"LIKE CLUB" initiative in Rural Community Schools of Bhojpur Municipality and Local Institutional Setups: Opportunities and Challenges

Utkrishta Sharma

KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARTS

Funded by:

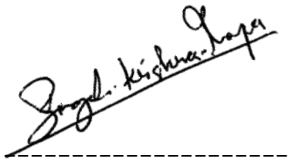
GPE KIX KNOWLEDGE INNOVATION EXCHANGE

IDRC · CRDI Canada

LEARNING, INNOVATION & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE | LIKE Lab

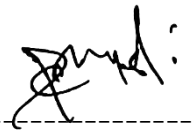
Approved

This rural internship report of Bachelor in Community Development, School of Arts, Kathmandu University has been presented by Utkrishta Sharma to the Faculty Advisory Committee in 2025 and has been approved.



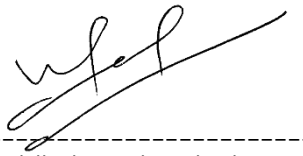
Binayak Krishna Thapa, PhD
Supervisor

Date: November 2025



Chandra Prakash Aryal, PhD
Program Coordinator

Date: November 2025



Uddhab Pyakurel, PhD
Dean, School of Arts

Date: November 2025

I am aware that this report will become a part of the library's permanent collection at Kathmandu University. I hereby permit the request to read the report to any interested reader upon written request.

Utkrishta Sharma
Degree Candidate

Date: November 2025

Declaration

By signing, I, Utkrishta Sharma, hereby certify that the report titled "LIKE Club initiative in Rural Community Schools of Bhojpur Municipality and Local Institutional Setups: Opportunities and Challenges" is entirely my original work, with no previous submissions to any other academic institutions for the fulfillment of a different degree.

Date: November 2025

Utkrishta Sharma

Degree Candidate

Disclaimers

This project, titled "Promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Schools Building on What Children Value and Aspire to Do and Be," is being implemented by LIKE Lab, Kathmandu University School of Arts, with support from the Global Partnership for Education and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of IDRC or its Board of Governors.

Abstract

This study analyzed the institutional readiness of the selected community schools in Bhojpur Municipality to establish, operate, and scale the Learning, Innovation, and Knowledge Exchange (LIKE) Club, a student-led initiative aiming to promote the principles of gender equality, social inclusion (GESI), and child participation. The club aims to create a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where students of all genders, backgrounds, and abilities can share their aspirations, reflect on their experiences, and lead change initiatives based on the 16 child well-being indicators, known as children's valued capabilities. This study also evaluated the roles played by the head teachers, GESI focal persons, and students in the establishment and scaling of the club and the opportunities and challenges that impact this process. Child clubs have long played an important role in empowering children to stand up for their rights, promote child participation, and prompt social change. Yet, even with Nepal's supportive policy framework, which includes the Constitution of Nepal (2015), the Children's Act (2018), the Children's Regulation (2022), and the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP, 2016–2023) that advocates for child participation through platforms such as child clubs, the effectiveness and institutional integration of these child clubs within the school system are limited and weak. The study used a mixed-methods approach, collecting quantitative data using the Institutionalization Tracker from 26 respondents across 13 selected community schools, while qualitative data were collected through structured interviews with 32 students from five community schools. The findings indicated that most schools have a moderate to high level of readiness to establish the LIKE club. The opportunities to do so are reflected in elements such as leadership, supervision, coordination, encouragement, inclusion, and equity, as scored by the head teachers and GESI focal persons. The students were also highly willing and enthusiastic to join the club and the associated training sessions, which further supports its establishment. Nonetheless, some challenges do exist, such as many students have a limited understanding of GESI concepts, the process of forming a child club, and the role played by the Board of Directors (BOD). Also, a lack of adequate materials and technological resources, a weak monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism, unclear role clarity among school personnel, and limited familiarity with the club manual create further challenges.

The school routines are rigid that they may hinder time allocation for club activities. The study concludes that establishing the LIKE club is both feasible and impactful. It recommends initiation with schools that have high readiness, such as Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya, Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), and Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), and gradually scaling to others with tailored support, orientation, training, mock sessions, improved feedback, and better (M&E) mechanisms. Ensuring that the LIKE club manual is well understood and applied will also be essential for sustainable establishment.

Keywords: child clubs, LIKE club, institutional readiness, GESI, scaling

Acknowledgement

This study builds on the project *"Promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Schools: Building on What Children Value and Aspire to Do and Be"*, being implemented by LIKE Lab, Kathmandu University School of Arts, supported by the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

I would like to express my thankfulness to my supervisor, Assistant Prof. Dr. Binayak Krishna Thapa, for providing me with the opportunity to work alongside the LIKE lab. His consistent guidance and feedback have been extremely supportive to me throughout the execution of this study; without his supervision, this study would not have been possible. I am also extremely grateful to Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA), the Department of Community Development, and all my professors along the way, for their guidance, which has played a crucial role in my academic journey. The supportive learning environment at KUSOA has really helped me in both my academic and professional journey. I am also thankful to the LIKE lab team. I am especially grateful to Ms. Isha Karki, Research Fellow, for assisting me in clarifying my doubts at every stage of the study, which greatly supported the progress of my study. A genuine thank you to Ms. Anuskha Shrestha, the project coordinator, and Mr. Saurav Rajbhandari, the community mobilizer at LIKE lab, for providing me with a supportive environment to conduct this study.

At the end, I want to acknowledge all the respondents, whose patient cooperation, willingness to share their time and experiences made this study possible. My heartfelt appreciation also extends to my parents for their moral support. Thank you all for your contributions. I genuinely appreciate it.

Table of Contents

Approved i

Declaration ii

Disclaimers iii

Abstract iv

Acknowledgement v

List of Tables ix

List of Figures x

List of Abbreviations xii

Chapter 1 Introduction 1

1.1 Background of the study 1

1.1.1 LIKE Club 3

1.2 Problem Statement 4

1.3 Objectives of the study 5

1.3.1 General Objective 5

1.3.2 Specific Objectives 5

1.4 Research Questions 5

1.5 Significance of the study 6

1.6 Limitations of the study 6

Chapter 2 Literature Review 7

2.1 Introduction to child clubs 7

2.2 Child Clubs in Nepal 8

2.3 Contribution of Child Clubs and GESI perspective 10

2.4 National Policies and Legislation Support for Child Clubs 11

2.5 Introduction to the concept of Scaling & Scaling Science 13

2.5.1 Progression of Scaling 14

2.5.2 Traditional Paradigms of Scaling 14

2.5.3 Scaling Science 16

2.5.4 Scaling Impact 16

2.6 Guiding Principles of Scaling Science 18

2.6.1 Justification 18

2.6.2 Optimal Scale 19

2.6.3 Coordination 20

2.6.4 Dynamic Evaluation 22

2.7 Scaling Theory of Change 22

2.8 Application of Scaling Science 23

2.9 Conceptual Framework 24

Chapter 3 Methodology 26

3.1 Study Design 26
3.2 Study Site 26
3.3 Duration of the Study 28
3.4 Sample Size and Technique 28
3.4.1 Sampling Technique 28
3.4.2 Sample Size 29
3.5 Data Collection Methods 30
3.5.1 Qualitative Method 30
3.5.2 Quantitative Method 31
3.6 Data Analysis Technique 32
3.6.1 Quantitative Data Analysis Technique 32
3.6.2 Qualitative Data Analysis Technique 33
3.7 Ethical Consideration 33

Chapter 4 Findings 35

4.1 Structured Interview 35
4.1.1 Understanding Students' Awareness and Willingness towards GESI and Child Clubs 35
4.1.2 Students' understanding and awareness of a child club 36
4.1.3 Students' Perception of Equality and Inclusion in School Activities 39
4.1.4 Students' Willingness to Establish a GESI-Focused Child Club 40
4.1.5 Students' Willingness to participate in a child club 41
4.1.6 Students' Willingness to Attend Training on Establishing Child Clubs 41
4.1.7 Students' Preferred Activities for the Child Club 42
4.1.8 Students' perspective on supporting a child club upholding GESI values 42
4.1.9 Students' Views on Leadership, Equality, and Inclusion through Child Clubs 43
4.1.10 Student-Perceived Support Needed for Child Club Participation 43
4.1.11 Student-Perceived Challenges in Participating in a Child Club 43
4.2 Schools' Readiness Assessment for LIKE club 44
4.2.1 School 1 Score: Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya 45
4.2.2 School 2 score: Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya 45
4.2.3 School 3 score: Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya 47
4.2.4 School 4 score: Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya 48
4.2.5 School 5 score: Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya 49
4.2.6 School 6 score: Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya 49

4.2.7 School 7 score: Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya 51
4.2.8 School 8 score: Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya 51
4.2.9 School 9 Score: Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya 52
4.2.10 School 10 Score: Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya 54
4.2.11 School 11 Score: Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya 55
4.2.12 School 12 score: Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya 55
4.2.13 School 13 Score: Shree Panchakanya Aadarbhut Vidyalaya 56
4.3 Aggregate Readiness Scores across the 13 Community Schools 57

Chapter 5 Discussion 59
5.1 Students' Readiness for LIKE Club 59
5.1.1 Students' Awareness of GESI and Child Clubs as a Foundation for LIKE Club establishment 59
5.1.2 Students' Willingness and Enthusiasm as an Opportunity to establish, operate, and scale the LIKE club 60
5.1.3 Challenges to establishing & operating the LIKE Club 60
5.1.4 The Role of Teachers and Focal Persons in Supporting Club Implementation 61
5.2 Institutional Readiness for LIKE club 62
5.2.1 The Roles of Head teachers, GESI Focal Persons, and Students in Establishing, Operationalizing, and Scaling the LIKE Club 62
5.2.2 Potential Opportunities and Challenges in Establishing, Operationalizing, and Scaling the LIKE Club 63

Chapter 6 Conclusion 66
References 68
Annex 1: List of the 13 Selected Community Schools 71
Annex 2 72
Annex 3 74
Annex 4 76
Annex 5 77
Annex 6 78
Annex 7 84

List of Tables

Table 1: Aggregate Institutional readiness scores across the 13 community schools ... 57

List of Figures

Figure 1: Scaling up: from a small, one-rose bush with a few roses to a bigger bush with more roses 17

Figure 2 Scaling out: One rose bush → many rose bushes, more roses. 17

Figure 3 Scaling deep: One rose bush → same-sized rose bush but with enhanced roses. 18

Figure 4 illustrates the actors for coordination in the scaling process. 22

Figure 5 : Conceptual framework of the study 25

Figure 6 Map of Bhojpur District 27

Figure 7: The total respondents of this study 29

Figure 8: Elements of the institutionalization tracker 32

Figure 9 : Sample radar graph from the institutionalization tracker 33

Figure 10: Students' awareness about the concept of GESI 36

Figure 11: Word cloud of students' understanding of child club 37

Figure 12: Students' awareness and understanding of child clubs 38

Figure 13 : Students' awareness about the roles of the Board of Directors (BOD) in a child club 39

Figure 14: Students' perception of inclusion and equity at their school 40

Figure 15: Students' Willingness to Establish a GESI-Focused Child Club 40

Figure 16: Students' Willingness to participate in a child club 41

Figure 17: Students' willingness to participate in child club training 42

Figure 18: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya 45

Figure 19: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya 45

Figure 20: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya 47

Figure 21: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya 48

Figure 22: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya 49

Figure 23: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya 50

Figure 24: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya 51

Figure 25: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya 52

Figure 26: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya 53

Figure 27: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya 54

Figure 28: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya 55

Figure 29: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya 56

Figure 30: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Panchakanya Aadarbhut Vidyalaya 57

List of Abbreviations

BOD	Board of Directors
CUE	Center for Universal Education
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GPE KIX	Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
IDRC	International Development Research Center
LIKE	Learning, Innovation, and Knowledge Exchange
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoFALD	Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
R4D	Research for Development
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

"*Envision a space where every child is acknowledged, listened to, and empowered to take the lead.*" This vision sums up what child clubs are all about. A child club is a child-led organization initiated and run by children themselves to address issues that matter most to them within their communities. It serves as a shared platform and an effective medium for children, with the help of which they can express their views, voice their opinions, and even influence policy-making. The goal of a child club is to unite children, educate them about their rights, encourage them to speak up for themselves, and empower them with the power to influence decisions affecting their future (Dahal, 2008, 2009b, 2013b, as cited in Dahal, 2014, p. 10). Child clubs organize a range of activities that benefit both the community and children's self-esteem, leading to positive improvements in families and neighborhoods. As examples, these activities include teaching people about health and cleanliness, working to protect the environment, making wall magazines, and putting on street plays.These initiatives are purposefully designed to address community issues and challenge the existing societal norms that restrict the participation of children. This empowers them to advocate for their rights (Joshi, 2016; GC, 2018). Participating in a child club leads increase in children's engagement with their family, school, and community activities, cultivating a sense of social responsibility and civic engagement in them which can help them to become effective and responsible citizens and leaders in the future. Child clubs resonate with the principles detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), articles 12, 13, 14, 15, and 17, especially article 15 (1), which allows children the right to form their own associations and advocate for their welfare. It states that "*States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly*" (Singh, 2012; Dahal, 2014; Joshi, 2016). By helping and empowering children to identify issues that affect their lives, express their concerns, and gain leadership and cooperation skills, child clubs play an important role in bringing children together to work towards social change, influence decision-making that affects their lives, and create positive changes within their schools and communities.

The introduction of child clubs in Nepal in the early 1990s has created a major shift in terms of child participation in the nation. After Nepal ratified the UNCRC on September 14, 1990, the country took its first formal steps toward acknowledging children's rights in the country. Following this, national and international organizations, such as Save the Children, Plan International, ActionAid, the Consortium of Organizations Working for Child Participation, World Vision International, and United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), played crucial roles in promoting children's rights and children's participation and in establishing child clubs (Singh, 2012). Child clubs began as small child-to-child activities under the Child-Centered Community Development Program in Lamgunj in 1989. At present, thousands of school-based and community-based clubs exist throughout the country that bring together children from different ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds (Dahal, 2014, p. 12; Singh, 2012).

In terms of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), child clubs in Nepal have achieved a significant amount of progress throughout the years. Child clubs have turned out to be safe spaces where girls, children with disabilities, and people from marginalized groups find opportunities to participate, learn, and lead. Child clubs have played a crucial role in advocating for awareness and social responsibility against social issues such as child marriage, child labour, and gender-based discrimination. Despite this progress, there are structural inequalities that limit the participation of differently-abled and Dalit children. This indicates that more efforts should be made to ensure that inclusion in child clubs can be fully inclusive (Theis & O'Kane, 2004; Singh, 2012; Gautam, 2008).

Nepal's policy has also strongly supported the institutionalization of child clubs. The Children's Act (1992, revised in 2018), the Local Government Operation Act (2017), and the Constitution of Nepal (2015) have jointly provided children with the rights to participation, protection, and development. Similarly, frameworks such as the National Framework for Child-Friendly Schools for Quality Education (2010), the Child-Friendly Local Governance Strategy (2011), and the School Sector Reform Plan (2009–2015) have played a significant role in strengthening child clubs in the education and governance system. The Nepal government's commitment to ensuring the integration of child participation into the country's overall development plan is reflected through these policies. In line with these policies, the Supreme Court of Nepal in 2001 recognized children's right to self-organization, permitting child clubs to register legally, this step was an important milestone in the global and national movement for child rights and child participation (Theis & O'Kane, 2004; Dahal, 2014; Singh, 2012; Child Rights, Government of Nepal, 2018).

Although these achievements indicate strong foundations, the challenge lies in scaling these impactful child-led initiatives to ensure their sustainability, quality, and inclusivity. Scaling is an emerging idea in the social sector, where organizations seek to address significant social and environmental issues at a broader level. In the context of development, scaling is beyond numerical expansion; rather, it involves deepening and broadening impact. The developing concept of scaling science emphasizes a balanced and ethical approach to growth, which is, scaling up for efficiency, scaling out for reach, and scaling deep for meaningful transformation. (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Bajracharya, 2023; Brookings Institution, 2023; Dahal, 2023). Utilizing this approach within the context of child clubs presents opportunities to enhance their effectiveness, replicate successful models across communities, and strengthen children's agency and participation at multiple levels.

This study is associated with the project titled *"Promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Schools: Building on What Children Value and Aspire to Do and Be,"* which was carried out under Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA)'s LIKE lab with the support of the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) and the International Development Research Center (IDRC). The project uses a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) evaluation tool to scale the Children's Valued Educational Capabilities (CVEC) framework and identify the barriers to inclusive education, and encourage child-centered and gender responsive education. LIKE lab is a social science research lab that conducts research on socio-economic and socio-political issues. It focuses on finding effective, scalable, and sustainable solutions to various developmental concerns.

This study, which is a component of this larger intervention, analyzes the baseline readiness of the selected community schools in the Bhojpur municipality for the

establishment and scaling of the LIKE club. It also aims to identify the potential opportunities and challenges related to this process.

1.1.1 LIKE Club

LIKE Club is a student-driven organization that strives to promote and put into action the principles of GESI and promote child participation within the school through its diverse club activities aligned with GESI values. The club aims to act as a catalyst of social change by creating a safe and inclusive space where any child, regardless of their gender, background, or abilities, can actively participate, share their experiences, engage in teamwork, develop leadership skills, and take initiative to carry out activities that bring about positive changes rooted in inclusivity and equality within their school and community.

- **Mission**
  Informed by the values and aspirations of children identified by themselves in their respective lives, promote the values of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), and through the club, encourage them to promote kindness, respect, and active participation in a safe and supportive space for interaction and development

- **Vision**
  A supportive school environment where all children, irrespective of their backgrounds, abilities, or gender, are valued, respected, acknowledged, and empowered to lead and shape their future with confidence and compassion

- **Objectives**
  The LIKE Club will:

1. Advocate for gender equality and social inclusion (GESI).
2. Promote a culture of kindness, empathy, and support for one another.
3. Empower the students to participate in school and community decision-making.
4. Create safe spaces for students where they can share their aspirations and challenges.
5. Facilitate activities that are aligned with indicators of children's well-being.

The club is based on 16 indicators of child well-being, which are also referred to as children's valued capabilities and includes:

1. Love, Care & Respect
2. Education
3. Nutrition Well-being
4. Aspiration
5. Physical Health
6. Bodily Integrity

7. Understand, Interpret, Plan, Imagine & Think
8. Religion & Identity
9. Shelter & Environment
10. Mental Well-being
11. Social Relations
12. Autonomy
13. Freedom from Exploitation
14. Participation
15. Mobility
16. Gender Equality & Inclusive Curriculum

1.2 Problem Statement

As per the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) 2016–2023, child clubs should be strengthened as peer-support mechanisms for enhancing learning outcomes and reducing dropout rates, especially in the transitional grades (6–8), where dropout rates are highest. It envisions mobilizing child clubs to create learning environments that are safe, inclusive, and gender-responsive. Alongside the SSDP, a number of national frameworks recognize the crucial role played by child clubs to promote child participation and inclusive education, such as the Children's Act (2018), the Constitution of Nepal (2015), the National Framework for Child-Friendly Schools (2010), and the Child-Friendly Local Governance Strategy and Operational Guidelines (2011). By supporting child-led organizations such as child clubs, these policies collaboratively advocate for children's rights to association, participation, and empowerment. Despite these supportive policies, the operationalization and institutionalization of child clubs remain inconsistent across different schools. Guidelines on how child clubs should be structured, how their activities should be carried out, and how these clubs should be sustained are not detailed in national polices or guidelines. Although the establishment and capacity-building of child clubs have been mandated by the School Management framework, their implementation has been very limited, as the majority of schools, especially the community schools, lack the necessary technical, financial, and human resources required for their effective establishment and operation (Ministry of Education, Nepal, 2016; Singh, 2012).

On the other hand, taken from the experiences of the development sector, although many educational and social interventions show positive results during pilot tests, they often fail to sustain or increase their impact when scaled. The cause of this failure is typically due to a lack of proper coordination among the stakeholders, insufficient contextual modifications, and assessment of the institutional readiness, as many times scaling interventions are started without first considering whether communities or educational institutions possess the capacity to implement or sustain the intervention. This thus results in disparities between the intended and actual impact because important elements such as resource availability, community needs, and alignment with polices are ignored.

In community schools where resources for the execution of club activities are limited, awareness among students and parents about the benefits of participation

in child clubs is low, and there is a lack of mentorship and practical training on club formation, leadership, and facilitation. The challenges are noticeable. Furthermore, children from marginalized and ethnic backgrounds, such as girls, children with disabilities, and the Dalit community, continue to be underrepresented in terms of leadership and participation in child clubs, which further perpetuates inequalities. This reveals that the child club's potential to foster gender equality, social inclusion, child-centered education, and child participation has not been fully achieved. As a consequence, the gap between the policy's vision and the realities of Nepal's education system continues to widen.

It is thus important to assess the baseline readiness of schools to establish or scale an inclusive and sustainable child club to address these disparities in policy and practice. To do this, a comprehensive awareness of institutional readiness, adaptability of existing policies, and inclusiveness in practice is necessary. Therefore, the aim of this study is to help inform future interventions and scaling strategies by assessing these elements. It intends to ensure that child clubs serve as inclusive, equitable, and empowering spaces where every child is valued and empowered to bring about social change in sync with GESI values.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to evaluate the baseline readiness of the selected community schools to establish, operate, and scale the LIKE club as a safe space to promote the values of GESL and what the roles of key stakeholders (head teachers, GESI focal person, and students) are in this process.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the important roles played by the key stakeholders (head teachers, GESI focal person, and students) in establishing, operating, and scaling the LIKE club in the selected community schools of Bhojpur municipality for promoting the values of GESI.
2. To analyze the opportunities and challenges of establishing, operating, and scaling the LIKE Club in the selected community schools of Bhojpur municipality to promote the values of GESI.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions have been created to guide this study based on the study objectives stated above:

1. What roles do the head teachers, GESI focal persons, and students play in establishing, operating, and scaling the LIKE club to promote the values of GESI in the selected community schools of Bhojpur municipality?
2. What are the potential opportunities and challenges of establishing, operating and, scaling, the LIKE club to promote GESI in the selected community schools of Bhojpur municipality?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is significant as it contributes to the literature on child clubs, scaling science, and institutional readiness by evaluating the effective ways to establish, operate, and scale child clubs to promote child participation, inclusive education, and GESI values, especially in community schools of Nepal. Although child clubs are known for encouraging child participation, leadership skills, and social inclusion, there are limited studies that assess the contextual factors that impact their successful establishment and sustainability. Therefore, this study provides academic input to understand the readiness of schools for integrating child-led initiatives, such as child clubs, into their school system by evaluating the baseline readiness of community schools in the Bhojpur municipality to establish and scale the LIKE club. It also reveals the important roles of head teachers, GESI focal person, and students for sustainable and successful club establishment and operation.

The study also contributes to the growing field of scaling science by explaining how scaling interventions should be contextually appropriate, ethical, sustainable, and equitable. It reinforces the concept that meaningful scaling is beyond an increase in numbers, but is more about being rooted in ethical considerations and backed by institutions. Moving forward, the study also provides valuable information to project initiators, educators, policy makers, and school staff who intend to initiate or scale child-led initiatives such as child clubs in schools. Overall, this study provides both theoretical and practical knowledge on how to establish and potentially scale child clubs in ways that promote the values of GESI and encourage inclusive and equitable child participation.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The study aims to provide valuable insights, but despite being carefully carried out, some limitations may have affected the findings that have been generated, which must be acknowledged:

1. This study is limited to Bhojpur Municipality thus the findings derived may not be completely generalizable to other locations due to geographical and contextual differences.
2. The study is limited to the community schools within the Bhojpur municipality, so the findings may not fully apply in the context of private schools, as in private schools, variations in terms of students' awareness of GESI, child participation, and resource availability for club activities may differ.
3. Since scaling science is still a growing concept, this poses a limitation for the study, as there are limited instructions on how to practically apply and conceptualize its principles and tools effectively.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

Included in this chapter are the review of the available literature on child clubs, child clubs in Nepal, the contribution of child clubs from a GESI perspective, national policies and legislation that support the formation of child clubs in Nepal, scaling science and guiding principles associated with it. The review of these literatures has helped to provide a solid conceptual foundation to guide the study. It has assisted in identifying the gaps in knowledge about how to effectively establish, operate, and scale child clubs in community schools of Nepal, along with the possible opportunities and challenges that may come up in this process.

2.1 Introduction to child clubs

A child club is a group or an organization that is run and led by the children themselves, which helps them to give voice to address issues in their schools and communities (Dahal, 2009b, 2013b, as cited in Dahal, 2014). These child-led clubs have grown to become powerful organizations at the community, national, and international levels that enable the children to fight for their rights, participation, and independence, as well as communicate their concerns with policymakers (Joshi, 2016). For promoting child rights and child participation, the role of child-led groups such as child clubs, youth forums, and youth councils has been crucial. These child clubs have played an instrumental role to spread the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and create safe spaces for children where they can have a say in decisions that influence their lives. Article 15(1) of the UNCRC provides children with the right to form associations and speak out for their well-being. It mentions that "state parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and peaceful assembly." (Singh, 2012). Thus, to exercise this right, the children have formed their own organizations, such as child clubs, which enable them to stand up for their rights with the support of adults. For this reason, child clubs can also be viewed as localized manifestations of initiatives around the world to give children a voice and empowerment (Singh, 2012). According to the study by Pufall & Unsworth (2004, p. 9, as cited in Singh, 2012), because of child clubs, thousands of children have been able to speak out for their rights and influence the authorities who have traditionally made decisions for them, which supports the idea that "voice is an expression of agency." Also, child clubs have been recognized to help children become better leaders and encourage them to work together. Child clubs provide the children with tools to assist them in becoming better members of society and contribute to social change. Thus, child clubs have also been recognized as "democratic training grounds" because they encourage children to become more involved members of their society (Ebbing, 2010, as referenced in Singh, 2012, p. 2), which in turn plays a crucial role in promoting democracy and enhancing the rights of children (Rajbhandary et al., 2006, as referenced in Singh, 2012). Children who take part in child clubs' activities become confident, gain knowledge about their rights, and develop the skills they need to use those rights (Dahal, 2014). Joshi (2016) states that, particularly in the

Global South, child clubs have developed as a means to support the rights of children.

2.2 Child Clubs in Nepal

Prior to the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989, the awareness of issues of children's rights in Nepal was very limited. On September 14, 1990, Nepal ratified the UNCRC which was a great move toward the recognition of children as rights-holders in the country. The Government of Nepal passed crucial legislation including the Children Act (1992) and the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1999) to make sure that the convention's rules were followed at the local level. These legislations were milestones in advancing, acknowledging, and protecting the rights of the children. Because of these policy changes, many local and international agencies started operating in Nepal to implement child rights throughout the country. After these changes in the policy, several national and international organizations started working in Nepal to make sure that children's rights were protected all around the country (Singh, 2012). It was during this time that child clubs started to grow in the country as a means to get children involved, which was in line with Nepal's commitment to the UNCRC. In Nepal, child clubs are a relatively new idea. They started in the early 1990s, after the nation ratified the UNCRC in 1990. Since then, they have grown a lot, and there are now thousands of clubs around the nation. The idea of child-led organizations may seem new, but Nepal has had children's groups for a much longer time. For example, children have been a part of organized groups like Scouts since 1952, where they have helped with school and community initiatives (Singh, 2012). International and national organizations that work on issues affecting children were the ones who first worked for the creation of child clubs in Nepal. Unlike older children's groups in the country, these new clubs were different in one important way: they were run to various degrees by children themselves. One main reason for this approach was that more and more groups that work with children were committing to following the inclusive principles set out in the UNCRC. There were not many child clubs in the late 1980s, but they started to grow quickly in the early 1990s (Gautam, 2008, p.25). The child-to-child activities that started in Lamjung in 1989 as part of the child-centered community development initiative led to the creation of child clubs in Nepal. The program was later expanded to Palpa, Tanahu, and Udayapur by Save the Children Norway (then Redd Barna). It focused on health, hygiene, injury prevention, educating siblings, caring for younger children, and promoting child rights, laying the foundation for participatory child-led initiatives across the country. Plan International initiated child clubs in 1991 and now highlights the importance of establishing a child club or children's forum in every village or school where they operate (Dahal, 2014, p.12; Singh, 2012) Save the Children United States (US) initiated child-to-child programs in Nuwakot in 1995 and in Siraha in 1996, while Save the Children UK began programs in Sindhupalchok in the same year. The children's clubs established by Action Aid originated from a participatory research initiative conducted in 1993/94 (Johnson & Hill, 1995, as cited in Dahal, 2014). In 1994, Bal Chetna Samuha was formed by bringing together the same group of children who had contributed to the preparation of Nepal's UNCRC report in Kathmandu. In 1996, two years later, Hatemalo Bal Samuha was established, which was another important step towards improving the movement for child clubs. By July 2005, these programs had grown so much that over 9,000 child clubs had been established across the country. This shows how the

importance of child participation is being recognized more in the country (Gautam, 2008, p. 25). As a response to the children's radio show Hatemalo, Save the Children started the first child clubs in Nepal in 1982. This show talked about things like disability, health, and child rights, and it encouraged children to talk about their issues with each other. The clubs quickly grew to cover almost 40 areas. People saw them as a continuation of older children's groups. They focused on cultural and fun activities, like football teams or Deusi-Bhailo parties during holidays. Informal children's groups started to develop in 1983. This was the beginning of a movement that became organized in the 1990s (Ratna, Shrestha, & Maharjan, 2011, p.8)

UNICEF Nepal has supported child rights and participation since 1968, introducing child clubs in 1996 and integrating them into national programs, such as the Decentralized Action for Children and Women Program (DACAW) from 2006 to 2008, to promote child-friendly governance (UNICEF-Nepal, 2003, 2010, as cited in Dahal, 2014). Its approach focuses on building children's capacity, supporting their role in local governance, and expanding a nationwide network of over 5,000 child clubs in partnership with MoFALD and NGOs (UNICEF-Nepal, 2012, as cited in Dahal, 2014). Child clubs in Nepal operate in both schools and communities, with support from child rights organizations (CWIN, 2007, as cited in Dahal, 2014). The approval of the Child-Friendly School National Framework for Quality Education in 2010 by the Ministry of Education significantly expanded the number of child-friendly schools, mandating School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) to form and mobilize child clubs and ensure their representation in school meetings. Recognizing the increasing need for human resources to support and promote child clubs across districts, the Consortium of Organizations Working for Child Clubs (Consortium) was established in Nepal in 1999 to encourage children's citizenship rights and the children's movement in Nepal. In August 2001, following a prolonged struggle, the Supreme Court of Nepal recognized children's organizations by granting Child Clubs the right to register under Article 15 of the CRC (Right to Association). This landmark decision set a national and global precedent for the legal registration of child-led organizations (Theis & O'Kane, 2004; Dahal, 2014). Child Clubs in Nepal are diverse, bringing together boys and girls aged 8–18 from various ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The executive board of Child Clubs consists of 7-11 members (including a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, and in some cases a joint secretary). This framework, which is presented by NGOs in the course of facilitator training, assists in structuring the leadership of clubs (Rajbhandary et al., 2002, as cited in Dahal, 2014).Members get together regularly, usually once a week, to share their thoughts and plan events that interest them. There are two kinds of child clubs in Nepal which are (1) school-based child clubs and (2) community-based child clubs. Those that meet in schools and those that meet in communities. Community-based clubs work to support child rights in their neighborhoods and include children in and out of school. School-based clubs work to make schools better places to be. Some clubs focus on sports, while others raise money to help people in need or give children from poor families schoolbooks. There are also groups dedicated to specific issues, such as girls' rights and environmental protection. Furthermore, the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP 2009-2015) introduced compulsory child clubs in public schools to support group learning. However, these clubs only include school-going children, excluding out-of-school children (Theis & O'Kane, 2004; Singh, 2012)

According to the United Nations (2021), the mapping initiative conducted by the National Child Rights Council (NCRC), formerly the Central Child Welfare Board, reveals that there are approximately 13,291 child clubs in the country, comprising 7,237 community-based clubs and 5,544 school-based clubs. However, determining the precise count of child clubs is challenging due to the fluctuating membership numbers. Furthermore, according to the Strategic Review of Support to Child Clubs (Consortium & Central Child Welfare Board, 2012) in Nepal, Child Clubs have the option to register as organizations under the Organization Affiliation Act, which requires these clubs to undergo financial audits as well.

2.3 Contribution of Child Clubs and GESI perspective

Child clubs are gaining popularity not only in Nepal but also in other South Asian countries. With heightened awareness of their rights, children and youth are better equipped to confront injustices and contribute to societal transformation (O'Kane, 2003, as cited in Singh, 2012). The children attribute much of their personal growth and the positive impacts on their families and communities to these clubs. Joining the clubs has brought both individual and communal benefits. Child Clubs offer unique opportunities for personal development, allowing members to acquire skills that might not be available at home, in school, or through other organizations. This experience has significantly boosted their self-confidence and enhanced their ability to manage small programs independently (GC, 2018, p. 18). Child clubs have made significant contributions at multiple levels. At the individual level, they help children learn about their rights, build self-confidence, and improve academic performance. Socially, they have gained recognition as essential platforms where children's voices are respected and included, with communities increasingly demanding their participation in programs and decisions beyond child-related issues. Nationally, child clubs have influenced policymaking by engaging in discussions, negotiations, and advocacy on children's rights. They are active from the community to central levels, raising awareness and voicing concerns against violence, sexual exploitation, child marriage, and other social issues (Singh, 2012, pp. 89-92). Child-led organizations exist to enable children to organize themselves, identify issues that matter to them, and decide on actions to address these concerns (Lansdown, 2005; O'Kane, 2006; Paudel, 2009, as cited in Dahal, 2014). In Nepal, child clubs have taken this role by mobilizing around a range of social issues, including gender-based discrimination in education, early marriage, and the negative impacts of alcoholism in families that often lead to violence and harm against children. Children view child clubs as a key agency for safeguarding their rights, with club leaders recognizing them as a collective platform to demand accountability from adults and institutions, including schools (Dahal, 2014). The child club activities significantly enhance children's participation, fostering their capacity to independently engage with and address issues directly relevant to their lives. Furthermore, through discussions and collaboration with peers and adults in planning and carrying out club activities, children develop valuable social skills (Singh, 2012).

Child clubs also play a crucial role in acknowledging and valuing the perspectives of young people, significantly contributing to the progress of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). By promoting the involvement of girls, children with disabilities, and individuals from marginalized groups, these clubs help dismantle exclusionary barriers and confront discriminatory practices. Child clubs have

played a key role in enrolling working children in schools, monitoring dropouts, preventing child marriage and trafficking, and advocating for justice for child laborers and other marginalized children and their families. Children from different classes and ethnic groups are also actively participating in these clubs. (Theis & O'Kane, 2004; Singh, 2012).

According to Singh's study (2012), "There are children in the clubs from all communities; there is no exclusion based on ethnicity in club memberships." However, the membership composition often reflects the location of the club, such as a majority of Newar children if the club is in a Newar community. The State of Children in Nepal 2011 report indicates that most children in the clubs come from indigenous communities, primarily because participation by these groups in social and institutional structures has recently gained more attention in Nepalese society. At the same time, the participation of children from the so-called lower castes (Dalit community) remains less than that of other groups because public spaces for them are restricted, and their interaction with higher-caste children is still not encouraged, especially in rural areas. Singh also notes that clubs are essentially not inclusive of children with disabilities, with participants admitting that "the clubs are not disability-friendly and have not taken the issues seriously." Both children and adults stressed the lack of facilities as the main barrier, although the clubs try to assist by, for example, carrying disabled children to and from school. Adults shared, "We have no policy to exclude them; we encourage their participation; however, their participation is almost nil because the clubs do not have facilities to make them adjust." (Singh, 2012).

Additionally, a study by Gautam (2008) suggests that child clubs have not yet fully established a space that ensures social equity in their membership. They still need to adopt a more balanced approach to provide all children with equitable opportunities to benefit from participation in child club activities. Overall, while child clubs promote inclusion across ethnic and social groups, structural barriers continue to limit the involvement of Dalit and disabled children, showing both the progress and remaining challenges in realizing GESI goals.

2.4 National Policies and Legislation Support for Child Clubs

The development and institutionalization of child clubs in Nepal have been strongly influenced by national policies and legislation that promote children's rights and participation. After ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on September 14, 1990, Nepal took significant steps to promote child participation and protection within its legal framework (Dahal, 2014; Singh, 2012; Child Rights, Government of Nepal, 2018). Key milestones include the Children's Act (1992, revised in 2018), constitutional provisions such as Article 39 of the 2015 Constitution, and supportive measures in the Penal and Civil Codes of 2017. Under the Children's Act, 2048 BS (1992), the Central Child Welfare Board (CCWB) was constituted as a statutory authority responsible for overseeing and promoting initiatives related to child rights and protection in collaboration with relevant ministries. Nepal has also ratified key international conventions, including the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1996) and the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (1999), ratified in 2003 and 2004, respectively. The Children's Act, 2018, aligns with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), integrating its four dimensions, which are 1) survival, 2) protection, 3) development,

and 4) participation, and ensuring special protection for children at all levels of government. Similarly, the Local Government Operation Act, 2017, incorporates provisions related to education, health, sanitation, and child protection, thereby reinforcing child rights at the local level (Child Rights, Government of Nepal, 2018). Nepal has also ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC, 2000) in 2007 and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography (OPSC, 2000) in 2006, and the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution in 2002. The government introduced the Juvenile Justice (Procedures) Rules, 2006, and the Terms and Conditions for Inter-country Adoption of Nepali Children, 2008, to strengthen child protection. The Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare, established in 1995, launched the 10-Year National Plan of Action for Children (2004/05–2014/15), supported by the Three-Year Interim Development Plan (2007/08–2009/10), which addresses the empowerment of children, youth, and women. Historically, children were first recognized as a development concern in the Seventh Plan (1985–90). Further inclusion in the Ninth Plan and the Interim Constitution (2007/2063) ensured non-discrimination and the right of every child to participate in school, family, and community life (Gautam 2008, p.24; Singh, 2012, p.13)

Nepal's legal and policy framework for children includes the Local Self-Governance Act, 1999, which mandates local bodies to prioritize child welfare projects and establish special funds for women and children, as well as the Children's Act, 1992. Plans and programs such as the Three-Year Plan (2011/12–2013/14), the Ten-Year National Plan of Action for Children (2004/05–2014/15), and the Child Friendly Local Governance Strategy and Operational Guidelines, 2011 promote child participation, child-friendly governance, and inclusion in local planning through child clubs and networks. Sectoral initiatives, such as the National Framework on Child-Friendly Schools for Quality Education (2010) and the National Youth Policy, further ensure children's participation, rights, and empowerment in education, health, and local decision-making (Consortium & Central Child Welfare Board, 2012).

Furthermore, the Constitution of Nepal (2015) firmly recognizes children's rights as fundamental, with explicit provisions ensuring their access to justice, education, and health, including protections for children in conflict with the law and against exploitation. The rights to survival, protection, development, and participation are guaranteed explicitly through ten distinct clauses under Article 39 of the Constitution. The Constitution emphasizes the best interests of children under Article 51(j), and beyond the child-specific provisions in Article 39, eleven other articles address child development and protection. Notably, Article 11(4) pertains to citizenship for children whose parents are unknown. Article 18 (Right to equality), Article 29 (Right against exploitation), Article 30 (Right to clean environment), Article 31 (Right to education), Article 35 (Right to health), and Article 43 (Right to social security). Article 51 emphasizes labor and social justice and inclusion policies, including the abolition of child labor and prioritizing the best interests of the child. The Constitution guarantees children's rights to mother-tongue education, free basic and secondary education, equal access to health and sanitation, and social protection for orphans, children with disabilities, displaced or vulnerable children, and marginalized groups. Additionally, the Supreme Court of Nepal has mandated legal recognition for child clubs, and the Children's Act, 2018, guarantees children

the right to express their views, access information, organize institutions, and participate in public gatherings. The Children's Act, 2018, grants children the right to establish clubs or institutions to protect and promote their rights. These clubs work to raise awareness on issues such as birth registration, school enrollment, child marriage, child labor, immunization, and learning in a safe, fear-free environment (Child Rights, Government of Nepal, 2018)

2.5 Introduction to the concept of Scaling & Scaling Science

In the development and non-profit sectors, scaling has attracted growing attention due to concerns that the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were not being met as quickly or effectively as expected. Many initiatives remain limited in scope and fragmented, preventing them from generating a meaningful impact on broader challenges. Even highly effective small-scale projects are often compared to "small pebbles dropped into a vast pond," with their influence dissipating rather than driving systemic change (Do, 2019).

The term *"scaling"* refers to various methods of expanding and strengthening an idea or program, whether through planned replication, natural dissemination, or integration into national systems, to create long-lasting, positive changes in people's lives (Olsen, Rodríguez, & Elliott, 2022). Scaling focuses on maximizing social and environmental impact, requiring researchers and innovators to think beyond the immediate users of knowledge. It calls for attention to future applications, potential barriers, and opportunities for innovations to drive broader social transformation. Scaling is not just a goal but also a process of embedding an effective idea, initiative, approach, program, policy, or intervention into widespread practice, ultimately creating a new normal sustained by the broader system. Scaling involves expanding the reach and influence of a policy, program, practice, or idea, while ensuring its impact is sustained over time (McLean & Gargani, 2019). According to Do (2019), there is no single, universally accepted definition of scaling in the literature. The term is often linked with concepts such as "scaling up," "replication," "expansion," or "going to scale," and in some cases, these are used interchangeably. Despite the variation in definitions, scaling generally refers to expanding impact from a smaller to a broader level. For instance, the Dao (2019) cites definitions from the World Bank (2005) and Hartmann and Linn (2008), describing "scaling" as the process of expanding, adapting, and sustaining successful policies, programs, or projects across different contexts over time to reach a broader audience. Similarly, the World Health Organization (2009) defines scaling as deliberate efforts to increase the impact of tested pilot or experimental projects, benefiting a larger population and supporting long-term policy and program development. Scaling refers to determining how to present research findings so that the solutions produced reach the intended users in forms they can accept and apply (Price-Kelly, van Haeren, & McLean, 2020; Bajracharya, 2023). Coburn (2003) explains that the problem of scale is fundamentally multidimensional, and leaders should approach change through four interconnected dimensions of scale: depth, sustainability, spread, and transfer of ownership. The ultimate aim is not just to bring about change but to ensure that the shift endures over time. Thus, it is explained that the absolute scale is not just about reach; it is about depth, sustainability, and system integration. Scaling must include deep teacher learning, ownership, and institutional support to be lasting. Scaling encourages consideration of downstream applications, barriers, and opportunities

for innovations to contribute to broad social transformation. Scaling is a long, complex, non-linear journey that can take up to 15-20 years. It requires a systematic approach to ensure quality, equity, and sustainability are maintained through expansion (Brookings Institution, 2023). Scaling involves three distinct processes: scaling up, scaling out, and scaling deep. Scaling up focuses on improving efficiency. Scaling out seeks to expand the reach by increasing the number of sites or opportunities. Scaling deep emphasizes enhancing quality or impact (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Bajracharya, 2023).

2.5.1 *Progression of Scaling*

Scaling emerged from the need to expand the impact of innovations and solutions, enabling them to reach broader audiences and generate meaningful social change. The 2014–2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa exposed the shortcomings of traditional scaling approaches, as the existing health systems and evidence-based solutions were inadequate to address the unprecedented crisis, which killed over 11,000 people and disrupted entire communities and economies. The outbreak revealed that scaling cannot rely solely on proven interventions or favorable contexts, especially in fragile social and institutional environments. In such situations, scaling must depend on research and innovation, where new ideas are generated, tested in real-world settings, and refined iteratively to achieve significant impact. The rise of 'scaling science' for social impact was driven by the recognition that complex and persistent problems, referred to as "wicked problems," require a systematic approach that goes beyond resource allocation to include considerations of evidence, context, and risk. Scaling science stresses the important role of innovators and researchers collaborating with diverse actors and systems, using dynamic evidence collected before, during, and after scaling to inform decision-making. Scaling relies on innovation, which encompasses the entire journey toward scale from initial promising ideas to achieving meaningful impacts at the end. Scaling science refers to extending the outcomes of scientific research to produce meaningful effects, viewed from both the researchers' and innovators' perspectives. It also involves building systematic, principle-based approaches that enhance the likelihood of innovations benefiting society. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) exemplified this approach in West Africa by supporting both long-term public health innovations and rapid response mechanisms, such as the trial and scale-up of a new Ebola vaccine, alongside traditional clinical and evidence-based methods. Overall, scaling science represents a paradigm shift that combines imagination, critical thinking, and systematic evidence, enabling solutions to be expanded in complex contexts while considering social, ethical, and practical factors (Gargani & McLean, 2017; Shrestha, 2022; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023).

2.5.2 *Traditional Paradigms of Scaling*

Scaling has mostly focused been about growth in terms of numbers, giving importance to size and reach, but not to making social change. The majority of what we know and have learned about scaling science is based on the historical models, such as the 19th-century industrial expansion, 20th-century pharmaceutical regulation, and 21st-century technology startups, they are referred to as the industrial, pharmaceutical, and lean paradigms. Even though these scaling

paradigms provide useful approaches to efficiency, replication, and rapid growth, they also possess limitations that are evident in dealing with the complexities of contemporary social innovation. These historical paradigms often represent an old-fashioned way of thinking in which the only aim of the organization is to expand instead of improving social outcomes. There is an assumption that bigger is better, because of which scaling is regarded as a business or an operational requirement where profit or share in the market is prioritized instead of a sustainable value in society (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Shrestha, 2022; Bajracharya, 2023)

Studies by Gargani & McLean (2017); McLean & Gargani (2019); Shrestha (2022); and Bajracharya (2023) explain the three traditional scaling paradigms, which are industrial, pharmaceutical, and lean scaling paradigms as follows:

- **Industrial Scaling Paradigm**

  According to McLean & Gargani (2019), the industrial gives emphasis to the use of mass manufacturing, replication, franchising, and train-the-trainer techniques to produce large-scale goods and distribute and standardize the physical products at minimal cost. To increase market share and maintain a monopoly is its main goal. Even though this paradigm is effective in pushing the organizations to grow but it generally values profit above creating social impact

- **Pharmaceutical Scaling Paradigm**

  The pharmaceutical scaling paradigm focuses on securing exclusive rights to an approved innovation, also known as authorization to scale (McLean & Gargani, 2019). Scaling up is allowed by the government only after testing the intervention in small-scale trials, and when the innovator is granted permission to expand. This scaling paradigm has helped to shape the creation of market-based solutions for the promotion of good health and disease prevention. It has also guided the creation of all types of evidence-based programs, which are conducted by for-profit and non-profit organizations around the world

- **Lean Scaling Paradigm**

  The lean scaling paradigm is based on the necessity to grow rapidly in a competitive market through quick learning, continuous iteration of product ideas to understand what the market values, resource mobilization, and securing the funds in a timely manner to expand market share. This paradigm involves developing a minimal viable product, launching it, learning from it, refining it quickly from feedback, and repeating this process. Rather than any formal authorization as in pharmaceutical companies, it relies on the support of customers and investors, which, however, may struggle to enforce exclusivity. This approach is popular among social entrepreneurs and impact investors (McLean & Gargani, 2019).

  Although commercial scaling paradigms emphasize growth above social impact, they also help to provide valuable information to social innovators, such as using industrial tactics, the collection of evidence in stages, and lean adaptive methodologies. However, these models do not complete social goals. The new paradigm of scaling science thus provides a platform to scale towards public good based on the various experiences of the Global South, not only

with the goal of expanding but also to enhance meaningful benefits to people (McLean & Gargani, 2019).

2.5.3 Scaling Science

Scaling science is a new paradigm that aims to extend the impact of research and innovation for positive social and environmental impacts. There are two things it has in common. The first one is to scale the scientific research to maximize public benefits, and the second is to use a systematic, principle-based strategy to ensure good social impact. Therefore, to effectively scale it requires the integration of innovators in the system they want to change, assess the risks, and also ensuring that effective solutions are adopted by the intended beneficiaries(Price-Kelly, van Haeren, & McLean, 2020; Dahal, 2023).

2.5.4 Scaling Impact

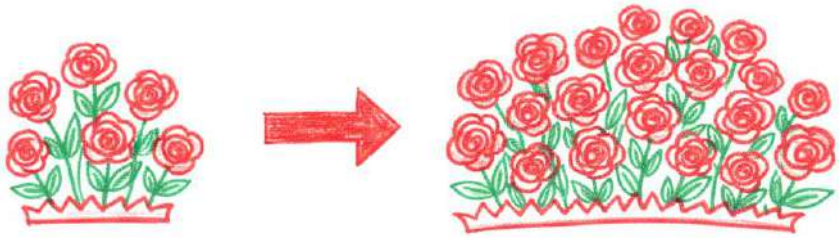
Scaling impact is a planned way to effectively extend the interventions in order to create meaningful changes in society. It does not aim at increasing revenues or market shares, unlike the traditional measures, but focuses on ethical justifications, evidence, and maintains a balance between expansion and its purpose. It requires systematic transformation of various actors and cultures, with the aim of replicating or scaling efforts in a manner that is sustainable and socially beneficial (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Bajracharya, 2023).

As per McLean & Gargani (2019), the four guiding principles of scaling science, which are moral justification, optimal scale, inclusive coordination, and dynamic evaluation, guide the entire process of scaling impact (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Dahal, 2023). These scaling principles guide social innovators and researchers to navigate stages between ideas to meaningful results. Scaling has different meanings, usually pictured in metaphor, like the growing fruit, which is used to guide the process of planning by demonstrating how an idea (seed) can be nurtured (growth) and expanded to yield significant positive results to a large number of people (harvest).

2.5.4.1 Scaling Up

Scaling up refers to the process of making a system or a space more efficient, that is, to make it more productive. An example of this would be a farmer receiving more fruits from one tree, a health program producing more nurses, or a policy better serving more people (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023). As shown in figure 1, one rose bush when scaled up would produce make more roses as outputs. People usually utilize this method to male changes at institutional level such as rules, polices, or guidelines.

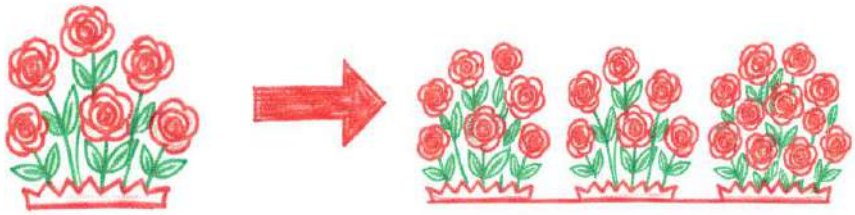
Figure 1: *Scaling up: from a small, one-rose bush with a few roses to a bigger bush with more roses*



2.5.4.2 Scaling Out

Scaling out means to extend the area of an intervention by adding more sites or opportunities to the existing one. Doing this makes it available to more people and places. For example, a farmer may plant more trees, a health program may open new training facilities, or a policy establishment may duplicate the same policy in different levels of government. Simply, scaling out involves replication and broader distribution so to have a broader effect of the intervention on a broader population or area (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023). The concept of scaling out is shown in Figure 2, where instead of using the same rose bush, more rose bushes are planted across a border area, which increases the total number of roses that grow within that area.

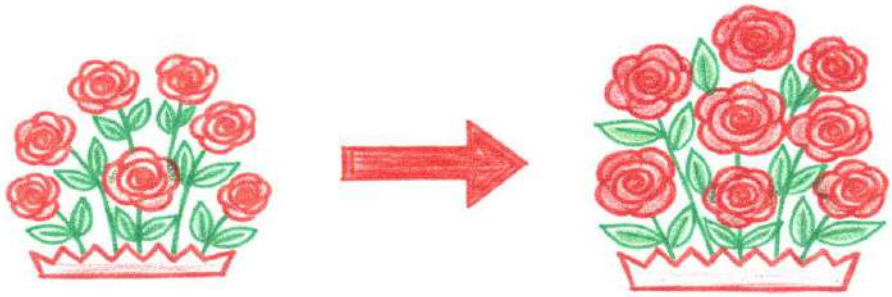
Figure 2 *Scaling out: One rose bush → many rose bushes, more roses.*



2.5.4.3 Scaling Deep

Scaling deep is concerned with improving the quality, depth, and cultural integration of an intervention, as opposed to increasing its size or volume. For example, a farmer may allow a fruit to be riper to enhance the flavor, a health education program may provide teachers with more skills to make them more effective, and a policy organization may provide campaigns to help to get policies adopted. Scaling deep focuses on transforming practices, norms, and behaviors of a community to make a meaningful and long-term impact (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023). The concept of scaling deep is shown in Figure 3. When a rose bush is scaled down, the goal is to make the roses bigger, smell better, and enhance its overall quality instead of just increasing their number,

Figure 3 *Scaling deep: One rose bush → same-sized rose bush but with enhanced roses.*



2.6 Guiding Principles of Scaling Science

According to the study by McLean & Gargani (2019) there are four principles of scaling, which include moral justification, optimal scale, coordination and dynamic evaluation. These principles emphasize how necessary it is to take into account pathways of scaling, acknowledge trade-offs, and ensure constant assessment. If we neglect these principles, we can end up putting private gains or expansion ahead of the public good. Grounded in these principles, scaling science gives social innovators and researchers a way to move from ideas to real, beneficial change. The

The four principles of scaling are described below:

2.6.1 Justification

The first guiding principle of scaling science is justification. This principle emphasizes that scaling is a decision that must be thoroughly thought out; it needs to be an intentional choice, not just an assumption. Justification promotes three foundations: scaling is a choice that requires justification, scaling must be aligned with values and supported by evidence, and both the innovators and those immediately affected should have a say in the decisions to scale. Justification ensures that decisions to scale are transparent, and it takes into consideration those who will be affected by the intervention. Justification maintains a balance between the need to expand an innovation and moral responsibilities. Government, financiers, and peers often put pressure on the innovators to expand their innovations, but ethical responsibility means assessing the risks and the benefits of doing so. There are two parts to justification: technical and moral. The technical part measures whether an invention is likely to have the beneficial impacts it was meant to have, based on research, past evaluations, and early outcomes from implementation. The moral aspect of scaling looks at the morals and ethics involved, asking how sure innovators need to be that their solution will work and not cause harm. Those who are affected by the invention are at risk of being affected, and they will face any negative consequences if scaling fails or has unforeseen effects. The acceptable level of impact risk relies on things like how urgent the problem is, how much it would cost to fail, how many different points of view there are, how many other alternatives there are, and how likely it is that harm will happen. To make sure that scaling is in line with community values, it is important to make decisions openly and with input from all stakeholders. Some important questions in regard to this include, "Why scale?" and "How certain must

we be about positive impacts before scaling?" .By clearly stating both technical evidence and community principles, you can make convincing arguments for scaling, get stakeholders involved, and make sure that everyone is on the same page when it comes to ethics. Justification also acknowledges that refraining from scaling may be the optimal decision when dangers surpass benefits or when values are misaligned. The Ebola epidemic in West Africa is a real-world illustration of how moral and technological factors led to the quick but careful scaling of vaccinations and other treatments. In general, justification makes sure that scaling is based on evidence, driven by moral duty, and in the best interest of the public. (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Price-Kelly, van Haeren, & McLean, 2020; Shrestha, 2022; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023)

2.6.2 Optimal Scale

The second concept, Optimal Scale, states that scaling should not just mean making more of something, or simply increasing output, but also making sure that the impacts are balanced and useful. It understands that "more is not always better" and that solutions that work well on a small scale may not work as well on a larger scale. Scaling has a lot of effects, some of which are planned, some of which are not, some of which are good, and some of which are bad. All of these effects need to be taken into consideration. Optimal Scale aims to maintain a balance between four dimensions of impact, which are magnitude, variety, sustainability, and equity. This makes sure that no one type of impact is given more weight than the others. To find the right scale, we need to keep looking at the trade-offs between these dimensions and get input from a variety of people, such as researchers, funders, and beneficiaries. To figure out the magnitude, we need both quantitative metrics (like how many people were served) and qualitative aspects (such as how deep the shift was or how well the cultures mixed). The concept also goes against the idea that "bigger is better," suggesting that a smaller, more focused intervention can sometimes have greater results than a larger, less effective one. For Optimal Scale to work, there must be a clear way to measure success, failure, and progress. It stresses getting approval from stakeholders to make sure that the chosen scale is in line with agreed values and goals. In the end, it encourages cautious and intentional preparation so that scaling has the maximum and most lasting effect (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Price-Kelly, van Haeren, & McLean, 2020; Shrestha, 2022; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023). Below the four dimensions of optimal scale is described:

- **Magnitude**
  The magnitude is the extent and strength of the changes that an innovation brings about. It helps innovators to figure out who will be affected by the changes, how much they will be affected, where the changes will happen, and how much people value them. It shows how much of an impact the intervention has and if it makes sense to scale it up, as well as whether adding more beneficiaries or outcomes would really enhance the overall impact.

- **Variety**
  McLean and Gargani(2019) define variety as the range of impacts an innovation has on different types, levels, and pathways. This dimension helps innovators understand how their ideas affect people, communities, and society as a whole, as well as of the many ways one innovation may have similar outcomes. It

shows if the intervention has a wide range of important effects, so that we do not just focus on one type of change and neglect other important effects.

- **Sustainability**
  Sustainability refers to how long impacts last, which can be the amount of time that people, places, or things are affected; the amount of time that an effort to create an impact can continue; and the amount of time that opposing forces (like resistance to antibiotics, market forces, and social norms) have not yet made an innovation useless. It ensures that scaling delivers benefits that can be continued over the long term and remain effective despite potential disruptions (McLean & Gargani, 2019)

- **Equity**

  Equity means making sure that the effects are spread out fairly among different groups in society. It helps innovators find and fix uneven access, stop doing things that make things less fair, and achieve results that are fair for everyone. For example, it shows how important it is to avoid making current inequality worse by making sure that one group does not gain at the cost of another and that results are fair in a way that everyone is okay with (McLean & Gargani, 2019)

2.6.3 Coordination

Coordination highlights that scaling is not an individual process but arises in complex systems of actors, namely initiators, enablers, competitors, and impacted people, which define and are defined by the scaling process. Coordination emphasizes that scaling doesn't happen in a vacuum, but in complicated systems with many players, such as starters, supporters, rivals, and those who are affected by and shape the scaling process. Simply put, scaling needs a method that is adaptable and open enough to change as new information is learned through use and assessment. Coordination is hard because these people's jobs change over time. It needs careful planning, constant adaptation, and adding new knowledge and resources as the process goes on. A changing set of relationships is needed to make an effect that helps the public good. Coordination makes it easier to plan, participate, and adapt within this system. It also makes sure that the right people join and leave the process at the right times, bringing the right skills, resources, and points of view. For researchers, teamwork is more than just making partnerships. It also means making a list of all the people who have a stake in the project and guessing how they will interact with each other to affect the results. To do this, strategies need to be changed to account for unexpected effects like those related to gender or social inequality. A portfolio method to teamwork makes growing efforts even stronger by bringing together many ideas and projects, which have a bigger effect as a whole than when they are done separately. So, coordination is more than just working together; it's also about getting the bigger picture, planning for unexpected outcomes like gender or social inequality, and making sure that everyone benefits equally. Coordination basically means planning, changing, and maintaining teamwork across different and growing networks to make sure that growth brings about fair and long-lasting public goods (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Price-Kelly, van Haeren, & McLean, 2020; Shrestha, 2022; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023)

- **Initiators**
  Initiators are the most important component of scaling because they allow a change in scale to take place. They include people such as innovators, investors, experts, as well as conditions like community support, land features, or cultural acceptance. For scaling to work effectively, it is important that the right mix of elements must line up correctly.

- **Enablers**
  Enablers are the individuals, organizations, and resources facilitating scaling once it has begun. They may include service providers, policymakers, government agencies, or even infrastructure like factories and distribution systems. Their roles range widely from legislation to training, ensuring that innovations move from small-scale use to broader implementation.

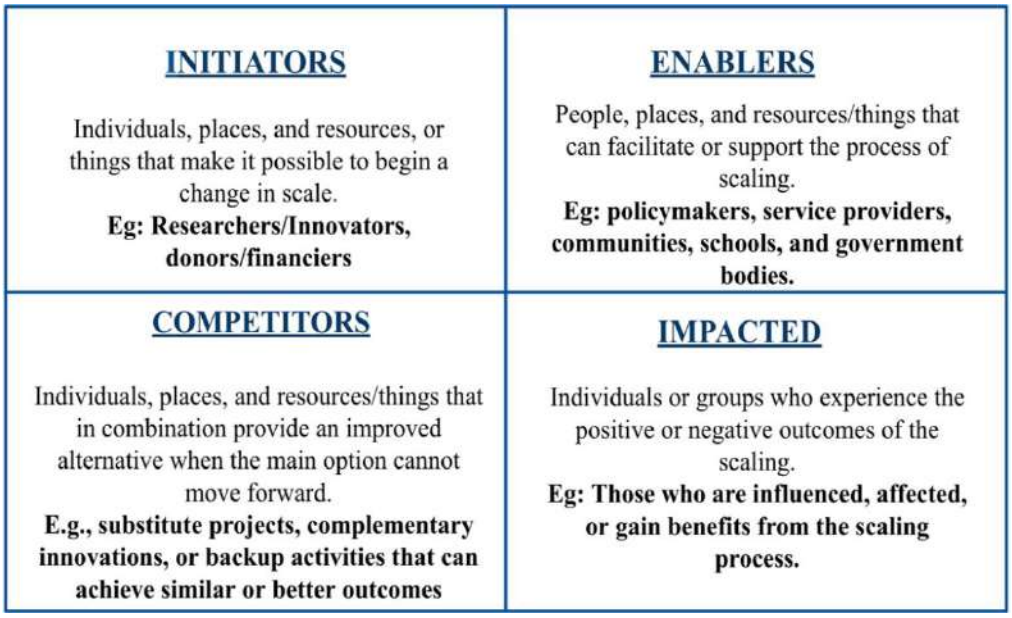
- **Competitors**
  People, practices, or systems that compete with or offer alternatives to the innovation being scaled up are known as competitors. These alternatives can come from business, cultural practices that are already in place, or natural resources, like land-use patterns, that make the way things are done now more appealing. If innovators want to scale for the public good, they need to know when competitors may be able to offer better results and be willing to give in for the sake of fairness and efficiency.

- **Impacted**

  The impacted are those who directly experience the positive or negative consequences of scaling. They hold the most significant influence over the ultimate success of scaling, regardless of whether they are formally included in decision-making. As beneficiaries, or those affected by unintended harm, they reveal the real value and sustainability of the scaling efforts.

Figure 4 below illustrates the interconnected elements of the scaling system: enablers, initiators, competitors, and those impacted by it. People, individuals, places, and things are sources involved in or affected by an innovation, forming a network where some impacts may be unexpected or difficult to measure. Coordinators help spot these impacts, and innovators must consider this group in decision-making and progress evaluation.

Figure 4 *illustrates the actors for coordination in the scaling process.*



2.6.4 *Dynamic Evaluation*

Dynamic evaluation considers scaling itself as an intervention that should be continuously assessed because scaling produces constant change; it requires an evaluative approach that is equally flexible and ongoing. Instead of only asking whether an impact was achieved at a specific moment, it delves deeper into how the effects occur, why they happen, under what conditions they were completed, and how outcomes evolve across different times and places.

Unlike the old, rigid, and linear approaches. Before, during, and after scaling, dynamic evaluation emphasizes ongoing learning processes. Two important things to think about when doing dynamic evaluation are: First, scaling is an intervention subject to assessment. Second, scaling transforms the impacts of innovations through a range of scaling effects (linear and nonlinear, quantitative and qualitative relationships between scaling actions and scaling impact). Strategies such as trials, case studies, or rapid assessments are selected based on the judgment of those involved in the scaling process, including initiators, stakeholders, and beneficiaries. This approach allows evaluation to remain adaptive when conditions shift as scaling progresses. Ultimately, Dynamic Evaluation strengthens the path to optimal scale by ensuring that scaling impacts are constantly monitored and understood. It prompts those involved to measure not only the intended impacts but also the unintended, desirable, and undesirable consequences. This enables innovators, funders, and communities to adjust actions for effective, equitable, and context-aligned scaling decisions (McLean & Gargani, 2019; Price-Kelly, van Haeren, & McLean, 2020; Shrestha, 2022; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023).

2.7 Scaling Theory of Change

Scaling Theory of Change is a framework that innovators can use to put the four guiding principles of scaling science into practice. In a traditional theory of change, activities lead to outputs, which lead to outcomes, and then impact. Traditional theory of change shows how a program should have achieved impact usually in a

fixed and linear manner. A scaling theory of change, on the other hand, looks at how the process of scaling itself changes how impact is achieved. As ideas grow, they change, adapt, and connect with systems in new ways. And this makes it dynamic. The scaling theory of change is meant to go along with the traditional theory, not replace it. It does this by explaining how scaling changes over time and can be hard to predict. At its core, it is made up of three parts: path to scale, response to scale, and partners for scale. (Gargani & McLean, 2017; Shrestha, 2022; Bajracharya, 2023; Dahal, 2023).

- **Path to Scale:**

  The path to scale is the series of steps an innovation goes through, beginning with idea generation, developing know-how, taking action, and ultimately expanding the impact.

- **Response to Scale:**

  Response to scale refers to how the impact of an innovation changes with the increase of the innovation in magnitude, quality, and kind of impact. Scaling has both good and bad impacts so everyone involved in the process needs to think about the trade-offs and find the optimal balance of impacts.

- **Partners for Scale:**

  The partners for scale are all the people and organizations that are part of scaling an innovation, including research and development, implementation, and expansion. Coordination between these partners is important for smooth transition, sharing of duties, and achieving the full potential of innovation.

Scaling impact is often hard to understand because there are many actors and conditions that are always changing. But scaling science helps us to make sense of this complexity. Its principles are like a map that helps innovators plan, adjust their tactics, and check their progress as things change. Innovators are asked to think about impact scales and to help others understand and use scaling science better (Gargani & McLean, 2017).

2.8 Application of Scaling Science

There are three main areas that show how scaling science can be used which are : Scaling for research and development (R4D), knowledge translation and scaling, and incorporating scaling into research. The study by Price-Kelly, van Haeren, & McLean (2020) explains that these areas show how scaling can be carefully added to the whole process of research and innovation.

1. **Scaling for Research and Development (R4D):**
   The goal of research for development is to make discoveries or find answers that can be used to help development. In this situation, scaling needs adaptable tools and a wide range of knowledge to make the move from discovery to

application easier. Scaling should only go ahead if there is strong evidence and support from the people who will be affected by it.

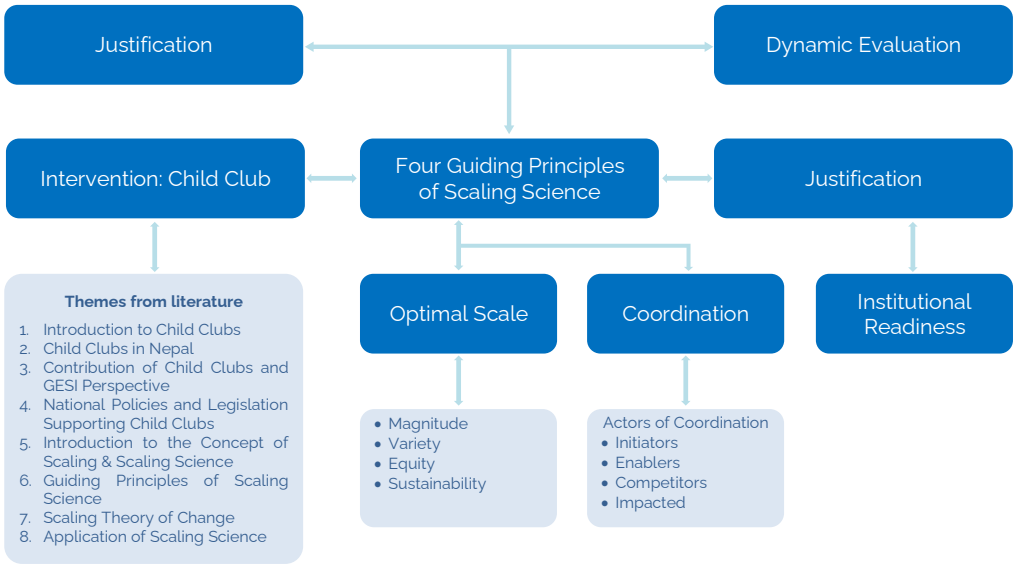
2. **Knowledge Translation and Scaling:**
   Knowledge translation involves using the study's findings in a specific setting. Scaling builds on this idea by looking at a bigger group of actors which are: imitators, enablers, competitors, and those impacted by the innovation. These actors influence how quickly and widely the innovation spreads. Scaling, therefore, increases, spreads, and maintains the impact of research by making knowledge application more widespread.

3. **Integrating Scaling into Research:**
   Scaling can be used in research by individuals as long as the four guiding principles of scaling science are followed: justification, optimal scale, coordination, and dynamic evaluation. These principles should be used at all stages of the study including asking (choosing the right research questions), doing (gathering and studying data), and sharing (letting people know the results). By doing so, scaling shifts focus from just producing results to making meaningful impacts that last.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

In Figure 5, the conceptual framework for this study is presented, which is based on the four guiding principles of scaling science, which are: Justification, Optimal scale, Coordination, and dynamic evaluation (McLean & Gargani, 2019). This conceptual framework assists in evaluating the potential opportunities and challenges associated with establishing, operationalization, and scaling the LIKE club in selected community schools of the Bhojpur municipality. The framework shows the relationship between the interventions, the literature used in the study, the guiding principles of scaling science, and the scaling tool, that is, the institutionalization tracker. In this conceptual framework, the LIKE club is the central intervention being studied, where the baseline readiness level of selected community schools to establish, operate, and scale the club is being evaluated, along with the potential opportunities and challenges involved in this process. It is important to note that while the relationship between variables in this framework is linear but their relationship does not follow a linear pattern, emphasizing that scaling is a complex process. Guided by the principles of scaling science, as displayed in the conceptual framework, the intervention progresses by evaluating whether it is ethically correct and morally justified to scale. It then determines the optimal scale based on its four dimensions: magnitude, sustainability, equity, and variety. Throughout and during the entire process of scaling and intervention, inclusive coordination takes place between the key actors, which are the intervention initiators, enablers, competitors, and the impacted individuals. At the end, dynamic evaluation checks show the intervention is working by tracking its progress and make improvements, it ensure that there is continuous learning as the intervention scales (Shrestha, 2022). Also, the institutionalization tracker, helps to inform the understanding of institutional readiness and the extent of policy support required to support child-led initiatives. Overall, the conceptual framework will help to guide the evaluation of opportunities and challenges, as well as baseline readiness of the community schools to establish, operate, and scale the LIKE club.

Figure 5 : Conceptual framework of the study



Chapter 3
Methodology

This chapter gives an in-depth description of the methodology used in this study, which includes the research design, the rationale of choosing the study site, the data collection methods, sampling size and technique, the data analysis method, and the ethical considerations that were followed throughout the study in order to maintain the study's integrity and guide every phase of the study.

3.1 Study Design

The study utilized a mixed-method design using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The qualitative method involved structured interviews with students and observation of the readiness of selected community schools to evaluate their awareness of the child club, GESI principles, students' willingness to participate in the child club, and their perceptions of the potential opportunities and challenges associated with the process of establishing the LIKE lab within the present school setting. Whereas the qualitative method involved the headteacher and GESI focal person giving the institutional readiness score on a scale of 1(low institutionalization) and 4 (full institutionalization) in the institutionalization tracker questionnaire to assess how ready the chosen schools are to establish and potentially scale the club. It also helped to find out any opportunities and challenges to help effectively establish and sustain the club.

By incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods, the mixed-method design enhanced both the validity and reliability of the findings at various stages of the study, such as formulation of the questionnaire, data analysis techniques, and interpretation of findings, thus providing an in-depth understanding of the issue. Using this methodology enabled the exploration of diverse human experiences that may be ignored by single-method approaches and promoted data triangulation to ensure the validity of the collected findings (Byrne & Humble, 2007; Subedi, 2023; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

The mixed-method approach helped to gain a comprehensive understanding of the baseline readiness in terms of the potential opportunities and challenges that may come up while establishing, operating, and scaling the LIKE club in the selected community schools of Bhojpur municipality.

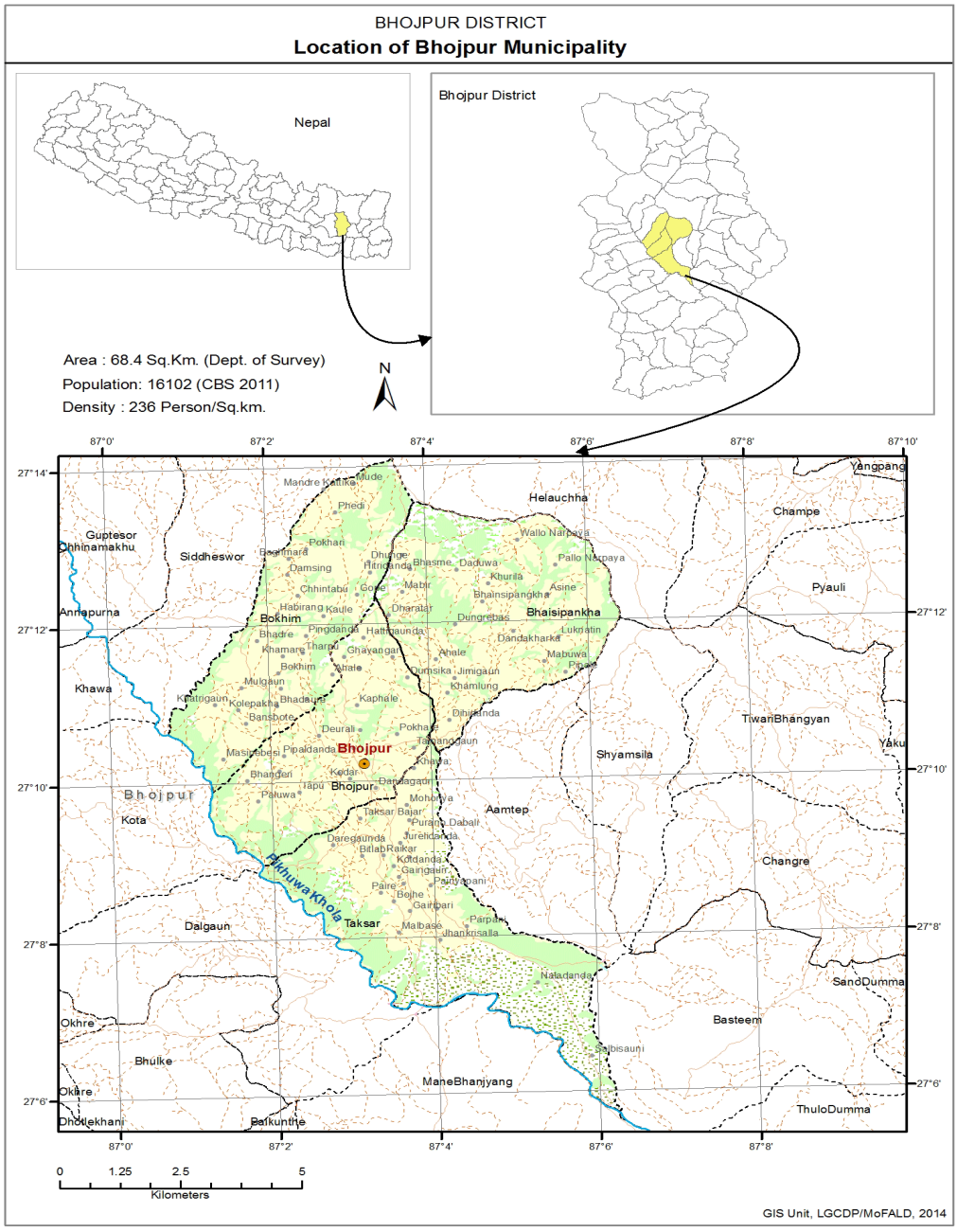
3.2 Study Site

The study took place in Bhojpur district of Koshi province, located in eastern Nepal. Bhojpur district borders Sankhuwasabha to the North, Udayapur to the south, Dhakuta to the east, and Khotang to the west, covering an area of 1,507 square kilometers. The primary focus was on the Bhojpur municipality within this district. According to the Government of Nepal's National Statistics Office (2023), Bhojpur municipality has a population of 26,007, with 12,645 (48.6%) males and 13,362 (51.4%) females. The population density is 163 people per square kilometer, with a total of 6,744 households. The overall literacy rate is 82.8%, with male literacy at 89.7% and

female literacy at 76.4%. The percentage of the population with disabilities is 2.7%, with 3.2% of males and 2.3% of females having disabilities.

As this study is part of the intervention *"Promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in School: Building on What Children Value and Aspire to Do and Be,"* implemented by the LIKE lab at Kathmandu University School of Arts (KUSOA), with support from the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (KIX) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Bhojpur was selected as the study site because of the ongoing implementation of the project there and also due to the limited child clubs functioning in the area, particularly within community schools.

Figure 6 Map of Bhojpur District



Source: LGCDP/MoFAGAD, 2014

3.3 Duration of the Study

The study was conducted from May 2025 to September 2025, lasting approximately 5 months. A key part of the study was a week-long field visit to Bhojpur Municipality in the Bhojpur district, which took place from June 6 to June 12 and included visits to five selected community schools, which were: Jansewa Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School), Bidodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), Saraswati Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School), Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), and Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Primary School). The field visit was important for collecting important data for evaluating how ready selected community schools are to establish, operate, and scale the LIKE club. This process involved direct engagement with the headteachers, the GESI focal persons (a supportive mentor, typically a social studies teacher), and students from these schools.

3.4 Sample Size and Technique

3.4.1 Sampling Technique

To select participants for this study, two sampling techniques were applied: probability sampling and non-probability sampling.

For this study, two sampling techniques were used: Probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In the case of probability sampling, a simple random sampling method was used to make sure that all members of the population have an equal chance of being chosen in the study, reducing selection bias and ensuring fair representation (Ahmed, 2024). This sampling method was particularly used to get responses from the students at five selected community schools, which made sure that students from various grades, backgrounds, and genders were fairly represented. This also ensured the minimization of overrepresentation of academically outspoken students and maintained an unbiased sample.

A purposive sampling approach, also known as judgmental sampling, which is a type of non-probability sampling, was used in this study. In this sampling approach, the respondents are intentionally selected based on the researcher's assessment of who could offer the most relevant data necessary for the study (Ahmed, 2024; Rai & Thapa, 2015). Purposive sampling helped to collect the responses for the institutionalization tracker's questionnaire from the headteacher and the GESI focal person of the 13 selected community schools intended for the establishment of the LIKE club. These schools were: 1. Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), 2. Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), 3. Panchakanya Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School), 4. Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), 5. Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), 6. Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Primary School), 7. Jansewa Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School), 8. Saraswati Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School), 9. Jankalyan Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School), 10. Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), 11. Jankalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), 12. Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School), 13. Biddodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School). The headteachers and the GESI focal person had been selected intentionally for this sampling method because they possess important leadership positions with the schools and have better knowledge of their institutional context, resources, curriculum, and needs. Their input was necessary to understand if the schools are ready to establish or scale the LIKE club.

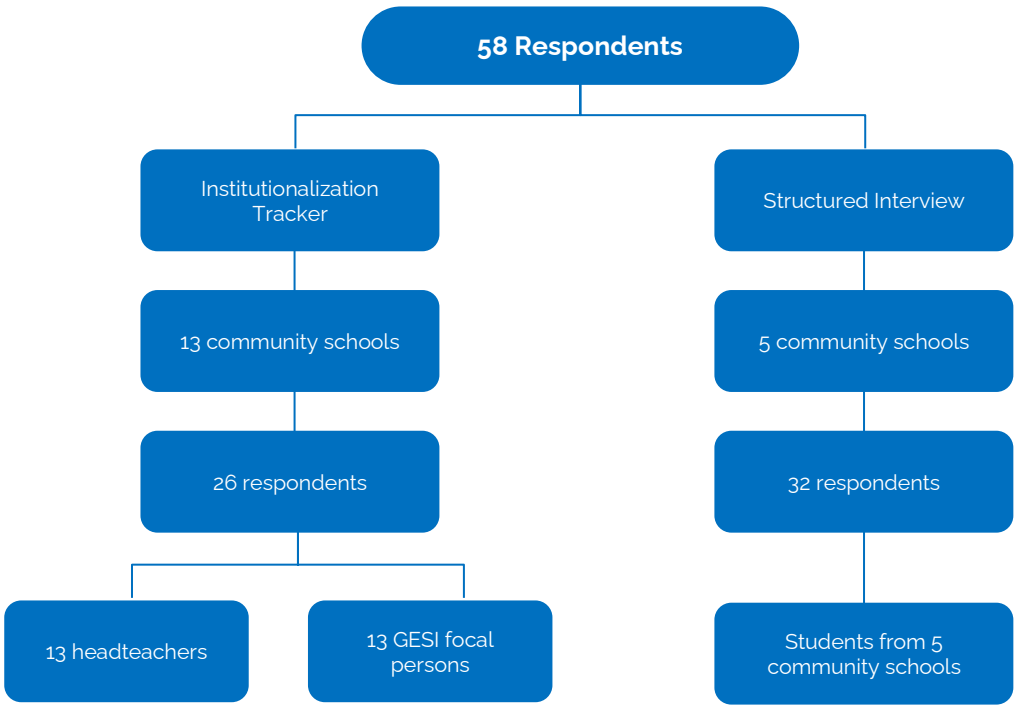
3.4.2 *Sample Size*

The study had a total of 58 respondents divided into two specific groups, as shown in Figure 7. A structured interview using structured questions was done with 32 respondents from the five chosen community schools. The number of students who provided the responses for the structured interview was as follows:

1. **Shree Jansewa Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School):** 7 respondents
2. **Bidodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School):** 8 respondents
3. **Shree Saraswati Aadharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School)**: 6 respondents
4. **Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School):** 5 respondents
5. **Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Primary School):** 6 respondents

The response from the structured interview with the students was intended to evaluate their awareness of concepts of GESI, how familiar they were with the child club, their readiness to participate in a potential child club, and their perceived opportunities and challenges in staying involved in the club. The institutionalization tracker, on the other hand, had a total of 26 respondents, combining 13 headteachers and 13 GESI focal persons from each of the selected schools for the LIKE club's establishment. The responses provided by them in the questionnaire of the institutional tracker helped to collect valuable insights to analyze how ready the chosen schools are in terms of resources, polices, curriculum, knowledge, and inclusive practices to integrate the LIKE club within the school's permanent structure. The insights collected assisted in identifying possible challenges and opportunities, as well as informing what capacity-building efforts would be required to establish the LIKE club sustainably within these schools.

Figure 7: The total respondents of this study



3.5 Data Collection Methods

By utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, this study ensured to strengthen the reliability and validity of the findings collected through both numerical and descriptive insights from the study's respondents. The specific data collection method used in this study is described below:

3.5.1 Qualitative Method

- ***Structured Interview***

  Students from five selected community schools were interviewed using the structured questionnaire consisting of both open-ended and closed-ended questions which covered three main aspects:

  1. **Demographic Information**

     Name, gender, age, grade, caste/ethnicity, and disability status.

  2. **Awareness & Willingness**

     Students' level of awareness of child clubs, their understanding of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) values, their willingness to participate in a potential child club at their schools, along with the training associated.

  3. **Opportunities & Challenges**

     Students' perceptions on how child clubs can contribute to developing leadership skills and inclusive practices within the school environment, what kind of support they may need to establish and operate a potential child club at their school, what challenges they might possibly face in terms of participating in or sustaining the child club, and whether they have received any training on gender equality and social inclusion.

A structured interview with the students was chosen to ensure consistency in terms of response, as each student responded to the same set of questions, which was both open-ended and closed-ended. This allowed to compare the students' responses and provide deeper insights into their level of awareness, as well as potential opportunities and challenges from their perception. The insights generated from their response are crucial for establishing the LIKE club in a way that meets their needs.

- ***Observation***

  For getting practical and contextual information, the selected community schools' key institutionalization elements, such as playgrounds, classrooms, availability of necessary resources such as computers, speakers, projectors, as well as the schools' infrastructure, were observed. These observations help to understand the readiness level of each of the selected schools, determining how favorable they are for the effective establishment of the LIKE club.

3.5.2 *Quantitative Method*

The quantitative method used the institutionalization tracker questionnaire to gather data from 26 respondents, which were 13 headteachers and 13 GESI focal persons, each from the 13 selected community schools (see Annex 1).

- ***Institutionalization Tracker***

  According to Perlman Robinson, Curtiss Wyss, and Hannahan (2021) Institutionalization Tracker is a scaling tool designed in July 2021 by Jenny Perlman Robinson, Molly Curtiss Wyss, and Patrick Hannahan with contributions from Real-time Scaling Lab partners, advisory groups, interns, and other collaborators. It helps to track the progress of mainstreaming or institutionalizing an initiative into the formal education system with the guidance and support of government actors. Institutionalization or "vertical scaling" aims to integrate initiatives so that they become a part of the government policies, plans, finances, and everyday operations to achieve long-term sustainability under government leadership. It helps policymakers, project initiators, and funders to identify and address areas that require additional attention as the initiative expands. The tool is organized around the main system building blocks of the education system, with each building block further divided into specific elements. There are scoring criteria for each element, and a column to explain the reason for assigning the chosen score. The scoring ranges from a scale of 1-4, 1 represents "low-institutionalization" and 4 represents "full-institutionalization". It is important to remember that moving from score 3 to score 4 takes longer than moving from score 1 to score 2.

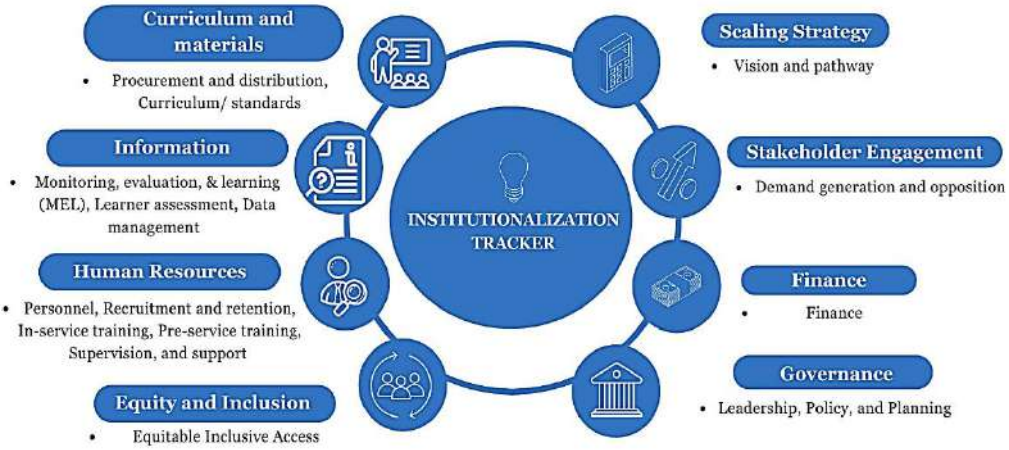
Scoring on the scale of 1-4 is categorized as:

1. Score 1= low institutionalization
2. Score 2 = emerging institutionalization
3. Score 3 = significant institutionalization and
4. Score 4 = full institutionalization

This tool is used to measure how well progress is being made to institutionalize initiatives for a certain government department or ministry, particularly the Ministry of Education (MoE), but if this tool is more suitable for a different ministry, it can also be used for that ministry instead. This should then be made clear when detailing assumptions. The tool is used to keep track of progress towards institutionalization at the national level. In the context of decentralized education systems, the tool can be used to monitor institutionalization activities within relevant subnational educational authorities. It is important to remember that this tool does not assess whether an initiative should be expanded or evaluate the overall strengths of an education system. Also, it does not evaluate other important elements of scalability, such as the consequences or quality of an initiative. Hence, it is preferred to use this tracker alongside other tool or metrics that measures these other elements. The findings from this tracker can help to develop or refine larger scaling interventions, which work best when combined with other tools like the Center for Universal Education's (CUE) "Scaling Strategy Worksheet" (Perlman Robinson et al., 2021).

Figure 8 below shows the system building block and its corresponding elements in the institutionalization tracker.

Figure 8: Elements of the institutionalization tracker



For this study, the institutionalization tracker had been specifically customized to collect relevant information from head teachers and GESI focal persons at each of the 13 selected community schools to make sure that the data collected aligned with the objectives of the study.

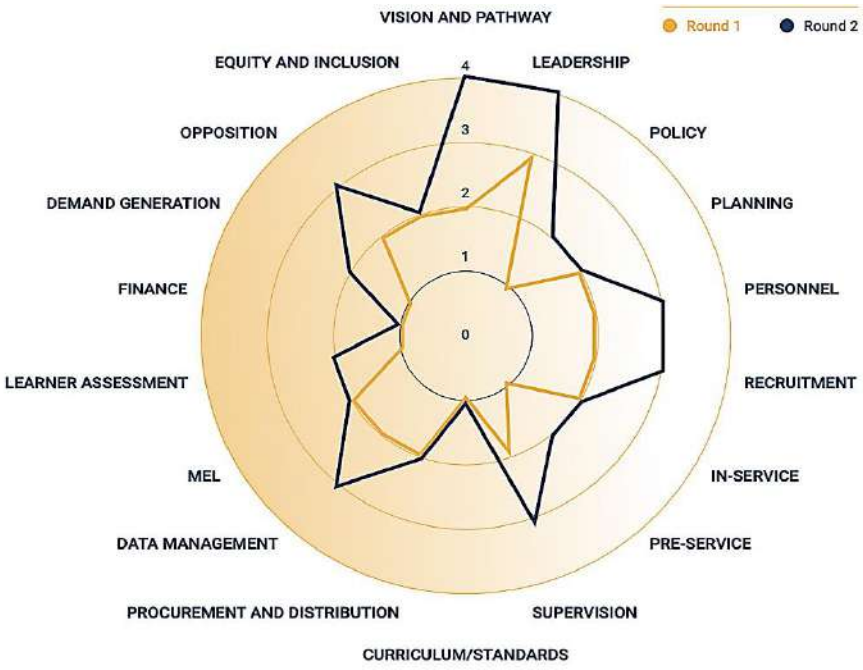
3.6 Data Analysis Technique

3.6.1 Quantitative Data Analysis Technique

- ***Radar Graph***

  The scores given in the paper-based questionnaires of the institutionalization tracker from the headteacher and GESI focal person from the 13 selected community schools were presented through a radar graph for visual representation of the scoring obtained. These scores were manually entered into Google Sheets for analysis. Perlman Robinson, Curtiss Wyss, and Hannahan (2021) state that a radar graph is an effective method to visually present the results or scores from the institutionalization tracker, which uses a scoring criterion of scale 1(low institutionalization) to 4 (full institutionalization). This graph not only provides a clear display of the institutional readiness of elements but also helps to identify which elements should be prioritized as actionable elements. The graph assists stakeholders in measuring progress over time by comparing data from multiple rounds. Figure 9 shows an example of a radar graph that shows the results of two rounds.

Figure 9 : Sample radar graph from the institutionalization tracker



Source: (Perlman Robinson et al., 2021)

- ***Pie Chart***

  The responses that were obtained from the structured interview using structured questionnaires with the students were entered into Google Excel (Sheets) manually for data analysis and for generating pie charts of the collected data. This helped to provide a clear visual representation of the data to analyze the students' responses in detail.

3.6.2 Qualitative Data Analysis Technique

- ***Thematic Analysis***

  Thematic analysis was carried out on the responses from the structured interview and the institutionalization tracker. This analysis helped identify the recurring themes to understand the potential opportunities and challenges to establish, operate, and scale the LIKE club in the 13 chosen community schools, the roles of the school's headteachers, GESI focal person, and students in this process, as well as students' awareness level of child clubs and GESI values were also identified through this

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Ethics in research are crucial for maintaining integrity, respect, and safeguarding participants' interests. It involves providing clear information about the study's purpose, obtaining informed consent, allowing voluntary participation or withdrawal, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity, and ensuring no harm comes to the participants (Dahal, 2014). Ethical considerations were prioritized

throughout this study. Respondents were fully informed about the study's objectives, and their participation in the structured interview and institutionalization tracker was based on informed consent and voluntary agreement. The study ensured that respondents' right to privacy was respected and confidentiality of personal information, such as names, was maintained at all stages of the study.

Chapter 4
Findings

This chapter is divided into two parts that give a comprehensive overview of the study's findings. The first part goes into more detail about the results from the institutionalization tracker, which is an important tool for figuring out how ready each community schools in the study are to set up and run the LIKE club in their respective schools. Radar or spider graphs are used to show institutionalization tracker scores that come from the head teacher and the GESI focus person of each school. These graphs show how ready each of the 13 community schools are to establish and operate the LIKE club. They give a clear picture of each school's baseline readiness. The spider graph helps us to understand better which schools are most ready and which may require more resources and strategic help.

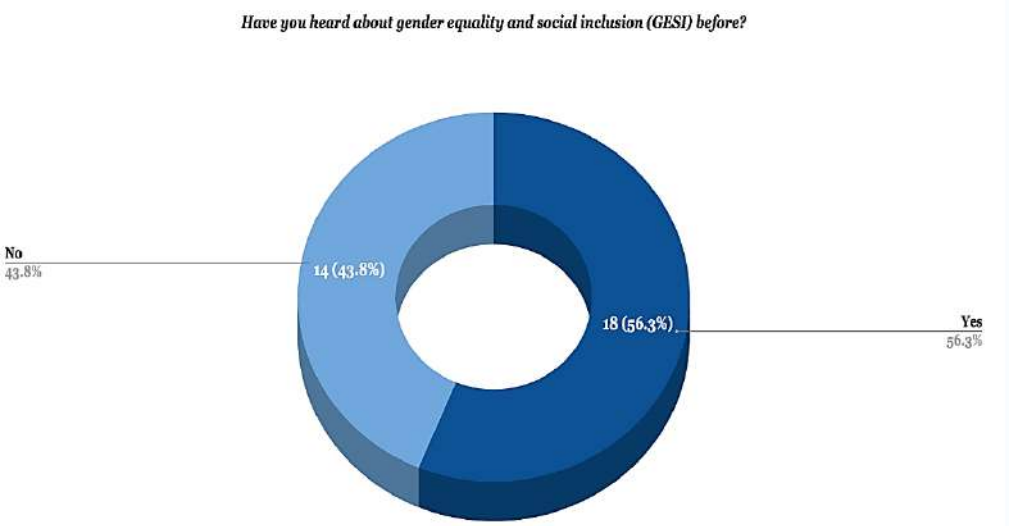
The second part gives a thorough analysis of the response's students gave in the structured interview using questionnaires that were done with students from five different community schools. Together, these findings give us useful information that can be used to make tailored support and intervention plans that will help the LIKE club get established and operate smoothly in the schools that were chosen.

4.1 Structured Interview

4.1.1 Understanding Students' Awareness and Willingness towards GESI and Child Clubs

Figure 10 below illustrates the responses collected from students at five of the 13 selected community schools (refer to Annex 1), providing insight into their awareness of the concept of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). The respondents include students from grades 5 through 10. Analysis of the data, as shown in the figure, revealed that out of the total of 32 respondents, 18 students (56.3%) reported having prior knowledge of GESI, whereas 14 students (43.8%) reported that they had never heard of it. This result indicates that although most students are aware of GESI, a significant percentage, 43.8%, are not. This variation emphasizes how crucial it is to carry out focused educational awareness initiatives in order to improve students' comprehension of social inclusion and gender equality. Such efforts are necessary for the LIKE Club to be able to function effectively. This is because one of the club's goals is to promote and uphold the principles of gender equality and social inclusion through its many activities.

Figure 10: Students' awareness about the concept of GESI



Source: Field Visit, 2025

4.1.2 Students' understanding and awareness of a child club

Most of the students who took part in the structured interview responded that a child club is a group or organization that works to protect children's rights and supports their general health and well-being. They said that child clubs were "a group made for children" and "a group or organization that cares about children's well-being." Many of the respondents who took part said that these kinds of clubs help children reach their goals, learn new skills, become more creative, gain confidence, and learn how to become a leader. They thought that child clubs were places where children could learn new things, play, and do a lot of different activities and sports, including volleyball and skipping. Most of the students who took part in the structured interview responded that a children's club is a group or organization that works to protect children's rights and supports their general health and well-being. They said that child clubs were "a group made for children" and "a group or organization that cares about children's well-being." Many of the respondents who took part said that these kinds of clubs help children reach their goals, learn new skills, become more creative, gain confidence, and learn how to become a leader. They thought that child clubs were places where kids could learn new things, play, and do a lot of different things, including volleyball and skipping. Several respondents also said that child clubs encourage them to be leaders by letting them be chairperson or president and to teach their younger peers about healthy foods, education, and morals, such as the difference between good and bad behavior. Some people pointed out that these clubs help children's mental and social growth, teach them not to be prejudiced, and teach them to plan and carry out tasks on their own. Phrases such as *"child rights protection"* and "*children's group advocating for child rights"* were observed. Overall, the responses show that children see child's clubs as places where they may exercise their rights, be involved, and learn new things that help them grow as whole people. For certain children, the clubs were groups that were set up to protect their rights and look out for their best interests. Other students, on the other hand, talked about how they helped improve behaviors and learning. One student said, "A formation (or group/body) established for the rights, entitlements, and best interests of children."

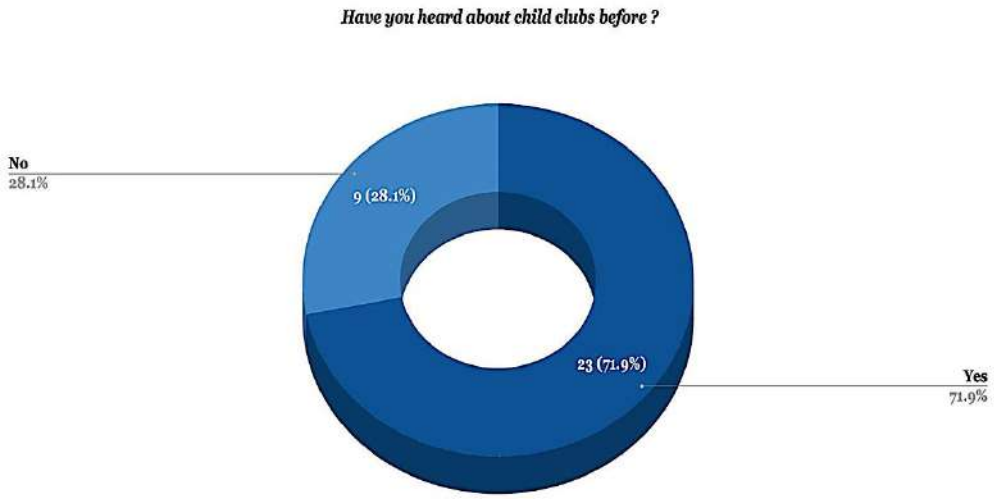
The words that the students used, like *"child rights," "protection,"* and *"well-being,"* are very similar to the words used by adults and in policies about child participation and children's clubs. This shows that children's understanding is shaped by larger social and institutional narratives, which is a positive indicator for establishing, operating, and expanding the LIKE club in the schools that were chosen. The words that students used most often to describe the club were put together into a word cloud, which is displayed in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Word cloud of students' understanding of child club

Source: Field Visit, 2025

The data in Figure 12 below gives a clear picture of how much the respondents are aware of and understand about child clubs. Out of the 32 respondents, a considerable majority, specifically 23 respondents (71.9%), acknowledged prior awareness of child clubs. Based on these findings, the chosen community schools point towards having a good baseline preparedness, indicating that students have a basic awareness of child clubs. The formation and smooth functioning of the LIKE club in these schools may be made easier by this basic understanding. Nevertheless, it is important to note that 9 respondents (28.1%) indicated that they do not the concept of child clubs. Students need educational programs that will help them learn more about what a child's club is and how to establish and operate it well. The effective establishment, operationalization, and expansion of the LIKE club will depend on the implementation of such initiatives.

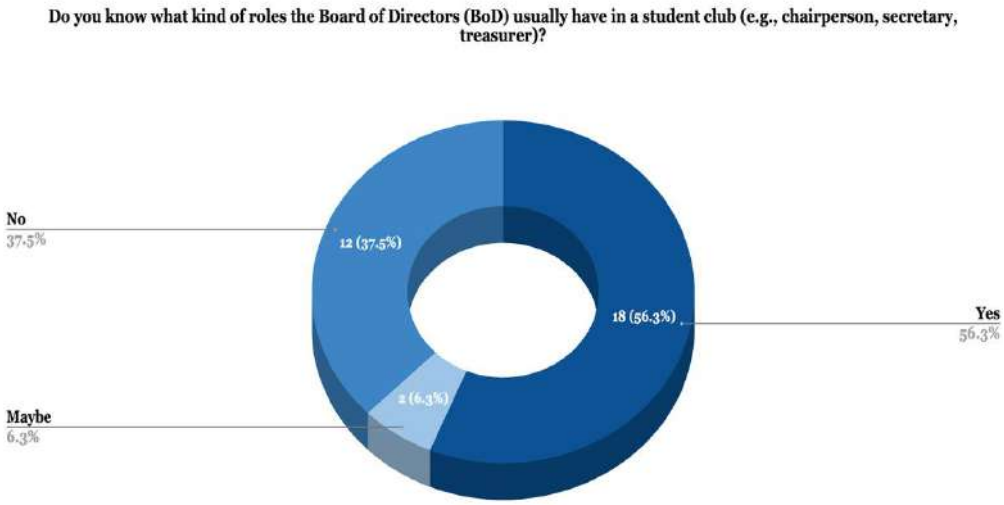
Figure 12: *Students' awareness and understanding of child clubs*



Source: Field Visit, 2025

An overview of the respondents' awareness of the duties performed by the Board of Directors (BODs) in child clubs or student-led clubs, such as club president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and other positions, is provided in Figure 13 below. Out of the total number of respondents who answered, 18 (56.3%), stated that they understood the responsibilities involved. In contrast, 12 respondents, which accounts for 37.5%, stated that they were unfamiliar with these positions. Additionally, two respondents, or 6.3% of the total, were unsure and chose "maybe" when asked if they were aware. This distribution shows that more than half of the respondents are quite aware of the different jobs in the BOD of child- or student-led groups, yet a large number of them are still not aware of what those roles are. Given these findings, it is crucial to conduct educational awareness sessions for students regarding the duties of the BOD, the student composition for each role, and the importance of these roles in a child club, roles of the BOD, the student composition for each role, and the significance of these roles in a child club.

Figure 13 : Students' awareness about the roles of the Board of Directors (BOD) in a child club

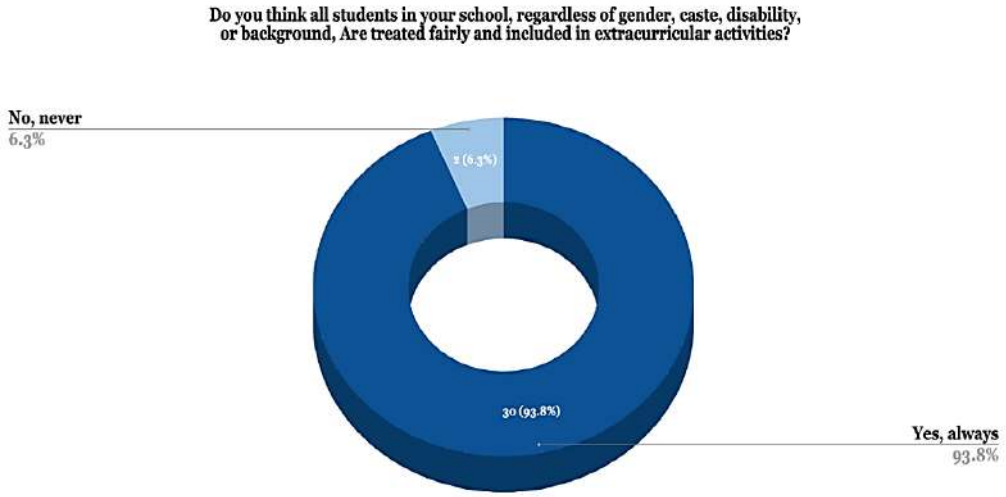


Source: Field Visit, 2025

4.1.3 Students' Perception of Equality and Inclusion in School Activities

Figure 14, presented below, illustrates the findings from an analysis assessing students' perceptions of fairness and inclusivity in extracurricular activities at their school, irrespective of gender, caste, disability, or background. This analysis is essential for evaluating whether the school fosters an environment that promotes and safeguards inclusion and equality for students from diverse genders, caste backgrounds, disability statuses, religions, and socioeconomic backgrounds. It is particularly significant, as one of the primary objectives of the LIKE club is to instill the values of GESI among students and potential club members of these selected schools through a variety of inclusive club activities. Among the total of 32 respondents, a significant majority, 30 individuals (93.8%), affirmed that they believe all students in their school, regardless of gender, caste, disability, or socio-economic background, are treated fairly and included in extracurricular activities. On the other hand, only 2 respondents (6.3%) disagreed. These results suggest the existence of a positive culture of inclusivity and acceptance within the school setting. This supportive climate serves as a favorable baseline for establishing the LIKE club, which aims to promote activities focused on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). By leveraging this environment, the LIKE club can effectively implement activities that promote GESI values and strengthen the culture of equality and inclusivity among the selected community schools.

Figure 14: Students' perception of inclusion and equity at their school

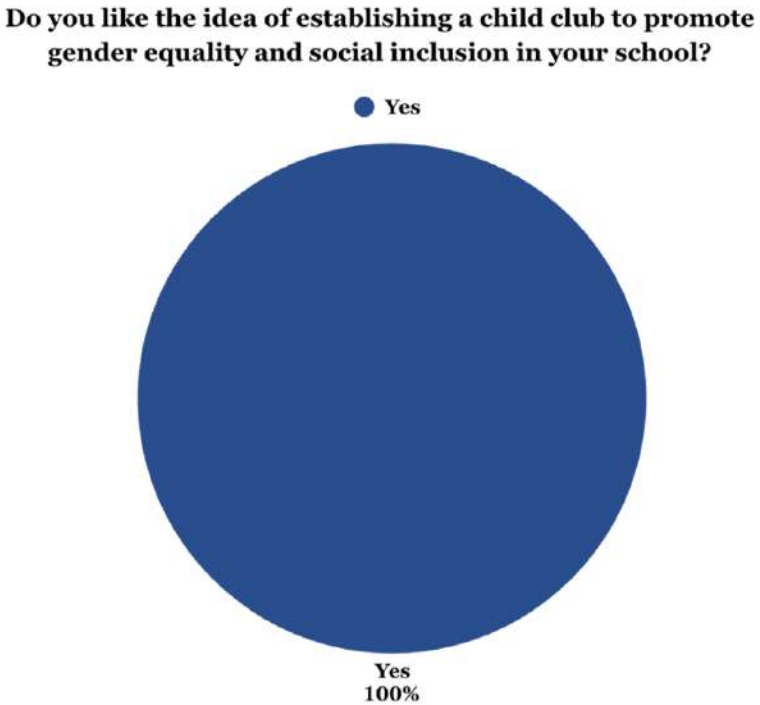


Source: Field Visit, 2025

4.1.4 Students' Willingness to Establish a GESI-Focused Child Club

Figure 15 below shows how students' responses to questions on whether they would be willing to establish a child club at their school to promote Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). All respondents demonstrated support, resulting in a 100% willingness rate, as indicated by the data analysis. This finding presents a strong, open, and positive ground for establishing and operating the LIKE club in the chosen schools, as well as for promoting GESI-focused activities through the club.

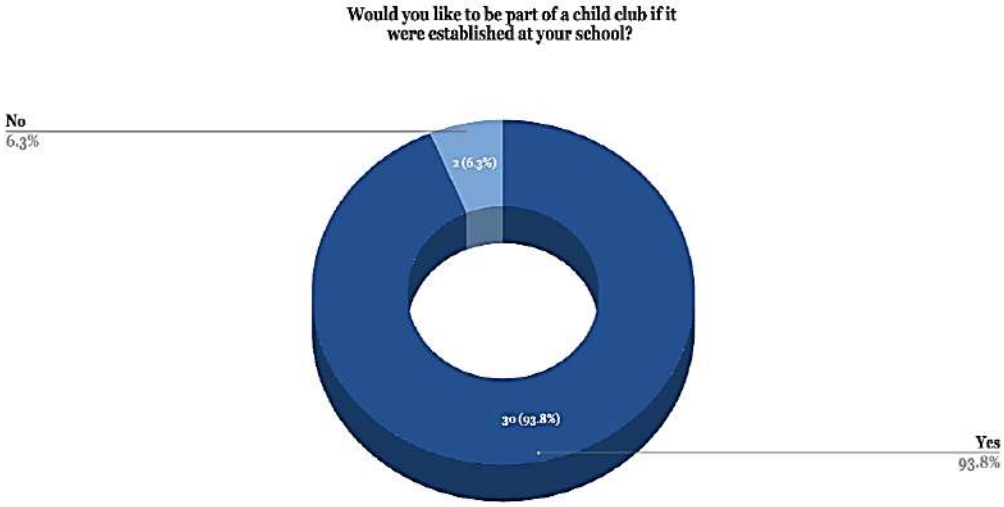
Figure 15: Students' Willingness to Establish a GESI-Focused Child Club



4.1.5 Students' Willingness to participate in a child club

Figure 16, presented below, illustrates the responses collected regarding students' willingness to participate in a child club, such as the LIKE club, if it were established in their school. Out of a total of 32 respondents, 30 (93.8%) indicated a willingness to participate, while only 2 (6.3%) respondents expressed disinterest. This overwhelmingly positive response reflects that a favorable environment exists within the selected school, as the majority of students are eager to engage in the proposed child club. The significant number of encouraging responses also indicates that the establishment and operation of the LIKE club would likely receive strong support from the student body at these schools. Moreover, this enthusiasm for participation in club activities underscores the potential for a successful and impactful establishment of the LIKE club within the school's environment.

Figure 16 : Students' Willingness to participate in a child club



Source: Field Visit, 2025

4.1.6 Students' Willingness to Attend Training on Establishing Child Clubs

Figure 17 below illustrates the responses of students regarding their willingness to participate in a short training program designed to teach them how to establish and conduct activities for a child club. The findings show that out of a total of 32 respondents, 31 (96.9%) expressed a willingness to participate in the training, while only 1 respondent (3.1%) indicated disinterest. These findings suggest a favorable environment for the establishment and operation of the LIKE Club within 5 of the 13 selected community schools, indicating a strong baseline readiness among the selected schools. This signals that the potential establishment of the LIKE Club aligns well with the interests of students, and the activities or programs offered by the club are likely to receive strong participation from students at these schools.

Figure 17 : Students' willingness to participate in child club training

Source: Field Visit, 2025

4.1.7 Students' Preferred Activities for the Child Club

Students shared a variety of ideas about the preferred activities they would like to see organized by the potential child club at their school. Students expressed a wide range of interests. A majority of them expressed interest in various sports activities, including football, volleyball, running, relay races, chess, kabaddi, skipping, kho-kho, badminton, basketball, high jump, and long jump. Furthermore, they expressed a preference for fun, playful, and informative activities. These included cultural dance competitions, singing contests, drama performances, poetry recitals, storytelling sessions, handwriting competitions, debates, arts and crafts, balloon bursting games, and a game of hot potato (tato-aalu). These collected responses reflect the students' enthusiasm for a child club that is not only informative but also fun, creative, and engaging, which in turn indicates towards a positive baseline within the selected community schools to establish and operate an inclusive and knowledge-oriented club, such as the LIKE club which aims to foster holistic (physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and creative) growth among its club members through a variety of club activities.

4.1.8 Students' perspective on supporting a child club upholding GESI values

A majority of respondents from the five selected schools indicated that all students at their school would support the idea of a child club that promotes gender equality and inclusion. A few of the respondents stated that students at their school generally enjoy participating in activities like sports and learning about issues such as discrimination against boys and girls and drug addiction. One specific comment from the respondent highlighted the enthusiasm among students for such a child club. One student mentioned, *"I think all students in my school would support the idea of a club that promotes GESI, as after joining the club, one can know many things."* However, some students from Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), Biddodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Pra.V), and Janasewa Aadarbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V) expressed uncertainty about a lack of interest among the students. Their response specifically included "I do not know," "no," and mentions of minimal support for their friends, with some indicating that

they are only a little interested. Overall, the findings suggest that while the majority support the initiative of a child club that upholds GESI values, a small group of students remains less enthusiastic about it. This analysis emphasizes the importance of informing students about the benefits of being a member of the child club, particularly in terms of their personal growth and development. By educating and emphasizing the positive aspects of the child club to the students, we can pave the way for the successful establishment and operationalization of the LIKE club within the selected community schools.

4.1.9 Students' Views on Leadership, Equality, and Inclusion through Child Clubs

When asked whether joining a child club could help the respondents build leadership qualities and advocate for issues concerning equality and inclusion in their schools, a majority responded "yes." They expressed that activities such as debate competitions could enhance their public speaking skills and confidence. Common comments included *"This group will help promote our speaking skills because there are different activities that will be conducted, for example, a debate competition where you develop the habit of speaking."* Another respondent noted, *"Yes, building confidence by teaching others to speak in public to increase their confidence."* Furthermore, a few noted, *"Yes, since they are self-initiated, the students become capable and develop awareness about different issues."* However, a few students responded with a "No" or an "I do not know," indicating a lack of awareness regarding the potential benefits associated with being members of a child club. Overall, these findings suggest that the students in the selected schools recognize the potential for personal growth and leadership development through child clubs. This aligns well with the objectives of the LIKE club and provides a good foundation for establishing the club within these schools.

4.1.10 Student-Perceived Support Needed for Child Club Participation

The students mentioned several forms of support that could encourage their participation in the child club. The most common form of support mentioned was training, including leadership development, awareness sessions, skill-development opportunities, and knowledge-sharing sessions on being a board of directors (BODs) of the club. Students also expressed a desire for teachers' support and guidance, flexibility in school schedules to accommodate club activities, and permission to participate, along with the need for a non-discriminatory and motivating environment where they feel encouraged to join club activities. The findings reflect that addressing this support is crucial for successfully establishing and sustaining the LIKE club within the selected community school.

4.1.11 Student-Perceived Challenges in Participating in a Child Club

Students, through their responses, have expressed several forms of challenges that they perceive could affect their participation in the potential child club. These challenges included a limited understanding and awareness of the child club and the roles they needed to play within it, feelings of fear and competition regarding participation in club activities, concerns about people's opinions, and a lack of confidence to speak up. Time flexibility conflicts with class schedules, and exams were also a significant concern among the students, as reflected in comments such

as *"Our class studies will be disrupted."* Another student pointed out, *"I have to leave studies when club activities collide with my studies."* Some students also mentioned that there is a lack of parental support, noting that *"parents are unsupportive,"* which further discourages them. One respondent also mentioned that *"Students do not participate due to menstrual cycle clashes and health-related issues".* Recognizing these challenges is crucial, as it may limit students' participation in the child club. Implementing targeted training sessions, along with student support and mitigation measures, is essential to creating an encouraging environment that enables all students to contribute to establishing, operating, and scaling the LIKE club within their school.

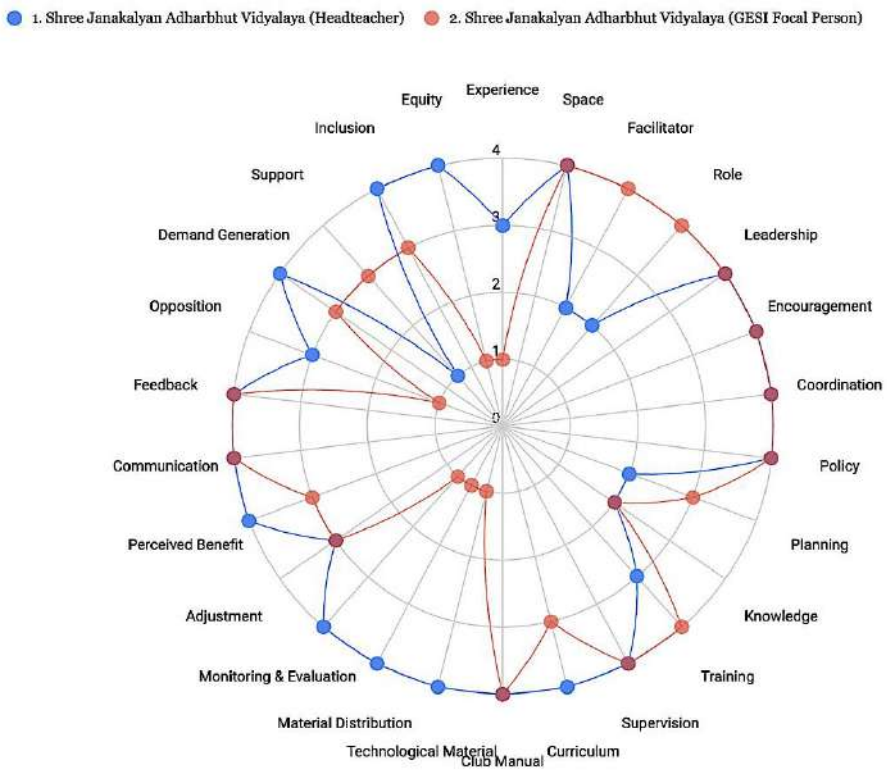
4.2 Schools' Readiness Assessment for LIKE club

The institutionalization tracker was used to assess the institutional readiness of the 13 selected community schools *(listed in Annex 1)* to establish, operate, and scale the LIKE club within their school environment. Data using the institutionalization tracker were collected from 26 respondents in total, comprising 13 head teachers and 13 GESI focal persons, one from each school. To gather a baseline readiness assessment, the tracker was tailored to the specific context of the LIKE club. It included specific questions focused on various sub-elements of the system building blocks, such as existence, readiness, governance, human resources, curriculum and materials, information, stakeholder engagement, and equality and inclusion *(refer to Annex 3)*

Respondents provided scores based on their school context, wherein a score of 1 indicated *"low institutionalization",* a score of 2 indicated *"emerging institutionalization"*, a score of 3 indicated *"significant institutionalization"*, and a score of 4 indicated *"full institutionalization"*. These scores were then used to generate a radar graph, which visually represents the level of institutional readiness and highlights the strengths and challenges across each school in different elements related to the establishment and operation of the LIKE club, based on their assigned scores. In the radar graph for all 13 community schools, scores provided by the head teachers are consistently denoted in blue. In contrast, those given by the GESI focal person are denoted in red. A darker overlap of these colors indicates agreement between the two respondents in their assessments of the school's context for establishing and operating the LIKE club within their school

4.2.1 School 1 Score: Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya

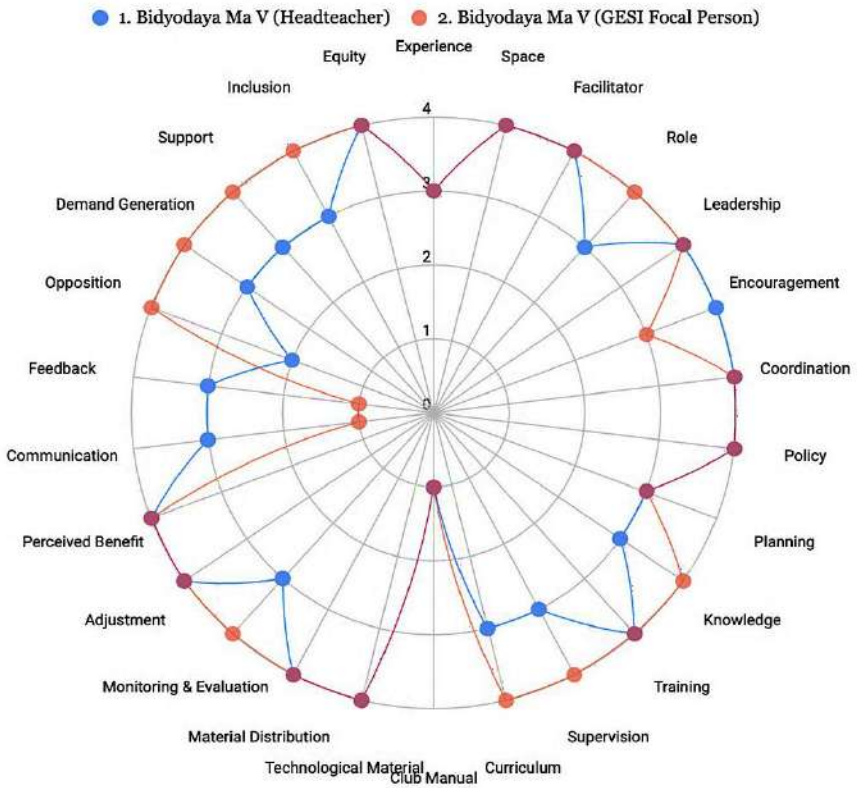
***Figure 18**: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V)*



Both respondents at Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V), as shown in Figure 18, scored highly on several key elements, including leadership, encouragement, coordination, policy, supervision, club manual, communication, feedback, and adjustment, with their assigned scores primarily as score 3 (significant institutionalization) and score 4 (full institutionalization). Their scores on these specific elements indicate institutional opportunities, highlighting that the school has strong governance, available spaces such as a meeting hall, assembly, or a playground, LIKE club's manual and activity book, highly supportive supervision, and a flexible school schedule to facilitate activities of the LIKE club. However, differing scores in elements such as technological resources, curriculum, equity, opposition, material distribution, and monitoring & evaluation indicate institutional challenges, particularly in terms of resource availability and systematic support or mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the club activities that may hinder the LIKE club's effective operation. In summary, while the scores suggest the school possesses some degree of readiness to establish the LIKE club, it needs to strengthen resource availability and curriculum integration related to topics of inclusion, gender equality, and child rights and address opposition among stakeholders (e.g., concerns from parents that clubs might harm studies) to ensure the effective establishment of the LIKE club.

4.2.2 School 2 score: Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya

Figure 19: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)



At Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), both respondents, as shown in Figure 19, scored high on elements such as space, facilitator, leadership, coordination, policy, training, technological materials, adjustment, perceived benefits, and equity with scores of full institutionalization (Score 4). This means that the school has designated areas (playgrounds, assembly hall, meeting hall), leadership, coordination, school-supportive policies that go in line with the GESI values, sufficient technological resources (like speakers, printers, microphones, or computers), a flexible school schedule, and a welcoming school climate in which diversity is embraced. There is no discrimination or exclusion of any child in the school, which contributes to a conducive environment to facilitate the activities of the LIKE club and shows a positive willingness to form and run the LIKE club in the school. Nevertheless, there are notable elements, including the manual of the club, communication, and feedback, whose scores are between 1 (low institutionalization) and 3 (significant institutionalization), between the head teacher and the GESI focal person. Therefore, these particular factors must be a priority to make sure that the required structures, knowledge, and support are present in the school before the LIKE club can be successfully established and operated.

4.2.3 School 3 score: Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya

Figure 20: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

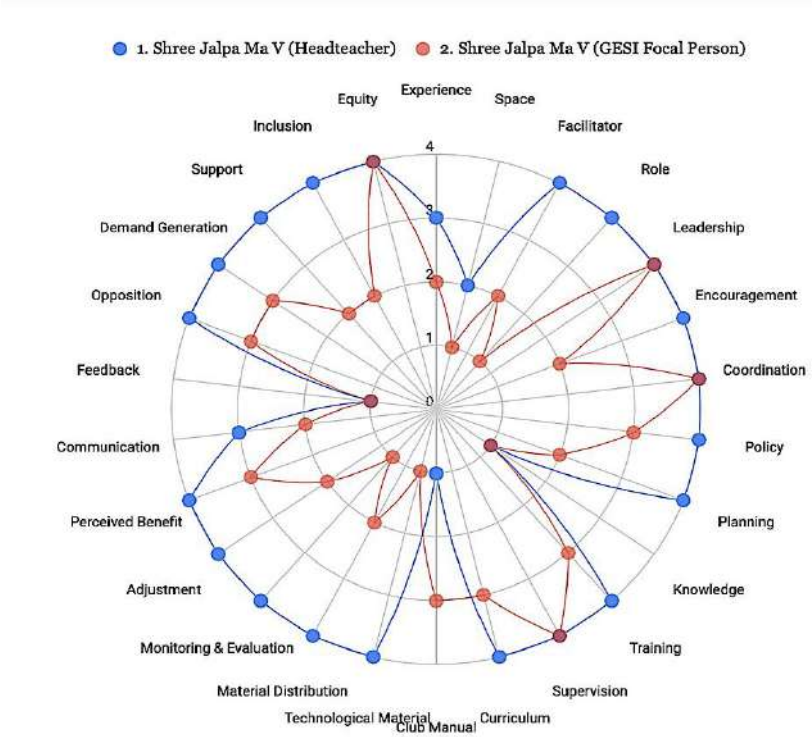


Figure 20 shows that there are significant disparities between the scores given by the head teachers and the GESI focal person at Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V). Key elements such as leadership, coordination, supervision, and equality received a score of 4, which means they are fully institutionalized into the school. This shows that the school has the capacity to successfully manage students' club activities, organize leadership, and ensure equitable practices in their operations. Low scores of 1 (low institutionalization) and 2 (emerging institutionalization) in elements like knowledge, feedback, club manual, and space, on the other hand, show inadequacies in the school's readiness level. For the LIKE club to be established and run successfully in the school, addressing the deficiencies in these specific elements should be given top priority.

4.2.4 *School 4 score: Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya*

Figure 21: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

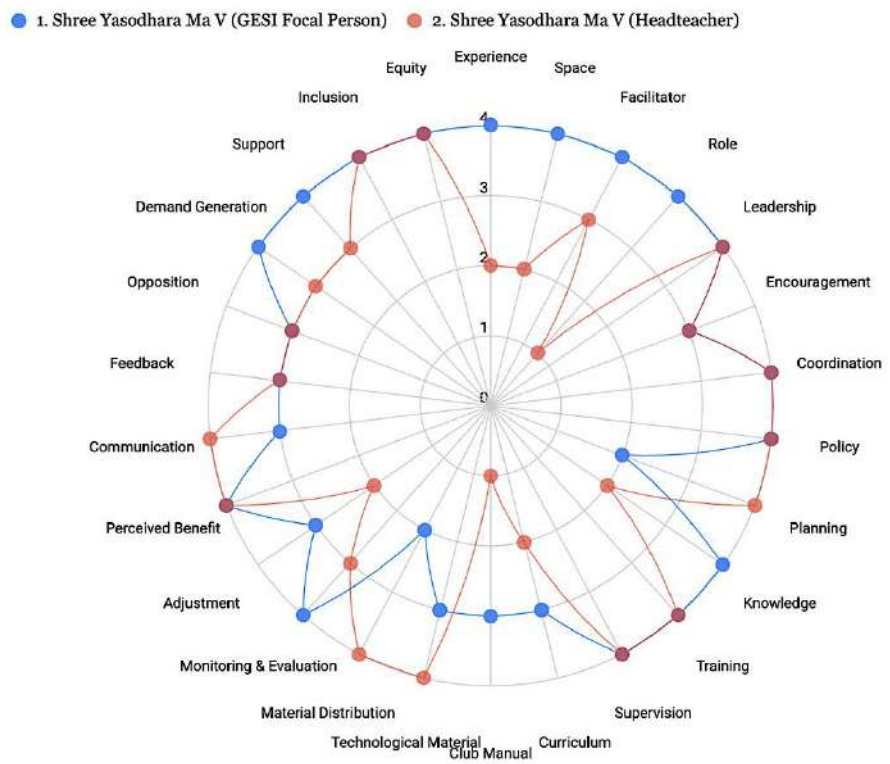
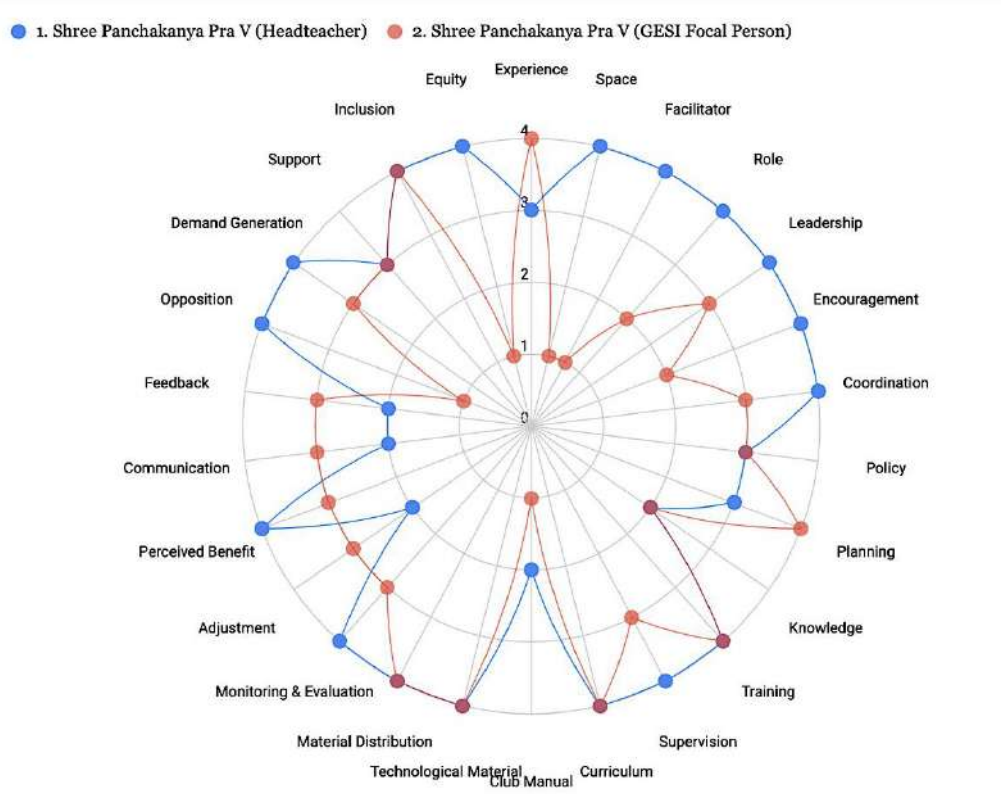


Figure 21 below shows the scores from the headteacher and GESI focal person at Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V) for the institutionalization tracker. In elements including leadership, coordination, policy, training, supervision, perceived benefit, equity, and inclusion, both respondents gave the school a score of 4, which indicates full institutionalization. This demonstrates that the school has a favorable institutional foundation, with committed leadership, supportive school policies, school staff willingness to participate in training on how to establish the LIKE club, recognition of the child club's benefits, and inclusive practices that allow all students to participate in student-led activities without any exclusion. Together, these factors create a supportive environment for the LIKE club's establishment and operation within the school. However, elements such as roles and the club manual received a score of 1, indicating low institutionalization. This suggests limited awareness among the headteacher and the GESI focal person regarding their responsibilities in establishing the LIKE club, and that the school may either not have received the club's manual or have a minimal understanding of its contents.

4.2.5 School 5 score: Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya

Figure 22: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Pra.V)



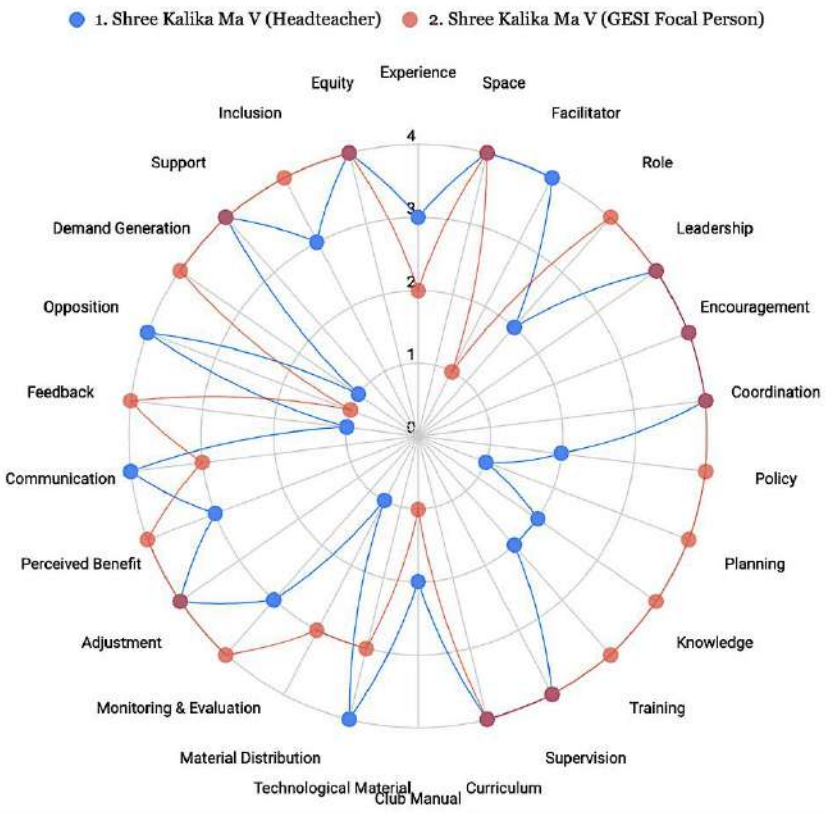
Based on the Figure 22 it can be observed that Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Pra.V) possess a certain degree of readiness with score 4 (full-institutionalization) in elements such as availability of technological materials (speakers, printers, microphones, or computers) to help effectively carry out the LIKE club activities, teacher's willingness on training regarding how to establish and operate the LIKE club, perceived benefits that the club can bring to the school, curriculum integration of GESI values and child rights, readiness to procure, store, and distribute all required materials for LIKE Club activities, and an equitable school environment ensuring inclusion of all students. However, the school is lacking in elements such as opposition or resistance (e.g., skeptical parents or reluctant teachers fearing clubs harm studies; reluctant teachers to monitor club activities), space availability, facilitator identification, and access or limited understanding of the club manual's contents, all of which scored 1 (low institutionalization) indicating the need to strength these elements within the school for the effective establishment of the LIKE club

4.2.6 School 6 score: Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya

The analysis of the scoring at Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V) as shown in Figure 23 indicated that elements such as space, coordination, leadership, encouragement, supervision, curriculum, adjustment, support, and equity received score 4 (full-institutionalization), suggesting that the school not only has available spaces (playground, assembly ground), supportive parents-teacher association (PTA)/ School Management Committee (SMC), flexible school's schedule to

accommodate LIKE club activities, GESI values integrated school curriculum, but also demonstrates favourable readiness through committed supervision and mentoring by school leaders creating a favourable environment for the LIKE club's establishment within the school. However, low scores such as score 1 (low institutionalization) and score 2 (emerging institutionalization) in club manual, designated facilitator identification to help establish the club, demand generation, club manual, material distribution, opposition indicate potential challenges to develop the club effectively within the school thus focused efforts to strength these elements should be prioritised for effective establishment and operation of the club.

Figure 23: *Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)*



4.2.7 School 7 score: Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya

Figure 24: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

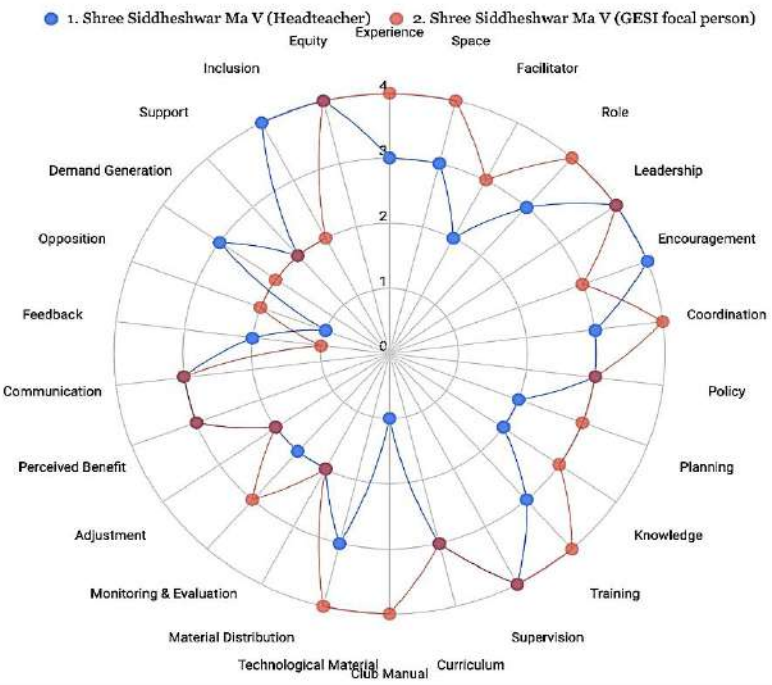


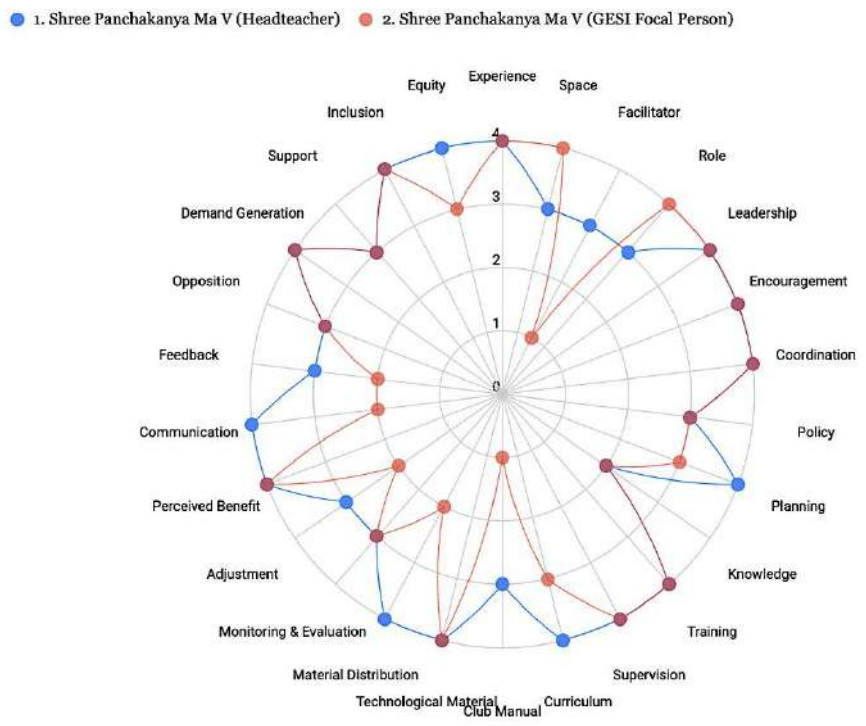
Figure 24 shows the variation in scoring among the head teacher and GESI focal person at Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V). Elements such as equity, supervision, and leadership have been scored 4 (full-institutionalization), indicating the school's institutional strength to establish and operate the LIKE club, demonstrating that the school the school has an equitable environment where students are not excluded, and the headteacher/GESI focal person are ready to support and supervise the students to run the LIKE club activities if basic orientation or training is provided. Conversely, elements such as adjustment, material distribution, and support received scores ranging from 1 (low institutionalization) to 2 (emerging institutionalization). This suggests that the school is not very flexible in adjusting time for club activities, despite having some basic club materials available (such as pens, paper, and posters), there is no proper system or readiness for regular procurement, safe storage, or timely distribution making support for LIKE club activities irregular and unreliable, PTA/SMC are some aware about LIKE Club but offers limited support, with little to not actively supporting its establishment. To successfully establish the LIKE club within the school, it is crucial to address challenges in these specific elements.

4.2.8 School 8 score: Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya

The analysis of scoring, as shown in Figure 25 at Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), indicates that the school has a favorable readiness and possesses key elements such as experience, inclusion, demand generation, perceived benefit, technological materials, supervision, training, coordination, encouragement, and leadership, scoring a 4 (full institutionalization). This indicates that the school has at least 2 years of experience in running a child club, with respondents ready to lead

the LIKE club after basic orientation. The school administration actively supports to promote the GESI values at the school through the LIKE club, the school has access to multimedia resources (speakers, computers, printers, etc.) for the club activities, the students are enthusiastic to participate in inclusive school activities, school believes that the club will benefit students by promoting leadership, inclusion, and GESI awareness, and the school fosters an inclusive environment for all the students. However, elements such as roles, club manual, knowledge, material distribution, adjustment, communication, and feedback have received low scores, such as a score 1 (low institutionalization) and score 2 (emerging institutionalization), indicating that these elements are either absent or partially available, reflecting a limited readiness for effectively establishing or operating the LIKE club within the school.

Figure 25: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

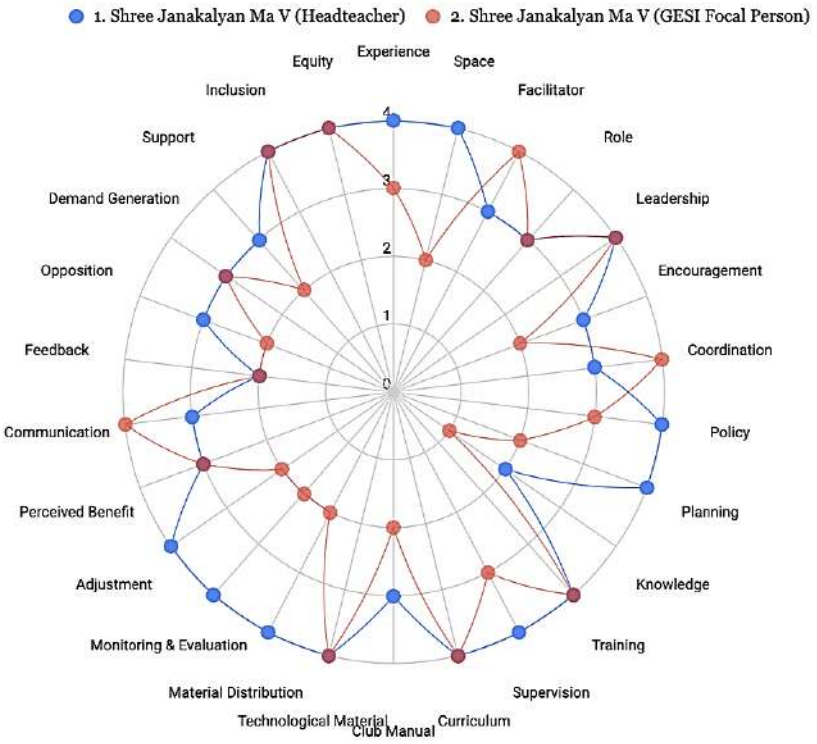


4.2.9 *School 9 Score: Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya*

Based on the Figure 26 below, the scoring from the headteacher and the GESI focal person at Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V) relieved that the school possess a favorable readiness in elements such as equity, inclusion, technological material, curriculum, training, and leadership been scored as 4 (full-institutionalization), indicating that the school ensures equal participation of all its students in school led activities, integrates GESI values into school curriculum, has technological materials (e.g., speakers, computers) available for club activities, demonstrates teacher's willingness to engage in training for club operation, and exhibits capable leadership from the headteacher and GESI focal person to guide and champion the LIKE Club effectively. Conversely, areas with low or limited

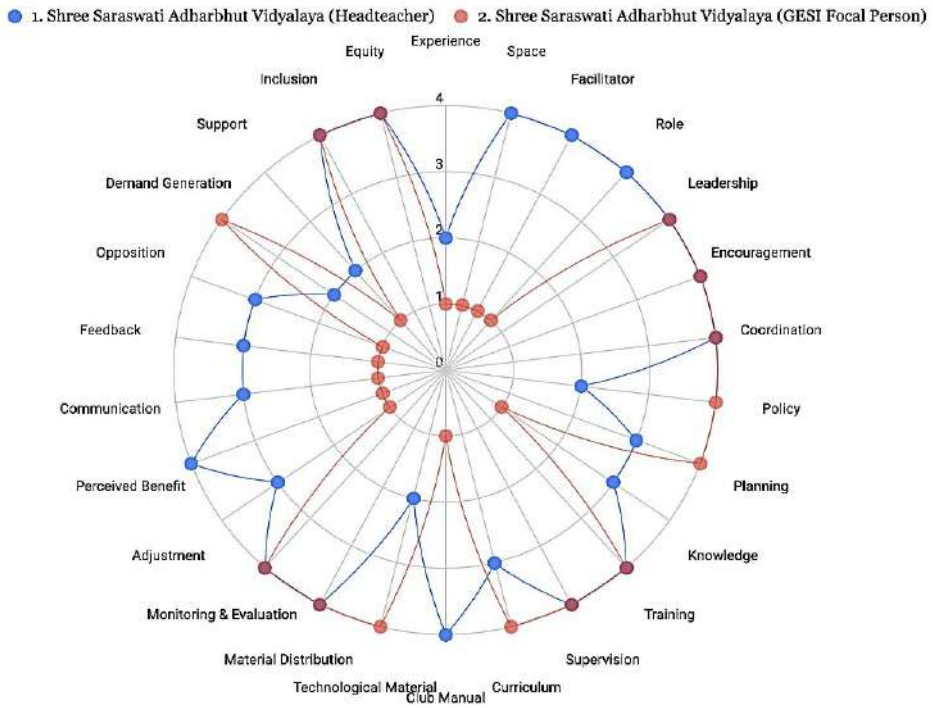
readiness, as indicated by respondents' scores of 1 (low-institutionalization) and 2 (emerging-institutionalization), encompass knowledge, space, encouragement, planning, club manual, material distribution, monitoring and evaluation, adjustment, feedback, opposition, and support. To effectively establish the LIKE club within the school, these elements must be addressed through training for respondents on child clubs, ensuring availability and distribution of the club manual and necessary club resources, adjusting the school's schedule for club activities, creating channels for students' input, and designating a space for club activities.

Figure 26: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)



4.2.10 School 10 Score: Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya

Figure 27: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V)

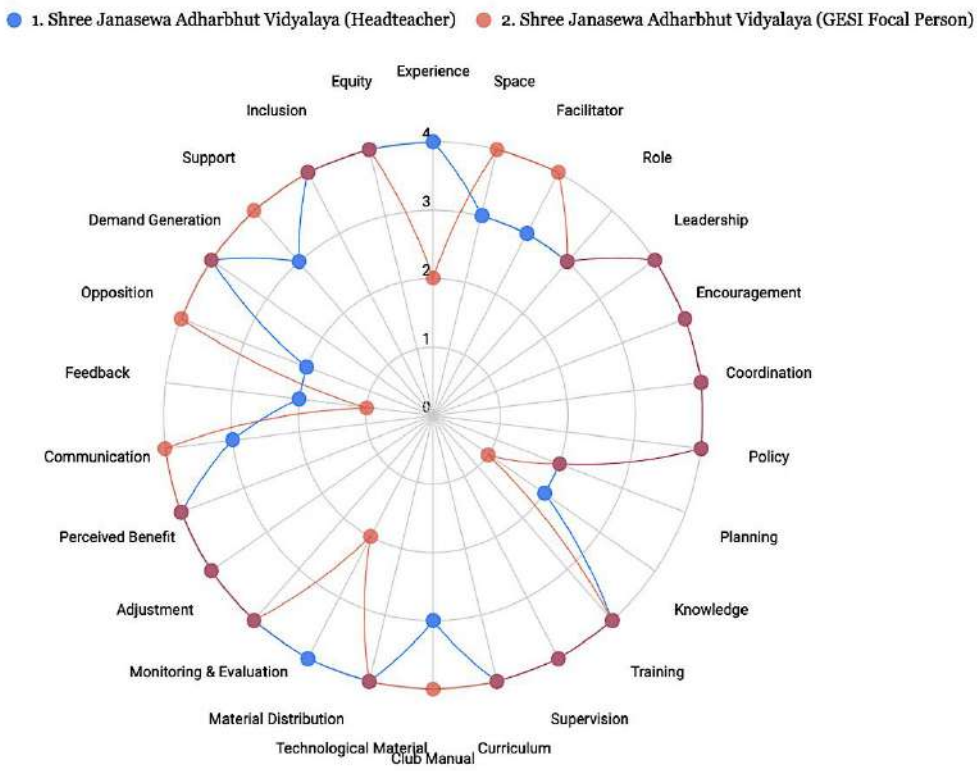


Based on Figure 27, Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V) demonstrates strong readiness, with both the headteacher and GESI focal person scoring 4 (full institutionalization) in key elements such as equity, inclusion, leadership, encouragement, coordination, training, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, and material distribution. This indicates that the school has an equitable environment for all the students ensuring no exclusion, committed leadership, supportive structures to guide the LIKE club, has system for supervision in place to monitor progress, there is readiness to procure, store, and distribute all required materials for LIKE club activities, willingness among headteacher and the GESI focal person to coordinate LIKE club activities. These elements thus need to be leveraged as foundational strengths to ensure that the LIKE club is effectively established. However, 12 key elements such as experience, space, facilitator, role, knowledge, club manual, support, opposition, feedback, communication, perceived benefit, adjustment, technological material, demand generation, and policy have received low score as scores 1 (low-institutionalization) and score 2 (emerging institutionalization) indicating that the school has limited prior exposure to child clubs, lacks adequate space and designated facilitator, has unclear role awareness, insufficient knowledge and resources, weak stakeholder support, resistance from some parents or teachers, , a lack of policy alignment, insufficient technological resources, and inflexible school schedule which show institutional weakness that needs be addressed to establish and operate the LIKE club within the school effectively.

4.2.11 School 11 Score: Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya

Figure 28 shows the scoring provided by the head teacher and the GESI focal person from Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V). Both respondents scored key elements, such as equity, inclusion, leadership, demand generation, encouragement, coordination, policy, training, supervision, curriculum, technological materials, and monitoring &evaluation, as well as adjustment and perceived benefit, at a score of 4, indicating the full institutionalization of these elements within the school. However, elements such as knowledge, feedback, experience, opposition, feedback, material distribution, and planning have been scored as 1 (low institutionalization) and score 2 (emerging institutionalization). This highlights gaps in teacher awareness, prior exposure to child clubs, stakeholder engagement, resource management, and planning mechanisms. Addressing these areas will be crucial for the effective establishment and operationalization of the LIKE Club in the school.

Figure 28: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V)

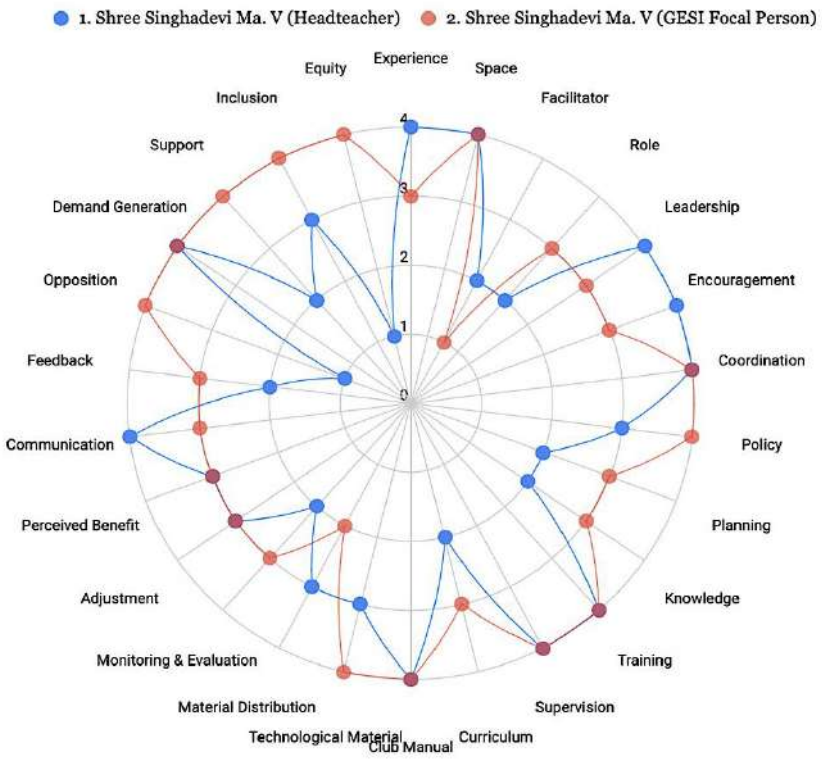


4.2.12 School 12 score: Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya

The Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V.) score is shown in Figure 29. Both respondents gave the club manual, training, supervision, coordination, demand generation, and space a score of 4 (full institutionalization). This illustrates how prepared the school is for providing resources, planning activities for clubs, and providing organized assistance. To effectively establish the LIKE club within the school, however, it is necessary to address gaps in teachers' awareness, prior exposure to child clubs, resource management, role clarity, and operational planning. These gaps are indicated by elements such as role, experience, opposition, feedback, monitoring and evaluation, material distribution, support,

curriculum, knowledge, and planning, which have been scored as 1 (low institutionalization) and 2 (emerging institutionalization).

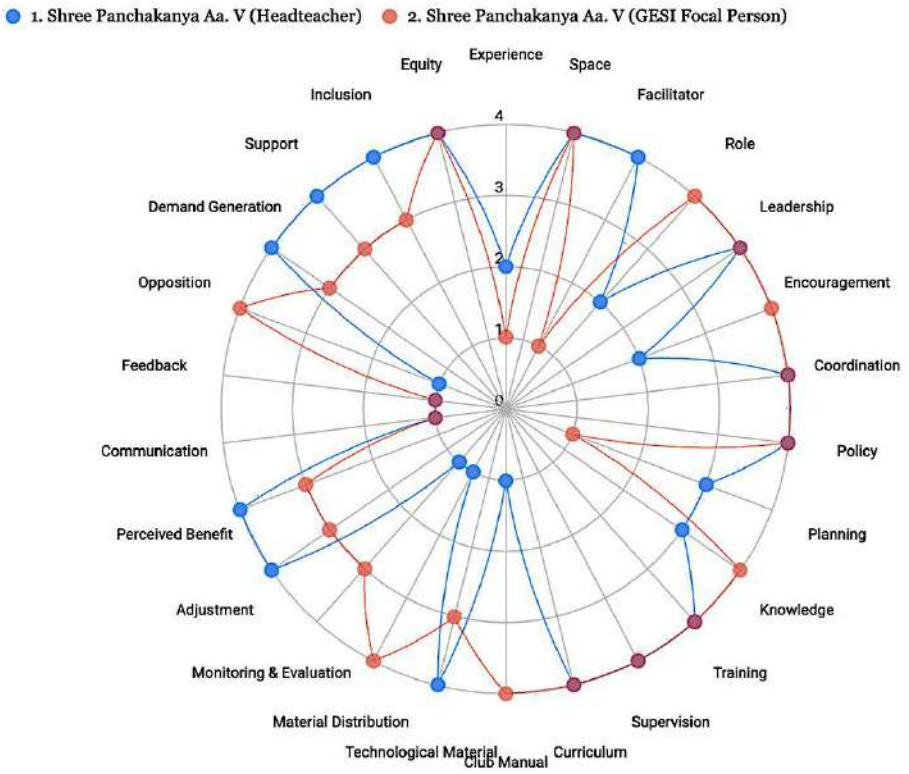
Figure 29: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)



4.2.13 School 13 Score: Shree Panchakanya Aadarbhut Vidyalaya

Figure 30 illustrates the scoring given by the head teacher and the GESI focal person from Shree Panchakanya Aadarbhut Vidyalaya (Aa. V). Both respondents scored key elements, such as space, leadership, coordination, planning, training, supervision, curriculum, and equity. This indicates that the school possesses readiness in leadership commitment, structured planning, and inclusive practices, which support the effective establishment of the LIKE club. However, elements like experience, facilitator, policy, club manual, communication, feedback, material distribution, experience, opposition, role clarity, and encouragement received low scores of 1 (low institutionalization) and 2 (emerging institutionalization). These low scores indicate limited prior knowledge of child clubs, limited understanding and awareness of roles, insufficient feedback and communication, and low stakeholder motivation. These elements must be addressed through targeted intervention to establish the LIKE club in the school effectively.

Figure 30: Radar graph showing institutional readiness scores of Shree Panchakanya Aadarbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V)



4.3 Aggregate Readiness Scores across the 13 Community Schools

Table 1 : Aggregate Institutional readiness scores across the 13 community schools

S.N.	Name of 13 community schools	Average scoring by the headteacher	Average scoring by the headteacher	Total
1	Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya	3.42	2.96	3.19
2	Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya	3.35	3.53	3.44
3	Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya	3.5	2.35	2.92
4	Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya	3.12	3.54	3.33
5	Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya	3.46	2.77	3.12
6	Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya	3	3.46	3.23
7	Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya	3.54	3.12	3.33
8	Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya	3.46	2.88	3.17
9	Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya	2.73	3.08	2.91 **(Lowest)**

S.N.	Name of 13 community schools	Average scoring by the headteacher	Average scoring by the headteacher	Total
10	Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya	3.35	2.62	2.99
11	Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya	3.46	3.5	3.48 **(Highest)**
12	Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya	2.92	3.35	3.14
13	Shree Panchakanya Adharbhut Vidyalaya	3	3.15	3.08

The table 1 above represents the level of institutional readiness found across the 13 community schools (see Annex1). The institutional readiness score was calculated by summing the respondents' scores across all 26 elements in the institutionalization tracker. Since the highest score, if a respondent scores all elements as 4 (institutionalization), is 104 (26*4). To make the results comparable, the raw total was divided by 26, resulting in an average score per element in the range of 1 to 4. For example, a headteacher of a particular school with a raw score of 89 had an average of 3.42 (89/26), reflecting strong institutional readiness. Based on the aggregate scores of the headteachers and the GESI focal persons across the 13 community schools, Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya demonstrated the highest institutional readiness (3.48). At the same time, Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya had the lowest readiness (2.91). This variation highlights differing levels of readiness to establish and operate the LIKE club across each school, with some schools closer to full institutionalization and others still in progress, requiring targeted interventions to strengthen low-scoring elements for the effective establishment of the club.

Chapter 5
Discussion

This chapter discusses about the noteworthy findings of the study, which were collected from the institutionalization tracker and the structured interview with the students. The discussion aims to provide a detailed understanding of the institutional readiness and students' perception of the potential opportunities and challenges in line with the literature and the research objectives of the study.

5.1 Students' Readiness for LIKE Club

Based on the findings from the structured interview with the students, this section in particular discusses on the students' awareness level of child clubs and their purpose, willingness to participate in a potential child club, and the potential challenges and opportunities they foresee related to establishing and sustaining the LIKE club in their school.

5.1.1 Students' Awareness of GESI and Child Clubs as a Foundation for LIKE Club establishment

The findings from the structured interview show that among the total of 32 respondents, 18 students (56.3%) have previous knowledge of GESI, but 14 students (43.8%) do not have. Contrary to this, the level of awareness about child clubs was, quite high among the students, with 23 (71.9%) of them being familiar with it, and 18 students (56.3%) have an understanding of the responsibilities of the Board of Directors (BODs) in child clubs. However, 12 students (37.5%) had limited to no understanding of it, and 2 students (6.3%) responded with "maybe," expressing uncertainty. When they were asked to describe child clubs in their own words as per their understanding, they defined them as "groups or organizations that promote child rights, protection, and well-being, helping children gain knowledge and leadership skills, and building their confidence and supporting their growth." Students also responded saying that child clubs are places where they can play sports, take part in different programs, and gain knowledge. Students make certain comments which included statements like, *"Child rights and a group which helps children to fulfill their aspirations," "helps in the growth of children", "a group which builds knowledge and skills among children," and "A group which fights for children's rights."* Singh's (2012) study also states similar things. The study found that the people who took part in this study viewed child clubs as safe spaces for children to discuss their rights, obtain new information, and engage in fun and recreational activities, and make social interactions through self-initiated programs. They also pointed out how important child clubs are for helping to address social issues and for promoting children's rights. Students' responses from the structured interview also indicate that they see child clubs as inclusive, right-based, and a safe and participatory setting that promotes their intellectual and personal growth. Now, based on the responses from the students, it is found that they are willing and enthusiastic about the establishment of a potential child club at their school. These

positive responses from them also suggest that the five selected community schools have partial readiness to establish the club within their school system. But the challenge in these schools is that the students still have a limited to no level awareness or knowledge about what a child club is, its objectives, the role of the Board of Directors (BOD) in a child club, as well as the concept of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). Thus, the headteachers and the GESI focal person in these schools must facilitate to conduct of awareness workshops and mock training sessions to help children understand these topics and bridge their knowledge gaps. The study by Hart (1992) says that when children do not have awareness of the issues, they may not fully understand the negative effects of their actions because of this, their participation can be tokenistic or shallow. Therefore, for successfully establishing, operating, and scaling the LIKE club, it is very important to leverage on students' existing knowledge of child clubs and focus on creating tailored workshop sessions in a peer learning model providing them with knowledge on GESI principles and leadership, which will help them to fill their knowledge gap in these topics.

5.1.2 *Students' Willingness and Enthusiasm as an Opportunity to establish, operate, and scale the LIKE club*

The study findings showed that all 32 student respondents (100%) have a strong level of enthusiasm to support the establishment of a potential child club that aims to promote the values of GESI in their respective schools. Similarly, 30 (93.8%) respondents are willing to join the club if established, and 31 (96.9%) have expressed their interest in participating in training sessions to learn how to establish, operate, and scale the club effectively and sustainably. The students' high level of willingness and enthusiasm towards the potential establishment of the LIKE club indicates a favorable environment to establish the club in these schools. They also shared the different club activities they prefer to be organized by the potential child club, which were sports (volleyball, football, kabaddi, skipping, kho-kho, badminton, skipping, and basketball), and cultural and creative activities such as dance, singing competitions, drama, storytelling, and poetry. If the LIKE club is able to match its activities with the activities preferred by the students, its establishment in the selected schools will be more effective and sustainable. The study done by Dahal (2014) also found that in Nepal, child clubs had more impact and participation when the children were the ones who were leading, organizing, and planning the club activities by themselves, making sure that the activities matched their preferences and needs. Also, a study by Singh (2012) mentions that child clubs are fully run and managed by the children themselves and they create their own activities instead of following those designed by others for them. The students at the five selected schools also view their school as an inclusive setting, which can also be considered as an opportunity for the LIKE club's establishment, as 30 respondents (93.8%) stated that the extracurricular activities at their school are equally accessible to all the students.

5.1.3 *Challenges to establishing & operating the LIKE Club*

Even though the students in the structured interview demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm and willingness to participate in a potential child club. They also reported some challenges that they believe might restrict their participation and involvement in the club. The challenges identified were that 14 students (43.8%)

mentioned having a limited awareness of GESI, 9 students (28.1%) had little to no knowledge about child clubs, and 12 students (37.5%) about what are the leadership responsibilities of the Board of Directors (BOD) in a child club. Adding to that, 20 respondents (62.5%) mentioned that they have had minimal to no training on the principles of GESI. The students also mentioned that social and cultural barriers may restrict their active participation in activities of the child club, which included fear of judgment, a lack of confidence in oneself, parental discouragement, and gender specific limitations such as difficult menstrual cycles. Students mentioned that "To participate in club activities, I have to leave my studies." "Students do not participate due to period clashes & health issues", and "parents are unsupportive". As per the study by Xu (2017), children get encouraged to participate in various activities when their parents are supportive. This also helps them to improve their academics, social skills, and well-being, making the activities more fun for them. A study by Gregory & Adie (2024, as cited in Ossai & Nwabuwe, 2025) states that lower participation in activities such as sports is also due to social barriers such as stigma, peer pressure, and class inequalities. It also states that an academic-centered mindset, which is further strengthened by parental pressure and institutional regulations, discourages students from spending their time playing sports.

According to the study by, Theis & O'Kane (2004), one of the challenges because of that child clubs struggle with is that some parents and educators undermine the potential of the club members, which limits the opportunity of these clubs to grow and expand. In Nigeria, some parents and teachers often discourage students from spending their time on extracurricular activities like sports, as they do not want them to waste their time. (Nwankwo & Udeze, 2021, as cited in Ossai & Nwabuwe, 2025). To address these challenges, targeted interventions from the side of headteachers, GESI focal person, and students are needed. Interventions could involve providing parents with orientation sessions explaining to them the advantages that participation in child clubs has on children. As per the study by Dahal (2014), participating in child clubs is both socially and personally beneficial to children. Through child clubs, children learn about child rights, build their self-confidence, enhance their academic performance, and the social awareness about child rights is also more respected and regarded in society. Hence, until social barriers and gaps in awareness level are addressed, the establishment of LIKE club in the selected community school risks being ineffective and sidelined despite the high willingness and enthusiasm demonstrated by the students in their responses.

5.1.4 The Role of Teachers and Focal Persons in Supporting Club Implementation

A study by Dahal (2014) mentions that child clubs help build better relationships and mutual understanding between children and adults, leading to child-friendly schools and classroom activities. For the successful establishment of the LIKE club, through the findings of the study, it is found that the headteachers and the GESI focal person play crucial roles. The students in the structured interview also mentioned that they require structured assistance in order to participate actively in the club. They stated that they need the support and guidance from their teachers, flexibility in their school routine so that they can participate in the club activities, and an encouraging and non-discriminatory environment that allows them to actively engage in the club activities. GESI focal person and headteachers help to integrate student initiatives into the school system. The study by Dahal (2014) also found out that inadequate orientation sessions for new committees, inconsistent school budgets, and low involvement of SMC/PTA in club activities are challenges

for its effectiveness. Also, the headteachers/SMC/PTA do not involve the children in the decision-making process because of which children have unequal opportunities for training, as the teachers choose students without prior consultation with the child club. Another study by Ninković, Knežević-Florić, & Đorđić (2022) mentions that the support given by teachers is important for building connectedness of students to their school. Furthermore, in the study conducted by Klem and Connell (2004, as cited in Tłuściak-Deliowska, 2016), they found that teachers' support is essential for students' participation. Therefore, for the LIKE club to be effectively established within the chosen schools, the role of the headteachers and GESI focal person is very important as their support and encouragement support the participation of students in the club.

5.2 Institutional Readiness for LIKE club

In this section, how the formal structure of the school, teachers' facilitation, and students' participation impact the successful establishment and the sustainability of the LIKE club is discussed. It also discusses the key roles of the head teachers, GESI focal person, and the students, along with the potential opportunities and challenges in this process.

5.2.1 The Roles of Head teachers, GESI Focal Persons, and Students in Establishing, Operationalizing, and Scaling the LIKE Club

Based on the findings of the institutionalization tracker, it is found that for the successful establishment and scaling of the LIKE club, cooperation between the head teachers, GESI focal person, and the students is needed. Through the data from the institutionalization tracker, it was revealed that baseline readiness by the head teacher (score 4) is high in elements, like governance-related elements, with an average score of 4 in leadership and 3.69 in encouragement. These scores reveal that the head teachers are effectively performing their roles as key pillars who can help to establish the LIKE club in the chosen schools effectively by integrating the club in the schools' improvement plan. Poor average scores in policy (3.38), planning (2.85), and knowledge (2.15); however, these scores points that although the leadership within these schools is strong, they lack institutionalization of formal arrangements such as written guidelines and annual activity plans. It also conveys that even though the head teachers are ready to establish the LIKE club, they need a better mechanism of for planning to establish and sustain the club. As per the study by both Singh (2012) and Joshi (2016), there is a necessity to institutionalize child participation by incorporating the perspective of children into policymaking and addressing gender bias that takes place in schools and child clubs. It states that there is a lack of proper guidelines on how to effectively operate child clubs and what activities they should organize. Both of these studies thus emphasize the necessity of a national policy framework to organize child clubs so that all children can take part in the activities organized by it fairly and equitably.

Also, GESI focal persons had high average scores in training (3.92), supervision (3.85), and coordination (3.92). These scores indicate that they act as enablers who can help to translate the values of GESI within the school into practice with the help of awareness workshops, training, and mentoring the students. However, they have low average scores in knowledge (2.46) and planning (2.77), which means that the GESI focal persons lack conceptual knowledge of the principles of GESI and

planning strategies to incorporate GESI-related activities into their academic year plan. By providing them with practical training sessions through periodic workshops can help them facilitate inclusive students' engagement effectively

According to the study by Joshi (2016) and Singh (2012), because of limited to inadequate knowledge of child rights by adults, meaningful child participation becomes challenging. A similar study by Dahal (2014) states that the teachers tend to follow the instructions given by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) without fully understanding the aim and objectives of child clubs. Facilitators fulfill diverse responsibilities, which include mentoring, conflict management, and guidance. They act as an intermediary between the schools and NGOs. As per Save the Children (2024) states that children clubs, their networks, and the children themselves should actively contribute to developing not only their capabilities but also the capabilities of the organization they represent.

Even though the institutionalization tracker was particularly scored by the students, the average scores in encouragement, 3.69 by the head teacher and 3.23 by the GESI focal persons, in demand generation, 3.31 by the head teacher and 3.46 by the GESI focal person, demonstrate that there exists an encouraging environment for student participation within the schools. It also reflects that students in these school show interest in participating in school-based activities. The study by Singh (2012, p. 17 also mentions that child clubs help to empower children to become self-reliant and become active members in their communities but their effectiveness is dependent on the support of adults who can guide them and provide opportunities for growth. Hence, although a supportive environment for student leadership is present, for it to remain sustainable, mentorship of teachers is important, along with the involvement of students in decision-making. This type of support is usually provided by adult facilitators who are affiliated with schools or organizations and they help children to learn about social issues and organize the club activities.

5.2.2 Potential Opportunities and Challenges in Establishing, Operationalizing, and Scaling the LIKE Club

The findings of the institutionalization tracker of the 13 selected community schools (see Annex 1) show a medium to high level of institutional readiness in terms of establishing and scaling the LIKE club. However, there exist challenges that can influence the successful establishment of the LIKE club in these community schools.

Under the governance block (institutionalization tracker; refer to Annex 4), several elements were identified as key strengths in establishing the LIKE club, such as leadership, coordination, and encouragement. The head teacher rated leadership at an average score of 4, while the GESI focal person gave a score of 3.85. For encouragement, the head teacher scored 3.69, and the GESI focal person scored 3.23. In terms of coordination, the head teacher rated it at 3.85, and the GESI focal person slightly higher at 3.92. These scores indicate that both the head teachers and the GESI focal person feel prepared to lead and coordinate the establishment of the LIKE club, particularly when provided with basic training. However, encouragement scores show that headteachers' scores feel moderately encouraged and supported by the school administration, while the GESI focal person feels slightly less supported.

Furthermore, elements such as policy and planning received average scores of 3.38 by the head teacher and 3.62 by the GESI focal person, and 2.85 by the head teacher and 2.77 by the GESI focal person, respectively. These scores indicate that both the head teacher and the GESI focal person perceive the school's policies to be aligned with GESI principles. Conversely, planning for GESI-related activities appears to be weaker, as evidenced by the low average scores, suggesting limited or absent integration of GESI-related activities within the school improvement plan. This lower score in both planning and policy presents a challenge for establishing, operating, and scaling the LIKE club, as sustaining the LIKE club within the school without structured planning and policy alignment could prove to be difficult. The evaluation of human resource elements shows differing scores between the headteacher and the GESI focal person. For knowledge, the headteacher scored an average of 2.15, while the GESI focal person scored 2.46. In terms of training, the headteacher received a score of 3.69, compared to 3.92 for the GESI focal person. Regarding supervision, the headteacher scored 3.92, and the GESI focal person scored 3.85.

These scores indicate that both the head teacher and the GESI focal person are willing to participate in training to establish the LIKE Club. However, there are challenges, as both have limited exposure to orientation on gender equality, social inclusion, and inclusive teaching practices. This highlights the need for structured, school-based capacity-building programs to enhance their knowledge and readiness for the effective implementation of the LIKE Club. These findings align with those from the Save the Children (2024) study, which notes that challenges to child participation include inadequate involvement of children in planning processes and ineffective operation of child clubs. There is a lack of training in child rights, protection, and management of child-led organizations, along with insufficient capacity at the local level to implement child participation policies and maintain accurate data on child clubs and networks.

Furthermore, the readiness score for curriculum integration was favorable, reflecting a high level of institutional preparedness with an overall score of 4. Head teachers rated it an average of 3.46, while GESI focal persons rated it an average of 3.54, indicating that GESI topics are already incorporated into the existing school curriculum. Similarly, access to technological resources received an average score of 3.69 from head teachers and 3.92 from GESI focal persons, showing that the school has access to a limited number of multimedia resources, such as speakers, printers, and computers, which could support club activities. The perceived benefits also reflect a positive attitude, with average scores of 3.69 from head teachers and 3.23 from GESI focal persons regarding the club's potential to enhance GESI awareness and leadership. Average scores in inclusion, 3.77 from head teachers and 3.46 from GESI focal persons, along with scores of 3.77 in equity from head teachers and 3.46 from GESI focal persons, indicate that schools provide a supportive environment that promotes inclusion and equity among students. Additionally, the demand generation score is 3.31 for head teachers and the same for GESI focal persons, suggesting strong interest among students in participating in student-led activities. This indicates a solid foundation for establishing the LIKE club in line with GESI values. Contrary to this, several challenges that could hinder the smooth establishment, operation, or scaling of the LIKE club were also identified. Low scores for club manual (2.31 by the head teacher and 2.54 by the GESI focal person) suggest that respondents either did not understand, access, or review the provided club manual. This suggests the need to improve the

dissemination and clarity of the Like club manual to ensure its effective use across schools. Material distribution received average scores of 3.31 among head teachers and 2.62 among GESI focal persons, reflecting limited access to the necessary materials needed for the smooth execution of club activities. Moderate scores for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) (3.15 by head teachers and 3.00 by GESI focal persons) indicate that while some schools maintain basic systems such as attendance records or meeting notes, structured tools to track LIKE Club activities remain limited. Similarly, adjustment scores (3.23 by head teachers and 2.77 by GESI focal persons) reflect partial flexibility in scheduling club activities, while others face constraints due to tight academic routines. This highlights the necessity to strengthen monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms and promote scheduling flexibility to ensure consistent implementation and documentation of club activities. These findings align with the report by Save the Children Norway & Carfax Projects (2018), which highlighted ongoing issues in data collection, analysis, and storage. It also pointed out the disconnect between monitoring results and the genuine outcomes of child participation initiatives. The report emphasized that, in the absence of clear monitoring and evaluation frameworks and sufficient training for stakeholders, child participation efforts often rely on anecdotal evidence rather than measurable results, which hampers their sustainability and potential for learning. Therefore, enhancing monitoring and evaluation capacity and implementing structured feedback systems are essential for the effectiveness and long-term establishment of the LIKE Club.

Likewise, elements such as communication (3.15 from the head teacher and 2.62 from the GESI focal person), feedback (2.23 from the head teacher and 2.08 from the GESI focal person), and support (2.85 from the head teacher and 3.00 from the GESI focal person) have received lower institutional readiness scores. These scores point out that the school has a poor feedback system and communication channels to share information about potential club activities as well as minimal awareness among the members of PTA/SMC about the LIKE club. These scores indicate that it is necessary to enhance communication channels, develop a systematic feedback mechanism, and increase awareness about the LIKE club's objectives among the PTA/SMC members for the effective integration of LIKE club within these schools

Chapter 6
Conclusion

The results from the institutionalization tracker and the structured interview conclude that establishing and scaling the LIKE club is possible and necessary within the selected community schools. The club, through child-led engagement, has the potential to promote the values of GESI as indicated by the high to moderate average scoring given by the head teacher and the GESI focal person in the institutionalization tracker. This is evident specifically in elements such as leadership, supervision, coordination, encouragement, inclusion, and equity, and students' willingness to participate in school-based training on how to establish the child club. Also, the students are aware of the benefits associated with the club's establishment and how it can be a medium to promote awareness of GESI and develop their leadership and cooperation skills. Based on these factors, a tailored awareness and knowledge-building workshop session for the head teachers and the GESI focal person on how to establish and operate a child club and its activities, as well as periodic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) sessions to track the club's progress and challenges in its sustainability, can facilitate a smooth initiation of the club.

Support is also needed to help schools adjust their routines to accommodate LIKE club activities and to integrate dedicated time into the school routine without negatively impacting academic priorities. This will ensure that students have dedicated time set aside for club participation and allow for the club's consistent operation. The varying level of readiness among schools also suggests that club establishment should follow a sequential approach, beginning with schools that show the most readiness before gradually expanding to those with lower readiness scores through target support, training, and capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the head teachers, GESI focal persons, and students' abilities to effectively establish and sustain the club.

The assessment of institutional readiness in the 13 selected community schools for this study demonstrated that schools, such as Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya, Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V), and Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V), are in a good position to begin the establishment of the club based on their average institutional readiness score, these schools have strong leadership, encouragement, and an inclusive and equitable school environment, and thus these schools are suitable for beginning the initial phase of the club establishment. These schools can also be referred to as models for gradual replication in other schools with lower readiness, such as Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V), Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V), Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya, and Shree Panchakanya Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa. Vi). The main challenges faced by these schools are their limited understanding of the LIKE club's manual. There also exist gaps in staff training and awareness of GESI values and inclusive teaching practices, as well as a lack of role clarity among head teachers and focal persons. Plus, these schools have a poor monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism to track students' participation in extracurricular activities. Inadequate access to essential materials such as chart paper, pens, markers, posters, crayons, and technological equipment like computers, speakers, and printers makes it difficult for the smooth execution of club activities. Moreover, these schools struggle to adjust their school routines for conducting club activities. To help these schools raise the readiness level to that of other schools, they need to be provided with resource assistance and targeted staff training and orientation sessions, particularly for the

headteachers and GESI focal person, to understand their roles better in the process of club establishment and scaling it. It is also necessary to make sure that the LIKE club manual is not just distributed in these schools, but also properly understood and successfully implemented within the school.

The high level of enthusiasm and willingness of the student to participate in training to establish and operate the club, as shown by the results of the structured interview, also shows a good opportunity to establish the club within the selected schools. Some students in the school view the child club as an effective medium to gain leadership skills and grow as individuals. But they still face challenges as they have poor and limited knowledge on GESI values, the purpose of child clubs, how child clubs work, what the board of directors (BOD) does in a child club, and how to operate a child club effectively. This indicates that the students require training and orientation, or mock workshops that explain the objectives of the child club, the concept of GESI in interactive and child-friendly terms, and provide them with hands-on training on how to plan club activities. The head teachers and GESI focal person play an important role in this process. They must be mentors, facilitators, and enablers who create a positive and safe environment for students to help them establish and keep the club going. Cooperation between the head teachers, GESI focal persons, and the students is very necessary for the implementation of the LIKE club's vision in the school improvement plan (SIP), contributing to its sustainability. By building on the strengths of existing institutions and high student willingness, and addressing challenges that have been found through targeted interventions as per the school's context. The LIKE club can be established and gradually scaled in the selected community school as a safe space that empowers children to create positive changes and promotes the values of GESI.

References

Ahmed, S. K. (2024). How to choose a sampling technique and determine sample size for research: A simplified guide for researchers. Oral Oncology Reports, 12, 100662.

Bajracharya, S. Exploring the multidimensionality of scale: a study of the community action group for education initiative at Durga Bhagwati Rural Municipality.

Brookings Institution. (2023, June). Considerations for researchers focused on scaling impact in education. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/BRIEF_Considerations-for-Researchers.pdf

Byrne, J., & Humble, Á. M. (2007). An introduction to mixed-method research. Atlantic research centre for family-work issues, 1, 1-4.

Child Rights Government of Nepal. (2018). "Happy Nepali, Prosperous Nepal: Concerns of all to Rights of Children" — State of Children in Nepal 2018 (Synopsis). http://childrights.gov.np/_uploads/publication/4/b68fe81218d02913df7f85393931a056.pdf

Coburn, C. E. (2003). Rethinking scale: Moving beyond numbers to deep and lasting change. Educational researcher, 32(6), 3-12.

Consortium; Central Child Welfare Board. (2012). Strategic review of support to child clubs, Nepal 2011-2012 (Final report). https://www.consortium.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/STRATEGIC-REVIEW-OF-SUPPORT-TO-CHILD-CLUBS_REPORT.pdf

Dahal, B. P. (2014). Child participation in schools of Nepal: Role and contribution of child clubs (Doctoral dissertation).

Dahal, G. S. (2023, September). The Multi-dimensionality of Scaling Extra Curricular Activities (ECA) Program In Public Schools Of Rautahat District.

Dehalwar, K. S. S. N., & Sharma, S. N. (2024). Exploring the distinctions between quantitative and qualitative research methods. Think India Journal, 27(1), 7-15.

Do, T. (2019). A review of scaling concepts: ReSolve scaling workshops project.

Gargani, J., & McLean, R. (2017). Scaling science.

Gautam, M. (2008). Child Participation in Child Clubs and Social and Personal Development Of Children (A Case Study of Lalitpur District) (Doctoral dissertation, Department of Population Studies).

GC, R. (2018). Role of Child Clubs in the Personality Development: A Case Study of 5 VDCs Child Clubs in Dhading District (Doctoral dissertation, Department of Rural Development).

Government of Nepal, National Statistics Office. (2023). National population and housing census 2021: Provincial, district, and municipal results. Retrieved from https://censusnepal.cbs.gov.np/results/population?province=1&district=6&municipality=4

Hart, R. A. (1992). Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship (No. inness92/6).

Joshi, N. R. (2016). Impact of child clubs participation in community development: a study of Dhading district (Doctoral dissertation, Central Department of Rural Development).

LGCDP/MoFAGAD. (2014). Bhojpur District CACs in ward map. Local Governance and Community Development Programme. Retrieved from http://lgcdp.gov.np/sites/default/files/GIS/05_Bhojpur.gif

Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP) - II. (n.d.). GIS 72 new Municipality Map. Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration. Retrieved August 22, 2025, from https://lgcdp.gov.np/gis_72mun

McLean, R., & Gargani, J. (2019). Scaling impact: Innovation for the public good. Routledge; International Development Research Centre (IDRC). https://idrc-crdi.ca/sites/default/files/sp/scaling_impact.pdf

Ministry of Education, Nepal. (2016, October). School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) — Final document. https://www.dpnet.org.np/uploads/files/MOE_SSDP_Final_Document_Oct_2016_compressed%202019-04-01%2009-35-50.pdf

Narayan, K. G., Sinha, D. K., & Singh, D. K. (2023). Sampling techniques. In Veterinary public health & epidemiology: Veterinary public health-epidemiology-zoonosis-one health (pp. 111-123). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore.

Ninković, S., Knežević-Florić, O., & Đorđić, D. (2022). Teachers' support and students' perceptions of school connectedness: A multilevel study. Zbornik Instituta za pedagoska istrazivanja, 54(1), 41-59.

Olsen, B., Rodríguez, M., & Elliott, M. (2022). Deepening Education Impact: Emerging Lessons from 14 Teams Scaling Innovations in Low-and Middle-Income Countries. Ongoing Analysis from the ROSIE Project. Center for Universal Education at The Brookings Institution.

Ossai, J. N., & Nwabuwe, S. N. (2025). The Effects of Social and Cultural Barriers on Sports Participation in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. Advances in Law, Pedagogy, and Multidisciplinary Humanities, 3(1), 270-284.

Perlman Robinson, J., Curtiss Wyss, M., & Hannahan, P. (2021). Institutionalization Tracker: Assessing the integration of an education initiative into a system. *Available at SSRN 3957339*.

Price-Kelly, H., van Haeren, L., & McLean, R. (2020). Scaling playbook: a practical guide for researchers.

Rai, N., & Thapa, B. (2015). A study on purposive sampling method in research. Kathmandu: Kathmandu School of Law, 5(1), 8-15.

Ratna, K., SHRESTHA, M. S. K., & MAHARJAN, M. S. (2011). Strategic review to support child clubs.

Save the Children. (2024). Child Rights Movement in Nepal: A reflective study on key milestones, achievements, and future directions. https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/child-rights-movement-study-report_English_Final.pdf

Save the Children Norway; Carfax Projects. (2018, June). Review of child participation in Save the Children Norway's programmes: Final review report. Norad.

https://www.norad.no/contentassets/72cf65d4c8e341c58aeee015ffcd3255/review-of-child-participation-in-save-the-children-norways-programmes.pdf

Shrestha, S. (2022, November). Scalability: A Diagnosis on Potentiality of Scaling Program for Strengthening Public Schools

Singh, A. B. (2012). Child Clubs as the Defenders of Children's Rights in Nepalese Context (Master's thesis, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, Fakultet for samfunnsvitenskap og teknologiledelse, Norsk senter for barneforskning).

Subedi, M. (2023). Use of mixed methods in social sciences research. Nepalese Journal of Development and Rural Studies, 20(01), 96-105.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (Eds.). (2010). Sage handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research. Sage.

Theis, Joachim and Claire O'Kane (2004) 'Children's Participation, civil rights and power' in: Gready, Paul and Jonathan Ensor (eds.): Reinventing Development? Translating Rights-based Approaches from Theory into Practice. Zed Books, London.

Tłuściak-Deliowska, A. (2016). The role of teachers' support in middle school students' achievement and school satisfaction.

United Nations. (2021, January 4). Mapping of child clubs and child club networks [Project]. UN Partner Portal. https://www.unpartnerportal.org/api/public/export/projects/2814/

Xu, J. (2017). Students' engagement and parents' involvement in extracurricular activities.

Annex

Annex 1: List of the 13 Selected Community Schools

1. Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School)
2. Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
3. Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
4. Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
5. Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
6. Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
7. Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
8. Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
9. Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
10. Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School)
11. Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School)
12. Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Secondary School)
13. Shree Panchakanya Aadarbhut Vidyalaya (Primary School)

Annex 2

Table 2.1 Questionnaire for Institutionalization Tracker

S.N	System Building Block	Element	Questions	Score (1-4)	Remarks
1.	**Existence**	Experience	Has your school operated any form of child club (formal or informal) in the past two years (e.g., environment club, dance club, sports club)?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
2.	**Readiness**	Space	Does your school have a specific space (such as a meeting hall, assembly ground, or playground) that can be used for LIKE Club meetings and activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Facilitator	Does your school have a designated teacher, staff member, or student volunteer identified to help establish the LIKE Club?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
3.	**Governance**	Role	Are you aware of the role you are expected to play as a head teacher or GESI focal person in establishing and conducting the LIKE club activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Leadership	Are you (as a head teacher or GESI focal teacher) ready to lead the formation and operation of the LIKE club at your school, if basic training is provided?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Encouragement	Are you (as a head teacher or GESI focal person) encouraged and supported by your school administration to establish the LIKE club that promotes values of gender equality and social inclusion among students?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Coordination	Do you think you can be a champion (a leader or main supporter) to help establish and coordinate the LIKE club activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Policy	Are your school's policies (e.g., code of conduct, student discipline, classroom management) aligned with principles of gender equality, social inclusion, and respect?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Planning	Are there any GESI-related activities or programs included in your school's academic year plan or School Improvement Plan (SIP)?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
4.	**Human Resource**	Knowledge	As a head teacher or GESI focal person, have you received or organized any training or orientation sessions on gender equality, social inclusion, or inclusive teaching practices?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Training	Are you and other teachers willing to participate in school-based training on how to establish the LIKE club?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Supervision	Are you (as head teacher or GESI focal teacher) ready to support, supervise, or mentor students through regular follow-up and encouragement to run the LIKE club activities at your school?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	

S.N	System Building Block	Element	Questions	Score (1-4)	Remarks
5.	**Curriculum and Materials**	Club Manual	Have you and your school received the LIKE club's manual and activity book (listing all 29 capability-based activities)?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Technological Materials	Does your school have access to multimedia resources (like speakers, printers, microphones, or computers) to help effectively carry out the LIKE club activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Material Distribution	Is your school ready to procure, store, and distribute necessary club materials (e.g., chart paper, pens, markers, posters, crayons) to students to effectively conduct the LIKE club activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
	Information	Curriculum	Are topics of inclusion, gender equality, child rights, and respect addressed in your existing school curriculum?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Does your school have systems or tools (e.g., attendance records, activity log, meeting notes) to help monitor, track, record, or review student participation in extracurricular activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Adjustment	Can your school's routine be adjusted to conduct the LIKE club activities without affecting the students' regular classes or exams?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Perceived Benefit	Do you believe your school will benefit from the establishment of the LIKE club in promoting leadership, inclusion, and GESI awareness among teachers and students?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Communication	Are there communication channels (e.g., notice board, announcements, messaging groups) to inform students, parents, and municipal officials about upcoming LIKE club activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Feedback	Is there a system (e.g, suggestion box, student council meeting) for students to give ideas or share feedback about LIKE club activities?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Opposition	Is there any opposition or resistance from you or others (e.g., skeptical parents fearing clubs harm studies; reluctant teachers to monitor club activities) regarding the establishment of the LIKE club at your school?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
7.	**Stakeholder Engagement**	Demand generation	Do students in your school show interest in participating or leading school-based activities (e.g., environment club, school events, and awareness campaigns) that promote values like inclusion, respect, and leadership?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Support	Are the parents-teacher association (PTA)/ School Management Committee (SMC) aware and supportive of establishing the LIKE club at your school?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	
8.	**Equality &**	Inclusion	Are students of all genders, including	• **1**	

S.N	System Building Block	Element	Questions	Score (1-4)	Remarks
	Inclusion		marginalized students and students with disabilities, encouraged to participate in or lead student-led activities at your school?	• **2** • **3** • **4**	
		Equity	Does your school ensure that no student is excluded from school activities like school events due to gender, religion, caste, ethnicity, disability, or economic status?	• **1** • **2** • **3** • **4**	

Annex 3

Table 3.1 Questionnaire for structured interview with students

Demographic Information

- **Name:**
- **Gender:** Male/ Female / Prefer not to say
- **Age**:
- **Grade Level**:
- **Caste/ Ethnicity:**
- **Do you have a disability?**

  ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

  If yes, could you kindly share what type of disability you have (physical, vision, sensory, intellectual, psychosocial, or others)?

  Ans

A: Awareness

1. Have you heard about gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) before?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If yes, in your own words, what do "gender equality" and "social inclusion" mean to you?

   Ans

2. Have you heard about child clubs before?

   ☐Yes ☐ No

   If yes, what do you think a children's club is?

   Ans

3. Have you ever been part of a children's club in your school? (e.g., environmental club, dance club)

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Do you know the typical roles the Board of Directors (BoD) typically holds in a student club (e.g., chairperson, secretary, treasurer)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Do you think all students in your school, regardless of gender, caste, disability, or background, are treated fairly and included in extracurricular activities?

   ☐ Yes, always ☐ No, never ☐ Sometimes

B: Willingness

1. Do you like the idea of establishing a child club to promote gender equality and social inclusion in your school?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Would you like to be part of a child club if it were established at your school?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Would you be willing to join a short training to learn how to establish and conduct activities in a children's club?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. What types of activities would you like the child club to organize in your school?

   Ans

5. Do you think all students in your school would support the idea of a club that promotes gender equality and inclusion? Why or why not?

   Ans

C. Opportunities & Challenges

1. Do you think being part of a child club can help students become better leaders and speak up for equality and inclusion in school? Why or why not?

   Ans

2. What kind of help or support would make it easier for students to take part in a children's club?

   Ans

3. As a student, what do you think might make it difficult for students to join, participate in, or stay active in a child club at your school?

   Ans

4. Have you ever received any training in school about gender equality or inclusion (GESI)?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

Annex 4

Table 4.1 Element of the institutionalization tracker with its element code.

S.N	System Building Block	Element	Element Code
1	Existence	Experience	EXP
		Space	Space
2	Readiness	Facilitator	Facilitator
		Role	Role
3	Governance	Leadership	Leadership
		Encouragement	ENCG
		Coordination	COORD
		Policy	Policy
		Planning	Plan
4	Human Resource	Knowledge	Knowledge
		Training	TRAIN
		Supervision	SUPV
5	Curriculum & Materials	Curriculum	Curriculum
		Club Manual	Manual
		Technological Material	TECH
		Material Distribution	DIST
6	Information	Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	M&E
		Adjustment	ADJ
		Perceived Benefit	Benefit
		Communication	COMM
		Feedback	FDBK
7	Stakeholder Engagement	Opposition	OPP
		Demand Generation	DG
		Support	Support
8	Equality & Inclusion	Inclusion	INCL
		Equity	EQTY

Annex 5

Table1 5.1 Average readiness score by the head teacher and the GESI focal person on the institutionalization tracker

System Building Block	Element	Element Code	Average scores by Headteacher	Average scores by GESI Focal Person
Existence	Experience	EXP	3.08	2.62
	Space	Space	3.46	3.15
Readiness	Facilitator	Facilitator	3.23	2.38
	Role	Role	2.77	3.15
Governance	Leadership	Leadership	4	3.85
	Encouragement	ENCG	3.69	3.23
	Coordination	COORD	3.85	3.92
	Policy	Policy	3.38	3.62
	Planning	Plan	2.85	2.77
Human Resource	Knowledge	Knowledge	2.15	2.46
	Training	TRAIN	3.69	3.92
	Supervision	SUPV	3.92	3.85
Curriculum & Materials	Curriculum	Curriculum	3.46	3.54
	Club Manual	Manual	2.31	2.54
	Technological Material	TECH	3.69	3.31
	Material Distribution	DIST	3.31	2.62
Information	Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	M&E	3.15	3
	Adjustment	ADJ	3.23	2.77
	Perceived Benefit	Benefit	3.69	3.23
	Communication	COMM	3.15	2.62
	Feedback	FDBK	2.23	2.08
Stakeholder Engagement	Opposition	OPP	2.62	2.54
	Demand Generation	DG	3.31	3.46
	Support	Support	2.85	3
Equality & Inclusion	Inclusion	INCL	3.77	3.54
	Equity	EQTY	3.77	3.46

Annex 6

Radar Graph showing the institutional readiness score of selected community schools.

Figure 6.1 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Bidyodaya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

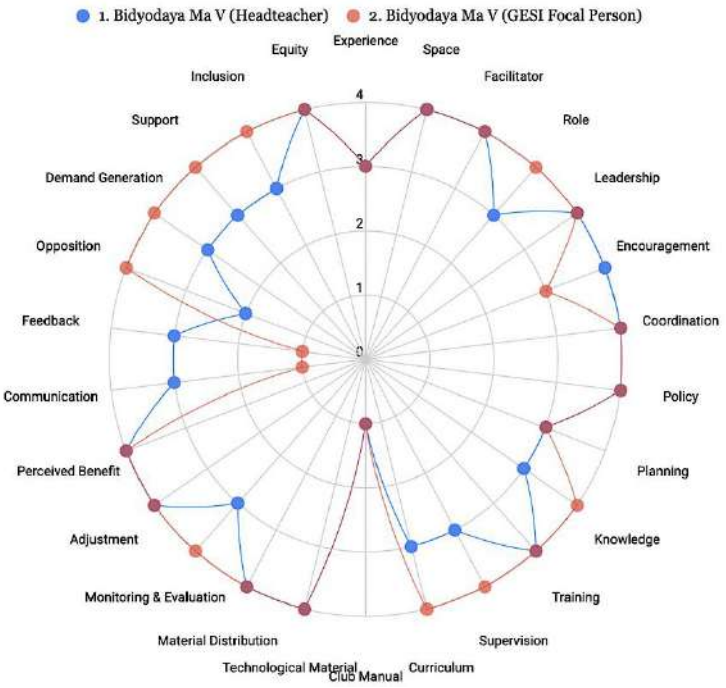


Figure 6.2 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Janakalyan Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V)

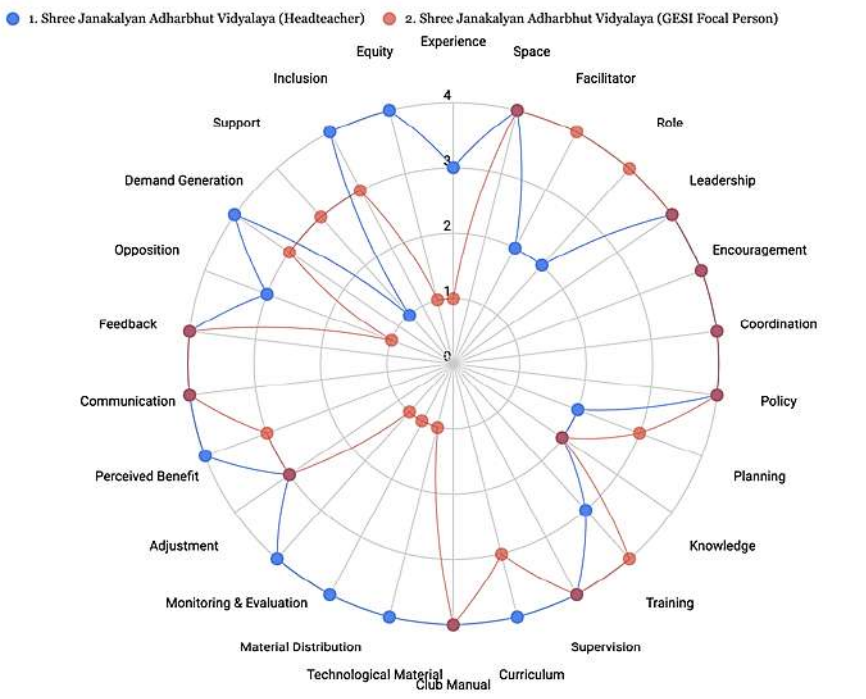


Figure 6.3 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Jalpa Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

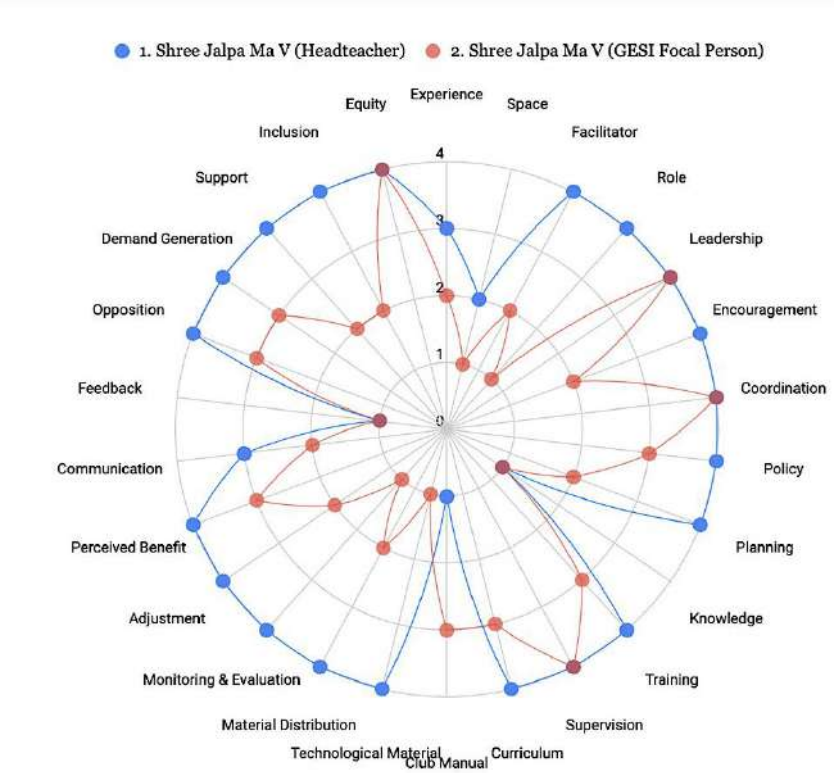


Figure 6.4 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Yasodhara Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

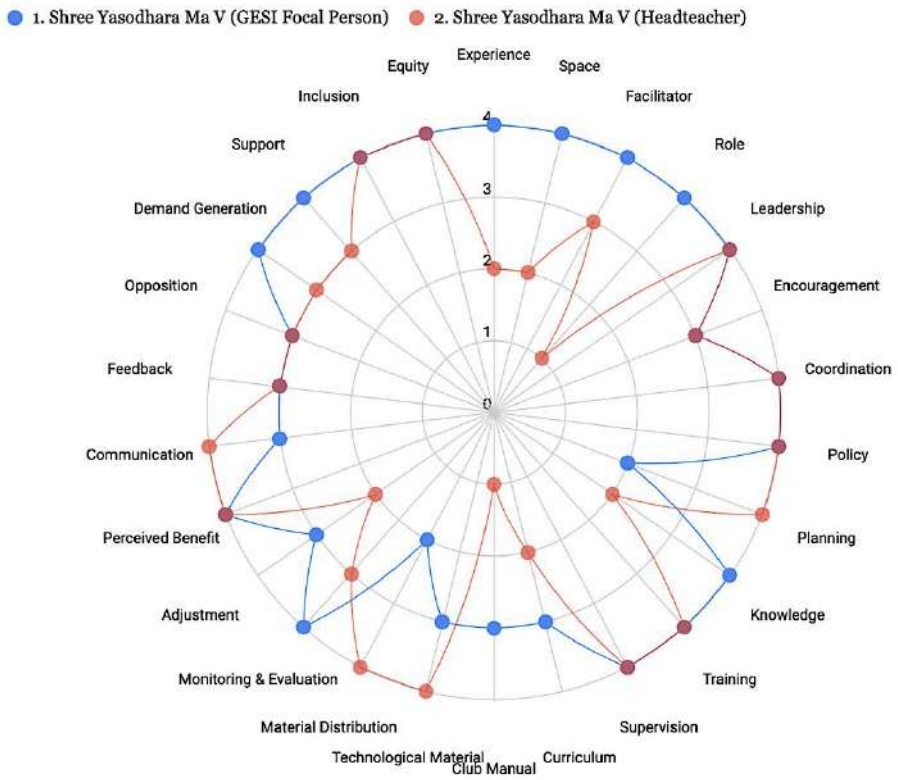


Figure 6.5 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Panchakanya Prathamik Vidyalaya (Pra. V)

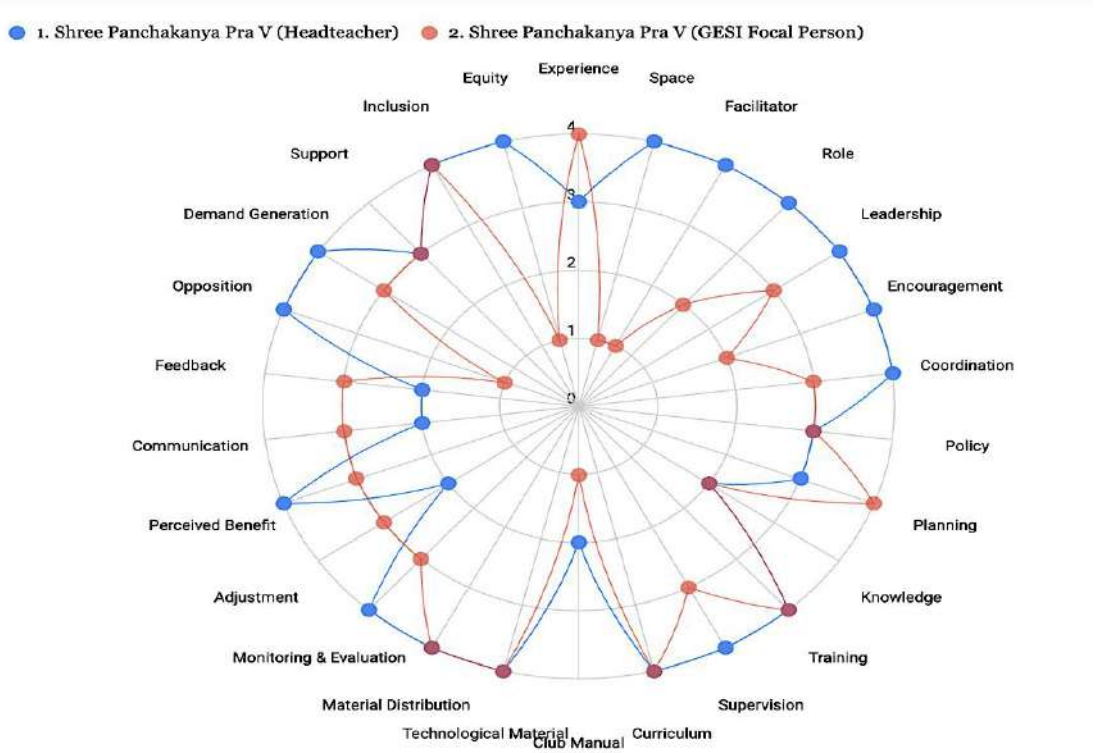


Figure 6.6 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Kalika Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V)

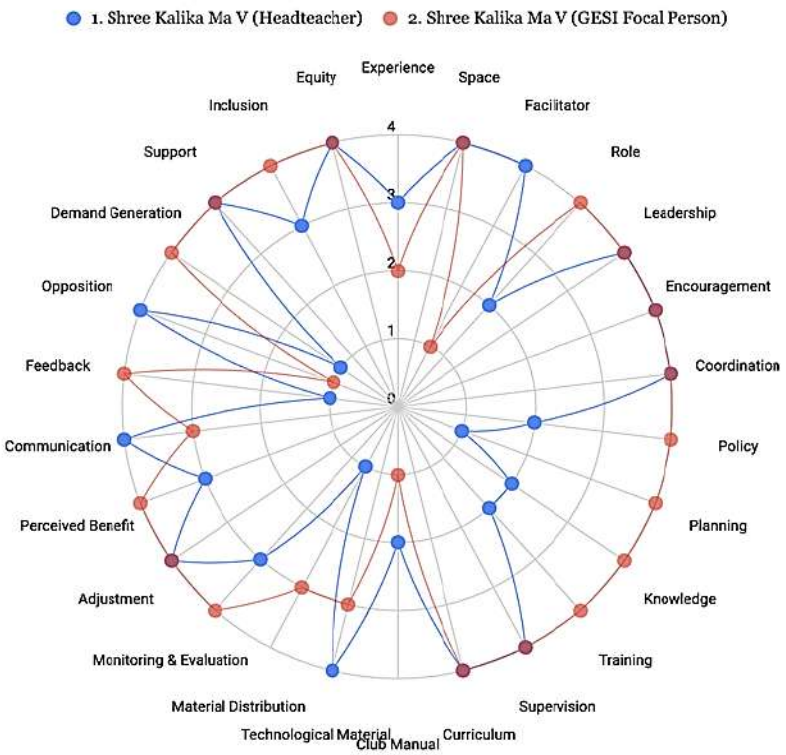


Figure 6.7 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Siddheshwar Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V)

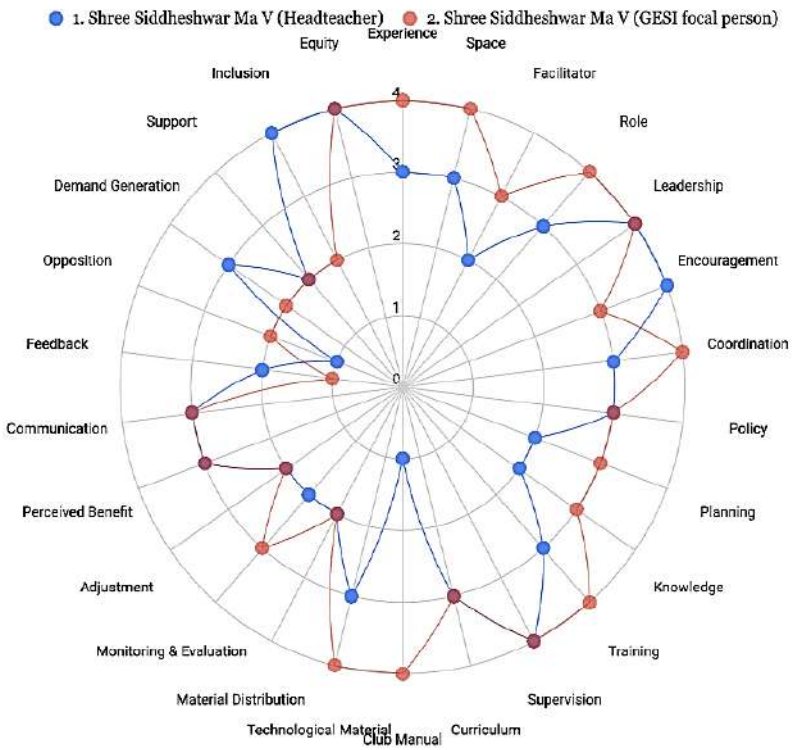


Figure 6.8 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Panchakanya Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V)

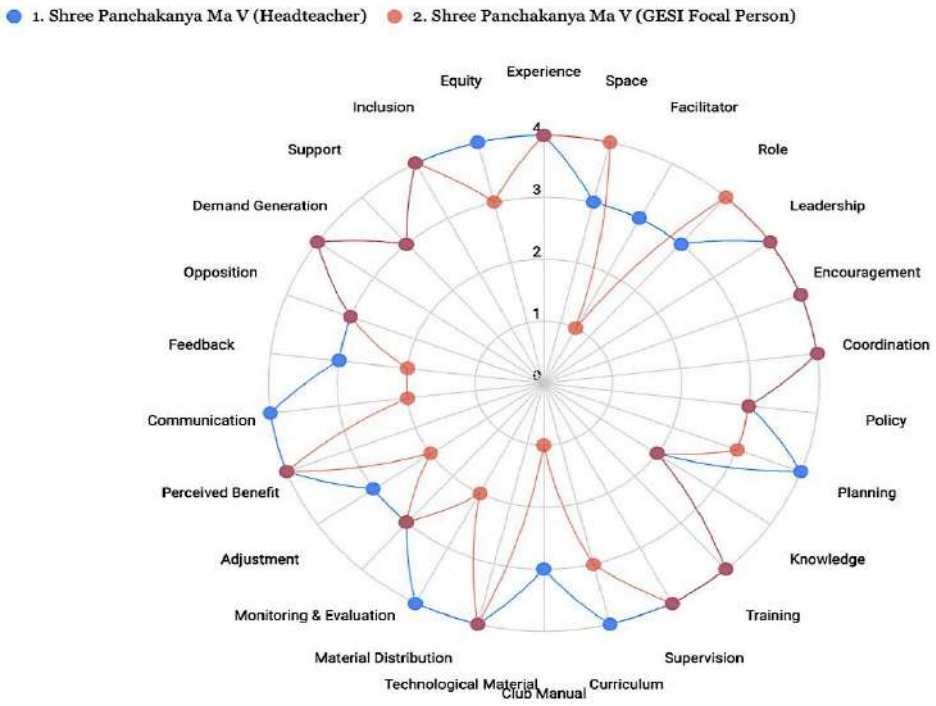


Figure 6.9 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Janakalyan Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma. V)

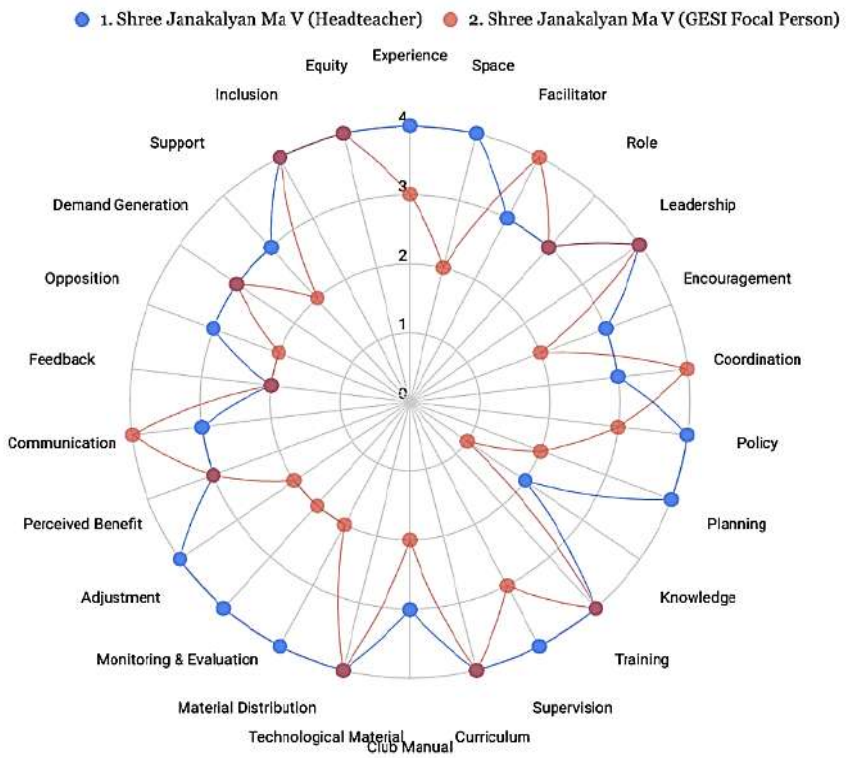


Figure 6.10 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Saraswati Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V)

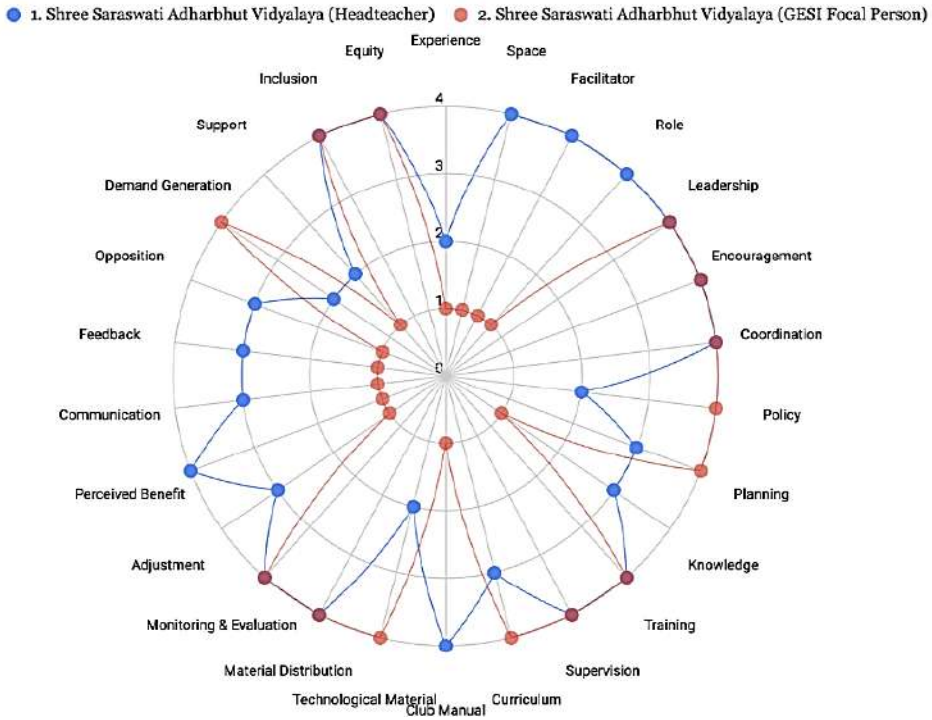


Figure 6.11 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Janasewa Adharbhut Vidyalaya (Aa.V)

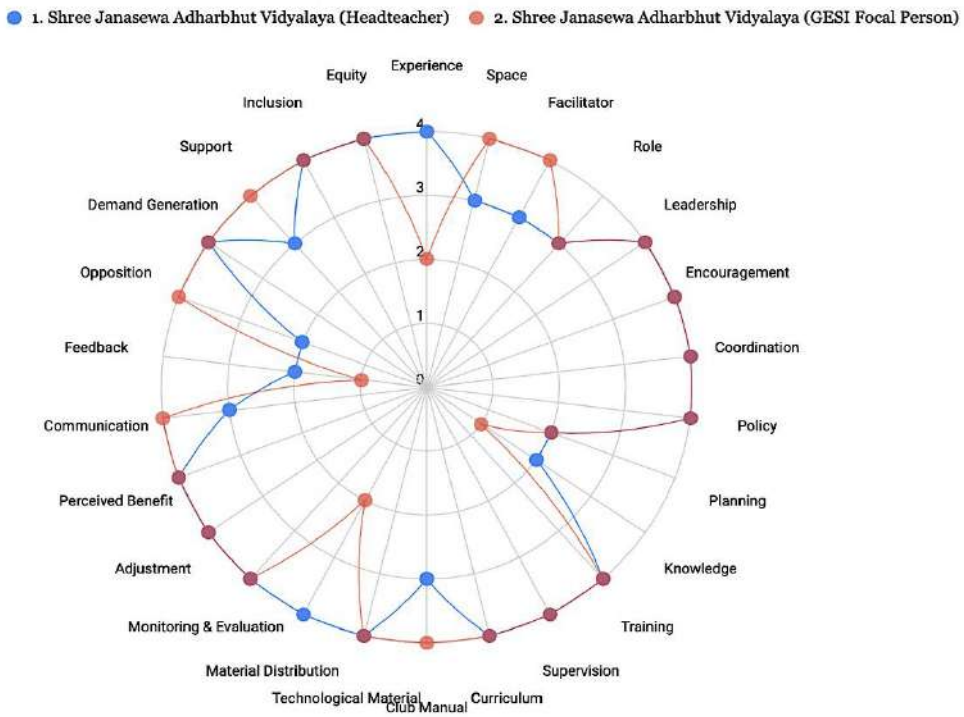


Figure 6.12 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Singhadevi Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Ma.V)

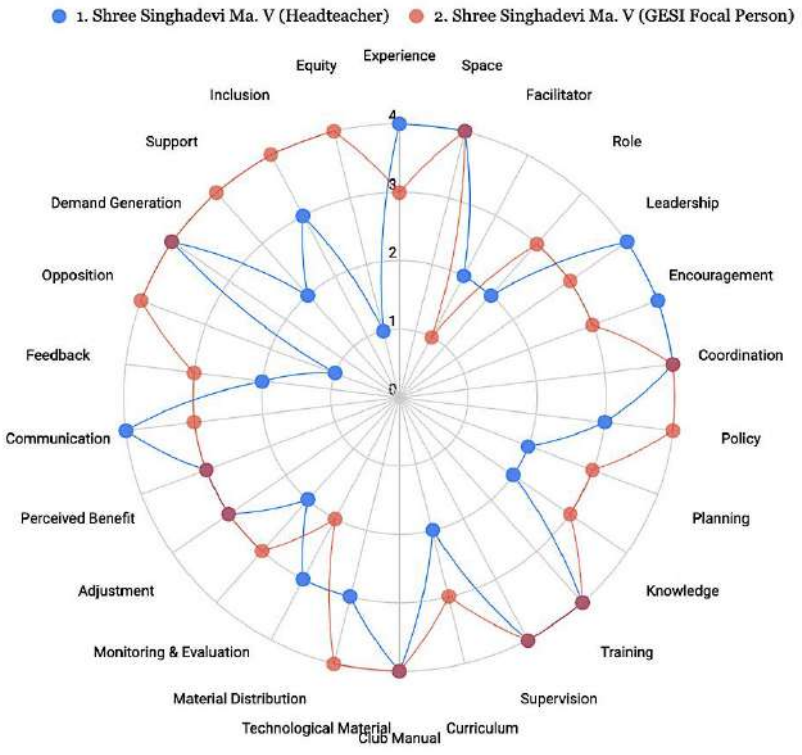
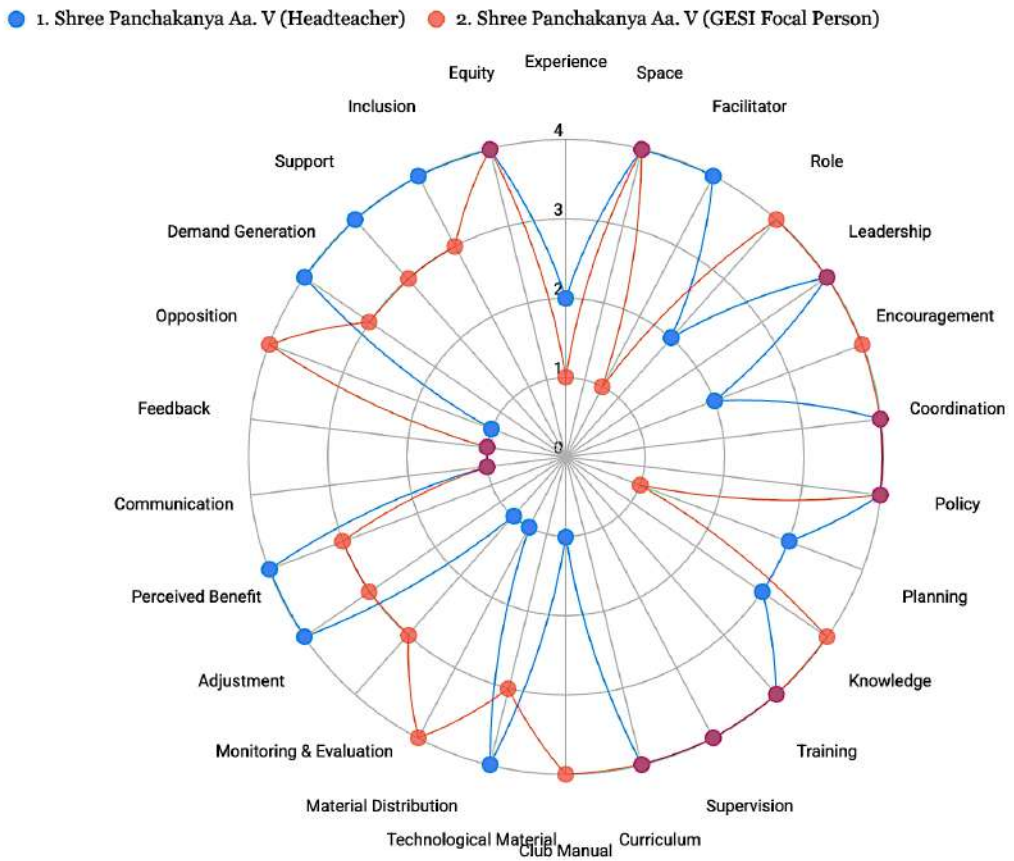


Figure 6.13 Radar graph showing the institutional readiness score of Shree Panchakanya Aadarbhut Vidyalaya (Aa. V)



Annex 7

Pictures from the field

During data collection at one of the community schools for the structured interview with students

LEARNING, INNOVATION & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARTS

Funded by:

GPE KIX KNOWLEDGE INNOVATION EXCHANGE

IDRC · CRDI Canada

LEARNING, INNOVATION & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE LiKE Lab