

Self-Entrepreneurship and Education in Private School: An Integrity Perspective

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Abstract

The contribution of private sector in development is highly lauded by the experts in this era. It stands as a backbone of all the capitalistic economy. In other words, it is also the symbol of liberalized economy in which private participation is becoming necessary. In the context of Nepal, schools are running by private sectors and they are practicing the concept of liberalized economy as counterparts of public schools. They take it as service business and the government is getting much benefit with good pass percentage from these schools. In this way, private involvement is deemed necessary for the development of education. The involvement of private entrepreneur generates good result from exam or quality education perspective. It is possible when self-employment is promoted from 2036 BS (1979 AD) in school sector. Thus, this paper highlights the importance of self-entrepreneurship in school sector in spite of the blame of commercialization of education. However, the private schools in Nepal have been operating like business houses. They practice negative aspects of education like unfair advertisements; the teachers are underpaid; they sell different goods from schools like copies, tie, belt; they force guardians to pay more in the name of fees like: admission, monthly fee; extra fees; as a whole they challenge the concept of service business ignoring the aspect of quality education. Hence they practice integrity in negative perspective as a whole.

Keywords: self-entrepreneurship, private school, integrity, education, development.

Background of the Study

In Nepal privatization of schools started from 2036 BS. Before that there were also private schools under private management but National Education System Plan (NESP) 2028 BS (1971 AD) nationalized all the schools considering that education can't be privatized. After eight years of NESP the government couldn't manage education to all the children and it was forced to privatize schools. Since then "commercial types of schools and colleges have been growing" (Khaniya, 2007, p. 223). They have used English as the medium of teaching so that they could attract students and parents. The human resource could be competent in international market as well.

On the other hand, public schools teach in Nepali medium and they couldn't contest in comparison to private schools. The private schools are also known as Boarding schools in short by the people and these schools are managed by private sectors. They take it as private enterprise and develop accordingly. The involvement of private sector is quite praised because of its good production. The SLC examinations of different years prove it. Private schools did well in academic performance and they serve the country towards development by educating people in their enterprises. The country has got the qualitative manpower for the development of the nation. Moreover, private schools produce manpower according to the demand of time. They are demand driven rather than process or system oriented. Khaniya (ibid) argues that "people who study in a good private institution can get good education which will eventually lead them to grab good opportunities anywhere in the world" (p. 217).

The investors have taken it as an opportunity and the educated lots establish schools under company act. They take it from social service plus profit motive perspectives (K.C., 2013). However, profit motive or commercialization isn't only the motto of investors. Fully commercialization can't be possible because education and educating pupils are different than commercial approach. The government has asserted rules which are working as guide to these schools. So private school owners take it as service business.

In spite of their claim, the owners of the private school are doing unethical business. They take excessive fees from the students. They work like business houses and they sell different items like: tie, belt, copies, and books. They put parents in shadow of quality education taking excessive fees. Hence, they are doing unethical business. They come to slander their counter parts through advertisement. So they contest in business unlike their motive of service business.

This paper will try to find out the contribution of private sector in the field of development with education. They have certain pedagogy which the government has assigned and they take fee from students and operate their business. So we want to see the private investment and its contribution to development through education and its lack of integrity in doing business.

Integrity

Integrity is a concept of consistency of action, values, measures, principles, and outcomes (Transparency international, 2012). In ethical sense, integrity is regarded as honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one's action. It is regarded as the opposite of hypocrisy or dishonesty. Integrity regards the internal consistency as a

virtue. One party may judge that others have done integrity or not, or to what extent do they act according to values, beliefs and system. The political practices; social and economic activities; and cultural factors etc affect or contribute to the integrity in the society. There are various studies on integrity in Nepal mainly regarding corruption mostly. Though there are various integrity pillars, structures and laws in various areas in any organization but they have not been effective and succinctly implemented in practice in Nepal (ibid). In this article we try to find out the unethical aspects of private school of Nepal in spite of their contribution to education and development.

Integrity has some sort of connection with the governance policy of any organization. It tries to look at what is the level of significance in any action that happens in the society. The private schools in Nepal are generally blamed of being commercial and they couldn't take the issue of integrity. So they are often regarded as the cheater of the nation, parents and children. The ASHE Higher Education Report shows that the integrity is against of cheating. The private schools in Nepal are also cheating the stakeholders in the name of quality education rather than the contribution for the development of the nation through quality education. The report (ibid) further says that the aim of integrity is to develop the character necessary to resist misconduct. The report further argues that the integrity should revolve the organizational tensions and societal forces. The aim of our study remains in the same periphery that the organizational structure of the private schools and the social misconception doesn't match. The production or the output of the private school seems much valuable in spite of its negative aspects. The holistic concept of corruption and misconduct shouldn't fit in such areas. The commercialization of any business or goods is much different than the contribution in education. Despite the barriers, private schools in our country have been producing good result and they have stopped the economy of the country which has been going out. So we try to look this issue from integrity perspective.

Business Alternatives Regarding Education in Private Sector in Nepal

Privatization of business is an alternative perspective of thinking according to Pieterse (2011). People are searching for new opportunities/alternatives for economic development in their life. They are searching for the alternatives which were not in use in the past. In our country, private schools stand as choice against public school. The parents have got alternative schools to educate their children. They have invested for that and trusted private schools to educate their children. Though they have complained about being commercialization, they establish it as an alternative selection in the field of education. Moreover, it stops the flow of money towards foreign countries where the parents had sent their children for study. Nowadays, private schools have given quality education in the country as per the demand of parents and the need of the country. Khaniya (2007) states that "privatization of education is as one the choices of the alternative sources" (p. 213).

The alternative perspective from parents is quite good because they can invest for their children as they wish. Mainly, private schools are the alternative choices of public schools. Private schools were not existed in the past in Nepal. There were government schools only to provide education to the children. They have got monopoly in the market and they provide any sort of education which was unquestionable. But, people have got alternative choices to educate their children at present. Therefore, the alternative theory of development of education and the choice theory of parents will work in our use of theory. Pieterse (2011) adds that many things like local alternatives, cultural alternatives etc. are in use under alternative paradigms. In this time, parents as well as children have choices to select different educational institutions. Khaniya (2007) further supports that the private education is the different taste which is served to the people in Nepal by private owners. So the common citizens can have the choices for their children. They can educate their children in different institutions according to their affordability and choices of the courses. It is their choice that guides the education of the children rather than the planning of the government. Glasser (n.d.) says that choice theory provides many choices that human selects to satisfy human needs. So we can say that private schools are the demand driven choices in Nepalese context

However, private schools in Nepal have been fostering the alternative business strategy in the Nepalese context. Their stand is questionable because of their integrity issues of educating the children. They have been ethically wrong in the context of providing alternative choices. So it makes us realize that their concept of alternative thinking is ethically not sound.

Self-entrepreneurship

Self-entrepreneurship is a private business. A person who operates such enterprise looks from profit motive. Self-employment is closely linked with purely and genuinely goods for more innovation and new ways of organizing production where People do not only provide themselves with employment, they also employ others (Ohlsson, 2004). However, Self-entrepreneurship creates economic growth of individual, family and country. Entrepreneurship is a costly and risky investment to develop better goods, services, and production processes, with corresponding effects on factor markets and economic growth (Rubinstein, 2013). However, they try to commercialize it as they can. They have some sorts of earning motive which they take as challenge and they

proceed challenging all sorts of problems.

Self-employment is quite new subject matter in our country. As Nandan (2011) says that the entrepreneurship is the key to identification of an opportunity that independent personnel can do in his life. He equally connects entrepreneurship with the profit motive. Private schools in Nepal are also following the same track. He further adds that it should be morally fit to a person and he/she shouldn't be morally degenerated. Despite various obstacles people have ventured to do it. Self entrepreneurship thus is a challenging situation to a person. The person who can take risk can only operate such institutions. Lumdaine and Binks (2007) supported that the main element of an entrepreneur is risk taking; so they are reactive and can help for economic development through change in the society. In our country, political situation is not so good. Despite all these hurdles, self-entrepreneurship stands as a strong pillar of development in education in our country. However, we should try to involve them in integrity. Entrepreneurs seek opportunities, bear threats, and lead themselves in the darkness of future searching for lime light. But it doesn't mean that their ideas and concepts are always right and guiding force of the common interest of the people.

Self entrepreneurship is thus quite challenging. They do their own business and the leader needs some kind of commitment to lead it ahead (Rubinstein, 2013). Many scholars argue that it is a pillar of development who can take challenge as opportunity. Mainly, economic development is the focus of entrepreneurs. The person who doesn't like to work on a fixed salary and wants to use his creativity can be a good entrepreneur. Nandan again advocates that entrepreneurs are ambitious of earning from own business or profession rather than working for someone on a fixed salary. They want to get higher monetary returns by translating their creative ability into a real business. So it is known as self-business. Either it is bigger or smaller, they do it with much attention to get more benefit. They invest their money to be independent of doing others' job. Mainly in our country, government job is only the option since there are no big industries. Thus self-employment is one of the options of getting and providing job to own self and others. So the motive of self-employment is being independent and courageous who have taken risk and benefit together. The private schools in Nepal are also doing the same. Supporting such arguments Khadka (2013) says that private schools are same as enterprise and the operators are the entrepreneur. They have the right to fix their price. If they lessen their profit, their business can't be operated; if they put more profit, their production won't be sold. This motive is fit everywhere either in business or in education sector of Nepal. So we clearly understand from his saying that self-entrepreneurship in education is existed in Nepal.

Private School in Nepal

Private education is generally administered by individuals or private parties. So the government doesn't take any responsibility except policy guidance. UNESCO, OECD and the World Bank defines private education as those institutions which "... are not operated by a public authority, but are controlled and managed by a private body or board of governors not selected by a public agency or elected by public vote" (Khaniya, 2007, p. 207). These schools don't get any grant from government like public schools in our country. According to UNICEF report of 2006, these schools are more expensive than public counterparts. It happens because these schools should be operated under company act of Nepal government. It is seen that private schools have high standard and good quality which is supported by the SLC results of several years. Khadka (2013) supports that the private schools have good management and the students have performed well in SLC examinations. He further adds that, if SLC is the indicator, private schools in Nepal have got 'glaring achievement'. Mostly private schools are urban oriented because they seek profit and accessibility. They don't get government grant and they should manage their budget themselves.

Since Eighth Five Year Plan the government of Nepal encourages the private sector participation to upgrade educational standards in country (UNICEF, 2006). In Nepal there are 4,631 private schools. They cover almost 30% share in secondary education only. They should be registered under company act of Nepal government (Education Regulation, 2008). There are three varieties of private/ institutional schools (here we don't include religious schools as private schools). So we also call them as institutional schools. Thus these schools are being operated like private business houses. However, the government acts and regulations don't speak about being enterprise. These institutions are conducting business in full swing so it is a questionable issue of private school in our country. Their motive and action are all oriented towards profit oriented business as we have mentioned above.

Education and Development

Education is basically regarded as a key to development. All the countries of the world are focusing on it. Education makes us aware about various possibilities that lead us towards progression. Atal (2007) states that "to educate the people is to empower them. Empowerment, as an indicator of development, thus requires education" (p. 19). Hence, education is regarded as the empowering factor for humans. Private schools, as the entrepreneur claim, are focusing on quality education of the children. The motto of private school is to deliver education of

good values and skills to empower the quality of the students. Thus it helps for the development of the nation.

Education is the symbol of development as well. The children can get various opportunities if they have instructed well. With quality education the children can lead the country and society towards development. Forgetting about commercialization, we can see the sacred motto of educating all the children. Atal (2007) further emphasizes on the broad motto of education. He says

Education is the entire process of learning that broadens a person's cognitive horizons and develops in him/her the skills to choose, evaluate and to add to the existing stock of knowledge. Education doesn't mean simply dissemination of existing stock of experience and knowledge, but also generation of new knowledge and its utilization for the societal good and enhancement" (p. 20)

Hence we see the connection of education and society and its progression. Certainly, education helps in development and it is not only the stock of something. It can generate many things from the learned knowledge and behavior. It broadens the horizon of the student and gradually it helps for the development of the society; so it enhances pupil the power to do good to the society with enhancing skills and knowledge.

We will be able to utilize all the resources so that the country as well as a person can be improved with advance knowledge and skills. Thus education is much important whether it is provided by public or private sector. In this age, government only can do nothing though it is believed that education should be provided by the government. However, the government is unable to provide all the facilities to the students. So, the governments of the developing countries put high priority in education but they can't manage resources to educate all the children, so they should depend on private sectors for educational development (Atal, 2007; Khaniya, 2007; & Kitaev, 1999). Thus, we can see the involvement of private sector in school/ college education after the declaration of Education for All (EFA) throughout the world.

Thus private sector involvement can be helpful to educate all the children for the countries like Nepal. It seems relevant to involve private sector in education along with the concept of liberalization. Nepal has also signed treaty with WTO for this purpose for open market policy. Hence, Nepal government from Eighth five year plan has planned to promote private sector's involvement in education. However, the education provided by the private institutions in Nepal, being centered in urban areas, is qualitative; or does it address the need of the country can be looked from the eyes of integrity?

Ethics in Business

In business ethics comes first. The commercialization of education is often blamed as privatization (Khaniya, 2007; Kitaev, 1999). When education develops as a business, people start suspecting that it should not happen like that. So we would like to focus on business ethics of private school holders in this topic so that they can't think otherwise. The entrepreneur should be much conscious about the condition of the consumer. In isolation, business happens nothing. So the entrepreneur should be conscious about ethics.

Nandan (2011) says that ethics is a kind of moral principal or the rules of conduct of human beings. They can't be away from social rules and regulations. Mainly, the entrepreneurs are guided by the normative principal of ethics that reminds us the accepted norms of the society and its application in the right way. It mainly focuses on the material world unlike the spiritual; so it does fit to the modern word. So private school owners are also social beings and they should be conscious about ethical matter of their business. Are they following the matter of integrity? It is a fundamental question that we put forward.

Private schools are also abided by the ethics. The entrepreneurs can't escape easily because of the provision of the law. If they have to shut down school, it can't be done without informing government or they should do proper management of the students. So it is ethically abided. Nandan (ibid) further adds that "social vision with welfare motive is important in business mission, because an organization cannot work in isolation from general public. Social welfare measures undertaken by a firm strengthens its presence as a responsible and dependable organizational citizen" (p. 36). So the private investors should be much responsible towards public. They have certain social vision i.e. to educate people; hence they are much responsible to operate their business.

So it is not fully commercialized field yet commercialized in the sense of enterprise. The investors should look after the interest of parents, students and as a whole contribute to the development of education of the country. This business is quite restricted and it should be operated ethically. Since there is no morality, it is quite difficult to sustain in the society. Despite all these rules and moral boundaries the investors have worked for some profit that attracts them to do such business.

Thus, school can be an enterprise but it is entangled with various moralities. Ethics is the guiding factor and they are only guided with the consent of parents. They have taken great responsibility of the children so it isn't a short term business like market goods: chocolates or biscuits which may be short lasting. So they should follow the rules of the District Education Office, education rules and regulations, company rules and the social obligations. Thus, integrity matters have got much value to all the members of society. So the private school entrepreneurs can't escape from such duties thinking that it is like merchandise goods.

Self-entrepreneurship, Private Education and Development

Self-entrepreneurship takes the side of private ownership of business. A person handles it with sole responsibility. There may be group or single, they operate the business with the motto of privatization. Pieterse (2010) said in his alternative model of development that private sector's involvement can foster creative economies. So entrepreneur also did the same things as mentioned by Pieterse. They focus on creative economy and innovation as supported by Nandan. He adds that "entrepreneurship as being essentially concerned with developing a new idea, based on which a risk-bearing unique product, service or method is marketed by means of setting up a new independent unit or by using an already existing unit (Nandan, 2011, p. 1)"

Thus private business thrives on new and innovative ideas. They are active to win the mind of the customer. So does by the private schools. They have conducted regular parental meeting. They have adequate classroom size and students. They take care of all the children and their activities. Ultimately, it helps for the overall development of the children. They develop competencies through competitions. Khaniya (2007) also supports that they change their strategies time and again to impress the parents and other stakeholders. So they exist in business. After all, their motto is to teach or educate students in an effective way. They have got appropriate number of students and effective course monitoring style.

Moreover, as like in business private schools contribute in the irreversible course of effective development. They provide different choices to the parents as stated by Dr. Bidhya Nath Koirala (personal conversation with Bishnu Magar 2nd September 2013). Moreover, they relieved government from the expenditures as stated above in education and development. Likewise, they provide job for the unemployed which is the contribution for the country's development.

As a whole we see the contribution of private sector for the development. As we have already stated education generates development. Development has thus direct connection with the education. Atal (2007) says

Planners and policy makers all over the world shared the view that only by improving the extending education the goals of modernization can be achieved. For obtaining technological and economic progress education was considered a prerequisite. Even for national integration illiteracy was seen as a major stumbling block. Moreover, educated personnel were needed to meet the needs of administration of a large political state. Thus, the need for trained manpower gave education a priority in the development agenda. (p. 24)

To avoid the above hurdles private schools contribute with much vigor. They follow the government norms and provide qualitative education that help for the overall development of the children and the nation. According to Koirala it helps to generate economy and it has given job to many personnel as well. Moreover, he said that private education has enhanced for entrepreneurship. So it becomes effective and efficient enterprising in our country which leads to development of the nation.

Conclusion

Self-entrepreneurship is a must in this era. People can work freely and develop themselves freely in such a situation. The businesses are of various types. One of them is private school which now comes under self-entrepreneurship. It was thought that education is the government entity and it is only the responsibility of the government to educate pupils. But this paper supports that education can be privatized; so the private sector can help government in development. The government only can do nothing to educate all the pupils especially in developing countries. So it can be shared with the private sector. As we understand the alternative development model of the 21st century, there are many areas of development which the government can share with private partners to accelerate development. In other words, private schools of Nepal are abided by the ethics that helps them to follow the matter of integrity. This sort of business is quite ethical. It guides and shapes the fragile mind of the children. Thus, it should be taken seriously by the private sector. It is unlike the merchandise entity that can be sold in the market. The commercial approach of education is necessary to develop alternative ways of development. So private sector in education in Nepal should fit in integrity model rather than to be opposed.

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