TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT
IN NEPALESE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

DHAN SINGH DHAMI

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION
(EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT)
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
2007

COPYRIGHT OF MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to devise general guidelines for effective diversity management in Nepalese primary schools through exploring teacher perceptions of diversity management and examining the possible influences of socio demographic characteristics; gender, age, academic qualification, experience, training, religion, language, ethnicity, cultural status, income, region of origin and school location. Teacher perceptions of diversity management were explored at personal, professional and organizational contexts. Both a qualitative and quantitative research design was utilized to explore teacher perceptions. Multistage sampling procedure was employed to determine the sample size. Five municipal clusters of five administrative districts were selected for study, based on the Human Development Index. The sample size of this study was 142 primary school teachers working in 36 primary schools. Quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire which required participants to rate their levels of perceptions on a five-point Likert scale, whereas qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions. Data analysis was carried out using t tests and ANOVA.

The results revealed that the overall level of teacher perceptions of diversity management was at a rather high level. The level of teacher perceptions at the personal and professional context was rather high, whereas it was at a moderate level in the organizational context. There was a statistically significant difference between gender, age, qualification, experience, training, religion, language, ethnicity, cultural status, region of origin, and school location. Income was the only personal factor that indicated no significant difference in overall level of teacher perceptions. Teachers with female identity, older aged, having a higher qualification, longer experience, trained, non-Hindu religious affiliation, non-Nepali mother tongue, ethnic identity, minority cultural status, urban origin and working in urban schools had higher level of perceptions of diversity management.

The findings from this study suggested that there is urgent need to include diversity issues in teacher preparation programmes, to attract disadvantaged groups to the teaching profession, to improve teacher motivation and self esteem, to establish a sound professional support mechanism, to reduce stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination in the schools, and to deploy teachers as per the number of students and grades in the schools.

KEY WORDS: PERCEPTION/DIVERSITY/ DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT/ TEACHER/ PRIMARY SCHOOL

139 pp.