the responses of informants to assess the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. First, this chapter begins with description of survey samples as well as the general characteristics of informants in section 6.1. Section 6.2 highlights the perceptions of informants on implementation performance followed by the results of the correlation in section 6.3. Similarly, Section 6.4 presents the results of the t-test, followed by the results of the multiple regressions in section 6.5. Research models and hypotheses are discussed in section 6.6, and finally, sections 6.7 and 6.8 highlight the discussion and conclusions respectively.

6.1 Informants' Characteristics

The researcher himself worked as enumerator. The informants from the sampled schools in four districts were gathered in the district headquarters and distributed the questionnaires at one time and collected them simultaneously. For the rest the three district informants, the questionnaires were distributed in person by visiting individual schools. This process not only helped appraise the completeness of the responses through back and forth clarifications whenever necessary, but also ensured a 100 percent response rate. The questionnaires for the GPSs and CMSs were separately administered. All together 255 questionnaires (132 for the GPSs and 123 for the CMSs) were administered during the survey of this study. To begin with the demographic characteristics of the informants, the variables such as gender, position, experience, location, and school type are presented in Table 6.1.
Table 6.1 Respondents’ Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>GPS (N=132)</th>
<th>CMS (N=123)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMC Chair</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 5 years</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 10 years</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terai</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: GPS= General Public School; CMS=Community Managed School

Of the total 132 informants of the GPSs, 90 percent were males, whereas it was 84 percent out of 123 informants for the CMSs. This helps to conclude that females’ involvement in policy implementation was quite low compared to that of males in both types of schools; particularly, the situation was more acute in the case of the GPS. Table 6.1 reveals that the participation of the HTs in the GPSs was 80
percent whereas it was 88 percent for the CMSs; however, the SMC chairs more or less participated on an equal footing in both types of schools. The experience of the informants between the two types of schools was interesting. For example, 71 percent of informants had more than 10 years’ experience in the case of the GPSs, but it was only 33 percent in the case of CMSs. This implies that the policy implementers in the GPSs were more experienced than the CMSs.

Regarding the location of the sampled schools, the share of the GPSs was 8 percent from the mountain region compared to 4 percent of the CMSs of the same region. The reason could be that few schools have been transferred to the community in the mountain region (Department of Education, 2012). There were relatively equal numbers of informants participating in both the hill and terai regions in both cases of schools. It is interesting to mention here that the sampled schools reaffirmed the national figures of the composition of the two types of schools. For example, as discussed in the significance of this study (see Chapter 1), the share of community-managed primary schools was 66 percent whereas its share in lower secondary and secondary schools was only 23 percent and 11 percent respectively (Department of Education, 2012). Table 6.1 therefore reveals that the informants from the community-managed primary schools were 63 percent, whereas it was only 21 percent from the GPSs. The situation for the secondary level was also similar, where 69 percent of the sampled informants were from the GPSs while there were only 34 percent of informants from the CMSs. These facts provide preliminary evidence that small schools were in favour of CMS policy compared to large ones.

### 6.2 Perceptions of Informants of Implementation Performance

This section presents the descriptive statistics of the variables used in this study. The responses were categorized into a seven-point Likert-type response such as "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Somewhat Agree," "Neither Agree nor Disagree," "Somewhat Disagree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree," which were assigned values from 7 to 1 respectively. This scale examined how strongly subjects agreed or disagreed with statement on the current school governance policy. In order to make the analysis shorter and more precise, the responses were categorized into two
different contrasts by combining strongly agree, agree, and somewhat agree into one category, i.e. "Agree," and responses strongly disagree, disagree, and somewhat disagree into another category, i.e. "Disagree." Regarding the responses related to "Neither Agree nor Disagree," it was categorized as "Not Decided" and its value was presented in between the two different contrasts.

6.2.1 Dependent Variable (Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy)

The implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy was measured by two policy output indicators: (1) by a six—item scale in which HTs, teachers, and the SMC chairs of both schools reported their perceptions of the ability of their respective schools to obtain increased community participation in school development.; and (2) by a four—item scale in which HTs, teachers, and the SMC chairs of both schools reported their perceptions of the ability of their respective schools to increase school effectiveness in terms of students' attraction to the school. Finally, both perceptions were combined and added to measure the aggregate perceptions of the informants of the dependent variable. The details are presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Perceptions of Implementers of Implementation Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Decided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are wide discussions among stakeholders while taking the decisions on school affairs.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have sufficient room to manage the school in line with our own plan.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.2 (Continued)

| Both interest and participation of community into school affairs | GPS 55.8 | 1.5 | 42.7 | 100.0 |
| School-community relationships have strengthened | CMS 76.0 | 1.6 | 22.4 | 100.0 |
| Community people frequently visit the school. | GPS 58.6 | 7.8 | 33.6 | 100.0 |
| The parent-teacher association is active in our school. | CMS 63.6 | 5.7 | 30.7 | 100.0 |
| The school is successfully moving forward to achieve the intended goals. | GPS 60.7 | 8.3 | 31.0 | 100.0 |
| The students' attraction has increased. | CMS 61.5 | 8.1 | 30.4 | 100.0 |
| Competition among schools has increased. | GPS 54.8 | 5.3 | 39.9 | 100.0 |
| Students' flow from private schools has increased. | CMS 66.2 | 8.1 | 25.7 | 100.0 |

Note 1: GPS= General Public School; CMS=Community Managed School
Note 2: GPS: Mean = 4.5114; S.D. = 1.07885; Minimum = 2.10; Maximum = 6.70
CMS: Mean = 4.4724; S.D. = 1.10382; Minimum = 2.12; Maximum = 6.76

Table 6.2 exhibits that the informants had different degrees of perception of the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy. The mean scores of both schools (GPS: Mean = 4.51, S.D. = 1.07; CMS: Mean = 4.47, S.D. = 1.10) demonstrated a satisfactory level of policy performance in both types of schools. The overall results indicate that more than 50 percent of informants agreed on the smooth implementation of decentralized school governance policy in both
types of schools. However, it is interesting to mention that the share of disagreement was also equally substantial, which was about 40 percent in average.

6.2.2 Independent Variables

6.2.2.1 Clarity of Policy Objectives

The literature review showed that clear policy objectives can serve as a resource to ensure effective policy implementation. In this regard, how far the decentralized school governance policy was clear enough at the implementing level was critical to assess. For this, five observed variables were administered with the intention of measuring the extent to which the implementers were aware of the intended policy objectives and their impact on implementation performance in both types of schools. The details of the perceptions of the informants are described in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Impacts of Clarity of Policy Objectives on Implementation Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Decided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementers are clear on the policy objectives and their operation.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have already received the implementation guidelines so that they were able to demonstrate the results.</td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers frequently discuss the outputs and the implementation procedures.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers were confident that the educational practices were on the track of the intended results.</td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementer</th>
<th>GPS</th>
<th>CMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>happy and</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfied</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on-going</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: GPS= General Public School; CMS=Community Managed School
Note 2: GPS: Mean = 4.3924; S.D. =1.17828; Minimum =2.00; Maximum =6.80
        CMS: Mean = 4.1543; S.D. =1.06382; Minimum =1.98; Maximum =6.85

Table 6.3 demonstrates the overall perceptions of implementers on the clarity of policy objectives. The mean scores of both schools (GPS: Mean= 4.39, S.D. = 1.17; CMS: Mean= 4.15, S.D. = 1.06) indicated a relatively reasonable level of understanding of policy objectives in both types of schools; however, the perceptions of the implementers varied considerably. The overall results indicated that more than 60 percent of the informants from both types of schools agreed that they could produce the results because of the clear policy objectives, whereas about one-third of the total informants perceived relatively policy objectives as equivocal.

6.2.2.2 Impacts of Capacity of Implementers on Implementation Performance

It can be inferred from the literature that relatively capacity of implementing agency focuses on knowledge of organization members by which implementers are able to focus on shared goals and solutions to problems. Developing capacity at the point of delivery is the prime factor for effective implementation of the policy because relatively limited capacity of schools sharply hampered the implementation performance in various cases. For example, a study conducted by Youngs and King (2002: 647) confirms that schools with stronger initial levels of capacity are more likely to enhance better performance in implementing policy. Considering the findings received from the literature, the existence of capacity at the implementation level was critical to assess. For this, five observed variables were administered in order to measure the impacts of capacity in producing implementation
performance in both types of schools. The details of the perceptions of the informants are described in Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4** Perceptions of Informants on the Role of Capacity on Implementation Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Decided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have received capacity building trainings.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers are administratively and technically competent enough.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The capacity-building trainings received by implementers have helped them to achieve the intended results.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school has developed the school improvement plan.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school revisits its school improvement plan annually.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: GPS= General Public School; CMS=Community Managed School
Note 2: GPS: Mean = 4.5894; S.D. = 1.18291; Minimum =1.60; Maximum = 6.80
CMS: Mean = 4.6163; S.D. = 1.09293; Minimum =1.80; Maximum = 7.00

Table 6.4 reveals the overall perceptions of policy implementers of the existence of capacity, which was supported to produce the implementation performance. The mean scores of both schools (GPS: Mean= 4.59, S.D. = 1.18; CMS: Mean= 4.61, S.D. = 1.09) demonstrated a relatively satisfactory level of existence of capacity in both types of schools. The results also indicated that the level of existence capacity of implementers in both types of schools was fair enough to produce the implementation performance. The overall results indicate that more than 60 percent of
the informants from both types of schools agreed that the existing capacity of implementers has helped produce the results.

6.2.2.3 Impacts of School Size on Implementation Performance

The literature suggests that there is a significant impact of the size of an organization on policy implementation performance (see e.g., Blau, 1972; Hall, 1972; and Kinnberly, 1976). This study therefore adopted the size of school as a variable to assess its impacts on policy implementation performance. It is worth mentioning that about 66 percent of the community-transferred schools were of small in size in the case of Nepal, called primary schools. For this, altogether five observed variables were administered in order to measure the effects of size in producing implementation performance in both types of schools. The details are described in Table 6.5.

**Table 6.5** Perceptions of Implementers on the Impacts of Size of School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Decided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to implement decisions in a small school.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it had a big number of students, it would be difficult to achieve the intended results.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation performances are better in small schools.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders meet frequently to solve problems.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a small school, Implementers have confidently achieved the intended results in a given time.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: GPS= General Public School; CMS=Community Managed School
Note 2: GPS: Mean = 5.2015; S.D. =0.80513; Minimum =3.00; Maximum = 6.80
CMS: Mean = 4.2358; S.D. =1.12964; Minimum =1.80; Maximum = 6.80

Table 6.5 exhibits the overall perceptions implementers on the effects of the size of the school and its impact on implementation performance. The mean scores of both schools (GPS: Mean= 5.20, S.D. = 0.80; CMS: Mean= 4.23, S.D. = 1.12) demonstrated relatively a fair level of agreement on the impact of the size of the school in producing the intended implementation performance in both types of schools. The overall results indicated that almost 60 percent of the informants from the GPS were agreed that small school size has helped to produce results. The informants from the CMS on the other hand were not fully agreed on that. A substantial number of informants noted their indifference (not decided) regarding the impact of the size of the school in producing desired implementation performance.

6.2.2.4 Impacts of the Budget on Implementation Performance

Many scholars have emphasized the budget and have identified it as a critical factor in the realization of the intended policy in action. For example, Younis and Davidson (1990) claim that a budget shortage results in the failure of guaranteeing effective implementation. Ryan (1996: 37) agrees with it and asserts that adequate resources have been a common variable among the highly-cited models developed for policy implementation. This study therefore assumes that the adequacy of the budget has a positive impact on policy implementation performance. For this, altogether five observed variables were administered in order to measure the effects of budget in producing implementation performance in both types of schools. The details of the perceptions of the informants are described in Table 6.6.
Table 6.6 Perceptions of Implementers on the Impacts of Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Decided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The adequacy of the budget has helped to produce results in a smooth way.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers also receive additional budget from the community.</td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementers have a sufficient budget.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school improvement plan has been effectively implemented.</td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school reallocates its budget according to need.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: GPS= General Public School; CMS=Community Managed School

Note 2: GPS: Mean = 4.6197; S.D. =1.17632; Minimum = 1.60; Maximum = 6.80
      CMS: Mean = 4.5724; S.D. = 1.19982; Minimum = 2.00; Maximum = 6.80

Table 6.6 demonstrates the overall perceptions implementers of the adequacy of the budget and its impact on implementation performance. The mean scores of both schools (GPS: Mean= 4.61, S.D. = 1.17; CMS: Mean= 4.57, S.D. = 1.19) indicated a relatively satisfactory level of agreement on the impact of the adequacy of the budget in producing the intended implementation performance in both types of schools. The results of both schools showed a more consistent perception represented by the standard deviations. The overall results indicated that almost 60 percent of the informants from both schools agreed that the adequacy of the budget has helped produce implementation performance.
6.2.2.5 Impacts of Teacher Commitment on Implementation Performance

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) incorporate the commitment of the implementing officials as a non-statutory variable affecting implementation in their model. Several others, for example Goggin et al. (1990), Cheng and Mok (2007) and so on state that street-level bureaucrats or actors are the central actors in policy implementation. Smit's (2005) study also identifies the key role of teachers, whose understanding of policy increases their commitment to, and eventually impacts, implementation. Carney et al.'s (2007) study only focused on CMSs and found teachers' reluctance to implement policy in Nepal. How far their finding still persisted in the case of the CMS and was also compatible with the case of the GPS encouraged selecting teacher commitment as an independent variable for this study. To measure this variable, altogether five observed variables were administered in both types of schools. The details of the perceptions of the informants are described in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Perceptions of Implementers on the Impacts of Teacher Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Decided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are satisfied with the outputs gained so far.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are happy with the implementation of hiring and firing teachers centrally.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teachers hired centrally are professionally competent.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers willingly participate in school activities.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are committed to school improvement.</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: GPS= General Public School; CMS=Community Managed School
Table 6.7 shows the overall perceptions implementers of the commitment of teachers and its impact on implementation performance. The mean scores of both schools (GPS: Mean = 4.51, S.D. = 1.03; CMS: Mean = 4.38, S.D. = 1.12) provides relatively satisfactory level of agreement on the impact of teacher commitment to producing the intended implementation performance in both types of schools. The results further indicated that there were similar perceptions of implementers in both types of schools; however, a higher standard deviation occurred in the case of the CMS, which indicated more dispersed perceptions of the informants. The overall results indicated that almost 50 percent (in average) of the informants from both types of schools were agreed that teacher commitment has helped produce implementation outputs.

### 6.2.3 Summary of the Descriptive Results

The descriptive results of this study were captured in terms of mean, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum values, which have already been elaborated. To recapitulate, the outcomes of the descriptive results are summarized in Table 6.8.

**Table 6.8 Summary of the Descriptive Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>GPS</th>
<th>CMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variable</strong>: Implementation</td>
<td>4.5114</td>
<td>4.4724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance of Decentralized School</td>
<td>1.07885</td>
<td>1.10382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Clarity of Policy Objectives</td>
<td>4.3924</td>
<td>4.1543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Capacity of Implementers</td>
<td>4.5894</td>
<td>4.6163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) School Size</td>
<td>5.2015</td>
<td>4.2358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Adequacy of Budget</td>
<td>4.6197</td>
<td>4.5724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Teacher Commitment</td>
<td>4.5167</td>
<td>4.3837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among the independent variables, Table 6.8 shows that school size accounted for the highest mean value in the case of the GPS, whereas the capacity of implementers was recorded as having the highest mean value in the case of CMS. It was noticed that lower standard deviations of the school size of the GPS and clarity of the policy objectives of the CMS indicated that the responses were more consistent compared to other variables. In regard to the dependent variable, the outcome of the descriptive results demonstrated a satisfactory level of implementation performance in both types of schools. The mean score for the GPS (Mean=4.5114, S.D. =1.07885) was more or less similar that of CMS in producing the intended implementation performance (Mean=4.4724, S.D. =1.10382). Based on the results of the descriptive statistics, the impacts of the different factors in producing the intended implementation performance were relatively similar in both types of schools.

6.3 Results of the Correlation

Correlation was performed to check the multicollinearity problem and to examine the relationships of variables proposed in the conceptual framework separately developed for the GPS and CMS. In doing so, the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy was evaluated in relation to the clarity of policy objectives, capacity of implementers, size of school, adequacy of budget, and teacher commitment. Based on the perceptions of implementers, the correlation matrix between the dependent variable and the independent variables is presented in Table 6.9 for the GPS and in Table 6.10 for the CMS, and the results were interpreted accordingly.
As revealed in Table 6.9, the correlation results among the variables for the GPS satisfy Pallant's (2002: 150) recommendation of bivariate correlations between the dependent variable and independent variables, which should not be more than .7. The results of the Pearson correlation coefficients shown in Table 6.9 also indicated that there was a positive correlation between the dependent variable (implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy) and three anticipated predictors: clarity of policy objectives ($r=.428$, $n=132$, $p<.000$), capacity of implementers ($r=.422$, $n=132$, $p<.000$), and adequacy of budget ($r=.424$, $n=132$, $p<.000$). Yet, there was a positive correlation between implementation performance and teacher commitment ($r=.134$, $n=132$), but it appeared insignificant at the 95% confidence level ($p>.063>.05$). Remarkably, the remaining predictor, i.e. size of school ($r=.055$, $n=132$), was negatively correlated with implementation performance.

### Table 6.9 The Correlation Matrix among Variables in Case of the GPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAOPO</td>
<td>.428***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPAOI</td>
<td>.422***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOLS</td>
<td>-.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADEBUG</td>
<td>.424***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCOMIT</td>
<td>.134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
1. *** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level
2. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
3. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level
and also appeared to be insignificant at the 95% confidence level (p>.266>.05). In a nutshell, the results of Table 6.9 have not only helped in retaining all of the predicted variables, but also supported avoiding the multicollinearity problem.

**Table 6.10** The Correlation Matrix among Variables in Case of the CMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>IPDCMS</th>
<th>CLAOPO</th>
<th>CAPAOI</th>
<th>SCHOLS</th>
<th>ADEBUG</th>
<th>TCOMIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAOPO</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>.622***</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPAOI</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>.490***</td>
<td>.385***</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOLS</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>.298***</td>
<td>.205*</td>
<td>.235**</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADEBUG</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>.687***</td>
<td>.391***</td>
<td>.368***</td>
<td>.153*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCOMIT</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>.271**</td>
<td>.172*</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.407</td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1= *** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level
Note 2= ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
Note 3= * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 6.10 presents the correlation results among the variables for the GPS, which also satisfies Pallant's (2002: 150) recommendation of bivariate correlations between the dependent variable and independent variables, which should not be more than .7. This result has helped in retaining all of the predicted variables. The results of the Pearson correlation coefficients shown in Table 6.10 also indicate that there was a positive correlation between the dependent variable (implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy) and all of the anticipated predictors; namely, clarity of policy objectives (r=.622, n=123, p<.000), capacity of implementers (r=.490, n=123, p<.000), size of school (r=.298, n=123, p<.000), adequacy of budget
(r=.687, n=123, p<.000), and teacher commitment (r=.271, n=123, p<.01). In a nutshell, the results of Table 6.10 have not only helped to retain all of the predicted variables, but also supported the avoidance of the multicollinearity problem.

6.4 Results of the t-Test

A two-sample (independent groups) t-test was performed to determine whether the means of the implementation performance between GPS and CMS were different from each other. If these two-sample means were significantly different, then the population means were declared to be different (Pallant, 2001: 205). Before going through the testing t-statistics, all of the necessary assumptions were first assessed. In doing so, the researcher followed Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007: 79) recommendation, who suggest that a distribution is normal when the values of skewness and kurtosis tend to be zero. Keeping in view their suggestion, skewness and kurtosis were used to assess the distribution of scores on the continuous variables and both of their values were confirmed to be less than ±1, i.e. tended toward zero. In addition, the histograms were also used to check the normality assumptions as suggested by Pallant (2011: 126). The details are shown in Table 6.11.

Table 6.11 Results of the Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Performance [GPS Verses CMS]</th>
<th>Levene's Test</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equ.Va. assumed</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equ.Va. not assu.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: GPS: N=132, Mean=4.5114, S.D. =1.07885; CMS: N=123, Mean=4.4724, S.D. =1.10382
Table 6.11 exhibits the results of the Independent Samples t-test, which was conducted to compare the implementation performance scores for the GPS and CMS. Since the significance value appeared larger than .05 at a 95% confidence level \([t(253) = -0.285; p > 0.776 > 0.05]\), the result obviously confirms that there was not a statistically significant difference in the scores between the implementation performance of the GPS and CMS when equal variance was assumed. Moreover, the magnitude of differences in the means was very small (mean difference = 0.039) and the effect size was also small (Eta squared = 0.00032), which indicated that only 0.03% of the variance in implementation performance could be explained by the types of schools employed for this study. Besides, when considering that the equal variances were not assumed, the result again reflected that there was no significant difference between the means using either assumption regarding the variances. Now it can be concluded that the mean difference of implementation performance of the GPS policy (Mean = 4.5114, S.D. = 1.07885, N = 132) was not significantly different from that of the CMS policy (Mean = 4.4724, S.D. = 1.10382, N = 123) at a 95% confidence level \([t(253) = -0.285; p > 0.776]\).

### 6.5 Results of the Multiple Regressions

The interest in running the multiple regressions was twofold: one, whether the predicted hypotheses supported the models, and two, whether the predicted set of independent variables had an impact on the outcome variable. In doing so, this study used the standard multiple regression technique to determine the most influential factors affecting the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. A separate independent variable was employed for carrying out the influential predictors in producing the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies. This was the reason for developing two separate conceptual frameworks for this study. In order to assess the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of schools, this study predicted five independent variables: Clarity of Policy Objectives (CLAPO), Capacity of Implementers (CAPAOI), Size of School (SCHOLS), Adequacy of Budget (ADBUG), and Teacher Commitment (TCOMIT).
Before testing the intended hypotheses and assessing the model developed for this study, all claims in the questionnaire concerning the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of schools were first analysed by factor analysis. Then, normality, reliability, multicollinearity problems were assessed for not violating critical assumptions in order to run the multiple regression analyses. A standard multiple regression was performed between the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies as the dependent variable and five independent variables by using SPSS version-20 for evaluation of assumptions. The details were already discussed in the methodology chapter of this study. The results of the multiple regression analyses for the two types of schools were separately generated and are discussed accordingly in the following sections.

6.5.1 Regression Results of the GPS Policy

In order to assess whether the predicted hypotheses were supported, and to identify the effects of the predictors on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, a standard multiple regression analysis was performed. The statistics showed that the Tolerance values for each independent variable ranged from .692-.938, which was above the required cut-off value of .10. Similarly, the VIF values (ranged 1.102-1.446) were well below the cut-off point of 5. Both of them proved that the multicollinearity assumptions were not violated. The details of the standard multiple regression results generated for the GPS policy are depicted in Table 6.12.
Table 6.12 Multiple Regression Analysis Results for the GPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients (B)</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients (Beta)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Collinearity Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.710</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.442</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of Policy Objectives</td>
<td>.257</td>
<td>.280</td>
<td>3.363</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity of Implementers</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>2.988</td>
<td>.003**</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of School</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>-.041</td>
<td>-.535</td>
<td>.594</td>
<td>.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy of Budget</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>2.106</td>
<td>.037*</td>
<td>.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Commitment</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.292</td>
<td>.771</td>
<td>.908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R=.558 R²=.311 Adjusted R²=.284 F=11.394 Sig.=.000

Dependent Variable: Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy

Note 1= ** Significant at the 0.01 level
Note 2= * Significant at the 0.05 level

As can be seen in Table 6.12, there were only three variables out of five predictors that appeared to be statistically significantly and that contributed to the implementation performance in case of GPS policy. For example, the coefficient of clarity of policy objectives (Beta= .280) indicated that the strongest unique contributor to explaining the dependent variable. The capacity of the implementers (Beta =.253) remained as the second highest contributor, followed by the adequacy of budget (Beta=.187). The Beta values for teacher commitment (Beta=.023) and for size of school (Beta= -.041) not only appeared as the least scorers in contributing to the prediction of the dependent variable, but also demonstrated insignificant factors for contributing to the implementation performance. This result indicates that there is a
need of convincing teachers in implementing the policy. The results therefore show that the model developed for this study explained 31 percent ($R^2=31\%$, $p<.000$) of the variance in the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy.

### 6.5.2 Regression Results of the CMS Policy

As done for the GPS policy earlier, standard multiple regression analysis was also performed for the case of the CMS to identify the effects of the predictors on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. The statistics show that the Tolerance values for each independent variable ranged from .752-.928, which was above the required cut-off value of .10. Similarly, the VIF values (ranged 1.052-3.330) were well below the cut-off point of 5. Both of them proved that the multicollinearity assumptions were not violated. The details of the multiple regression results generated for the CMS policy are depicted in Table 6.13.

**Table 6.13 Multiple Regression Analysis Results for the CMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients (B)</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients (Beta)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Collinearity Statistics</th>
<th>Tolerance</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-.726</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-1.864</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of Policy Objectives</td>
<td>.310</td>
<td>.327</td>
<td>5.402</td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td></td>
<td>.752</td>
<td>1.330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity of Implementers</td>
<td>.174</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>2.873</td>
<td>.005**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.765</td>
<td>1.307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of School</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>2.137</td>
<td>.035*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.928</td>
<td>1.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy of Budget</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>.457</td>
<td>7.698</td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td></td>
<td>.782</td>
<td>1.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Commitment</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>2.826</td>
<td>.006**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.950</td>
<td>1.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R=.823</td>
<td>R$^2$=.678</td>
<td>Adjusted R$^2$=.664</td>
<td>F=49.217</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sig.=.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dependent Variable: Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy

Note 1= *** Significant at the .001 level
Note 2=** Significant at the .01 level
Note 2=* Significant at the .05 level

Table 6.13 exhibits that all five predictors appeared to be statistically significantly and contributed to the implementation performance in the case of CMS policy. For example, the adequacy of budget possessed the largest coefficient (Beta= .457) and indicated the strongest unique contributor to explaining the dependent variable. Similarly, clarity of policy objectives (Beta= .327) remained as the second highest contributor, followed by the capacity of implementers (Beta=.172). In contrast to the results gained in the case of the GPS policy, the predictors, namely teacher commitment (Beta= .152) and size of school (Beta= .116), significantly contributed to predicting the dependent variable in the case of CMS policy. Yet, these two variables appeared as the least scorers for CMS as in the case of GPS policy. Now it is obvious to conclude that all of the predictors were found to have a better fit in producing the outcome variable through the CMS model. The results therefore show that the model developed for this study explained 67 percent ($R^2=67\%$, $p<.000$) of the variance in the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy.

### 6.6 Research Models and Hypotheses

Taking into account the overall aims of the hypotheses developed for this study, the dependent variable was expected to measure the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy by adopting the following models separately for the two types of school governance policies.

**GPS Model:**

$$IPDGPS= \beta_0 + \beta_1 CLAOPO + \beta_2 CAPOAI + \beta_3 SCHOLS + \beta_4 ADEBUG + \beta_5 TCOMIT + e_0$$

**CMS Model:**

$$IPDCMS= \beta_6 + \beta_7 CLAOPO + \beta_8 CAPOAI + \beta_9 SCHOLS + \beta_{10} ADEBUG + \beta_{11} TCOMIT + e_1$$
Where,

IPDGPS = Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy through GPS Policy (i.e. dependent variable for GPS Model)

IPDCMS = Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy through CMS Policy (i.e. dependent variable for CMS Model)

CLAOPO = Clarity of Policy Objectives
CAPAOI= Capacity of Implementers
SCHOLS = School Size
ADEBUG = Adequacy of Budget
TCOMIT = Teacher Commitment

6.6.1 GPS Model

This model assumed that all five anticipated predictors have a positive impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in the case of GPS policy. This model thus projected five hypotheses (H₁ through H₅) to be tested, as depicted in the conceptual framework (see Figure 3.1). The statistical values captured from the regression analysis are presented in the following equation developed for the GPS policy model.

\[
IPDGPS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CLAOPPO + \beta_2 CAPAOI + \beta_3 SCHOLS + \beta_4 ADEBUG + \beta_5 TCOMIT + e_0
\]

\[
= 1.710 + .280 CLAOPPO + .253 CAPAOI + (-.041) SCHOLS + .187 ADEBUG + .023 TCOMIT + .700
\]

It can obviously be inferred from the GPS model that only three out of the five predictors were statistically, positively significant at F (5,126) =11.394, p<.000, R²=31%. First, the results indicated that the model developed for the GPS policy explained 31 percent of the variations in ensuring implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in the case of the GPS policy. Secondly, the results retained only three hypotheses (H₁, H₂, and H₄) tested under the GPS model. Finally, clarity of policy objectives (Beta=.280) had the highest significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, followed
by the capacity of implementers (Beta=.253) and the adequacy of budget (Beta=.187). The remaining two predictors, namely teacher commitment (Beta=.023) and size of school (Beta= -.041), were found not to be significant at all. These results consistently reiterated the results captured from the Pearson correlation coefficient.

6.6.2 CMS Model

This model assumed that all five anticipated predictors have a positive impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in the CMS policy. This model thus projected five hypotheses (H6 through H10) to be tested, as depicted in the conceptual framework. The statistical values captured from the regression analysis are presented in the following equation developed for the CMS policy model.

\[
\text{IPDCMS} = \beta_6 + \beta_7 \text{CLAPO} + \beta_8 \text{CAPAOI} + \beta_9 \text{SCHOLS} + \beta_{10} \text{ADEBUG} + \beta_{11} \text{TCOMIT} + e_1
\]

\[
= -.726 + .327 \text{CLAPO} + .172 \text{CAPAOI} + .116 \text{SCHOLS} + .457 \text{ADEBUG} + .152 \text{TCOMIT} + .390
\]

It can obviously be inferred from the CMS model that all of the predictors of the model were statistically and positively significant at F (5,117) =49.217, p<.000, R²=67%. First, the results indicated that the CMS model explained 67 percent of the variations in ensuring assumed implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in case of the CMS policy. Secondly, the results retained all the five hypotheses (H6, H7, H8, H9 and H10) tested under the CMS model. Finally, the adequacy of budget (Beta=.457) had the highest significant impact on implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, followed by clarity of policy objectives (Beta=.327), capacity of implementers (Beta=.172), and teacher commitment (Beta=.152) being the least-affected factor, i.e. size of school (Beta=.116). These results consistently supported the results captured from the Pearson correlation coefficient.
6.6.3 Results of Hypothesis Testing

The related hypotheses developed separately for the GPS and CMS are discussed and their results compared as follows. The results of the testing of hypotheses generated from the standard multiple regression analysis reiterated the results captured from the Pearson correlation coefficient.

1) Impacts of Clarity of Policy Objectives on Implementation Performance ($H_1$ & $H_6$: Clarity of policy objectives has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies.)

The statistical results gained from both types of schools for this study showed an alternative hypothesis—that the clarity of policy objectives has a positive and significant impact on respective implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. This result therefore supports the models developed by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975: 463-464), and Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 25), who claim that clear policy objectives have a positive impact on policy implementation. This is because the implementation performance can only be increased if the implementers accept the policy (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181).

2) Impacts of Capacity of Implementers on Implementation Performance ($H_2$ & $H_7$: The strong capacity of implementers has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies.)

The statistical results gained from both types of schools for this study showed an alternative hypothesis—that the capacity of implementers has a positive and significant impact on respective implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. The result of this study therefore asserts the bottom-up theory, in line with the claims made by Goggin et al. (1990: 182-183), Howlett et al. (2009: 6), and Graziano and Winkler (2012: 8). Their study findings confirm that the implementers' capacity at the implementation level is positively related to policy implementation.
3) Impacts of the Size of School on Implementation Performance (H3 & H8: Smaller schools have a greater impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies.)

The statistical result for the case of GPS retained the null hypothesis—that the size of the school has no impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. The result of this study therefore contradicts Blau’s (1972: 3) and Hall's (1972: 139) theories, which assert that the smaller the size of the organization, the greater is the chance of an increase in organizational performance. Conversely, the statistical result gained from the CMS retained its alternative hypothesis—that the size of a school has a positive and significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. The result of this study for the CMS therefore supported the theories developed by Blau (1972: 3) and Hall (1972: 139).

4) Impacts of the Adequacy of Budget on Implementation Performance (H4 & H9: The adequacy of the budget has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies.)

The statistical results gained from both types of schools for this study showed an alternative hypothesis—that the adequacy of budget has a positive and significant impact on implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. These results therefore reiterated claims made by Younis and Davidson (1990: 8), Anderson (1994: 165), and Ryan (1996: 37). Their common claim is that policy implementation will be effective if the system is given enough resources. This evidence is also consistent with a Nigerian study which identified inadequate budget as the main constraint in the implementation of decentralized educational management programs (Ikoya and Ikoya, 2005: 511).

5) Impacts of Teacher Commitment on Implementation Performance (H5 & H10: Teacher commitment has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies.)
The statistical result for the case of the GPS retained the null hypothesis—that the commitment of teachers has no impact on implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. However, the statistical results gained from the CMSs retained the alternative hypothesis—that teacher commitment has a positive and significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. This result therefore restates the strength of the models developed by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975: 472-473) and Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983: 25), who discovered the commitment of the implementing officials as an effective variable for producing better implementation performance. The finding of this study also correlates with Elboim-Dror's (1973: 15) study results, who found that the teachers exclusively influenced the implementation of educational policies. This study further validates Cheng and Mok's (2007: 529) comparative study between the high school-based management schools and the low school-based management schools in Hong Kong.

6.6.4 Summary of the Results of the Tested Hypotheses

To recapitulate, the results of the tested hypotheses generated from the standard multiple regression analyses showed that almost all hypotheses developed for this study were retained as expected. However, the third and fifth hypotheses for the case of the GPS (H₃: The smaller the size of the school, the greater is the impact on implementation performance, and H₅: Teacher commitment has a significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy) did not retain their respective alternative hypothesis because the null hypothesis was not rejected. Table 6.14 contains a brief summary of the intended hypotheses and their empirical results.
Table 6.14 Summary of Results of Tested Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Predicted</th>
<th>Empirical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Clarity of Policy Objectives</td>
<td>IPDGPS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Capacity of Implementers</td>
<td>IPDGPS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Size of School</td>
<td>IPDGPS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>Adequacy of Budget</td>
<td>IPDGPS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>Teacher Commitment</td>
<td>IPDGPS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Clarity of Policy Objectives</td>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>Capacity of Implementers</td>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>Size of School</td>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9</td>
<td>Adequacy of Budget</td>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10</td>
<td>Teacher Commitment</td>
<td>IPDCMS</td>
<td>Sig. (+)</td>
<td>Sig. (+)**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: IPDGPS = Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy through GPS Policy

Note 2: IPDCMS = Implementation Performance of Decentralized School Governance Policy through CMS Policy

Note 3: Sig. (+) = Significantly Positive Impact at *** = p < 0.001, ** = p < 0.01, * = p < 0.05

Note 4: Sig. (-) = Insignificant (Not significant) at all

6.7 Discussion

There were only three predictors—clarity of policy objectives, adequacy of budget, and capacity of implementers—out of five that significantly contributed to predicting the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in the case of the GPS policy. However, for predicting the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy through the CMS, the contribution of all five predictors remained statistically significant. The predictor size of the school remained the least predictor in both the cases. In addition, the size of the
school in the case of the GPS showed a negative direction, whereas it demonstrated a positive direction in the case of the CMS but appeared as a very weak predictor. This gives a clue that there would be no significant effect if the size of school variable were omitted from both models, even though it was weakly statistically significant in the case of the CMS policy.

There could be two reasons for the results gained from the case of the GPS policy. First, the size of the school was not a crucial factor in ensuring implementation performance because the qualitative analysis of this study found better-run schools producing implementation performance unrelated to their size. Secondly, small schools might have been motivated by the short-term benefit, i.e. motivational grants provided by the government. Regarding the teacher commitment, the teachers in the GPSs have felt more secure in terms of salary and job security. In addition, there were several cases revealed by the qualitative results of this study where teachers were paid even though they did not produce the required outcomes in the GPSs. This could be the cause of low teacher commitment in producing the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. This result is consistent with Carney et al.’s (2007) study, where it was found that teachers were reluctant to implement policy in Nepal.

On the other hand, two main reasons could be guessed for the results gained, especially regarding the two variables—size of school and teacher commitment—from the case of the CMS policy. First, the size of the school became one of the predictors for ensuring implementation performance because the national figure shows that about 66 percent of CMSs fall in the small school category (Department of Education, 2012). Of them, the majority have shown better performance (e.g., see Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2008; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011). Secondly, the committed teachers found in the case of the CMSs could be because of two motives. One, teachers have been given autonomy in the CMS. Two, the SMCs have given authority for teacher promotion. This result resembles that of Elboim-Dror (1973: 15), who found that teachers' motivation was an extremely influencing factor in producing better implementation performance of educational policies.
The results of this study confirm Van Meter and Van Horn’s (1975: 463), and Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 25) models. For example, the clarity of policy objectives, adequacy of budget, and capacity of implementers were sustained constantly as the most influencing predictors in predicting the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of schools. This means that these three predictors found a good set of variables to predict the dependent variable, i.e. implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of schools. Nevertheless, their strength of contributions differed. For example, clarity of policy objectives remained as a unique predictor, followed by the capacity of implementers in the case of the GPS policy, whereas it was adequacy of budget followed by clarity of policy objectives for the CMS policy. This finding consistently supported the results from the qualitative analyses of this study.

The results of the t-statistics showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the implementation performance of GPS policy and CMS policy. Two reasons could be guessed here. One, the government could not differentiate the schools running under the two different policies and considered both as public schools and entitled the same criteria to receive grants from the government, as identified by the qualitative results of this study. Two, the motive of transferring schools to community was merely to receive the motivational grants worth NRs. 300,000 (Approximately 3,700 USD) from the government.

According to Pallant (2011: 160), the $R^2$ shows how much of the variance in the dependent variable was explained by the model. The results of this study showed that the model developed for the GPS policy explained 31 percent ($R^2$=31%, $p<.000$) of the variations in ensuring the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, whereas it was 67 percent ($R^2$=67%, $p<.000$) for the CMS. The $R^2$ value for the CMS model remained more than double the value generated for the GPS policy. This provides a clear notion that the CMS policy model appeared to be a better set of predictors compared to the GPS policy model. While comparing the individual predictors, the clarity of policy objectives showed the highest significant impact on implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, followed by the capacity of implementers and adequacy of the budget in the case of the GPS,
whereas the adequacy of the budget had the highest significant impact, followed by clarity of policy objectives and capacity of implementers in the case of the CMS. Interestingly, these three predictors, even though their individual strength differed in terms of predicting their respective outcome variable, demonstrated a good set of variables for producing better implementation performance in the case of both types of school policies.

The low $R^2$ value in the case of the GPS policy could be the outcome of the inclusion of inappropriate predictors in the model. This means that several significant variables might have been left out while developing the model. Leadership can be one of them, which was firmly confirmed by the qualitative results of this study. For example, the evidence collected from the qualitative analysis asserts that a leadership crisis caused the poor implementation performance in both types of schools. Studies also have revealed significant differences in the nature of the HT leadership between schools (e.g., see Youngs and King, 2002: 648).

### 6.8 Conclusions

The main aim of employing the quantitative method was to support the qualitative results. The results of the quantitative analysis consistently supported the results generated from qualitative analysis. For example, the results of both the qualitative and quantitative analyses of this study consistently claimed that the CMS policy was not superior to its counterpart GPS policy in terms of enhancing community participation, and attracting students and retaining them in their respective schools. The results generated from the t-statistics performed for this study also unanimously supported the results generated from the qualitative analysis by exhibiting a statistically-insignificant difference between the implementation performances of the GPS and CMS policies.

The evidence collected from the qualitative analysis of this study firmly affirms that the leadership of the HT strongly contributed to producing implementation performance in both types of schools. This was followed by clarity of policy objectives, availability of budget at the school, school culture, the capacity of implementers at the school level, the school environment, and the policy acceptance
of teachers. In the same line, the standard multiple regression results confirmed that the clarity of policy objectives, adequacy of budget, and capacity of implementers showed the highest significant contributions to the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of school policies.

Last, three conclusions can be drawn from the results of the quantitative analysis. One, the results of the t-statistics confirmed that there was no statistically—significantly difference between the implementation performances of the GPS and CMS policies, which consistently supported the results generated from the qualitative analysis. Two, the statistical results gained from both types of school policies for this study retained respective alternative hypotheses and thus supported the claims made by Van Meter and Van Horn’s (1975), and Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) models. Three, the amount of variance accounting for the GPS and CMS models variance from 31 percent to 67 percent indicates that the CMS model appeared to be a better set of predictors of the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy.
CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a recapitulation of the major findings, along with reflections, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations. At the beginning, the recapitulation of the research questions and its approach, and a brief summary of the major findings and reflections are covered in section 7.1. Section 7.2 discusses the combined results and finally conclusions are drawn in section 7.3, followed by the contributions of the study in section 7.4. This chapter concludes with some recommendations for policy makers in section 7.5., and section 7.6 deals with recommendation for future research.

7.1 Recapitulation

7.1.1 Research Questions and Approaches

As discussed earlier in chapters 1 and 3, there are numerous striking examples of variation between countries with regards to their school governance policies, which seem to swing as a pendulum between centralization and decentralization. As such Nepal’s school governance policy has remained indecisive in this regard while covering a problematic domain by presenting a conflict in its direction between centralized and de-centralized policy. In general, however, a centralized school governance policy has been practiced irrespective of several efforts towards decentralization. Despite this practice, after the 1990 era (the reformative era), government policy and plans have strongly emphasized moving towards a decentralized framework to find a balance between centralized and de-centralized school governance policy. The current policy of management transfer from public schools to the community appears as a result of this new era. Despite the government of Nepal having made strong policy provision with necessary legal arrangements,
several obstacles has been encountered in the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy.

After the introduction of the CMS policy, it ultimately created two types of public schools in Nepal. One is the CMSs and the other is the GPSs. Now the justification of operating two types of government public schools is the focus of a policy debate in Nepal. Interestingly, these two types of public schools, run under two different policies, are virtually located in the same neighborhood. They are of approximately the same size, and serve similar communities; however, several past researches (e.g., Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy, 2008; Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009; Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011) conducted in Nepal claim that the CMSs did possess excellent performance in enhancing community participation and in retaining students after introducing the decentralized school governance policy there. How far it is true that the CMSs are better-off than their GPS counterparts is the main significance of this study. This study therefore was undertaken to explore and compare the implementation performance between two types of schools. In doing so, this research uncovers answers to the following research questions.

1) What does the prevalent school governance policy look like in Nepal?
2) What are the intents of policy makers and how do the implementers (end users) perceive the current policy?
3) To what extent have the CMSs been successful in increasing community participation for school improvement and school effectiveness in terms of the student attraction compared to their GPS counterparts that it was intended to produce?
4) What are the factors associated with the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy?
5) Does the “CMS policy” work as a viable instrument in the decentralization process of the school governance systems in Nepal?
6) What are the determinants that have contributed to widening gaps between intended and attained policy?
In order to answer the above research questions, this study primarily adopted a case study approach. The case studies were supplemented by an intensive review of the literature, document analysis, interviews, focus group discussions, and observations. In addition, a quantitative approach was also adopted to support the qualitative results. The outcomes of all these techniques helped to arrange the findings according to the research questions, and to relate the findings with the conceptual frameworks developed for this study. The major findings captured by this study are summarized and discussed as follows.

7.1.2 A Brief Summary of the Major Findings

The literature reviewed for this study revealed that school governance policies have changed over time to respond effectively both to national demands and global changes. These changes take place, time and again, due to the shift in roles of the national government, and changes in the technological and socio-economic profiles of a nation. As a result, the literature suggests that centralized governance policy appears, disappears, and reappears (e.g., see Kuiper et al., 2008) in many countries in a cyclic process. The movement toward decentralizing the responsibility of school governance to communities has become a global phenomenon, particularly since the 1990s. Introduction of the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal is the outcome of that global movement. However, the efforts toward decentralization so far in practice have taken the form of de-concentration, which can be considered one of the weakest forms of decentralization (Rondinelli et al., 1989: 75). Two distinct models were extracted from the results of this study. Model 1 represents a publicly-funded and publicly-managed school governance model that emphasizes bureaucratic control over the school; for example, GPSs basically fall under this model. Model 2, on the other hand, is a publicly-funded and community-managed model that stresses community control over the school; for example, CMSs fall under this model to some extent.

The fundamental aim of the CMS policy is to promote community participation in and ownership of school development, and to increase students' attraction and to retain them in public schools. Interestingly, however, the empirical results of this study derived both from the qualitative and quantitative analyses could
not detect any distinct changes that had significantly occurred in the CMSs as compared to the GPSs. Remarkably, as reiterated by other qualitative techniques employed for this study, the results of the cross-case findings of this study helped to further arrive at more reliable results—that the two separate policies introduced for running the GPS and CMS have not shown substantial difference in their implementation performance. This result was consistently supported by the results of the quantitative analysis. Instead, the HT's role, i.e. leadership, was found to be the most influential factor for achieving intended policy outputs in both types of schools. The results of this study pinpoint a set of causal factors, particularly the leadership of the HT, the clarity of policy the objectives, the availability of the budget at school, organizational culture, the level of capacity at schools, the school environment, and policy acceptance by teachers, that were strongly associated with the implementation performance of the intended policy. Among them, leadership was seen as the strongest unique contributor to achieving intended implementation performance.

7.1.3 Reflections

The policy documents reviewed for this study have recognized SMCs as the main actor of school governance and management. However, the degree of authority to be provided to the SMCs varies from one policy to another. The case study approach adopted for this study helped to explore in-depth case analysis of the current school governance policy. Employing policy makers, policy analysts, and implementers to obtain information from policy, research, and practice points of view added extra strengths to this study. For example, document analysis and interviews with policy makers contributed to identifying policy intentions, whereas research perspectives were captured from the literature review, the research findings, and the interviews with policy experts and assisted in exploring the reasons for contributing to the gaps between the intended and implemented policy. Finally, the practice perspective gathered from the policy implementers' perceptions helped to analyze the implementation performance of the intended policy. These three perspectives facilitated making comparisons between the two types of policies. Further, the advantages of using other instruments such as observations and focus group discussions provided great flexibility in questioning and gathering in-depth
information on real contexts. Finally, the quantitative approach employed for this study helped to increase the strengths of generalizing the study results.

The literature reviewed for this research opened up several perspectives on school governance policies and assisted in internalizing and analyzing the intentions of the policy documents of Nepal. Similarly, the preparation of semi-structured interview guidelines helped to gather intended information in a sequential order. However, the field visit program was not able to conduct joint discussion sessions for policy implementers and policy makers due to time constraints. It was realized that joint discussion sessions could be a useful technique to capture cross-case information as regards the intended and perceived policy.

So far as the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy is concerned, the quality of answers to the aforementioned research questions has a strong base. First of all, this study employed a combination of relevant informants in order to capture information from policy, research, and practice perspectives. The informants were: policy makers that were working in the ministry; policy experts that were directly involved in developing the SSRP and also were on the Education Policy Committee; and finally, HTs and SMC chairs, who were the main implementers of the policy. The strength of the combination of the informants and use of mixed methods has remarkably contributed to inferring a valid conclusion for this study. The findings of this study therefore would be applicable to revisit the policy and equally beneficial for paying attention to the better implementation of the intended policy.

7.2 Discussion of the Combined Results

7.2.1 Prevalent School Governance Policy of Nepal

Policy makers have claimed that the present school governance policy is decentralized in nature with the intention of finding a better balance between prescriptive and local demands. This gives rise to the idea that the intention of the government was not to move toward a complete devolution. The potential risks seen by the policy makers were availability of budget at the local level, clarity of policy objectives, readiness of the schools, and capacity of implementers. The majority of
interviewees, especially policy analysts—that participated in this study mentioned that the intention of the current school governance policy was influenced by top-down features. For example, the results of the document analysis showed that the government's intention was to divide the responsibility of public school management between the government and the community. To do so, the community was assumed to be responsible for implementing the policy in line with the centrally-developed guidelines and directives. This process looks like Hill's (2005: 178) top-down process of policy implementation, which states that policy is considered as the property of the center and controlled implementers through prescriptive implementation guidelines.

When analyzing the cross-interpretation between the policy makers and the HTs, the current school governance policy can be inferred as a mixed policy. Two basic reasons were identified for adopting a mixed policy. First, local levels are not technically ready; therefore, central interventions are essential. Second, diversity in the demand for education (for example mother-tongue education) has contributed to a move toward more decentralization. This result reflects Ryan's (1996: 35) interpretation of Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975) model guided by state control policies, but attempts are made to unify both top-down and bottom-up features on policy implementation as Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) model visualized.

7.2.2 Intention of Policy Makers and the Perceived Attitude of the Implementers

The prime intention of policy makers seemed to move toward a broader policy guideline to find a balance between prescriptive and local demands, keeping in view the strengths and opportunities of the policy (Nieveen and Kuiper, 2012). However, several weaknesses and threats were observed, notably ignorance of the capacity of implementers, budget limitations, and the readiness of the local school. While analyzing the SWOT analysis of prevalent school governance policy, the interviewees perceived unanimously that national politics and donors' interests have greatly influenced current school governance policy, followed by the social and cultural factors.

Remarkable dissimilarities were detected between the policy makers and policy implementers on the intentions and perceived attitudes of the decentralized
school governance policy. For example, policy makers tried to interpret prevalent policy as decentralized, as discussed earlier, whereas policy experts and policy implementers contradicted this view. Especially, experts were critical of policy makers in their intentions for several reasons, particularly a traditional bureaucratic tendency, centralized political systems, influence of change resisters, unfaithfulness of central-level agencies toward local schools, and hidden agenda in order not to lose power from central-level organizations. Similar perceptions were observed by the HTs and SMC chairs. Their view was that the decentralized school governance policy merely remained on paper, but it has been practiced differently. This can be taken as an example to spell out how schools were compelled to follow centralized ruling in the name of decentralization. Bottom-uppers therefore take it as a strong weakness of the top-downers (Pülzl and Treib, 2007: 90). This kind of gap persisting between policy makers and implementers might have contributed to low implementation performance in the case of both types of schools. Vedung (1997) and Love (2004) are therefore extremely concerned about such perceptual gaps, which need to be minimized in order to achieve intended policy outputs, because implementation performance can only be increased if the implementers accept the policy (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181).

Consistent with Simon's (2007: 141-142) view of diverse human understanding due to the vague guidelines, the results of this study also demonstrated an adverse contribution of diverse understandings among implementers in materializing the intended policy objectives. For example, on the one hand, HTs were in doubt as to receive regular grants once the school transferred to the community. It can be taken as a rooted confusion with the policy intention. On the other hand, teachers in the GPSs have felt more secure in terms of their job even in the case of producing worst results. It can be treated as a wrong perception of the policy implementers. It appeared that in both cases there was a big information gap between policy makers and implementers. Two reasons were identified: one, there was a lack of wider policy dissemination and poor policy implementation support systems. This finding replicates Pick et al.’s (2007: 158) study result, which confirmed that if the implementers are confused about the roles to be played then it limits the implementation performance. Two, the policy was made to be supply driven instead
of making it more demand based. Younis and Davidson (1990: 8) therefore proposed a bottom-up approach in which individuals working at the implementation levels are focused on.

7.2.3 Comparisons of Implementation Performance between GPS and CMS

Decentralized school governance policy was introduced to boost community participation, to develop ownership, and to attract students to public schools (National Planning Commission, 2002). The results from the cross-case analyses, interviews, and focus group discussions contrasted with the intention of the policy, because community participation was substantially eroded in both types of schools; even the case of the CMS was found to be the worst compared to the GPS. In contrast, the case analysis showed increased parental support in the CMSs compared to the GPSs. This practice resembles Van Horn's (1979: 141) view of ensuring people participation in organizational survival. On the other hand, the cross-case study demonstrated that a resource-dependence problem (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978: 2) has intensely increased in both types of schools due to poor community participation.

This study envisioned school effectiveness in terms of students' attraction and was taken as one of the measures of the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. The results of the case studies and interviews revealed that students' attraction had increased in both types of schools for two reasons. One was the role of the HT, which also was reflected in the study of Youngs and King (2002: 648). The observations carried out for this study also supported this. Two, the students' inflow was extremely reduced due to low quality of education in both types of schools. For example, the cases of the non-teaching staff discussed in the cross-case analysis—who took their children out of their respective schools and enrolled them in private schools, are sufficient proof to back up this reason. Both the interviews and focus group discussions in this concern therefore recognized that lack of English-medium instruction in both the types of schools contributed to the low profiles of public schools.

The results generated from the qualitative analysis strongly contradicted the views of policy makers and implementers. For example, policy makers urged that
CMS policy remain as an instrumental to increase community participation and student attraction, but the information received from the qualitative results, such as cross-case analysis, interviewees with policy experts and implementers, and focus group discussions, did not support this. The results of the quantitative analysis also consistently supported the results of the qualitative analysis. This finding helped to add value to Burde's (2004: 84) study, but countered the findings captured by the Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy (2008), the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (2009), and the Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited (2011) in the case of Nepal. In a nutshell, the results of this study claimed that there was no superiority of CMS over GPS policy; subsequently it is the role of leadership which has played the strongest unique contributor to enhancing expected policy outputs.

Established organizational culture in the form of good practices, such as regularity of students and teachers, introduction of English medium instruction, regular meetings of SMC and parents, consultations among stakeholders for developing the SIP, and parents' visits to schools, has become more functional in both types of better-run schools. Similar results were also observed by Levin (2011: 74) in the case of New Zealand, and Mukundan and Bray (2004: 226) in the case of India, but the result refutes the study finding of the Centre for Policy Research and Consultancy (2008) in the case of Nepal. Several pertinent reasons can be seen from the results of this study. First, implementers were quite convinced by the GPS policy objectives. Second, teachers were more motivated by the GPS policy. On the other hand, the teachers in the CMSs might believe that the CMS policy would be a barrier to their professional career development. The second reason noticed was the information gap between intended and perceived policy. For example, it seems that the teachers were more secure with the GPS policy compared to CMS policy.

### 7.2.4 Factors Associated with the Implementation Performance

The results of the qualitative analysis identified that the strongest unique contributor associated with the increase in community participation and students' attraction was the cause of leadership. This factor was found to persist in both types of well-running GPSs and CMSs. The evidence collected from the qualitative analysis of
this study therefore asserts that actual implementation performance is predominantly influenced by the existence of good practices of effective leadership. Several studies also have revealed significant differences in the nature of the HT leadership between the schools (e.g., see Youngs and King, 2002: 648). The result of this study thus firmly becomes an advocate of Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983: 22) model, who also visualizes leadership skills as central to policy implementation.

The qualitative results remarkably recognized the leadership of the HT followed by a number of set variables, chiefly clarity of policy objectives, availability of a budget at school, school culture, capacity of implementing policy in the schools, school environment, readiness of the schools, and policy acceptance of teachers, which were associated with the implementation performance of the intended policy. Except for leadership, the informants from the GPSs focused more on availability of the budget and capacity development, whereas the informants from the CMSs emphasized policy clarity and commitment of the teachers. The results from the qualitative analysis were consistently supported by the results of the quantitative analysis. For example, the quantitative results showed that clarity of policy objectives, adequacy of budget, and capacity of implementers remained the most influencing predictors of the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of schools. This means that these three predictors constituted a good set of variables in predicting the dependent variable, i.e. implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. Nevertheless, the strength of predicting power of individual variables differed between the types of schools. For example, clarity of policy objectives remained a unique predictor, followed by the capacity of implementers and adequacy of the budget in the case of GPS policy, whereas it was adequacy of the budget that was placed at the top, followed by clarity of policy objectives, and capacity of implementers for the case of CMS policy. This result restates the strengths of both Van Meter and Van Horn’s (1975) and Mazmanian and Sabatier's (1983) models of policy implementation.

The HTs and the SMC chairs from the GPSs were found to be chiefly focused on the availability of the budget for achieving the implementation performance in terms of policy outputs. The cross-case analysis of this study also reveals that those schools which were able to collect additional resources on top of the government
grants seemed to be successful in achieving policy objectives irrespective of the particular policy. This could be the reason that many scholars have emphasized the budget and have identified it as a critical variable in realizing the intended policy (e.g., see Edwards, 1980; Younis and Davidson, 1990; Anderson, 1994; Ryan, 1996; Kochar, 2004; Crampton, 2009; Hu et al., 2009). The statistical results from both types of schools also confirmed that the adequacy of the budget had a positive and significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. This result not only supports the claims made by Younis and Davidson (1990: 8), Anderson (1994: 165) and Ryan (1996: 37), but is also consistent with a Nigerian case where an inadequate budget remained the main constraint in the implementation of decentralized educational management programs (Ikoya and Ikoya, 2005: 511).

Informants from the GPSs, along with policy experts, felt that a shortage of capacity at the school level has adversely affected in bringing about the required changes. The cross-case findings of this study point out that the lack of capacity at school level has forced implementers to resist new changes. In line with the qualitative result, the quantitative result also exhibited the capacity of implementers as one of the main contributors to predicting implementation performance. This is the reason why there was a low rate of schools transferring to the community. This result is compatible with Graziano and Winkler's (2012: 8) study finding, which confirmed that the lack of capacity of implementing agencies has led to several implementation failures in decentralized governance policies. The statistical results gained from the quantitative analysis of this study also supported the alternative hypothesis—that the capacity of implementers had a positive and significant impact on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of schools. The result of this study therefore asserts the claims of the bottom-up theory in realizing the intended policy outputs (e.g., see Goggin et al., 1990: 182-183; Howlett et al., 2009: 6).

The informants from the CMSs on other hand noted exclusively that teachers’ beliefs need to be changed to introduce new innovations, because the intended policy outputs can only be achieved if implementers accept the changes (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979: 181). The result of this study also validates Elboim-Dror's (1973:
15) and Smit's (2005: 300) studies, which confirmed the key role of teachers whose understanding of policy increases their commitment to, and eventually impacts, implementation. The quantitative results of this study for the CMS firmly confirmed that teacher commitment had a positive and significant impact on implementation performance. This result further resembles Cheng and Mok's (2007) comparative study, which confirmed that teacher commitment remains instrumental in high school-based management in Hong Kong, and also is associated with Carney et al.'s (2007) study findings in the case of Nepal. Interestingly, the quantitative results of this study show that the teacher commitment to the GPSs was not a significant contributor. One of the reasons could be that the teachers in the GPSs have felt more secure in terms of salary and job security. The proof of this reason can also be supported by the evidence collected from the cross-case findings of this study.

Consistent with Brever and Deleon's (1983: 66) claim, it was evident from the results of the quantitative analysis of this study that the clearer the policy, the better were the chances of increasing implementation performance in both types of schools. The cross-case findings also help to draw the inference that both types of better-run schools were more confident regarding policy objectives compared to poor-performer schools, a consistent result also witnessed from the focus group discussions and observations of this study. Two reasons can be drawn from this result. One, implementers were convinced by the policy. Two, the HTs might have foreseen a powerful SMC as a threat in the case of CMS policy. For example, the focus group discussions capture the information that the HTs from the GPSs were found to be more committed to the implementation of the GPS policy compared to the CMS policy. Van Meter and Van Horn's (1975: 482) interpretation appears critical here—that implementation may not produce the expected performance if there are conflicts between policy makers and implementers.

7.2.5 Viability of CMS Policy

The qualitative analyses of this study help to infer a common result—that the HT is the key actor in the effective implementation of educational policies and programs. Irrespective of the two policy provisions introduced for the decentralized school governance systems in Nepal, the empirical results of this study showed the
role of the HT as the strongest unique contributor to enhancing community participation, increasing student attraction, and mobilizing resources. Due to the limitation of this study, this factor was not included in the models developed for carrying out the comparisons between the two types of policies.

The cross-case findings of this study further drew the conclusion that the public schools in Nepal have become low-income groups’ or labors/workers’ school. The school cannot charge any fees for them, because it is beyond their affordability. Parents do not care about their children's education for two reasons: one, the parents are struggling with hand-to-mouth problems; two, they are illiterate. This finding gives rise to the idea that the socio-economic condition of the community in Nepal and the intention of the CMS policy do not match each other. Burde (2004: 84) therefore suspects that too much dependency on the community might have adverse effects on equity and social solidarity.

Apparently both the results of the qualitative and quantitative analyses revealed that there were no notable explanations of the superiority of CMS over GPS policy. This evidence is sufficient to plead that how a policy is implemented and what has been achieved are crucial for determining policy outputs. Several good practices, particularly the regularity of students and teachers, introduction of English medium instruction, regular meetings of the SMC, and parents' visit to schools were visibly noticed in both types of better-run schools, which was firmly the outcome of the HTs' leadership quality.

7.2.6 Determinants of the Widening Gaps between Intended and Attained Policy

The results of this study found five great weaknesses in terms of the widening gaps between intended and attained policy. One, the government could not differentiate the nature of the schools between GPS policy and CMS policy. Both schools were considered as public schools and entitled the same criteria for receiving grants from the government. Two, the government did not create strict rules for regulating the poor-performing GPSs. This has produced a wrong policy message—that teachers that were in the GPSs are paid even they do not produce minimum results. Three, the distance control systems that have persisted in the school
governance systems have further contributed to widening gaps between intended and perceived policy. Henceforth, paperwork has remained a bottom-up approach, but a top-down approach is deeply rooted in actual practice. Fullan's (2001) observation seems valid here. Fullan states that educational decentralization as a concept hides more than it reveals. Four, the policy was not validated by the parents, community members, or teachers. It has made a distance link between policy makers and implementers. Five, the cross-case analysis of this study suggests that the poor commitment of both the HTs and teachers has remained an acute problem for translating intended policy into actual action. The lack of regular orientations and lack of capacity-focused programs at the school level have substantially deferred gaining teacher commitment to practice.

7.3 Conclusions

The literature reviewed for this study revealed that the school governance policies have changed over time to attempt to respond effectively both to national demands and global changes. These changes take place, time and again, due to the shift in roles of the national government, and changes in the technological and socio-economic profiles of a country. The literature therefore reiterates repeatedly the fact that adopting a good policy is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for achieving the intended outputs, because intended policy needs to be implemented accordingly (Balzarova, 2004: 391). Keeping in view this fact, the intention of this study was to examine a comparative picture of the implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy between two types of school policies.

The results of the document review revealed that the centralized practice remained unchanged against the intention of decentralization. However, the efforts towards decentralization so far in practice have taken the form of de-concentration, which can be considered one of the weakest forms of decentralization (Rondinelli et al., 1989). For example, the results of this study extracted Model 2, a publicly-funded and community-managed model that stresses the community control over school (compatible to Leithwood and Menzies's, 1998, third model), i.e., CMSs fall under this model to some extent. However, the government could not differentiate the nature
of the schools between GPS policy and CMS policy. Both schools are considered as public schools and entitled to the same criteria to receive grants from the government. The results of this study therefore suggest stopping the dual policy that currently persists in the school governance systems in Nepal.

The fundamental aim of decentralized school governance policy is to promote community participation in school development, and to increase students' attraction, and the efficiency and accountability of schools (National Planning Commission, 2002). Remarkably, the empirical results of this study derived from both the qualitative and quantitative analyses did not find any distinct changes that had occurred in the CMSs as compared to the GPSs. This study therefore concludes that there is no difference between centrally-controlled and locally-managed GPS policy and community-owned and locally-governed CMS policy. Moreover, the results of this study not only countered to some international cases (e.g., see Bush and Gamage, 2001; Ho, 2006; Resh and Benavot, 2009), but also countered national studies (e.g., National Council for Economic and Development Research, 2008; Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2009, Full Bright Consultancy Private Limited, 2011). This result is sufficient evidence to claim that how a policy is implemented and what has been achieved are crucial for determining policy outputs. The precise conclusion is that better implementation performance is the outcome good harmony between the community, SMC, HT and teachers in general, and leadership in particular.

The qualitative results of this study helped to propose a causal model consisting of predictors; notably, leadership, clarity of policy objectives, availability of a budget, school culture, capacity of implementers, and school environment. Surprisingly, the results gained from the qualitative results consistently supported the quantitative results of this study. Particularly, the clarity of policy objectives, adequacy of budget, and capacity of implementers were most influencing predictors in terms of predicting the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in both types of schools. Nevertheless, the contributions varied between the types of school policies. This means that these three predictors constituted a good set of variables in predicting the intended policy outputs in line with the literature and theory discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of this study (e.g.,
see Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975; Kinnberly, 1976; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979; Edwards, 1980; Brever and Deleon, 1983; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983; Goggin et al., 1990; Ryan, 1996; Leithwood and Menzies, 1998; Kochar, 2004; Hill, 2005; Crampton, 2009; Hu et al., 2009; Smith and Larimer, 2009; Birkland, 2011).

Although a number of predictors have been identified as critical determinants for predicting the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy, the leadership in schools exhibited a primacy in determining better implementation performance. The results of this study therefore help to conclude that it is leadership which has made for better-run schools irrespective of the particular policy. In reference to this conclusion, the researcher has proposed a new causal inductively-derived model comprising a strong set of predictors for achieving better implementation performance of the decentralized school governance policy (see Figure 7.1).

![Figure 7.1 A Causal Model Derived From the Results of This Study](image-url)
7.4 Contributions of the Study

7.4.1 Contribution to Theory

Much research has profoundly focused on the comparative analysis of public and private schools. There is hardly any field-level research, however, in the literature on the comparative picture of policy implementation performance between the two types of public schools. This study has initially fulfilled this scarcity. To be precise, on the theoretical side, the key challenge was to find an alternative model for solving the problems encountered in policy implementation. This study has succeeded in pointing out the contextual limitations of the existing policy implementation models (Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979; Brever and Deleon, 1983; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983; Goggin et al., 1990; Ryan, 1996; Leithwood and Menzies, 1998) and proposed a new causal model for bridging the gap. For example, out of the selected five independent variables from these theories, only three had direct impacts on the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy in Nepal; namely, clarity of policy objectives, adequacy of budget, and capacity of implementers. The other two anticipated independent variables—size of school and teacher commitment—did not have direct impacts on implementation performance. Instead, the enquiries of this study discovered a new variable, i.e. superiority of leadership in the school, for determining the better implementation performance of the intended policy. This finding further helps to claim a theoretical contribution—that the researcher has developed a new causal model to test and guide theory development and future research to confirm the predictive power of the hypothesized predictors for achieving the intended implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. Last, concerning a theoretical contribution, previous studies have asserted the significant advantage for CMS policy without confirming its causal predictors; the results of this study claim its strength a step ahead by tracking specific paths of variables (see Figure 7.1) to visualize the direct impacts on implementation performance.
7.4.2 Contribution to Practice

On the empirical side, methodological strength is the main practical contribution of this study. For example, several studies suggest the generally positive effects of decentralization, but it is difficult to draw conclusive result due to their methodological limitation. This study evaluated the initial outputs of ongoing decentralization initiatives in Nepal, analyzing it between centrally-controlled and community-owned public schools using mixed methods. This study has provided additional inputs into the policy formulation function on one hand at the macro level, for example, how a policy is implemented and what has been achieved are crucial for determining policy outputs; and on the other hand, the causal determinants inductively identified by this study play a significant role while carrying out policy decisions and their implementations at the micro or school level. For example, the results of this study clearly spell out that the "one size fits all" policy implementation model does not fit different socio-cultural environments because each school is unique in nature. The key point noted from the results of this study is that the success in making changes is caused by an effective leadership and established school culture. The results of this study derived from the qualitative analysis therefore point out that school culture or organizational culture, which can only be fostered by effective leadership, was one of the influential determinants for confirming the implementation performance. This result therefore implies the practical implication of this study, that is, providing more authority to the HTs and empowering them accordingly to increase implementation performance.

7.5 Recommendations of the Study

A balance of autonomy between policy makers and implementers appears to be a viable strategy to realize the intended changes through decentralized school governance policy. For example, the results of this study indicate a multi-level governance policy whereby service needs to be guaranteed by the government in order to address teachers’ concerns, for work to be guaranteed by teachers in order to gain the confidence of parents, the HTs’ need to be empowered as leaders rather confining them to mechanical work in order to establish a school culture, and the need
for supervision to be taken care of by the SMCs in order to ensure that the intended policy is put into action. For this, a wide range of consultation with stakeholders is regarded as of paramount importance in the process of developing educational policy, and involvement of teachers is essential for fostering the sustainable effectiveness of the intended changes in actual transformations. This study therefore recommends that policy makers perceive the real “voice” and “choice” of implementers as policy inputs and foster a consumer culture in order to lessen the gaps between intended and perceived policy objectives.

The results of this study help to derive evidence that school governance policy is neither solely "top-down" nor completely "bottom-up" in nature; it requires a balance between these two extremes. This balance point can be termed multi-level governance policy, with plenty of autonomy to the HT. Ainley and McKenzie (2000: 145) call it “integrated governance.” In doing so, the results of this study allow to make the following recommendations.

1) The results of this study confirm that there was no superiority of CMS policy over GPS policy; it was the role of leadership, which remained the strongest unique contributor to enhancing expected policy implementation performance. This study therefore suggests stopping the dual policy in order to improve the profiles of the public schools in Nepal.

2) The dedication and leadership skills of the HTs have successfully achieved the implementation performance of the intended policy. For example, the HT’s commitment toward school improvement helped boost the implementation performance in both types of schools. Based on this finding, this study therefore recommends that HTs should be given leadership roles rather than limiting them to executing only mechanical tasks.

3) The technical and academic capabilities of the HTs, SMCs, and teachers need to be urgently addressed for two reasons. One, increased capacity helps to fill the gaps that persist at the levels of implementation performance between the two different schools. Two, capacity enhancement schemes encourage teachers to accept new changes (for example, running English medium classes). To do so, a comprehensive capacity improvement plan needs to be developed by focusing on new
technologies and professional career development for all policy implementers as a part of capacity development.

4) Even though the intention of the decentralized school governance policy is to make the schools autonomous, the results of this study do not support the idea that schools are independently functioning due to the dominant roles of the DEO. The results of this study therefore recommend providing more authority to HTs to increase implementation performance, because HTs' commitments have shown significant positive results in achieving better policy implementation performance.

5) The results of this study exhibited that policy clarity had positive effects on the implementation performance of the intended policy. However, the better-run schools captured in this study showed much confusion concerning the policy objectives, and therefore attention should be paid to the dissemination of policy and the readiness of the implementing agency to achieve a uniform understanding of the intended policy.

6) The organizational culture needs to be strengthened to motivate teachers to accept new changes and to foster the commitment of the teachers, which will further help to develop a sense of ownership in implementing educational policy. In addition, the results of this study outlined some of the established school features, such as effective leadership, good harmony between the HT and teachers, committed teachers, a cooperative SMC, a conducive school environment, and a team-working culture. These best practice approaches of better-run schools can be institutionalized and transferred to other schools.

7) The evidence collected from the cases of this study demonstrates that the availability of a budget has played a significant role in materializing intended policies. Regardless of adopting two different policies, both types of schools captured in this study were found to be underfinanced. To address this issue, first, the government should be responsible for ensuring financial and technical resources. Secondly, resource capitalization skills need to be strengthened to reduce the budget deficit issues in schools.

8) The commitment of teachers was found to be a necessary condition to bring about the intended changes. For example, this study found that the teachers were committed to implementing the intended policy in the better-run schools. The
reason identified was that the HT, teachers, and SMC chair had a good culture of sharing. This shows that good harmony and transparent systems among the teaching and non-teaching staff contribute to the materialization of policy outputs. The decentralized school governance policy should create an environment that motivates teachers to enroll their children in the public schools where they teach; this would certainly not only reinforce the teacher’s commitment to the implementation of the policy, but also would help to regain the parents' confidence in the public schools.

9) If and only if the CMS policy is the bottom line of the government policy, then there is a need for a series of dialogues and discussions with the teachers and their unions for gaining the confidence of the teachers. If not, this study firmly recommends withdrawing the CMS policy and ending the misinterpretations of the GPS policy that teachers would continuously get paid even if they do not produce the required results. This sort of a wrong understanding of the policy should be ended by introducing performance-based pay in all types of schools.

10) Finally, the results of this study favour neither Model 1 nor Model 2 for achieving better implementation performance. This study therefore recommends finding a better balance between these two extremes, which could be instrumental in materializing decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. It should be strongly noted that it is beyond the scope of this study to assess the alternatives of the model, and therefore rigorous further study on this issue is recommended. The main advantages predicted in the recommended policy are of two-fold. One, there will not be a chance of operating two types of government-funded public schools, which was the main policy problem encountered while implementing the decentralized school governance policy in Nepal. Two, the recommended policy guarantees school autonomy and shifts focus to institutionalized community participation in the school governance systems in Nepal.

7.6 Recommendation for Future Research

The results of this study indicate a number of areas in which further research is needed. However, as mentioned in the conclusion, the results of this study help to arrive at the conclusion that the leadership was strongest unique contributor in
translating policy into action. In reference to this finding, this study has developed a causal model consisting of a set of predictors, particularly, leadership, clarity of policy objectives, availability of budget, school culture, capacity of implementers, and school environment, to predict the intended policy outputs. However, they need to be rigorously tested. Very specifically, future research can thus begin with an empirical study not only to examine the strengths of the six predictors hypothesized in Figure 7.1, but also to confirm the model for predicting the implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy. Mixed methods might be an effective approach for conducting the recommended future research, as was carried out for this study. Field interviews with parents and surveys of teachers, which are highly marginalized in contemporary research, would be added information for assessing the actual implementation performance of decentralized school governance policy.
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Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development. 2008. **A Study on School Governance in Nepal.** Kathmandu: Author.

Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development. 2008a. **Exploring the Possibility of Expanding Per-Child Funding Mechanism.** Kathmandu: Author.


APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

A semi-structured form of an open-ended interview technique was adapted to assess the perspectives of the policy makers and perceptions of the implementers preferably HTs, and SMC chairs on decentralized school governance policy. Particularly, the focus of interview for policy makers was on principles of and approaches to the current school governance policy and the reasons behind adopting the new policy. Similarly, the interviews with SMC chairs and HTs were focused on perceived dimension of the policy from practical perspectives. By and large, I employed the following semi-structured interview checklist including some potential questions, so that, there were plenty of rooms for accepting infrequent questions (see Table APP-I-1).

Background questions
a) In your opinion, what are the characteristics of a good school?

b) Do you think communities’ role is crucial to make a good school?

c) Do you think general public schools in Nepal are losing their strengths? If yes/no, why?

 d) Do you think the community managed school policy could be an alternative for decentralized school governance policy?
Table APP-I-1 Semi-structured Questions for Policy Makers

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<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Central Questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Policy Intention</td>
<td>1. To what extent the present school governance policy is decentralized policy? Please give reasons.</td>
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<td>2. What are the distinct features of the current policy?</td>
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<td>3. What are the major reasons for departing policy toward decentralization?</td>
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<td>4. What are the future intentions?</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Materializing the Policy into Practice</td>
<td>5. What are the strategies envisioned for implementing the policy?</td>
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<td>6. Do you think the implementation of the policy is going as expected? If yes, give examples.</td>
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<td>7. Do you observe any gaps between intended and implemented policy? If so, what are the gaps?</td>
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<td>8. How do you remove these gaps?</td>
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<td>9. What are the expected roles of stakeholders, especially SMCs and teachers?</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Comments and Suggestions</td>
<td>10. Do you have any comments and suggestions in relation to the current policy? Please mention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table APP-I-2 Semi-structured Questions for SMC Chairs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Central Questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Policy Perception</td>
<td>1. Do you think the current policy would be a viable instrument for the decentralization process of Nepali school system? [If yes/no, why? Could you please specify the reasons?]</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2. Does current policy fit in Nepali context?</td>
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<td>3. What strengths do you see with the policy?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Are there any weaknesses with the policy? If so, please specify them?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Materializing the Policy into Practice
5. Why did/did not you take the management responsibility of the school?
6. How the policy has helped for making better school?
7. What are the problems that are connected with the implementation of the decentralized school governance policy in your school?
8. Why these are problems?
9. How these problems can be solved?
3. Comments and Suggestions
10. What do you suggest to solve the problem that is encountering now (e.g., Reluctance from teachers’ professional organization)?

Table APP-I-3  Semi-structured Questions for HTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Central Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Policy Perception</td>
<td>1. How do you interpret the current school governance policy?</td>
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<td>2. What strong aspects do you see in the current policy? What are these?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3. What weaknesses do you see in the current policy?</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Materializing Policy into Practice</td>
<td>4. Do you think the current policy is applicable to the local context? If yes/no, please give reasons.</td>
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<td>5. What barriers do you see in materializing the current policy into practice?</td>
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<td>6. What is the biggest problem? Why it is the biggest problem?</td>
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<td>7. Should this policy be stopped? If yes/no, please give reasons.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>8. What could be the operational strategies to be employed for effective implementation of the policy?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Comments and Suggestions</td>
<td>9. Do you have any comments and suggestions regarding the current policy and its implementation process?</td>
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APPENDIX II

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINE

A focus group discussion guideline was employed to facilitate the discussions. The detail is presented below, which was used as a flexible tool to collect information from the participants.

**Step 1: Preliminary session**

I introduced myself and requested to all participants for their self-introduction. It helped us to get to know each other. Then after, I explained the basic purposes of the focus group discussion, areas of discussion and expectations. I also assured the participants about the confidentiality of the information. In addition, I tried to make an agreement on the process of discussion and code of conducts to be followed, for example, one person at a time, respect each other’s view, and make constructive comments upon other’s opinion and so on.

**Step 2: Introductory session**

I initiated an introductory background question in order to help them to start thinking about the topic;

1) Do you remember your school life?
2) What did it look like?

The introductory background questions helped link with the following questions:

3) What major differences do you see between your time’s school and present school
4) **Probing**: Physical facilities, community participation, teachers, students' achievement, library, school management committee
5) How do you characterize a good school?
**Step 3: Exploration of area specific questions**

6) Do you think communities’ roles are crucial for making better school?
7) If, yes, could you please specify the areas
   - **Probing:** Improving physical facilities, teaching-learning, student achievement, school financing, and so on.
8) Why and how?
9) Does current decentralized school governance policy fit in Nepal?
   - **Probing:** It is the policy of hand over public schools to community. The expectation of policy is that community can make a close look and play a more active role in imparting quality education in terms of student achievement.
10) If yes, how and why?
11) What strengths do you see with the policy?
12) Do you think this policy would be a viable instrument for the decentralization process of Nepali school system?
13) If yes/no, why? Could you please specify the reasons?
14) What are your arguments?

**Step 4: Problems with the policy**

15) What are the problems that are connected with the implementation of decentralized school governance policy in your schools?
16) Why these are problems?
17) What is the biggest problem?
18) Why it is the biggest problem?
19) Should this policy be stopped?
20) If yes, please give reasons
21) If no, how it can go smoothly?

**Step 5: Ways to improve the issue**

22) Do you offer some solutions in order to improve the implementation of the policy?
23) If you are appointed as an implementer of this policy, how do you implement?
24) How do you solve the problem that is encountering now (e.g., Reluctance from teachers’ professional organization)?

Step 6: Final session

25) Do you want to add anything more?

Step 7: Wrap up session

26) I Acknowledged their time, active participation and valuable suggestions/comments.
APPENDIX III

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Best and Kahn (1999) give a clue that checklist helps ensure the important aspects of the objects observed. With this suggestion, I developed the following checklist to record the information in a systematic manner.

Step1: Preliminary Preparation

1) Did I receive permission?
2) How to enter to the school?
3) To whom I should meet?
4) How should I precede the observation?
5) Which setting shall I choose?
6) How do I record my observation?
   o Note keeping
   o Recording
   o Video tape

Step2: Observational Process [Identify the objects to be observed]

7) Physical environment
   o Building and Classroom arrangements
   o Library
8) Human setting
   o Teacher and student absenteeism
   o Teaching-learning activities
   o Community participation
   o Student achievement
9) Program setting
   o School improvement plan
Resource generation and utilization

10) Overall school environment
   - External environment (fencing, playground, and so on)
   - Internal environment (time on task, cleanliness, student-teacher relationship etc.)

Step 3: Review the processes
   11) Did I cover all the information needed?
   12) Do I need to repeat the observation in some cases?

Step 4: Final session
   I acknowledged to all school family members for granting permission and their supports received during the observations.
APPENDIX IV

SURVEY FORM
FOR
GENERAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

First Part

General Information

Please, provide sign like this (X) in the given empty box

1. Sex
   - Male
   - Female

2. Position
   - Head Teacher
   - Teacher
   - Chair of School Management Committee

3. Experience
   - Below 5 years
   - 5 to 10 years
   - Above 10 years

4. School Location
   - Mountain
   - Hill
Terai -fO{

5 - %_School Type -ljBfnosf| lsl;d

Primary School -kfvyld\_ 
Lower Secondary School -lgdflj_ 
Secondary School -dlj\_ 

Second Part -bf];|f] efu

Please read the following statements carefully one by one. And provide your opinion by using the sign (x) below the specified number of each statement on the basis of the following conditions:

a. If you are **Strongly Agree** with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 7
b. If you are simply **Agree** with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 6
c. If you are **To Some Extent Agree** with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 5
d. If you are **Neither Agree Nor Disagree** with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 4
e. If you are **To Some Extent Disagree** with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 3
f. If you are simply **Disagree** with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 2
g. If you are **Strongly Disagree** with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 1

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<td>We frequently discuss about the implementation of the policy and meet periodically</td>
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<td>Our educational practices are on the track of the intended results</td>
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<td>We are happy and satisfied with the ongoing implementation</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>-!!_</td>
<td>We have received capacity building trainings or workshops</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>-!@_</td>
<td>We are administratively and technically competent enough to produce the intended results</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>-!#_</td>
<td>The capacity building trainings we received have helped us achieve the</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
intended results
-\ljBfno \uj\jBfnof oo\lj\jBfno' of\lj\jBfno\lj\jBfnof \ldef /o f\lj\jBfno\lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

14 -!$_ We have developed School Improvement Plan
-\lj\jBfnof \uj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef /of\lj\jBfno \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

15 -!%_ We revisit our School Improvement Plan annually
-\lj\jBfnof \uj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef /of\lj\jBfno \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

16 -!*_ It is easy to implement decisions in small school
-\lj\jBfnof \uj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef /of\lj\jBfno \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

17 -!&_ If it would have a big number of students, it could be difficult to achieve intended results
-\lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef /of\lj\jBfno \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

18 -!*_ Implementation performance is better in small school
-\lj\jBfnof \uj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef /of\lj\jBfno \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

19 -!(@) Being a small school, we meet frequently and solve the problems encountered
-\lj\jBfnof \uj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef /of\lj\jBfno \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

20 -(@) Being a small school, we have confidently achieved the results in a speculated time
-\lj\jBfnof \uj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef /of\lj\jBfno \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef \lj\jBfnof \lj\jBfnof \ldef

21 -(@) We have an experience that adequacy of budget has helped implementation in a smooth way
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Column 1</th>
<th>Column 2</th>
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</thead>
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<td>We also receive additional budget from community</td>
<td>-xfd[f] cg'ejdf s'g} klg gLlt sfof[Gjogsf nflu ah]6sf] dxTjk&quot;0f{ e&quot;lds f'x'G5_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have sufficient budget</td>
<td>-jt[dfg gLlt sfof[Gjogsf nflu ;d'bfon] yk ah]6sf] Joj:yf ug]{ u/sf} 5_</td>
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<tr>
<td>School improvement plan has effectively implemented</td>
<td>-ljBnfo ;'wf/ of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have autonomy to reallocate the school budget</td>
<td>-;fwf/0f ljBfno gLlt] ljBfnonfO{ cfjZostf cg';f/ ah]6 yk36 ug]{ clwsf/ lbPsfn] gLlt sfof[Gjogsf nflu ;xh ePsf] 5_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are satisfied with the outputs achieved so far</td>
<td>-;fwf/0f ljBfno gLlt k</td>
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<td>Teachers are happy with the implementation of hiring and firing teachers centrally</td>
<td>-lzIfsx?sf] lgo'lQm s][Gb)o lgsfoaf6 x'g] jt[dfg k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers hired by central level are professionally competent</td>
<td>-s][Gb)o lgsfoaf6 lgo'Qm ePsf lzIfsx? of]Uo / blf 5g_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers willingly participate in school activities</td>
<td>-lzIfsx? :j:km&quot;t{ ?kdf ljBfno ultljwdf ;+nUg x'G5g_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are committed toward school improvement</td>
<td>-jt[dfg gLlt]n lzIfsx?nfO{ sfdk</td>
</tr>
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<td>Line</td>
<td>Text</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>There is wide discussions among stakeholders while taking the decisions on school affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-ljBfno ;d'bfodf gn]hfg] lg0f{o ubf{ ljBfno Joj:yfg ;ldlt, lzIfs cleefjs ;+3, lzIfsx? / ;d:t ljBfno kl/jf/ aLrdf Jofks 5nkmmn eO ;a{;DDft lg0f{o ePsf] lyof]_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>We have got sufficient rooms to manage school in line with our own plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-;fwf/0f ljBfno gLltn] ubf{ xfd[f] cfkm\g} of</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Both interest and participation of community into school affairs have increased</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-;fd'bflos ljBfno x:tfGt/0f gLltn] ljBfnodf ;d'bfosf] rf;f] / ;xefltuf a9fPsf] 5_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>It has strengthened school-community relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-jt{dfg gLt sfof[Gjogn] ;d'bfo / ljBfno aLrsf] ;DaGw emg\ dha't agfPsf] 5_</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Community people frequently visit school</td>
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<td>-;d'bfosf df!g;x? ljBfnosf] utljlw a'em\g cfO/xG5g_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Parent-teacher association is active in our school</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-xfd[f] ljBfnodf lzIfs cleefjs ;+3 lqmoflzn 5_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>School is successfully moving forward to achieve the intended goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-xfdL jt{dfg gLItsfl pb]Zo k[fKtLsf nflu ;kmntfk&quot;j{s cuf8L al9/x]sf 5f]_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Students' attraction has increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Competition among schools has increased</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-jt{dfg gLIt sfof[Gjogn] ljBfnox?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Students' flow from private schools has increased.

41. -$!_ Do you recommend that the general public school policy should be continued in future? If yes/no, please give reason(s).

Thank you for your invaluable time and opinions.

-tkfO{sf cd"No ;do / ljrf/sf nflu wGojfb_
APPENDIX V

SURVEY FORM
FOR
COMMUNITY-MANAGED SCHOOLS

First Part

General Information

Please, provide sign like this (X) in the given empty box.

1 -!_ Sex -ln"u_  
   Male -k'?if_  
   Female -dlxnf_  

2 -@_ Position -kb_  
   Head Teacher -k|wgfWofks_  
   Teacher -lzIfs_  
   Chair of School Management Committee -ljBfno Joj:yfkg ;ldltsf] cWoIf_  

3 -#_ Experience -cg'ej_  
   Below 5 years -% jif{ d'gL_  
   5 to 10 years -% b]lv !) jif{  
   Above 10 years -!) jif{ eGbf dfly_  

4 -$_ School Location -ljBfnosf] cjl:vlt_  
   Mountain -lxdfn_  
   Hill -kxf8_  
   Terai -t/fO{_
5 - %_School Type [-ljBfnosf| lsl;d]

Primary School -k||fylds
Lower Secondary School -lgdfli
Secondary School -dfli

Second Part -bf];[f] efu
Please read the following statements carefully one by one. And provide your opinion by using the sign (x) below the specified number of each statement on the basis of the following conditions:

a. If you are Strongly Agree with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 7
b. If you are simply Agree with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 6
c. If you are To Some Extent Agree with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 5
d. If you are Neither Agree Nor Disagree with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 4
e. If you are To Some Extent Disagree with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 3
f. If you are simply Disagree with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 2
g. If you are Strongly Disagree with the given statement then provide sign (x) on the box right below number 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Statements -JffSox?_</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
We are clear on the policy objectives and its operation.

We have already received the implementation guidelines so that we are able to demonstrate the results.

We frequently discuss the outputs and the implementation procedures.

Our educational practices are on the track of the intended results.

We are happy and satisfied with the on-going implementation.

We have received capacity building trainings or workshops.

We are administratively and technically competent enough to produce the intended results.

The capacity building trainings we received have helped us achieve the results.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>We have developed School Improvement Plan for small schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>We revisit our School Improvement Plan annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>It is easy to implement decisions in small school systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>If it would have a big number of students, it could be difficult to achieve intended results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Implementation performance is better in small school systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Being a small school, we meet frequently and solve the problems encountered.</td>
</tr>
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<td>314</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Being a small school, we have confidently achieved the results in a speculated time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>We have an experience that adequacy of budget has helped implementation in a smooth way.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We also receive additional budget from community.

We have sufficient budget.

School improvement plan has effectively implemented.

We have autonomy to reallocate the school budget.

Teachers are satisfied with the outputs achieved so far.

Teachers are happy with the implementation of hiring and firing teachers locally.

Teachers hired by local level are professionally competent.

Teachers willingly participate in school activities.

Teachers are committed toward school improvement.

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stakeholders while taking the decisions on school affairs

| #_ | 32 | We have got sufficient rooms to manage school in line with our own plan |
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| #_ | 38 | Students' attraction has increased |
| #_ | 39 | Competition among schools has increased |
| $_ | 40 | Students' flow from private schools has |
41.-$!_ Do you recommend that the community managed school policy should be continued in future? If yes/no, please give reason(s).

Thank you for your invaluable time and opinions
BIOGRAPHY

Name
Mukunda Mani KHANAL

Birth Date and Place
17-11-1965, Gorkha, Nepal

Academic records
- Master of Science (M. S.) in Education Policy and Innovation, University of Twente (UT), The Netherlands, 2008
- Master of Philosophy (M. Phil.) in Educational Leadership, Kathmandu University (KU), Nepal, 2003
- Master of Education (M. Ed.) in Planning and Management, Tribhuvan University (TU), Nepal, 2000
- Master of Arts (M.A.) in Economics, Tribhuvan University (TU), Nepal, 1992

Affiliation
- Under Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of Nepal

Experience
- Civil Servant- Government of Nepal : 1993 to date
- University Lecturer (Part time): 2003-2007 & 2009-2010

Publications
- School Education Policy in Nepal
- Educational Management and Financing of Education in Nepal: Policy and Practice
- Financing of Education (Master’s Degree Reference Book)
- Financing Modalities in Education in Nepal
- The Economics of School Finance
- Korean Association for Policy Studies (KAPS), South Korea, 2012
- Journal of National Center for Educational Development, Nepal, 2005

Awards
- Top 10th of Nepal in Bachelor's Degree examination administered by Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal, in 1990

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