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Pedagogy under Power: Unpacking Pedagogical Practice during the Rana Regime in Nepal

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Abstract

Despite the historical significance of the Rana period in shaping the foundations of formal education in Nepal, scholarly inquiry into its educational system and pedagogical practices remains remarkably limited. In particular, there is a notable absence of systematic research on the pedagogical practices of that era. The Rana rulers were largely opposed to extending educational opportunities to the general populace. Nevertheless, critical milestones in the development of Nepal's modern education system were established during this time. The founding of Durbar High School - the nation's first school - and Tri-Chandra College - the first institution of higher education - both occurred under Rana rule. Furthermore, several other important educational initiatives were introduced during this period. However, despite these developments, the pedagogical practices adopted during the Rana regime have not been adequately investigated. In light of this gap, the major aim of this study is to explore and analyze the pedagogical practices of the Rana era in Nepal. This qualitative study examines educational developments during Nepal's Rana regime through a comprehensive analysis of secondary sources. It draws on key policy documents, including the NNEPC (1956) and ARNEC (1961) reports, along with scholarly works. Relevant materials were selected using purposive sampling to ensure contextual relevance. Data analysis followed combining inductive theme generation with deductive validation against existing theories. Themes were organized in alignment with policy documents to ensure clarity and credibility and all findings were cross-checked for consistency. Essential content from Nepali texts was translated into English where required. This study demonstrates that Nepal's education system during that period was significantly influenced by the British education system prevalent in India. As a result, Nepal's curriculum, instructional content, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methods closely mirrored those of the foreign model. Furthermore, the study highlights that the Rana-era education system deliberately excluded political, social, and economic subjects relevant to Nepal, prioritizing instead the teaching of foreign content. Likewise, the teaching-learning processes, student evaluation mechanisms, and school financial management were profoundly shaped by external influences.

Keywords: Pedagogical practices, curriculum, contents, instructional materials, assessments procedures

Background of the Study

The Rana rule in Nepal is widely recognized as authoritarian, autocratic, and oppressive. However, during this period, several foundations of education took place. Notably, the Durbar School, the first formal school in Nepal, was established in 1910 during primership of Jung Bahadur Rana, exclusively for the education of Rana family members. At the same time, Tri-Chandra College, Nepal's first higher education institution, was also established during this period. To systematize education, the Department of Education (DOE) was established, with the position of Director General (DG) reserved exclusively for members of the Rana family (Adhikari, 2021). Furthermore, the Ranas introduced elements of British-style education, which they had encountered in colonial India, into the Nepali education system. While these educational initiatives were significant, they were largely undertaken out of necessity and self-interest, rather than a genuine commitment to public educational advancement. Wright (1877) describes the educational scene in the following words:

> *The subject of schools and college in Nepal may be treated as that of snakes in the Ireland. There are none. Sir Jung Bahadur and some of the wealthier classes have tutors, either Europeans or Bengali Baboos to teach their children English; but there is no public provision for education of any sort. Every man teaches his own children, or employs the family priest of Pandit for the purpose. The lower classes are simply without education of any kind whatever.*

This striking observation encapsulates the educational landscape during the Rana period and serves as a critical reference point for understanding the Ranas' educational policy. Their approach to public education can be broadly summarized in two key principles: they were supportive of adopting the English education system exclusively for their own children, and they were fundamentally opposed to the notion of universal education for the general population (Adhikari, 2021). Although the Ranas accepted the English system of education, they remained fundamentally opposed to the concept of mass education. They systematically suppressed all genuine efforts aimed at educating the general populace, regardless of their origin (Adhikari, 1984). This resistance to public education was deeply rooted in the preservation of clan interests, and any individual - regardless of status - who voiced progressive views concerning the welfare of the people faced severe consequences, including execution, exile, or imprisonment (Adhikari, 2021; Acharya, 1958). The severity of this repression is underscored by the fact that even three Rana prime ministers suffered persecution for such views - one was assassinated, and two were exiled to India. As a result of this exclusionary policy, education encountered increasing governmental resistance, and whatever limited educational initiatives were undertaken primarily served the children of the Rana family, followed by a select group of non-Ranas who demonstrated unwavering loyalty to the regime (Aryal, 1970).

Nepal experienced a prolonged period of intellectual stagnation during the Rana regime, which lasted from 1846 to 1950. The Ranas maintained the belief that their autocratic rule could be sustained as long as the populace remained uninformed and

submissive to their authority. In this context, education was perceived as a potential threat to the stability of their regime (Sharma, 1984). Consequently, Rana policy was deliberately designed to preserve public ignorance and enforce national isolation (Aryal, 1970: Kumar, 1991). The Ranas viewed public education as a destabilizing force that could undermine their control. Professor Aryal, a prominent Nepali educationist, noted that educational development during the Rana era was severely constrained due to two primary factors: first, a general failure to acknowledge the importance and utility of education; and second, a prevailing fear that education might incite dissent against the regime (Baral, 2011; Kumar, 1967; Aryal, 1970). This widespread resistance to education significantly limited opportunities for higher learning, with only a small number of Nepalese managing to attain advanced qualifications. A 1948 government report revealed that merely 7 individuals had obtained college or graduate degrees, 48 held undergraduate degrees, and 14 had completed Sanskrit studies (Adhikari, 2021; Reed & Reed, 1968).

Due to the Ranas' resistance to public education, the foundations for state-controlled schooling were laid during their rule. In 1875, for the first time in Nepal's history, a Rana general was appointed as the Director of Education, marking the beginning of centralized oversight in the education sector (Shaha, R. 1996). The establishment of Durbar School in 1883 - presently known as Bhanu Madhyamik Vidyalaya - signified the formal introduction of Western-style education in Nepal. However, access to this institution was strictly limited to the children of the Rana aristocracy and their close associates (Upraity, 1962). Despite the prevailing educational restrictions, Trichandra College was founded in 1918 in Kathmandu, becoming the first institution of higher education in the country. It adhered to the academic standards of Patna University in India, which was responsible for conducting examinations and conferring academic qualifications (Liechty, 1997). Until 1950, Trichandra College remained Nepal's sole higher education institution, apart from the Sanskrit College established later in 1948. Unlike Trichandra, the Sanskrit College followed the curriculum set by Banaras Hindu University in India. The early 1940s saw growing political agitation aimed at dismantling the hereditary Rana oligarchy, which in turn led to increased neglect and resistance toward educational advancement. Nevertheless, in 1948, the Rana regime made its first formal move toward founding a national university (Adhikari, 2021; Shah, 2020). A significant meeting convened in August of that year at Trichandra College - chaired by the Director General of Public Instruction - resulted in the formation of a 25-member high-level commission tasked with drafting a comprehensive plan for the proposed university (Sharma, 1987; Sharma, 1990).

The University Commission, established by the Rana government in 1948, held a series of meetings to deliberate on the structure and vision of the proposed national university. Key issues discussed included the type of university to be established, the subjects to be offered, the medium of instruction and examination, the possibility of coeducation, institutional organization, and the promotion of research (Caddell, 2007). In April 1949, the Commission appointed subject-specific conveners to begin drafting curricula for various academic disciplines (Sharma, 1980; Baral, 1983). However, the political transformation that followed the end of Rana rule in 1951 led to the informal dissolution of the Commission, effectively halting progress on the university's establishment.

Despite the Ranas' deliberate efforts to restrict public access to education, several noteworthy developments in the educational sector occurred between 1846 and 1950. Influenced by British educational practices, the Ranas established institutions such as Durbar High School in 1883 and Trichandra College in 1918. However, these institutions primarily served the children of the Rana family and their close associates, reinforcing the regime's exclusivist approach to education. Significant educational milestones during the Rana era included the founding of Durbar High School in 1883 to provide Western-style education to members of the ruling elite (Vir, 1988). In 1918, Trichandra College was established as Nepal's first post-secondary institution, following a British-inspired curriculum (Adhikari, 2021; Wood, 1965). A Directorate of Education was also formed to supervise and regulate the country's educational activities. In 1938, the Rana Prime Minister issued an Education Code that allowed the establishment of private schools, though under strict limitations. In 1948, the Ranas took a major step by forming a 25-member high-level commission to develop a comprehensive plan for a national university (Sharma, 1987). That same year, Sanskrit College was founded, offering education rooted in traditional Indian curricula. By the end of Rana rule in 1951, the country had 310 primary and middle schools, 11 high schools, 40 religious institutions, one teacher training center, two technical schools, and two colleges (Sharma, 1987). These developments, though constrained by the Ranas' political motives, laid the groundwork for future educational reform in Nepal.

Methods and Materials

This study employs a qualitative research design and is informed by a comprehensive analysis of secondary sources (Wolfinger, 2002), related to educational developments during Nepal's Rana regime. It is anchored in key historical policy documents, notably the reports of the Nepal National Education Planning Commission, 1956 and the All-Round National Education Committee, 1961. Additionally, the study integrates scholarly literature, including academic books and peer-reviewed research articles authored by prominent educationists. Relevant educational documents, theoretical texts, and analytical works were purposefully selected through purposive sampling to ensure contextual depth and alignment with the study's objectives (Patton, 2015). In the analysis of educational documents, texts, and scholarly articles, this study adopted the analytical approach proposed by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), which integrates both inductive reasoning - deriving themes from the data - and deductive reasoning - validating findings against existing theoretical frameworks (Nowell et al., 2017; Creswell, 2015). The researchers began by drawing on established theories from prior studies as an analytical foundation, followed by a meticulous examination of the documents to extract key concepts and recurring patterns (Glesne, 2011). The emergent insights were then systematically categorized into thematic domains that aligned with relevant policy documents (Merriam, & Tisdell, 2015), thereby enhancing the credibility, coherence, and interpretive clarity of the findings (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Each theme and sub-themes were rigorously cross-checked to ensure fidelity to the original sources (Patton, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017). Where documents were available only in Nepali, essential information was translated into English to support comprehensive analysis. Table 1: Summaries the major reports and scholarly work reviewed and their pedagogical practices concerns.

Table 1: Summaries the major policies reviewed and their pedagogical practices

Author	Title
NNEPC (1956)	Report of the commission or education in Nepal
ARNEC (1961)	Report of the commission
Singh (2013)	Ph D thesis
Adhikari (2021)	Education during the Rana Period
Shah (2020)	Pedagogical reform at primary schools in Nepal: Examining the child centered-teaching

Results and Discussion

A thematic content analysis was used to explore educational documents related to the Rana oligarchy. This analytical approach focuses on identifying, categorizing, and interpreting recurring themes and patterns within the information to generate evidence-based conclusions (Walling, Shapiro, J. & Ast, T. (2013). The study was underpinned by a conceptual framework derived from scholarly literature, including education commission reports, scholarly books and research articles addressing education during the Rana era. A comprehensive and systematic review of the documents led to the identification of several critical themes (Glesne, 2011): goals and objectives of education, curriculum, content, classroom delivery, teaching learning materials, instruction, assessment practices, financing of education, and physical infrastructure (Saldana, 2021). Consequently, the findings have been organized thematically according to these fundamental dimensions. To enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the analysis, efforts were made to ensure coherence with the documents. Each thematic category, including all headings and subheadings, was meticulously reviewed (Patton, 2015). Furthermore, the original documents were re-examined in detail to confirm the accuracy and relevance of the identified themes (Merriam, & Tisdell, 2015). The subsequent sections present the findings of this analysis in a structured and thematic manner.

Educational Landscape during the Rana Oligarchy

Prior to the return of Jung Bahadur Rana from the United Kingdom, the Gurukul system constituted the primary mode of education in Nepal (Landon, 1976). It was customary for students to receive instruction either at the teacher's residence or at a designated learning site. Over time, however, this traditional system gradually declined (Adhikari, 2021; Ragsdale, 1989; Aryal, 1977). The Rana regime marked the beginning of formal or modern education in Nepal, establishing foundational structures that, in many respects, persist to this day (Mitchell, 1976). Following the political change of 1951, two key promises were made: the provision of free education and a commitment to comprehensive educational reform. Yet, even after more than seven decades, these aspirations remain largely unfulfilled in practice (Jha, 1987).

It is widely believed that Nepal's first English-medium school, established in 1854, would not have materialized had Jung Bahadur Rana not visited the United Kingdom (Landon, 1928; Adhikari, 1984). That visit is credited with laying the groundwork for the introduction of modern, Western-style education in Nepal, as it provided Jung Bahadur Rana with direct exposure to the British education system (Hitchcock, 1980; NNEPC, 1956). However, the school - established on 10 January, 1854 at Dakhchowk, within the Thapathali Durbar premises - was not accessible to the general public. Its primary purpose was to educate the children of the Rana family, particularly in the English language (Acharya, 2022 BS). A few years after his return to Nepal, Jung

Bahadur also attempted to send his sons and nephews to the United Kingdom for further education, though these efforts proved unsuccessful (Gupta, 1964; Landon, 1928).

The autocratic regime of the Rana Dynasty (1846 -1951 AD) severely restricted access to education in Nepal. Education was largely limited to the descendants of the Rana family and the Royal family, who were permitted to attend the Palace School in Kathmandu and pursue higher education abroad (Acharya, 1972). Due to the Rana regime's opposition to public education, state control over schools was firmly established during their rule. In 1875, for the first time in Nepal's history, a Rana general was appointed as the Director of Education. The establishment of the Durbar School marked the introduction of Western-style education in Nepal; however, enrollment was exclusively limited to the children of the Rana family and their affiliates. Despite continued resistance from the Rana rulers, Trichandra College was founded in Kathmandu in 1918 as the country's first institution of higher education (Joshi, 1998; Leo, & Margaret, 1970). The college adopted the curriculum prescribed by Patna University in India, which also administered examinations and conferred certificates and diplomas. Until 1950, Trichandra College remained the sole higher education institution in Nepal, apart from the Sanskrit College, which was established later in 1948 (Shah, 2020; Adhikari, 2021; NEC, 1992; Sharma, 1980).

The Sanskrit College differed from Tri-chandra College in adhering to the curriculum prescribed by Banaras Hindu University in India. The early 1940s were characterized by political unrest in Nepal, marked by a movement aimed at overthrowing the hereditary Rana premiership. Consequently, educational activities were largely neglected and faced opposition during this phase of national development (Bhattarai, 1968). Nonetheless, in 1948, the Rana government made the first historic attempt to establish a national university in Nepal. In August 1948, a meeting was convened at Tri-chandra College, chaired by the Director General of Public Instruction, to initiate the organization of the proposed university. This meeting resulted in the formation of a high-level commission comprising 25 members tasked with preparing a comprehensive plan for the university's establishment (Sharma, 1987; Sharma, 1990).

The newly constituted commission for the proposed university convened multiple meetings to deliberate on various critical aspects, including the type of university to be established, the subjects to be offered, the medium of instruction and examination, coeducation, organizational structure, and research priorities. In April 1949, the University Commission held a session during which conveners were appointed to draft curricula for the respective subject areas (Bista, 1991; Sharma, 1980; Baral, 1983). However, a change in government in 1951 led to the informal dissolution of the University Commission, which had originally been appointed by the Rana regime in 1948, thereby temporarily delaying the establishment of a national university. Despite the deliberate restrictions imposed by the Rana regime, Nepal experienced significant educational developments between 1846 and 1950 (Adhikari, 2021; Acharya, 1965). Influenced by British colonial education systems in India, the Ranas sought to educate their own families by introducing Western-style institutions. In 1883, they established Durbar High School to provide English education to the children of Rana elites and their associates. This was followed by the founding of Trichandra College in 1918, the first higher education institution in Nepal, which

similarly aimed to offer post-secondary Western education to members of the ruling class (Baral, 1977; Bhandari, 1968).

Several landmark developments during this period reflected a gradual expansion of educational infrastructure, albeit within a restricted and elite-focused framework (Acharya, 1958; Baral, 1977). These included the establishment of a Directorate of Education to oversee and regulate academic affairs across the country and the promulgation of the 1938 Education Code by the Rana Prime Minister, which conditionally permitted the establishment of private schools. In 1948, a high-level commission comprising 25 members was formed to design a comprehensive plan for the establishment of a national university. The same year also saw the foundation of a Sanskrit College, marking an effort to preserve traditional scholarship alongside the expansion of Western education. By the time the Rana regime came to an end in 1951, the country's educational system had expanded to include 310 primary and middle schools, 11 high schools, 40 religious schools, one teacher training center, two technical schools, and two colleges. Although access to education remained limited to the elite class, these developments provided the initial structural foundation for a more inclusive and diversified educational system in the post-Rana era.

Curriculum of School Education

During the Rana regime, the curriculum implemented in Nepal closely followed that of British India. Durbar High School, in particular, adopted the course of study then prevalent in Indian schools. This curriculum included subjects such as English Language, Vernacular Nepali, Sanskrit, Arithmetic, History, Geography, and Drawing. Among these, History and Geography were categorized as Social Sciences (Maskey, 1996). This indicates that Social Sciences were formally introduced into primary education as early as 1854. From the inception of Nepal's formal education system, therefore, Social Sciences have held a significant position within the primary curriculum (Amatya, 2004). Meanwhile, Sanskrit schools that operated during the Rana period primarily served religious purposes, focusing on classical education rooted in Hindu scriptures. In addition, Bhasha Pathsala - schools specializing in the Nepali language - were established to equip students with clerical skills necessary for administrative roles within the Rana bureaucracy (Bista, 1994).

The English-style education system adopted in Nepal during the Rana period was modeled after the British educational framework established in colonial India. This system was accredited based on the standards of the Oxford and Cambridge examinations. The curriculum was directly influenced by this model and comprised subjects such as English, Mathematics, History, and Geography (Adhikari, 2021). As Bista (1994) noted, "While Nepali and Sanskrit were taught, little else of Nepal was introduced. The history or geography that was taught was confined to that of the British Isles and India." Textbooks remained largely unchanged over extended periods. For instance, the Grade 2 textbook *First Book of Reading*, authored by Peary Charan Sarkar, remained in use for approximately 70 years. Similarly, *Sanskrit Grammar* by Bhandarkar, *Algebra* by K. P. Basu, and *Arithmetic* by Jadav Chandra Chakravarti were used consistently across generations of students (Sharma, 2005).

Basic schools, inspired by the educational philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, placed particular emphasis on rural vocational training. The teacher qualification

requirements were tiered according to grade levels: completion of the Entrance Examination was required to teach up to Grade VI, an Intermediate of Arts (I.A.) degree to teach up to Grade VII, and a Bachelor's degree to teach Grades VIII to X. Durbar High School did not impose any age restrictions for enrollment, which allowed both children and youth to attend. However, in cases of academic failure, older students often dropped out, whereas younger students typically repeated the class (Sharma, 2005).

Aim and Objectives of the Education.

During the Rana period in Nepal, educational objectives varied according to the type of institution. Sanskrit schools were primarily oriented towards imparting traditional religious knowledge and skills. In contrast, *Bhasha Pathsala* institutions were designed to cultivate clerical competencies necessary for administrative service. English-medium schools, on the other hand, aimed to develop foundational literacy, particularly in reading, writing, and oral communication in English (Bista, 1994).

More broadly, the national education system of the time lacked clearly defined and contextually grounded aims. Curriculum design and textbook selection appeared arbitrary, with minimal consideration for the nation's socio-economic conditions or developmental priorities. In British India, by contrast, the introduction of Western education served specific colonial objectives - namely, to produce a class of administrative clerks and to reshape the traditional worldview of Indian society - objectives which ultimately supported British imperial interests (Baral, 1983).

These colonial goals, however, held little relevance in the Nepalese context. Nepal did not require a large cadre of low-wage clerical personnel, nor was there a strategic imperative to inculcate Western cultural norms among its population. Nevertheless, the pervasive influence of British India - culturally, politically, and educationally - extended into Nepal. The Rana rulers, who maintained close and favorable relations with the British, consciously adopted the Western model of education. Consequently, Nepal's curriculum during this period was largely transplanted from British India and bore minimal reflection of the country's indigenous culture, historical experience, or national identity (Aryal, 1970).

Prescribed Books

The curriculum implemented in *Bhasha Pathsala* (language schools) was confined to foundational instruction in arithmetic, Sanskrit, and the Nepali language. In contrast, the middle school curriculum was comparatively broader, incorporating subjects such as English, history, and geography. Notably, at Durbar High School, the inclusion of Nepalese history and geography was expressly prohibited. Instead, the instruction focused on the history and geography of India and the United Kingdom (Adhikari, 2021). This deliberate omission appears to have been motivated by the Rana regime's apprehension that fostering awareness of Nepal's national history and geography might cultivate political consciousness and encourage dissent against their autocratic rule. English was systematically introduced from Grade One through Grade Ten at Durbar High School. The instructional foundation was laid with *First Book of Reading* by P. C. Sarkar, a text employed to teach both elementary English and mathematics (Maskey, 1996). The school itself supplied textbooks to students, primarily due to its academic affiliation with the University of Calcutta. As a result, the prescribed texts

and curriculum were aligned with the standards and educational frameworks prevalent in secondary schools under the jurisdiction of that university (Singh, 2012; Shah, 2020).

During the 1924/1925 academic year, the officially prescribed textbooks comprised *First Book of Reading* by Peary Charan Sarkar, *Algebra* by K.P. Basu, *Arithmetic* by J.C. Chakravarti, *Grammar* by Nesfield, *Composition* by P. C. Wren, *History* by Vincent Smith, and *Geography* by Dudley Stamp (Lohani, 1988). Of these, the sole textbook available in the Nepali language was *Nepali Teshro* (Part III), whereas the remainder were published in either Hindi or English. This multilingual environment presented considerable difficulties for Nepali students, who were expected to acquire proficiency in two foreign languages simultaneously. Instruction in the Nepali language during this period was largely nominal and lacked substantive depth. As Durbar High School functioned as an English-medium institution, the Nepali language was accorded minimal academic importance. Consequently, both Nepali and Sanskrit were regarded as lacking prestige and were often marginalized as secondary or less esteemed disciplines within the formal educational framework (Maskey, 1996).

Curricular Content

The curriculum implemented at Durbar High School was largely modeled after foreign systems of education, with a particular emphasis on British frameworks. This externally influenced structure reinforced socio-political stratification by aligning educational access and content with the interests of the ruling elite (Hedrick, & Hedrick, 1972). As Bista (1991) highlights, the educational system not only mirrored the entrenched social hierarchies of the time but also actively sustained them by granting the aristocracy privileged access to Western-oriented knowledge, while systematically marginalizing the broader population from substantive educational engagement.

As Bista (1991) notes:

> *While Nepali language and Sanskrit were taught, little else of Nepal was introduced. The history or geography that was taught was confined to that of the British Isles and India, a practice that was to instill a sense of inferiority and ineffectiveness of things Nepali and a debasement of the ethnic heritage of the different Nepali peoples.* (p.119)

By 1920, the curriculum at Durbar High School encompassed subjects such as the history of India and Britain, excerpts from English literature - including Wordsworth's *Lucy Gray* - and general world geography (Liechty, 1997; Onta, 1997). Conspicuously lacking, however, was any intentional effort to foster an informed academic consciousness of Nepal's own historical and geographical identity as a sovereign nation (Onta, 1997).

Although Prime Minister Dev Shamsher introduced a forward - looking reform by launching *Aksharanka Siksha* - the first Nepali language primer published and distributed at the state's expense - this initiative was later discontinued under the administration of Chandra Shamsher (Acharya, 1957). It was not until the cultural advocacy of influential intellectuals such as Balakrishna Sama that the Nepali

language and its literary heritage were formally integrated into the national school curriculum. Among the various components of the education system, curriculum formulation and textbook development experienced notable transformation, particularly as the state sought to reconcile diverse socio-political priorities. During the initial stages of formal education in Nepal, however, curricular content remained predominantly influenced by British educational frameworks.

Classroom Pedagogy

During this period, instructional practices in schools were characterized by a one-room, one-teacher model in which a single instructor was responsible for delivering all subjects to a heterogeneous group of students spanning multiple age groups and grade levels. The content and structure of instruction were predominantly shaped by the teacher's own knowledge base, which effectively served as the de facto curriculum for the classroom. Teachers were commonly associated with disciplinary authority, symbolized by the presence of a cane, and corporal punishment was a routine response to academic failure or incomplete assignments. Pedagogical methods were primarily based on rote memorization. Students were expected to recite alphabets, numerical sequences, multiplication tables, vocabulary, poems, stories, grammatical rules, and word lists through repetitive oral drills (Sharma, 1980). Reading activities often involved students pointing to text in their notebooks or textbooks while reciting aloud; however, this frequently resulted in a disconnect between what was read and what was indicated, as memorization often supplanted actual reading comprehension. Progression to new material was contingent upon the complete memorization and oral reproduction of the previous lesson. In early literacy development, teachers sometimes physically guided students' hands to assist in forming letters and words (Singh, 2012; Shah, 2020).

The instructional environment of the time was predominantly monotonous, lacking elements of creativity, engagement, or learner-centered interaction. This pedagogical rigidity significantly contributed to elevated student attrition rates. Teaching methods were primarily reliant on the translation approach, often requiring learners to translate complex sentences between English and Nepali. Classroom practices were dominated by repetitive tasks such as reading aloud, rote recitation, handwriting drills, and memorization of vocabulary, all of which consumed the bulk of instructional time.

According to the 1956 report of the Nepal National Educational Planning Commission (NNEPC), operating under the auspices of the College of Education, the curriculum in effect during this period was narrowly academic in orientation. It lacked responsiveness to the diverse intellectual and developmental needs of learners, particularly those unable to adapt to highly rigid, memory-intensive instruction. Pedagogical strategies emphasized rote learning, repetitive drilling, and didactic lecturing - approaches that favored students with extraordinary memorization abilities. Those without such cognitive advantages frequently struggled to meet academic expectations and ultimately disengaged from schooling (Aryal, 1970). Compounding these issues was a chronic scarcity of teaching aids and instructional resources, which further limited teachers' capacity to employ dynamic or differentiated pedagogical techniques.

During this period, instructional practices predominantly relied on the lecture method, with a clear emphasis on teacher-centered learning. The role of students in the educational process was minimal, as they were largely passive recipients rather than active participants. Knowledge was primarily conveyed orally, with teachers reading aloud and students memorizing and reciting content. Early instructional materials focused mainly on religious texts, basic alphabets, numbers, and multiplication tables (Sharma, 1990). Access to textbooks was extremely limited, with only a few students benefiting from books imported from India. There was no formalized curriculum or standardized textbooks in place; consequently, teachers held considerable autonomy over instructional decisions, including content selection, teaching methods, and student assessment (Shakya, 1977). Lessons were assigned sequentially, with students expected to memorize and reproduce the material before proceeding to the next topic. Promotion to subsequent grades was determined by the teacher's judgment of a student's memorization and recitation performance. It was only with the establishment of Durbar School that prescribed textbooks began to be introduced, while systematic curriculum development occurred only after the democratic movement.

The introduction of modern education in Nepal brought forth new teaching methodologies; however, religious education remained predominant during the Rana era. The 1956 report by the Nepal National Education Planning Commission characterized the curriculum as predominantly academic, posing significant challenges for many academically capable students who struggled to thrive within its rigid structure (Acharya, 2002; Shah, 2020; Singh, 2012). Instructional practices were largely focused on rote memorization and teacher-centered lectures, which disadvantaged students lacking exceptional memorization abilities and contributed to high dropout rates.

Instructional Materials

Instructional materials - alternatively known as teaching and learning materials - encompass a wide array of resources, including animate and inanimate objects, as well as human and non-human components, employed by educators to enhance the teaching and learning process. These materials are instrumental in concretizing abstract concepts, thereby making learning experiences more engaging, meaningful, and interactive for students. As integral components of instructional strategies, they contribute significantly to the facilitation of active learning and the implementation of effective assessment practices. Broadly, the term refers to all tangible and intangible resources utilized by instructors to deliver content and support students in achieving specific learning objectives. During the Rana regime in Nepal, the educational system was overwhelmingly dependent on textbooks, which remained largely static and unrevised over prolonged periods (Aryal, 1970). These textbooks, along with the teachers, constituted the principal - often exclusive - sources of knowledge for students. The absence of supplementary instructional materials, such as visual aids, charts, and other pedagogical tools, significantly constrained the depth and variety of the learning experience.

A significant number of classrooms during this period lacked even the most fundamental instructional facilities; for example, chalkboards were missing in most schools. As a result, both teachers and students were frequently obliged to write

directly on dusty floors to convey lessons or practice writing. This pronounced deficiency in educational resources severely compromised the quality, interactivity, and overall effectiveness of classroom teaching and learning (NNEPC, 1956).

Medium of Instruction

The term medium of instruction refers to the language used to deliver educational content in formal settings. This language may or may not coincide with the official language of a particular country or region. In contexts where students' first language differs from the official language, their mother tongue may be used either partially or entirely throughout their education (Cavenagh, 1851). At Durbar School, the medium of instruction varied across sections: English and Sanskrit were used in the Sanskrit Pathsala, while Nepali was the language of instruction in the Bhasha Pathsala. Over time, both Nepali and Sanskrit were further integrated into the curriculum. Nepali was increasingly recognized for its administrative relevance, whereas Sanskrit was valued for its religious and cultural significance (Sharma, 2012). During the rule of Dev Shumsher, discussions were held regarding the most suitable form of education in Nepal and the appropriate language of instruction - whether English, Sanskrit, or Nepali. However, a clear consensus on this matter was not achieved.

Jaya Prithvi Bahadur Singh, a distinguished youth leader and progressive thinker of his time, was a strong proponent of using the Nepali language as the medium of instruction in schools (Adhikari, 2021; Shah, 2020). He believed that education in the mother tongue was essential for cultivating a sense of national identity and unity among the people. In line with this belief, he developed a foundational Nepali language textbook titled *Achhyarank Shikshya*. This primer was distributed to students free of charge, reflecting his commitment to accessible and inclusive education rooted in the national language (Shah, 2020).

In 1945, Prime Minister Padma Shumsher further advanced this linguistic and educational reform. He openly declared Sanskrit a "dead language," arguing that it was no longer relevant for contemporary educational needs (Adhikari, 2021; Manandhar, 1986). Emphasizing the importance of practical and culturally resonant instruction, he advocated for teaching and learning to take place in students' mother tongues. This marked a significant shift in educational policy, aligning with broader efforts to modernize Nepal's education system and strengthen national cohesion through language (Sharma, 2015).

Physical Infrastructure of Schools

Physical infrastructure encompasses the availability, quality, and distribution of public facilities, including their number, the resources and amenities they offer, and the appropriate composition of facility types to address the needs of the population. In the context of education, school infrastructure refers to the physical environment in which learning takes place. This includes school buildings, essential facilities such as sanitation and hygiene services, potable water systems, electricity, necessary equipment, and designated open spaces, all typically enclosed within a secure perimeter (Singh, 2012).

The establishment of Durbar School in 1853 AD by Jung Bahadur Rana marked the introduction of modern, English-style education in Nepal. For the first thirty-eight

years after its founding, the school operated without a permanent building. It was relocated multiple times within Rana palaces, where temporary spaces were allocated for instructional purposes (Shah, 19910c; Rose, & Scholz, 1980). Following the death of Jung Bahadur, the school was housed in the Charburje Durbar premises, which is presently the location of the Election Commission. It was subsequently moved to Dhir Shumsher's residence and later to a limited space within the Narayanhiti Palace, where classes were conducted up to the tenth grade (Rose, & Fisher, 1970). During this period, children of Jagirdars also began to gain access to formal education through this institution.

In 1940 AD, the school was shifted to Dakhchowk in Thapathali. Later, in 1891, a dedicated school building was constructed on the western side of Ranipokhari. Durbar School operated on the upper floor of this new structure, while Ranipokhari School functioned on the ground floor (Shah, 19910b; Sharma, 2005). Despite this progress, only a few Sanskrit schools continued to operate, and no additional schools were established over the following four decades (Singh, 2012; Shah, 2020; Bista, 1994).

Before the advent of democracy in Nepal, the construction of school facilities was predominantly a government-led endeavor, albeit limited in scope. Following the establishment of democratic governance, the development of educational infrastructure became a more collaborative effort, incorporating both governmental agencies and local communities. In numerous instances, existing buildings were adapted for educational use in locations where dedicated school structures were unavailable. In 1901, Dev Shumsher Rana undertook a significant educational initiative by establishing approximately two hundred schools throughout Nepal. However, this progressive effort was abruptly curtailed when his brother, Chandra Shumsher Rana, mandated the closure of these institutions merely four months later. The Rana administration appeared cautious of broadening public access to education, concerned that an educated populace might pose a threat to their authoritarian governance (Shah, 19910a; Regmi, 1975; Regmi, 1950).

The educational infrastructure during this period remained largely inadequate. Where school buildings existed, they were often basic and insufficiently equipped, suffering from poor lighting and ventilation, limited instructional resources, and the use of floor seating. Instruction was typically delivered by a single teacher tasked with educating students of diverse ages and grade levels within one classroom. A notable advancement in public education was achieved with the opening of Durbar School to the wider public in 1957 BS.

The classroom serves as the fundamental component of a school's physical infrastructure. It is essential that each school provides a sufficient number of classrooms, each designed to create a welcoming and conducive learning environment. Walls should be painted in light, soothing colors and thoughtfully adorned to enhance the atmosphere. Educational materials such as charts and artwork ought to be displayed on the walls to stimulate student engagement. The front wall should be equipped with a blackboard positioned at an optimal height for visibility. Built-in storage units along the rear walls are necessary for organizing books, teaching supplies, craft materials, scientific equipment, maps, and other

instructional resources. Seating arrangements should be flexible to accommodate various activities simultaneously. Classrooms must be well-illuminated to ensure that students seated in all areas can clearly see both the teacher and the blackboard. Additionally, classrooms should be situated in locations that allow for adequate natural ventilation and lighting, especially in cases of power outages. These arrangements were lacked during rana regime.

The library is an integral part of a school's physical infrastructure and plays a vital role in supporting the learning process. It is a fundamental facility within any quality educational institution. The library should be strategically located in a quiet area to minimize distractions and provide an environment conducive to study and research. As a centralized repository of knowledge, the library is essential for both teachers and students. It should maintain a well-organized collection of resources, including textbooks, workbooks, reference materials, fiction and non-fiction books catering to various reading levels, as well as specialized publications on specific topics. Supplementary materials such as pamphlets, clippings, maps, charts, and periodicals should also be properly shelved to ensure easy accessibility and efficient utilization. But these facilities were not available.

Financing of School Education

Financing refers to the act or process of raising and providing funds for various purposes, including activities, purchases, or investments. Fundamentally, it involves securing the necessary monetary resources to support a particular need or objective. In the context of education, school finance is a comprehensive and dynamic field that encompasses three key functions related to resources: revenue generation, resource allocation, and resource utilization (Shah, 2020; Shrestha, 1981b). These functions collectively aim to facilitate educational opportunities and achieve desired educational outcomes (Adhikari, 2021; Shrestha, 1981c). These financial activities operate within a broader framework shaped by educational objectives and societal values, which influence the design and implementation of the finance system.

Education finance specifically pertains to the governmental and organizational mechanisms through which funds are generated - via taxation, tuition fees, donations, and other sources - allocated, and expended to support both the operational and capital needs of formal schooling (Shrestha, 1981a). Experts in economics, public finance, school finance, budgeting, management, accounting, education law, and intergovernmental relations typically engage in the field of education financing. This domain should not be viewed solely as a technical discipline confined to complex financial formulas and budget classifications. Instead, it fundamentally encompasses public policy considerations central to any society, including issues of equity, efficiency, and freedom of choice (Shakya, 1977). The references cited herein guide readers to seminal works that explore the functioning of education finance and the diverse challenges inherent to the field (Aryal, 1970). These sources have been selected for their comprehensive scope or for their pivotal role in shaping the general landscape or specific policy directions within the historical development of education financing (Shah, 2020).

Teachers' Remuneration

The emergence of teaching as a secular and professional occupation is closely tied to the development of the modern education system and the institutionalization of formal learning through schools, colleges, and universities. In the context of Nepal, such educational institutions began to take shape during the Rana regime. This era corresponded with the period in which the British East India Company had established colonial dominance over much of the Indian subcontinent. It was also the time when the British government adopted Macaulay's Minute, which became a foundational policy for the promotion of Western-style education in India (Shrestha, 1981c). This strategic shift led to the systematic introduction of Western educational models for the local population, which in turn contributed to the gradual expansion of modern education. Simultaneously, it marked the decline of traditional oriental educational institutions. The professionalization of teaching and the associated remuneration structures in Nepal evolved as part of this broader transformation in educational philosophy and institutional development.

Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana recognized the value of English education for his own children and consequently established a school within his palace premises in 1856. Initially, access to this institution was restricted exclusively to members of the Rana family and a select group of courtiers' children (Adhikari, 2021; Shrestha, 1981b). However, by 1900, the school was eventually opened to the general public. This institution is likely the first in Nepal to introduce a system in which teachers were employed on a regular monthly salary funded by the government, including the appointment of a few foreign educators. This model marked a significant departure from the traditional educational structure, where instruction was primarily delivered by Brahmin scholars, student enrollment was largely limited to Brahmins, and the functioning of such institutions relied on religious endowments (Shaha, 1996).

Historical records suggest that Mr. Rose, an English educator, accompanied Jung Bahadur Rana following his return from a visit to Britain in 1907. It is also plausible that Mr. Rose was initially appointed to provide training to Jung Bahadur's staff prior to transferring instructional responsibilities to them. During this period, the *Nijamati Thamauti* (civil service staff register) recorded the names of personnel, their postings, and the terms of their annual remuneration (Shrestha, 1982). However, Mr. Rose's name no longer appears in the *Thamauti* after 1910, indicating that the Nepalese government did not provide his salary. By contrast, records confirm that from 1916 onward, remuneration was formally issued to James Kenning, who served as the principal of the school. The source of Kenning's salary prior to that date, however, remains unclear.

During the tenure of Jung Bahadur Rana, two prominent Sanskrit schools operated under the leadership of Neeldev Pandit and Vachaspati Pandit. Neeldev Pandit received an annual salary of NPR 600, equivalent to NPR 50 per month, while Vachaspati Pandit was paid NPR 300 annually, or NPR 25 per month (Shrestha, 1981a). Students enrolled in these institutions were also provided financial support in the form of a monthly stipend of NPR 4, totaling NPR 48 per year. In addition to the Sanskrit educators, Haradhum Ghosh, a Bengali teacher, began instructing students in multiple subjects from the 8th of Poush 1910 BS and was remunerated at NPR 90 per month, amounting to NPR 1,080 annually. Similarly, Vyaram Ghosh, another

instructor, was appointed to teach Chinese and received an annual salary of NPR 840, or NPR 30 per month (Shrestha, 1981b).

By 1924, a new educational institution was established where both Neeldev and Vachaspati continued their teaching responsibilities. Records from *Nijamati Thamauti* indicate that a total of NPR 1,884 was allocated to cover the salaries of the two teachers and the stipends for the enrolled students. Moreover, a royal decree (*Sanad*) issued on the 10th of Poush, 1976 BS (December 1919 AD), formalized salary provisions for four teachers and one support staff member (Aryal, 1970).

Table 2: Salary of School Teachers 1976 BS

S. N.	Teachers	Yearly Grants (NPR)
1.	Teacher for Ain	Rs. 600
2.	Teacher for Shresta	Rs. 550
3.	Teacher for Ain	Rs. 450
4.	Teacher for Mathematics	Rs. 400
6.	Peon	Rs. 048

Government Involvement in the Financing of Education

The formal involvement of the Nepalese government in the financing of education began during the premiership of Dev Shamsher around 1900-1901. During this period, approximately one hundred *Bhasa Pathasalas* (vernacular language schools) were established under state initiative. The government was directly responsible for appointing teachers in these institutions, and their salaries were disbursed from the national treasury, marking an important step toward state-sponsored education. Following this development, a limited number of English-medium schools and a single English college were also founded by the government. These institutions were entirely financed by state resources. This expansion reflected the state's recognition of the growing need for formal education in both vernacular and English mediums (Shah, 1990c).

The increasing public demand for broader educational access prompted the Rana regime to enact an Education Ordinance in 1940. This ordinance signaled a significant policy shift by introducing the principle of partial government responsibility in financing schools established by local communities. Notably, it institutionalized the *Grants-in-Aid* system, under which public schools could receive financial assistance from the government. By the end of the Rana rule in 1951, Nepal's school system had evolved into a diverse financial structure. Schools operated under four primary funding models: (i) fully government-supported English schools and *Bhasa Pathasalas*, (ii) Sanskrit schools entirely funded through religious trusts, (iii) community-established public schools receiving partial government aid, and (iv) English-medium schools supported by public contributions (Sharma, 1980; Sharma, 1987).

Between 1846 and 1950, significant developments transpired that profoundly influenced the financing of Universal Compulsory Free Primary (UCFP) education in the following decades. Two pivotal concepts emerged during this period: (i) the recognition of state responsibility for education, and (ii) the establishment of state-local partnerships to facilitate the expansion of educational opportunities. Notably,

the acknowledgment of state responsibility was initially reluctant. Traditionally, education was not viewed as a direct obligation of the government in Nepal. However, the Rana regime, apprehensive that swift educational advancements might undermine their authority, exercised stringent oversight over all aspects of educational development. Even minor operational decisions within educational institutions required explicit government approval (Sharma, 1990).

During this period, the administration of education was characterized by a high degree of centralization. Due to the limited number of schools and colleges, the government assumed full financial responsibility for their operation. The Rana regime, aiming to retain control over the educational sector, instituted a policy of providing free education in government-operated schools and colleges (Shah, 1990a). Furthermore, a limited number of scholarships were awarded to students pursuing studies abroad. Nevertheless, these efforts were modest in comparison to the total government expenditure, and educational facilities remained considerably constrained (Shah, 1990b: Shrestha, 1982).

After 1930, with the growing number of educational institutions, the Rana regime was reluctant to finance the rising expenses from the government treasury, which they found burdensome. Consequently, a provision was introduced in 1938 allowing institutions to be established through private funding; however, it was explicitly stated that these institutions would remain under government control (Adhikari, 2021). Moreover, the inclusion of a clause in the legislation recognizing the public's right to free and compulsory primary education reinforced the perception of education as a state responsibility. Although no specific law formally designates education as a state obligation, these schools have consistently remained under strict government supervision. Any attempts to circumvent this oversight have raised significant concerns within government circles, prompting the Department of Education to exert all necessary pressure to ensure compliance (National Education Committee, 1978).

State-Local Partnership

A significant development in the promotion of education in Nepal was the emergence of the concept of state-local partnership. The legislation referenced earlier was likely the first to formally acknowledge the public's right to establish schools independently, while also clarifying that government grants-in-aid would be provided to support educational initiatives (Upraity, 1962). Although the act outlined the conditions under which such schools could be organized and receive financial assistance, it did not specify the exact amount of aid, leaving the decision largely to the discretion of the Director of Public Instruction or the Prime Minister.

Two aspects of this arrangement were particularly noteworthy (NNEPC, 1956). First, a significant portion of the grants-in-aid was allocated to fund the position of a teacher-administrator, who typically served as the school's headmaster and often held civil service status. Appointed by the Director of Instruction, this individual was more accountable to the Director than to the school's Managing Committee (School Board). Due to his association with the Rana regime and his distinct status compared to other teachers, his role frequently generated dissatisfaction at the local level. Second, while the Rana rulers theoretically provided free education at all levels within

government institutions, privately supported schools were limited in their capacity to offer free education universally (Upadhyaya, 1922). In line with the provisions of this act, private schools primarily relied on tuition fees, donations, and charitable contributions to secure financial support.

In 1947, during the establishment of Basic Schools, the government advanced the concept of "partnership" in education by formally assuming responsibility for the administration and financial support of these schools (Acharya, 1957). However, the government continued to emphasize the importance of local involvement, prioritizing communities willing to provide additional financial contributions or to donate land and buildings for the schools (Shah, 1978). Concurrently, efforts were made to promote Panchayats, or village councils, to oversee the general administration of schools at the local level. The management of elementary education was placed under the jurisdiction of these village councils, which were authorized to impose an educational tax not exceeding five percent of the total revenue within their respective areas to support the schools (College of Education, 1956). Nevertheless, this provision for generating local educational revenue did not come to fruition.

Assessment Procedures

At Durbar School, students were evaluated through biannual and annual examinations conducted in English. Oral assessments were administered up to grade four, while written examinations began from grade five onwards. Passing all subjects was mandatory for promotion to the next grade (Shah, 2019a). In contrast, Ranipokhari Pathsala, a Sanskrit institution, did not conduct formal examinations or issue certificates; instead, student progress was assessed informally based on comprehension and discipline (Adhikari, 2021; Shah, 2020). After 1901, examinations were introduced to select clerical candidates, with those passing two subjects receiving the designation "Dui Passe." By 1910, a dedicated office was established to oversee these examinations and manage the issuance of certificates Singh, 2012).

The teachers at Durbar High School were highly qualified, diligent, and motivated, which had a direct positive impact on their students. Under the guidance of such dedicated educators, students demonstrated strong commitment to their studies and seldom failed. The school conducted two main examinations annually: the half-yearly and the annual examinations (Maskey, 1996). For the half-yearly assessments, teachers assigned specific topics and conducted informal evaluations of students' progress. Promotion to the next grade was contingent upon passing the annual examination. Students who failed one or two subjects were eligible for re-examination (Sharma, 2015). The final examination at the school level, known as the entrance examination, was administered by Calcutta University in 1936, as it was the nearest university at the time (Maskey, 1996). At Durbar School, the medium of examination was English. Oral assessments were conducted up to grade four, with written examinations introduced from grade five onward. Students were required to pass all subjects to advance to the next grade (Shrestha, 1967).

Durbar High School was initially affiliated with Calcutta University, requiring its students to travel there to sit for the Entrance (Matriculation) Examination. Later, following the school's affiliation with Patna University, students were required to undertake their final examinations in Patna (Adhikari, 2021). In both cases, the

government provided financial assistance to cover students' travel and related expenses. Students who successfully passed these examinations were recognized with special awards. Of particular note, Ram Prasad Manandhar achieved first place in the Intermediate-level examination at Patna University in 1928, representing a historic achievement as the first Nepali to earn such distinction. In the same year, Jung Bahadur appointed nineteen-year-old Bir Shumsher as a lawyer resident in Calcutta (Shah, 1975). During his free time there, he pursued evening studies under Mr. Grace, an instructor at Dafton College; however, he was unable to complete his academic program.

Khadga Shumsher, son of Dhir Shumsher, was the first Nepali student to sit for the entrance examination conducted by Calcutta University; however, he did not pass the exam (Maskey, 1996). Rana Chandra Shumsher was the first to successfully pass the entrance examination. Due to the considerable distance to Calcutta University, he later began taking matriculation examinations through Patna University in 1918 BS. From 1928 BS onwards, Patna University began administering examinations within Nepal (Shrestha, 1971). Following the establishment of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Board on 16 Kartik 1990 BS, national examinations were officially conducted in Nepal, with the first exam supervised by Controller Nandaram Upreti (Adhikari, 2021). At Ranipokhari Pathsala, where the Sanskrit curriculum was taught, formal examinations and certifications were not provided. Instead, students were assessed through the Salaka test, which evaluated their mastery of the subject matter, efficiency, and discipline. Students were expected to demonstrate accuracy and fluency in recitation, although no formal certificates were awarded (Sharma, 1987).

After 1901, examinations were introduced to select clerical candidates, requiring them to complete tests in Nepali essay writing and arithmetic. Candidates who successfully passed these two subjects were designated as "Dui Passe," meaning they had passed two subjects. In 1910, an office was established to administer these examinations and issue certificates to successful candidates (Tuker, 1957). By 1931, two additional subjects were added to the examination, and candidates who passed all four were referred to as "Char Passe," meaning they passed four subjects.

A monetary award system was implemented to honor students who placed first, second, and third in the final examinations. Both oral and written assessments were conducted. Oral examinations were administered from grades one to three, with Nepali and English tested through spoken responses and dictation exercises (Regmi, 1958). Mathematics exams utilized slates for problem-solving. English instruction was largely provided by Bengali teachers, whose pronunciation influenced by Bengali phonetics caused many Nepali students to struggle with English dictation (Maskey, 1996). Written examinations were introduced starting from grade four (Shrestha, 1967). Alongside English textbooks, subjects such as geography, history, mathematics, composition, grammar, and translation were taught in both English and Hindi (Sharma, 1962). Examination questions were asked and answered in English, making proficiency in two foreign languages a challenging task for students. However, with the support of dedicated and capable teachers, students not only succeeded in passing these rigorous examinations but also achieved notable academic excellence.

Conclusion

The Rana regime initially opposed the dissemination of education among the general populace. Nevertheless, shifts in the global political landscape, growing public consciousness, and the pressures of modernization eventually compelled the Ranas to implement limited educational reforms (Sharma, 1980). Consequently, Durbar High School was established in 1854, followed by the founding of Tri-Chandra College in 1918, marking the formal inception of Nepal's modern education system. However, the curriculum introduced at Durbar High School was modeled on that of Indian universities, signifying the early incorporation of foreign educational frameworks. Prior to this, Nepal had maintained its own indigenous system of education. The primary aim of the education system during the Rana regime was not to develop the skilled human resources necessary for national progress, but rather to produce a limited cadre of clerical personnel. Concerned that increased awareness among the general populace could challenge their authority, the Ranas ensured that Durbar School excluded Nepal's social, political, and economic contexts from the curriculum. Instead, the curriculum incorporated content drawn from India and Britain. Furthermore, the textbooks used were authored by Indian and other foreign writers, with little to no inclusion of subject matter related to Nepal (Sharma, 1951). During the Rana regime, pedagogical practices was entirely teacher-centered, leaving no scope for democratic or participatory pedagogical approaches. Classroom practices such as discussion-based learning, student autonomy, or the adoption of learner-centered teaching methodologies were virtually non-existent (Vaidya, 1994). Student assessment relied solely on the teacher's discretion, with no standardized or transparent evaluation mechanisms. Durbar School implemented a system of mid-term and annual examinations, with student assessment conducted primarily through written tests. The core objective of this examination system was not to evaluate students' comprehensive knowledge, skills, or conceptual understanding, but rather to assess their aptitude for clerical work. Additionally, students who achieved high scores in these examinations were eligible for cash rewards. In the absence of a democratic educational framework - and under the strict constraints of an autocratic regime that actively restricted access to education - the implementation of democratic pedagogical practices and assessment system was not only impractical but fundamentally inconceivable. As the education system during the Rana regime was largely modeled on the Indian framework, English was adopted as the primary medium of instruction. It was only in later years, following the establishment of a language school by King Jay Prithvi Bahadur Singh of Bajhang, that Nepali began to be introduced as a language of instruction in schools. At that time, the implementation of mother-tongue-based, bilingual, or multilingual education - practices common today - was not feasible (Whelpton, 1992). Consequently, the teaching-learning process lacked effectiveness. Furthermore, outside the capital city of Kathmandu, most regions suffered from severely inadequate educational infrastructure. In many instances, classes were conducted in open fields due to the absence of proper school facilities.

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