

International Organizations and Transmission of Global Higher Education Trends

*Perspectives on the Role of the World Bank and
UNESCO to Nepal*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how the World Bank (WB) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have involved in shaping Nepalese Higher Education (HE) through transmitting globally dominant Higher Education issues to Nepal. For this, it looks at the role and influencing mechanisms of the WB and UNESCO through the analysis of their activities. The analysis includes the activities particularly concerned with the following topics: equity and access, quality assurance and accreditations, financial sustainability, knowledge sharing across borders, information communication and technology (ICT) in HE, and institutional autonomy which are a few among other issues of recent trends in global HE. The study adopts qualitative case study research design. The data collected through document analysis and qualitative semi-structured interviews have been analyzed based on the analytical framework drawn from Shahjahan (2012) and Dale (1999), which deal with the role of international organizations in globalizing higher education policy and the mechanisms of external influence in education normally related to their activities respectively. The finding indicates that the World Bank and UNESCO have played the significant roles as ‘discursive forces, networkers and coordinators’ to promote globally dominant higher education ideas in Nepal. Similarly, the study has also explored the impacts (imposition, harmonization, dissemination, standardization and installing interdependence) that are linked to the activities of the World Bank and UNESCO. Overall, the study has concluded that the national higher education system has the opportunity to align with the broad global dynamics in higher education in association with the World Bank in particular and UNESCO in general.

Key Words: Global Higher Education, Internationalization, Globalization, International Organizations, World Bank, UNESCO

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and the well-wishers whose support, encouragement and love have sustained me throughout my life.

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ACRONYMS

APQN	Asia-Pacific Quality Network
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EFA	Education for All
ESSU	Education Sector Strategy Update
EU	European Union
FPB	Formula Based Funding
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate
GON	Government of Nepal
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HEP	Higher Education Project
HERP	Higher Education Reforms Project
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INQAAHE	International Network of Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education
IOs	International Organizations
KE	Knowledge Economy
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
M. Phil.	Master of Philosophy
NEWS	North East West South
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPHERD	National Programme for Higher Education Reform and Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBF	Performance Based Funding
PCL	Proficiency Certificate Level
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PMT	Proxy Means Testing
Prof.	Professor

QA	Quality Assurance
QAA	Quality Assurance and Accreditations
QIP	Quality Improvement Programme
SHEP	Second Higher Education Project
TU	Tribhuvan University
UGC	University Grants Commission
UiO	University of Oslo
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WB	World Bank

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1 INTRODUCTION

The present study aims to examine how the World Bank (WB) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have involved in shaping Nepalese Higher Education (HE) through transmitting globally dominant HE topics to Nepal. It involves the analysis of the activities particularly concerned with the following topics: equity and access, quality assurance and accreditations, financial sustainability, knowledge sharing across borders, ICT in HE and institutional autonomy which are a few among many other issues of recent global HE trends as presented by Altbach et al. (2009), Shahjahan (2012) and World Bank (2013).

Through the analysis of the activities of the WB and UNESCO, the study looks at their role and influencing mechanisms in transmitting various topics present in global discussion on higher education in the researcher's home country of Nepal. Nepal is one of the low income countries in South Asia. It is among the poorest countries in the world and currently ranks 145th out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index (UNDP 2014). Being a developing country, the support of various international organizations (IOs) has always been an essential source for the reformation of education system in Nepal as viewed by Yang (2010). At the same time, it is a great challenge for the country to frame and implement the educational plans and policies in accordance with the global mandates of the dominant IOs such as the WB and UNESCO in the context of Nepal. This is due to various reasons such as IOs are influential policy agents around the world particularly in the countries having lower income (Al'Abri 2011), the more funding IOs invest, the more influential they are (Rizvi and Lingard 2010, Yang 2010). They have been supporting the country for the development of education sector with finance and other resources since long. Besides, different other constraints such as finance, technical manpower and other resources have added more challenges.

Various academic changes have taken place during the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Such changes are more extensive in that they are truly global and affect many more institutions and populations (Altbach et al. 2009). Moreover, Yang (2010) views the importance of global-centric policies rather than the nation-centric policies in higher education as the latter are no longer sufficient and cannot adequately engage with the new global realities of transnational economic, political and cultural interconnectivities. As a result, having faced some

challenges, Nepal has also been trying to adopt the global trends of higher education, for example, establishment of quality assurance system, improving access to HE and etc. (World Bank 2015, UGC 2012/13). It is believed that the World Bank and UNESCO have something to do with such phenomena as they have launched different projects for the reformation of HE. Hence, the researcher wants to analyze what is exactly happening in this particular area.

1.1 The World Bank and UNESCO in Higher Education

The World Bank and UNESCO are two international organizations working in the field of HE. They are the important actors which play the role of catalyst for globalizing higher education in either way such as by providing financial assistance or relevant advice and feedbacks. Moreover, they are the global institutions which have contributed to the shaping of the higher education landscape in developing country in a very significant way (Lebeau and Sall 2011). In addition, it is also significant to mention the World Bank and UNESCO as important IOs having great roles in higher education because they have a global scope of influence; they possess multiple instruments of influence and conduct various supranational activities in higher education; and most of the higher education researchers cite them (Shahjahan 2012). They have contributed to the field of HE by financing studies, promoting methodologies, generating data, publishing materials and conducting research on HE (Bassett 2010). The separate discussions regarding the World Bank and UNESCO in relation to HE have been done in the following sections.

1.1.1 The World Bank

The World Bank is active in HE reforms, particularly in developing countries since 1963. Since then, it has helped in supporting the growth and diversification of tertiary education systems in developing countries and in promoting essential policy reforms to make the sector more efficient, relevant, equitable, transparent, and responsive (World Bank 2013). It has invested a huge amount of money for HE reforms since its involvement. Tertiary education programmes have accounted for over \$8 billion in loans since 1963 while it has lent over US\$ 3.7 billion for 126 education projects with tertiary education components in 61 countries from 2003 to 2012 (ibid.). The ratio of providing its loans differs from one region to another. The South Asia region received the largest share (34%) of Bank lending for tertiary education over the last 10 years, followed by the Latin America and Caribbean region (30%) (ibid.). Besides

the loan, an equally significant contribution is the policy dialogue, technical support, and analytical work conducted by the Bank as a knowledge-sharing institution, to help government consider options about possible HE reforms and prepare for their implementation in the context of international experience (Salmi et al. 2009).

The areas of focus and the policy directions of the World Bank in regards to HE have also changed through different time periods. For example, much of the support provided by the World Bank tertiary education projects was piecemeal, with a narrow focus on the establishment of new programmes or on discrete quality improvement measures for existing teaching and research activities in the 1970s and 1980s (ibid.). To understand its role after 1990s especially in developing countries, it is essential to have a look on its key publications which have also been considered as “the policy frameworks” for HE (Salmi et al. 2009, p. 104). In the 1990s, the World Bank regarded HE as a key development priority. As a result, it published its first report “Higher Education: the Lessons of Experience” to acknowledge the fragile HE systems in developing countries which had the crisis of underfunding (Robertson 2009, p. 113; Salmi et al. 2009, p. 100). This report began “the World Bank’s redeployment of efforts into the tertiary education sector” (Bassett 2010, p. 286). The Executive Summary of the report states:

Higher Education is a paramount importance for economic and social development. Institutions of higher education have the main responsibility for equipping individuals with the advanced knowledge and skills required for positions of responsibility in government, business, and the professions. [...]. Despite the clear importance of investment in higher education for economic growth and social development, the sector is in crisis throughout the world. In all countries, higher education is heavily dependent on government funding. (World Bank 1994, pp. 1-2)

Similarly, this was followed by another report “Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise” with the attempts of the World Bank and UNESCO in 2000. The focus point of the report was the crises that HE in developing countries must manage in order to fulfill its mission of promoting sustainable, cultural, social, and economic development, where the major areas of concern included: privatization, access (particularly for women), diminished government funding and increased demand (Salmi et al. 2009). Thereafter, there was another publication “Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary

Education” in 2002. This report addresses globalization and the need for a well-educated workforce in order to participate in the new global economy and establishes a pointed strategy towards tertiary higher education for operations across the Bank (Bassett 2010). Along with the concerns of global economy, it deals with the appropriate HE policy options. For instance, the report “describes how tertiary education contributed to building up a country’s capacity for participation in an increasingly knowledge-based world economy, and investigates policy options for tertiary education that have the potential to enhance economic growth and reduce poverty” (Salmi, 2002, p. 52). Right after this, “Education Sector Strategy Update (ESSU)” was published in 2005. This highlights “the importance of tertiary education within a holistic view of the education sector, recognizing the key role of education advancement at all levels and the significant linkages between education and the rest of the economy” (Salmi et al. 2009, p. 103). The ESSU includes three themes which are “integrating education into a countrywide perspective, broadening the strategic agenda through a system wide approach (from pre-school through tertiary education), and becoming more result oriented” (World Bank 2005, p. vi). The ESSU also ties together the Bank’s successive and evolving statements about the significance of tertiary education with other aforementioned reports and translates the foundation of these works with continued support for investment in tertiary education development around the globe (Salmi et al. 2009). These reports have discussed some challenges of HE, brought new messages and dealt with the Bank’s strategies to overcome the challenges (see the detailed summary of these in Appendix: 2).

It has been common to all that HE is essential for the development of any nation by eradicating poverty. After the year 2000, it has been realized that the World Bank has centered on reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)¹ through sustainable poverty reduction (Bassett 2010). As a result, the participation of the World Bank in HE has been felt more active. Now, it has a renewed emphasis on HE with quality assurance as the key theme of its programme (Uvalic-Trumbic 2009) where quality HE is supposed to reduce the poverty along with other problems.

Being specific to the presence of the World Bank on HE in Asia, it has been the most influential (Yang 2009) as it is the largest financier of international educational development, and most powerful ideologue and regulator in the developing world (Jones 1992). It has launched different projects with the emphasis on:

¹ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

System-wide reforms, quality, efficiency, decentralization, the restructuring of the public service, the introduction of standardized educational testing regimes, the introduction of private service providers, as well as cost recovery measures. [...]. Its activities in Asia also include providing guidelines for the development of cross-border higher education in the region, launching initiatives in quality, quality assurance, and mutual recognition of qualifications, promoting networking of higher education institutions within the region across the board [...]. (Yang 2009, p. 177)

1.1.2 UNESCO

UNESCO is the leading United Nations (UN) agency in the field of education in general and in the context of globalization and internationalization in particular (Mundy and Madden 2009). HE, being a part of the entire education system, is also the concern for UNESCO. Its involvement in higher education can be traced both to its formation as the UN specialized agency in the field of education, science and culture in 1945, and to the initial development of UN (ibid.). Moreover, HE was at the heart of the UNESCO's action from the moment of its foundation because it considered that 'working with universities' would be an important means for promoting the intellectual solidarity of humankind and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge (Uvalic-Trumbic 2009). It has been carrying out different activities as per its vision and mission. Six objectives had been outlined for conducting activities effectively in the General Conference of UNESCO in Mexico held from November 6 to December 3, 1947. These objectives include:

- development of an international organization of universities;
- address problems of the difference in university degrees across the world;
- the role of education in international relationships;
- the function of universities within a national context;
- collaboration between universities and UNESCO;
- the establishment of international departments at certain universities

(Records of the General Conference of UNESCO, second session, Mexico 1947, v.2: Resolutions; as cited in Uvalic-Trumbic 2009, p. 30)

Some of the issues raised in the above objectives still seem relevant to the present context as well. Besides, there are many reports and conferences of UNESCO which flesh out its

position in the field of HE. More importantly, an international conference on universities, assembled in Utrecht in 1948, was an important landmark in the process of developing the higher education programme of UNESCO. The most direct result of the Utrecht conference was the establishment of International Association of Universities (IAU) at an international conference held in Nice 1950 (Uvalic-Trumbic 2009). In addition, the Faure Report (1972) and the Delors Report (1996) prepared by UNESCO also have some contributions in the field of HE. The Faure Report argued that the expansion on HE should lead to a broad range of institutions capable of meeting a wide variety of individual and community needs (ibid.). It was recommended for more diversification throughout the post-secondary educational system. On the other side, the Delors Report suggested that HEIs should become not only centers of knowledge and places of professional training, but also the crossroads for learning throughout life and vehicles for international cooperation, promoting UNESCO's mission of fostering international understanding (ibid.).

Following the aforementioned activities, the first world conference on “Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action” was held in UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, from 5-9 October 1998. This conference was mainly centered to such principles: broadening access to HE as a key factor of development, as a public good and as a human right; promoting reforms of HE at system and institutional levels to enhance quality, relevance and efficiency; and securing adequate resources and funding (both public and private) in keeping with increased demands placed on HE by its different stakeholders (UNESCO 1999). This conference served as a historic landmark in defining the core dimensions of HE in society at the outset of the twenty-first century (UNESCO 2010). Similarly, considering the relevance of the outcomes of the first world conference, another world conference on “The 2009 World Conference on Higher Education: The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Social Change and Development” was held in Paris, from 5-8 July 2009. The conference included various themes such as:

The Conference had two overarching themes for debates in plenary sessions: higher education's role in addressing major global challenges (sustainable development, Education for All and poverty eradication); and the societal commitment to and social responsibility of higher education. [...]. The parallel sessions were structured around three broad sub-themes: Internationalization, regionalization and globalization; Equity, access and quality; and Learning, research and innovation. Each of these themes was

examined from different angles, in particular: public and private roles and responsibilities; the emergence of new models and approaches; the possibilities offered by information and communication technologies (ICTs); the implications in terms of funding and investment; and the implications in terms of governance and management. (UNESCO 2010, p. 10)

The World Conference was preceded by many regional conferences at regional and country level. The results of each of the regional conferences were presented in the world conference. It has been seen that there were several common issues, representing new dynamics, identified and developed during the regional conferences in spite of having variation in the economic, social, cultural and political context (ibid.). Such regional activities, for example conducting regional conferences, show that UNESCO is involved in regional level too. In the same connection, Shahjahan (2012) puts some words having a little more coverage as:

UNESCO is involved in regional efforts due to its decentralized structure. It plays the roles of a standard setter, a sponsor of forums, and a knowledge broker in terms of regional HE policy issues. Finally, UNESCO coordinates the mutual exchange of information on higher education issues (e.g., quality assurance, internationalization, and academic qualifications). (p. 377)

All the above discussions justify the view of Mundy and Madden (2009) which assert that UNESCO's unique mandate surely lies in the valuation of higher education as a public good, the promotion of human right to equality of opportunity in higher education, and the protection of cultural diversity in the higher education space. The UNESCO has many more to do with global HE system.

To be specific to the presence of UNESCO on HE in Asia, it has been actively influencing HE policy making through its different activities. According to Yang (2009), it shapes policy concepts by:

developing and proposing conventions, resolutions, and recommendations in the field of higher education (McNeely and Cha 1994), by promoting lifelong learning, and by establishing worldwide applicable quality assurance systems, it shapes policy concepts in its Asian member states. (p. 176)

1.2 Global HE Topics of the World Bank and UNESCO

Different IOs may have their own policy directions for the promotion of HE. However, it is not surprising to find some areas identical as it is common to see that the majority of IOs work for the most dominant issues. For example, the following piece of writing from Uvalic-Trumbic (2009) shows that the World Bank and UNESCO have the partnership for the common issue i.e. assuring quality in higher education:

Recently, UNESCO and the World Bank formed a partnership to assist developing countries assure quality in higher education. In early 2008, a three-year Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity was launched aiming to sustain activities for capacity building for quality assurance in higher education in developing and transition countries. (p. 42)

In the same connection, how these two international organizations consider the roles of higher education and what are their current agendas/policy directions in higher education can be understood from the following table which is based on the website of the World Bank (2013)² and Shahjahan (2012). Furthermore, it also assists to compare the areas that are identical and different from the World Bank and UNESCO perspectives.

² <http://go.worldbank.org/HBEGA0G2P0>

Table 1: Recent Coverage of the World Bank and UNESCO in Global HE Development

IO	WB	UNESCO
Views on the role of higher education	Essential player for the knowledge economy	Key factor for cultural, economic, and social development in the knowledge society
	Capacity builder for responding to technological advances	Endogenous capacity builder
	Higher-order capacity builder necessary for development	Promoter of human rights, sustainable development, democracy, peace, and justice
	Supporter of progress toward millennium development goals	Supporter of progress toward Education For All (EFA) goals
Current agendas/ policy directions in higher education	Institutional diversification and autonomy	National and research capacity building
	Quality assurance and relevance	Quality assurance
	Equity mechanisms	Equality of opportunities and access
	Science and technology research and development capacity	Recognition of qualifications
	Financial sustainability	Knowledge sharing across borders
	Management capacity building	Challenges of globalization
	Information and communication technology (ICT) capacity building	Use of ICTs in education

Based on Shahjahan (2012) and World Bank (2013)

The table, on the one hand, shows that most of the areas such as HE for economic development, equity and access, quality assurance, use of ICT, and research capacity building are identical to both the IOs. On the other hand, the extent of their focus on some other areas sometimes differs. For example, it can be analyzed from the above table that the WB is more attentive on institutional autonomy, financial sustainability, management capacity building, whereas UNESCO is more attentive on recognition of qualifications, knowledge sharing across borders, challenges of globalization and so on. Although there are different areas in

terms of the priority and focus, some of the areas have connections such as the challenges of globalization are the issues for both IOs.

1.3 Higher Education Development in Nepal

Nepal is a low income country in South Asia. The development in different sectors has been taking place day by day and so has been in its educational sector. Education in Nepal can be divided into two parts that is school education and higher education (Khaniya, 2007). School education includes secondary education (up to grade 10) and higher secondary education (grade 11 and 12). On the other hand, higher education includes the study of Bachelor's level and above.

The history of higher education in Nepal goes back to the establishment of Tri-Chandra College in 1918. The curriculum of this college was based on Patna University in India as there was no any administrative body for university programme in the country. As a result, Tribhuvan University which is the first state university was established in 1959. In the same way, Mahendra Sanskrita University was established in 1986. After the establishment of this university, there emerged the concept of multi-university system to decentralize and HE in the regional level. Khaniya (2007) mentions "The Multi-university concept was brought up after 1990 on the assumption that there would be competition among the universities and as a result the quality of higher education would be enhanced (p. 101)." Along with this consideration, three more universities were established in 1990s. Among these three universities, Kathmandu University was established in 1991 while Purbanchal University and Pokhara University were established in 1995 and 1997 respectively. Similarly, Lumbini Boudha University got established in 2005. In addition to these, three other universities have recently started their academic programmes. They are the Agricultural and Forest University, Mid-Western University, and Far-Western University. In this way, there are nine universities in Nepal at the moment (Ministry of Education 2014). Beside these universities, there are three university like institutions (Health Academies) which can be referred as deemed universities. They are National Academy of Medical Sciences, B.P. (Bishweshwar Prasad) Koirala Institute of Health and Sciences, and the Patan Academy of Health Sciences (ibid.). TU still holds the largest share of enrollment i.e. 87.9% of total enrolled in different universities including health academies (University Grants Commission 2014). These historical sequences of the development of different universities show that the horizon of education has become

broad to foster the true spirit of education and to provide global market-driven programmes in the country. However, the HE sector has not been able to adequately meet the human resource needs of the economy (World Bank 2015).

There are many reformations in Nepalese HE system since 1990 due to political restructuring and other reasons of HE reforms such as improving access and quality of HE. For example, there are reformations in the examination system (attempts for assignment system, semester system instead of annual system), structures of the programmes (two to three and three to four years Bachelor's Degree), phasing out the Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) from the university system and changes in curriculum due to political changes such as monarchical system to republican system. Although, there is vast improvement in the enrollment at HE level, still there are many challenges. The following extract from the document of World Bank (2015) makes it more apparent:

HE enrollment increased from 173,546 in 2005/06 to 452,571 in 2012/13, with an average annual growth rate of 14.7 percent. The number of graduates increased from 25,900 in 2005/06 to 63,642 during the same period. The gross enrollment rate (GER) reached 17.1 percent in 2012/13, which is higher than that of most countries at comparable levels of economic development. Despite significant achievements over the past decade, weak relevance, low quality, internal inefficiency, inequity and inadequate financing continue to pose major challenges in the HE. (p. 2)

The World Bank and UNESCO have been launching different programmes to overcome such challenges prevalent in Nepalese HE. The following section deals with their highlighting attempts.

1.4 The World Bank and UNESCO in Nepalese Higher Education

The WB and UNESCO, normally referred as global institutions (Lebeau and Sall 2011), have important roles in expanding Nepalese HE as well. They have been conducting different activities for the development of HE through different periods of time. Their journey into the Nepalese HE will be discussed briefly in the following sections.

1.4.1 The World Bank

The World Bank started working in the developing countries after 1950 (Shahjahan 2012). Similarly, it started its journey into Nepal after the assistance of loan for Telecommunications Project³ in 1969 (World Bank, 2007). The attempts to reform Nepalese higher education took a new turn with the entry of the World Bank in Nepal as both policy advisor and financier of education through different projects. It primarily started working for the development of HE in Nepal with the launch of its Higher Education Project in 1993. Some of its important closing and active projects in the field of HE are: Higher Education Project (1993-2001)⁴, Second Higher Education Project (2007-2014)⁵, and Higher Education Reforms Project (2015-2020)⁶ (World Bank 2015). It conducts different activities through such projects for the reformations of HE in Nepal.

In this way, the World Bank has an important role in the development of Nepalese HE. The issues such as institutional autonomy, quality assurance and accreditation system, reforms in funding system, examination system, promoting equity of access and HE for economic development are the major areas of focus in different HE projects (World Bank 2002; World Bank 2014; World Bank 2015). Its different activities through different projects indicate that HE in Nepal has some important connections with the World Bank. Regular participation of the World Bank in different seminars, meetings and discussions of HE is another praiseworthy task. This has positive results in the implementation of its programmes.

1.4.2 UNESCO

Nepal joined UNESCO in 1953 and the UENSCO office in Kathmandu was established in 1998. It contributes to building peace, alleviating poverty, fostering sustainable development and intercultural dialogue in Nepal through education, science, culture, communication and information. It also works to attain quality and adult literacy, to mobilize scientific knowledge and science policy for sustainable development, to preserve cultural heritage, promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and to empower people through the free flow of the ideas and access to information and knowledge (UNESCO 2011). It actively participates in the work of the UN country team in Nepal and closely cooperates with other development

³ <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P010061/telecommunications-project?lang=en>

⁴ <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P010454/higher-education-project?lang=en>

⁵ <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P090967/second-higher-education-project?lang=en>

⁶ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2015/01/24028192/nepal-higher-education-reforms-project>

partners in the country (UN Nepal Information Platform 2012). It conducts different training programmes, conferences, collects data and publishes various reports, gives advice in policy formation, implementation, and evaluation, and etc. in the overall education system in Nepal. Recently (on 16 and 17 December 2013), it had organized an EFA consultation meeting⁷ on “Is education in Nepal truly for all?”.

Being specific to HE in Nepal, UNESCO included HE mainly after the last decade. Since then, it has published different reports for the promotion of HE in Nepal. One such example is the report on “Advancing Policy Options for Higher Education: Improving Transition and Access to Higher Education in Nepal” in 2008. Similarly, it also conducts different workshops and seminars for the promotion of HE in Nepal. For example, there was a national workshop for the development of HE policy in 2011 (UNESCO Office in Kathmandu 2011).

1.5 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The study takes as a starting assumption that the globalization has affected many aspects of society including higher education. Globalization can be defined as “the reality shaped by an increasingly integrated world economy, new information and communications technology (ICT), the emergence of an international network, the role of the English language, and other forces beyond the control of academic institutions” (Altbach et al. 2009, p. iv). The various supports and activities of different major international organizations have influenced the way globalization has entered into countries; become the catalyst for change both a positive and negative way. Hence, the researcher wants to have an in-depth study in this particular field. The researcher believes that a wide range of stakeholders such as international organizations (IOs), states, institutions, researchers, teachers, students and other concerned authorities will be benefitted from the findings of this study.

The purpose of this study is to understand the role of the WB and UNESCO in the development of HE in Nepal in correspondence with globally dominant HE topics. The study has central and supporting research questions to lead it into a right track. The overall research question of the study is:

⁷ <http://un.info.np/Net/NeoDocs/View/65>

How are the World Bank and UNESCO transmitting global higher education trends into Nepalese higher education development?

The supporting research questions of this study are as follows:

- i. How are the World Bank and UNESCO interacting with Nepal's HE sector? Are they 'discursive forces, networkers or coordinators' to bring globally dominant HE topics to Nepal?
- ii. What are the existing mechanisms of influence observed with the activities of the World Bank and UNESCO in bringing globally dominant HE ideas to Nepal?
- iii. How do the individuals involved in policy making understand the significance of the World Bank and UNESCO in transmitting globally dominant HE concepts to Nepal?

1.6 Relevance of the Study

Globalization has become an integral part of this dynamic world. Higher education is the driver of globalization and is driven by globalization (OECD 2009). Different international organizations are working in different sectors for uplifting the status of people and nations. Upgrading the education system is one of such sectors. IOs are the important actors which play the role of catalyst for globalizing higher education in either way such as by providing financial assistance or relevant advice and feedbacks (Shahjahan 2012). In the context of Nepal, there are many IOs which are working in the field of education. However, the World Bank and UNESCO are supposed to come in the front lines in the field of education (Khaniya 2007). Being a student of Masters of Philosophy in Higher Education, it is the researcher's keen interest to explore how the World Bank and UNESCO are acting to carry the globally dominant HE issues for the development of HE in Nepal. Looking at the reformations of HE in Nepal, it is common to see that Nepal is also trying to follow the global HE trends. For example, it has recently established quality assurance system, has tried to promote institutional autonomy, has considered HE as the knowledge economy, has started to be involved in knowledge sharing programmes across borders, has improved in equity and access and so forth. IOs such as the World Bank and UNESCO are the global organizations which have contributed for the promotion of global HE policy (Shahjahan 2012). Hence, it is

relevant to have an in-depth study to see the role and influencing mechanisms of such organizations through the analysis of their activities in Nepal with reference to their global activities.

The findings of the study will be equally significant to reform the activities of the World Bank and UNESCO to make them more effective. The study will, of course, provide some feedbacks to the people involved in HE policy making in Nepal.

1.7 Outline of the Study

The study consists of six major chapters, with sub-divisions on each part.

Chapter one introduces the area and topic of the research. It briefly discusses the involvement of the World Bank and UNESCO in HE at global, regional (Asian), and national (Nepal) level to make the way through. It also discusses their global policy directions/agendas in HE. Besides, it also presents the purpose of the study and research questions; relevance of the study; limitation of the study; and the outline of the study.

Chapter two prepares the background and context for the study. The chapter will be divided into different sub-sections for framing the appropriate background and context. These sub-sections include: internationalization and globalization of higher education; international organizations and higher education; higher education and the global knowledge economy, Nepalese higher education in the light of global trends; the University Grants Commission (UGC) and higher education policy development in Nepal.

Chapter three briefly deals with the world system theory which is the base line to develop the appropriate concept for this particular study. In addition, it reviews the global academic literature which sheds light on various roles and the mechanisms of influence that international organizations play in globalizing higher education. Finally, an analytical framework has been drawn based on the theories and the literature discussed.

Chapter four outlines the overview of research design, research methods, data collection and data analysis procedures. Besides, validity and reliability of the research along with some potential ethical issues also have been discussed.

Chapter five presents the data collected through interviews and documents and discusses the findings. The findings have been discussed as in the sequence of the research questions and with reference to the analytical framework developed in chapter three.

Finally, chapter six provides an overall summary of the study and conclusion drawn from the findings. Based on the findings, the chapter ends with the recommendations for policy implication and further research.

2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss some important issues related to the overall area of the study. Such issues include: internationalization and globalization of higher education; international organizations and higher education; higher education and the global knowledge economy, Nepalese higher education in the light of global trends; the University Grants Commission and higher education policy development in Nepal.

2.1 Internationalization and Globalization of Higher Education

Internationalization and globalization of higher education are sometimes taken synonymously although they are different for many scholars. They are often confusing terms in the field of HE (Enders 2004). Therefore, it is worth discussing how some of the different scholars view them.

Internationalization and globalization of HE have resulted in the integration of research, English language as the lingua franca for scientific communication, the growing international market for scholars and scientists, the growth of communications firms and of multi-national and technology publishing, and the use of information technology (Altbach and Knight 2007). In the like manner, regarding the growing pressure on HEIs in the age of globalization, they view the internationalization and globalization as:

Globalization is the context of economic and academic trends that are part of the reality of 21st century. Internationalization includes the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions and even individuals to cope with the global academic environment. The motivation for internationalization includes commercial advantage, knowledge and language acquisition, enhancing the curriculum with international context and many other. (Altbach and Knight 2007, p. 290)

Altbach et al. (2009) also put their views in the similar way. They also argue that globalization has influenced HE whereas internationalization has responded to it. To put it in their words:

Globalization, a key reality in the 21st century has already profoundly influenced higher education. [...]. We define globalization as the reality shaped by an increasingly integrated world economy, new information and communications technology, the emergence of an international knowledge network, the role of the English language, and other forces beyond the control of academic institutions. [...]. Internationalization is defined as the variety of policies and programmes that universities and governments implement to respond to globalization. (Altbach et al. 2009, p. 7)

The connection between internationalization and globalization can be taken as the catalyst and response where the latter can be considered as the catalyst and the former is the response for it (Knight 1999). There is inseparable interrelationship between these two processes. The relation can be best understood from the statement “internationalization is changing the world of Higher Education, and globalization is changing the world of internationalization” (Knight, 2008, p. 1).

On the other side, the concept of internationalization and globalization may be taken synonymously in some other contexts. Scott (2005) regards both internationalization and globalization as complex phenomena with many strands, and remarks that “the distinction between internationalization and globalization, although suggestive, cannot be regarded as categorical. They overlap, and are intertwined, in all kinds of ways” (p. 14). The present study considers internationalization and globalization in line with Scott (2005), not as completely two different terms. Rather it treats both of them as overlapping terms, which have collectively influenced the HE system throughout the world. Furthermore, it also assumes internationalization and globalization as multidimensional concepts that relate to creating a homogeneous world as argued by Maringe (2010) through sharing some globally dominant HE topics.

Internationalization and globalization are concerned with a broad range of activities of HE, such as trans-national mobility of students and staff, internationalization of curricula and quality assurance, inter-institutional co-operation in education and research, and establishment of international university consortia (Van Vught et al. 2002). In the present globalizing world, HEIs are developing a consumerist concept which transforms education into a product exchangeable in an open market under the influence of social interaction globalization (Marginson and Considine 2000; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). HEIs are

required to provide quality HE that is exchangeable and suitable throughout the globe. Therefore, they should consider the global trends and “it is not possible for higher education institutions to opt out of the global environment, since its effects are unavoidable”. (Altbach et al. 2009, p. 7)

The people involved in national HE policy making must be familiar with all the global, international, regional and local trends necessary for the dynamic world. They must be prepared:

to track and understand the broadest global trends in higher education, as well as the internationalization of higher education more specifically, while at the same time attending effectively to the unique needs and aspirations of their particular institutions, local communities, and regional or national contexts. (Rumbley et al. 2012, p. 4)

Along with the internationalization and globalization, regionalization of HE also does have an important position for the discussion. One of the important examples of regionalization is Bologna Process in Europe which aims for the development of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA)⁸ and promotion of European HE throughout the world (Maassen et al. 2008). The regionalization has started to emerge in Asia just trying to duplicate the concept of Bologna (Maslen 2008). For example, the rise of the transnational HE in the Asia-Pacific region also reflects the growing pace of globalization and the subsequent pressures imposed by it (Mok 2011). A number of countries working to position themselves as regional higher education/innovation “hubs”⁹ (Knight 2011, p. 222) may be seen as an embodiment of isomorphic trends in internationalization (Rumbley et al. 2012).

In this way, internationalization and regionalization are the responses for globalization. Every country needs to consider some common topics of HE to enter into internationalization through regionalization to response globalization.

⁸ <http://www.ehea.info/>

⁹ According to Knight, the term ‘education hub’ is being used by countries who are trying to position themselves as centers for student recruitment, education and training, and in some cases research and innovation.

2.2 International Organizations and Higher Education

There are various ideas in defining international organizations. On the one hand, the word 'international' refers to the activities between individuals and groups in one state and individuals and groups in another state as well as intergovernmental relations and activities (Archer 2001). On the other hand, the term 'organization' refers to the social sum, which by application of a rule under the authority and leadership, ensures the cooperation of individuals in a common task, which determines the implementation and distributes positive result (Bourricaud 2008). From the merger of above definitions, international organization refers to the system where there is the concept of governance, set objectives, administrative structure, and there is involvement of, interaction between individuals, groups, other organizations or nations, normally beyond national boundaries. Similar to this concept, Archer (2001) views international organization as a formal, continuous structure established by agreement between members, whether governmental representatives or not, from at least two sovereign states with the aim of pursuing the common interest of the membership, covers a wide range of institutions even if profit-making associations are excluded. Further, Simmons and Martin (2002) define international organization as “a union or association of States, or of enterprises or of other national entities set up across national boundaries” (p. 9). From all the above discussions, it can be concluded that IOs are normally involved in cross border activities with their defined goals.

International organizations are supposed to promote research, expand dialogues and support for establishing policies. In this regard, (Bassett 2010) mentions “In the light of the current atmosphere of economic crises, political instability and unrest, and the expansion of global education, international organizations are becoming increasingly important in shaping the relationships that drive progress, promote research, expand dialogues, and establish policies”, p. 277). On the other side, HE is essential for any nations in many ways. It develops human capital required for industrialization, promotes a knowledge based economy and helps in the dissemination, production and preservation of knowledge through research. Considering the importance of higher education, different international organizations such as the World Bank and UNESCO are actively involved in the same field. Higher education is one of the important parts of their global mandates. For example, different reports such as “World Conference on HE” published by UNESCO in 2009; “Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise” published by the World Bank/UNESCO in 2000; “Higher

Education: The Lessons of Experience” published by the World Bank in 1994; “Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education” published by the World Bank in 2002 and many others provide ample evidence regarding their active involvement in the HE sector. They are working with different areas within HE such as quality assurance and accreditations, equity and access, and ICT in HE (see Chapter 1, Section 1.2 in details). As a result, IOs are discharging various roles for the promotion of higher education throughout the globe. They are the important actors to distribute the global higher education policy. Justifying the similar concept, Appadurai (1996) argues that the policy ideas flowing globally are also linked to different IOs such as the EU, the World Bank, IMF, UN, UNESCO and OECD. The analysis of their roles can be done in better ways if the focus is on particular tasks and functions. This can be done by studying and investigating whether these functions are successfully carried out in the light of set objectives (Gutner and Thompson 2010). The present study seeks to investigate how far the World Bank and UNESCO are functioning in shaping Nepal’s HE in line with their globally set objectives.

2.3 Higher Education and the Global Knowledge Economy

The concept of the Knowledge Economy (KE) can be best understood as an economy where knowledge is the main engine of economic growth (Chen and Dalhman 2005). The principal component of a knowledge economy is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical inputs or natural resources (Powell and Snellman 2004). In other words, a knowledge-based economy relies primarily on the use of ideas rather than physical abilities and on the application of technology rather than the transformation of raw materials or the exploitation of cheap labour (World Bank 2003). The advanced knowledge and skills along with the proper use of technology can foster the economic growth of any nation faster and more efficiently.

The relation between HE and KE is a quite burning issue in the recent years. HE generates appropriate knowledge through research and the same knowledge may be utilized to promote the economy. So, it is justifiable to mention that knowledge is the driving force for new wealth while HE is a source of new knowledge creation (Ilon 2010). Besides, HE is also seen as “an engine for social mobility and change and for the empowerment of both individual citizens and social groups such as women” (Lebeau and Sall 2011 p. 145), which contributes

to economic development. It trains the highly-skilled workers and contributes to the research base and capacity for innovation that determine competitiveness in the knowledge-based economy.

As the global knowledge economy is transforming the demands of the labor market throughout the world (World Bank 2003), HEIs are required to produce the manpower that fulfill the requirements of the present global market. Mostly, the HEIs are responsible for preparing workers to compete in the knowledge economy, which requires a new model of education and training (ibid.). The universities should be research oriented as they produce new information; contribute to human understanding; and connect intellectual and scientific trends for the global knowledge economy (Altbach, 2013). They are the major agents of economic growth, the knowledge factory and are at the center of the knowledge economy (Guruz and Pak 2002). The above ideas support for the concept of HE as an important tool for the economic development of any nation in the globalized world where knowledge is being developed and applied in new ways (World Bank 2003).

The access of quality HE throughout the globe has become a need of the day for the economic development. As a result, the attempts have been made to reform HE in line with the developed concept of global knowledge economy. For example, such attempts have produced the emergence of some common issues of discussions for the promotion of quality HE globally. The discussions of such issues include: equal access of quality and research oriented HE, quality assurance and accreditations, financial sustainability, use of ICT, knowledge sharing across borders and so on (World Bank 2003; Altbach et al. 2009; Shahjahan 2012).

2.4 Nepalese HE in the Light of Global Trends

In the recent years, the impact of globalization; the phenomenon of massification; quality assurance and the use of ICT have become important issues for discussion in global HE (Altbach et al. 2009). The globalization is the major trend that has impacted and has been shaped by other global trends such as new information and communication technology, the emergence of an international knowledge network, and the role of the English Language. As time has changed, there are different perspectives with respect to global trends of HE which have brought important changes in the way HE or university systems are viewed. For instance, university systems have changed profoundly in the last 10 years with regards to the

student population, lifelong learning, financial constraints, accountability, the core functions of teaching and learning, and privatization of higher education, (ibid.).

Nepal is making some attempts to bring these reformations to its HEIs. In spite of such attempts, very few reforms are in line with the global trends of HE while others are still to be reformed. The financial constraints and other limited resources that many of the countries having low income have to face are the main reasons for why Nepal's HE system is lagging behind. The global emergence of mass and universal higher education that dominantly began in the 1990s (Altbach 1999) also seems to have affected the higher education system in Nepal. As a result, the enrollment rate is also in an increasing order i.e. increased from 173,546 in 2005/06 to 452,571 in 2012/13, with an average annual growth rate of 14.7 percent. The gross enrollment rate (GER) reached 17.1 percent in 2012/13 (World Bank 2015). This shows that the Nepalese HE is in the phase of massification as defined by Trow (1970), which he defined as 0 – 1% participation rate as Elite HE, 15 – 40% participation rate as Mass HE and > 40% participation rate as Universal HE. Due to the increased number of participants in Nepalese HEIs, it has been a problem to manage necessary funding for managing infrastructures and other necessary measures. The dominant grants system of the government can be linked to input-based funding mechanism, in which the funding is allocated according to measures of the costs of higher education often calculated in terms of staff salaries, material requirements, building maintenance, etc. as defined by Jongbloed (2000). Besides, the allocations to universities are also subject to negotiations and are not linked to students' performance over the years (World Bank 2015). This has led to enormous inefficiencies in the sector. Realizing this situation, the attempts for formula based funding and performance based funding have been encouraged in the recent years to bring better result (ibid.).

The quality assurance and accreditation systems were initiated in 2008 in Nepal. However, they remain under developed (ibid.). Nepalese universities are lagging behind in the production of new knowledge or research oriented activities. Research, innovation and the pursuit of excellence are not emphasized as integral parts of the teaching-learning process or faculty development (ibid.). However, they are trying to be research-oriented in the recent years. The UGC has an important role for the move towards that direction. It has been organizing Quality Improvement Programme (QIP)¹⁰, which emphasizes for the promotion of research culture among the individuals as well as HEIs (University Grants Commission

¹⁰ <http://www.ugcnepal.edu.np/page-detail/quality-improvement--9221>

2012/13). As a result, the HEIs have been trying to be more accountable for their extended roles i.e. they are not only confined to their primary function: teaching and learning. Moreover, they have come to realize that the generation of new knowledge and service to the society should be their other important functions. However, the progress is very low. As highlighted by Castells (2001), this shift from the traditional roles of the university, that is, formation and diffusion of ideology, and the selection of the dominant elite, to the new functions of training the work force and especially the production of new knowledge through research and development, is prevalently becoming an urgent necessity.

There are still some problems in relation to equity and access. Although the GER is relatively high i.e. 17.1 percent, there are large income, gender and geographic disparities. For example, students from rural and remote areas have limited access and female participation in science and technology is less than 20 percent while overall female participation has reached 47 percent (World Bank 2015).

The growth of private higher education world-wide has been one of the most remarkable developments of the past several decades (Altbach et al. 2009). In the same way, the number of private HEIs is also increasing in Nepal too. There were 701 private HEIs in 2001/12 and the number has increased to 751 in 2012/13 (University Grants Commission 2013; University Grants Commission 2014). There is still lack of ICT for the development of HE and even the students enrollment in such area is very low (World Bank 2015). Internet and other online resources are out of reach for many students. However, the situation has improved to some extent comparing with the past 10 years. For example, some selected colleges affiliated to different universities have established online library, online courses and ICT related programmes such as Bachelor's and Master's in Computer Application especially in the city areas. The government has started to provide some scholarships to the selected students enrolled in the programmes of ICT considering that the number of graduates in such programmes is very low (ibid.). This shows that Nepalese HE has just started to be familiar with the use of ICT.

In this way, Nepal has started to improve its HE system in line with the developed global trends in HE education. The establishment of the University Grants Commission can be taken as a response Nepal implemented to start working on its HE system more effectively. The detailed discussion about the UGC in Nepal has been made in the following section.

2.5 The University Grants Commission in Nepal

There was a need for a regulatory authority in higher education after the implementation of multi-university concept in Nepal. As a result, the University Grants Commission was established. It was established as a statutory and autonomous body when the UGC Act was approved by the Parliament on November 22, 1993. Since then, it has been working in the field of Higher Education. It has different roles and responsibilities. It is responsible for allocation and disbursement of grants to the universities and their campuses, regulating their activities and formulating policies and programmes on establishment of new universities. The major objectives of the UGC are to coordinate among universities; allocate and disburse government grants to universities and HEIs and take appropriate steps for the promotion and maintenance of standards of higher education in Nepal (University Grants Commission 2012/13). It works to uplift the Nepalese higher education suitable for the country and equivalent to the global standard.

Functions of University Grants Commission

The University Grants Commission is liable to carry out different functions as led by its Act, which was formed in 1993 (University Grants Commission 2012/13). As mentioned by the webpage of the UGC¹¹, the current functions are:

- To advise the Government of Nepal on the establishment of new universities,
- To formulate policy for the allocation of government grants to the universities and higher education institutions,
- To disburse grants to universities and make recommendations to the concerned bodies for additional grants.
- To coordinate among the universities.
- To take necessary steps for determination and maintenance of standards of higher education.
- To formulate necessary policies and programmes for the promotion and enhancement of quality in higher education.
- To make necessary arrangement on the exchange of scholarships, fellowships etc. between the universities and educational institutions within or outside Nepal.

¹¹ <http://www.ugcnepal.edu.np/page-detail/main-functions-of-th>

As one of its important functions is to formulate necessary policies and programmes for the promotion and enhancement of quality in higher education, its involvement for the coordination among different stakeholders of HE sector while drafting the HE policy seems appreciable. The following section briefly outlines how the policy is framed and what role the UGC plays.

2.6 Higher Education Policy Development in Nepal

Policy, in general, refers to the principle of action proposed by an organization or individual to run them efficiently. In the words of Gornitzka (1999), it is “a public statement of an objective and the kind of instruments that will be used to achieve it” (p. 14). It can be taken as a tool to achieve a certain goal. However, Nepal does not have a specific higher education policy document for its smooth development; although it is very essential to provide a good roadmap for providing quality HE necessary for the country as well as the global labor market. Bajracharya (2012) observes “a clear lack of policy outlining criteria for institutional development” (p. 65). Nepal Government is responsible for formulating policies but it has been unable to create a HE policy due to frequent changes of political parties to lead the government. As the political leadership changes, the condition of the universities becomes vulnerable due to being adjusted with the political ideologies. It has created a perennial conflict within and among all the stakeholders of HE such as students, teaching staffs, academic bureaucrats and so on. In this way, the fluid political situation has led the universities maintain a survival strategy by continuing long rituals (ibid.).

The higher education in Nepal is passing through the stage of massification, which has brought many challenges such as running the HEIs; challenges in promoting the qualities of different educational programmes; lack of qualified teachers; lack of various physical and educational prerequisites and many more (Bhushal 2011). The policies get changed before they are implemented due to the political instability while policy reform is a long-term process that needs continued support over a protracted period (World Bank 2015). As a result, the public and private higher education institutions run the programmes on their own plans. A good governing HE policy is the necessity for giving them a good direction.

Considering the need of HE policy for finding the solutions to the problems existed, the University Grants Commission has recently drafted a higher education policy upon the

request of the MoE and proposed it to Nepal Government for its endorsement (World Bank 2015). This is the first specific policy document in the field of higher education in Nepal and it is still waiting to be passed from the cabinet. There was no broader and particular national policy framework on how higher education should be organized, managed and directed before. It is hoped that the recently formulated HE policy with hard work and long study will come into effect and bring reformations in the field of higher education very soon.

The policy formulation process follows a certain approach. After analyzing the document of University Grants Commission (2014a), the following approaches can be found in the process:

- Review of documents.
- Preparation of discussion papers
- Consultations with the stakeholders
- Workshops in five development regions of Nepal
- Policy framework draft preparation
- National workshops for the finalization of draft
- Submission of drafts to MoE for necessary action for government endorsement

In preparation of this HE policy document, the participants are from the various fields such as government, UGC, universities, teachers, students, political parties, international organizations, industries and other concerned authorities (ibid.). Each of their direct or indirect contribution has a significant role in formulating appropriate policy for the nation. The UGC coordinates with all the stakeholders while formulating the HE policy.

3 THEORETICAL BASIS AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The present chapter deals with the theoretical basis, literature review for setting the background for analytical framework, and finally presents the analytical framework for the study.

The study on the involvement of international organizations in the field of education, particularly in the developing countries, has become an important area because of their positive and sometimes negative impacts (Al'Abri 2011). They cannot be completely neglected. Due to this, many researchers have made their attempts to find out the roles of different IOs in the field of education. In the present globalized world, it is difficult to imagine an international system without international organizations because these institutions have become an indispensable part of global governance (Frey and Stutzer 2006). Normally, it is the mission of global organizations like UNESCO to promote global vision of higher education in which people are enabled to function in their personal, professional and community lives, and able to be perpetuators and repositories of knowledge, ideas and local and national cultural tradition (Sadlak 1998). At the same time, the exchange of policies throughout the globe is another phenomenon for globalization.

3.1 Theoretical Basis

It is widely accepted that the strong development of any research is linked to the appropriate theoretical concept relevant for the study. Therefore, this part outlines a theoretical concept based on which the overall study draws its foundation. The present study will be based on the world system theory which is a macro sociological theory (Martinez-Vela 2001) that has been used to study how the global higher education system spread among different nation states.

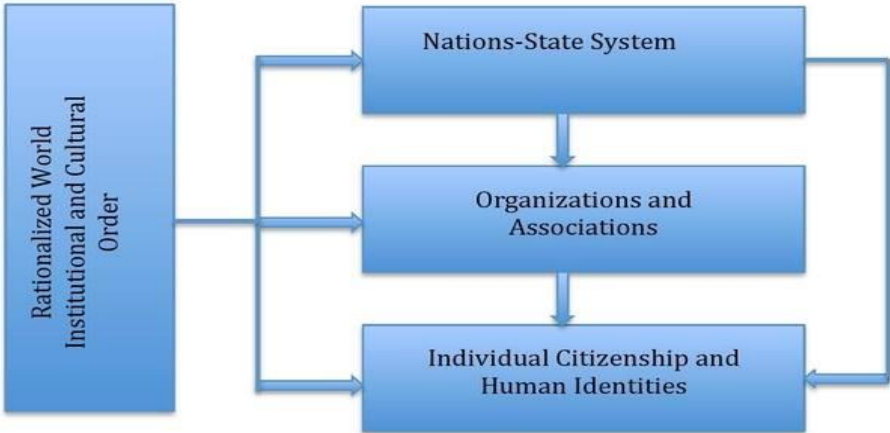
3.1.1 World System Theory

World system theory, similar to dependency theories, having roots in Marxism, is critical of social inequalities (Klak 2002; Potter 2002). This theory provides the insights and ideas to look at how nation-states, their activities, development programmes, plans and policies are influenced by world culture. As mentioned by Daun (2009), world system theory can be

further divided into two parts: political economic world system theory and institutional world system theory. The former (political world system theory) having its “phases on economic growth and recession” (Daun, 2009, p. 283) regards competitiveness, profit and accumulation as the determinant of global happenings, which in turn affects the development of nation states (Klak, 2002; Daun 2009). The latter (institutional world system theory), on the other hand, focuses on the existence of world society and world culture. This study utilizes the latter type of world system theory as the theoretical basis because it provides an understanding of how global processes have affected the development of nation states, i.e. in case of this research- how the activities of IOs (WB and UNESCO) concerned with the global higher education issues have influenced higher education in Nepal.

The nation states are very much influenced by world culture. Though the policies, goals and priorities of the nation states are the outcomes of national consensus, the instrumental role of the world culture is very essential. In this regard, Meyer et al. (1997) assert the view that nation states are supposed to carefully address the world culture by including modern form of society, for example the idea of mass schooling. They should be the part of world society. Nation state is considered as worldwide institution constructed by worldwide cultural and associational processes (ibid.).

Figure 1: Process of World Cultural Influence: The World as Enactment of Culture



Adapted from Meyer et al. (1997, p. 151)

The diagram shows that the world society, nation state, organizations and individuals influence each other. The present study builds its base on the above mentioned framework as it analyzes the activities of the WB and UNESCO (organizations) to seek their roles and influencing mechanisms while transmitting globally dominant HE topics (world society and culture) to Nepal (nation-state).

Meyer et al. (1997) suggest that the world culture spreads in two ways, namely- through the creation of international organizations, and through professionals who create international organizations and affiliations. The present study assumes that the world culture spreads through the former. Since the study deals with how the world culture is transmitted into nation states through IOs, it seems remarkable to discuss briefly about their role and the mechanisms of influence. So, this has been discussed in detail in the following sections.

3.2 Setting the Background for Analytical Framework

In this section, the researcher has reviewed the literature related to the activities of international organizations and transmission of globally dominant HE agendas. The main purpose of this discussion is to pave the way to the analytical framework. The section is divided into three sub-sections which deal with significance of international organizations with reference to global HE agendas; reflection on the roles of international organizations in transmitting/globalizing higher education agendas; and finally the reflection on the mechanisms of international organizations' influence while transmitting global HE agendas/policies.

3.2.1 Significance of International Organizations Regarding Global HE Agendas

International organizations play a pivotal role at different levels of higher education development. Their support may be in the form of finance, technology, sharing of ideas/advice and etc. Such organizations can be regional (for example, ASEAN) or global (for example, UNESCO). They have been found significantly important in shaping the context of national education policies and becoming influential policy agents around the world, particularly but not exclusively in the countries having low income (Al'Abri 2011).

Since a few years, education policy making has been no longer an exclusive affair of the nation-state as transnational organizations, to which most nation-states belong, are the main contexts which define the major education aims (Moutsios 2009). As a result, they (IOs) have been doing various activities for the formation and transmission of different higher education agendas globally, regionally and locally. They have made the effort to introduce policy texts, categories, numbers, and indicators on higher education to construct and reproduce the global discursive landscape upon which to make sense of higher education and in turn articulate higher education policy (Shahjahan 2012). Another scholar, Yang (2009) asserts that international organizations play an increasingly important role in the process of educational policy formation and evaluation, involving negotiating consensus and conventions, ensuring coordinated policy action across national systems as well as supporting international cooperation in education through the development of global indicators and quality. Such approaches of IOs indicate a trend toward uniformity, demanding a convergence in thinking and accepting similar diagnoses of problems confronting educational systems with widely differing social, political, and economic traditions. They influence national systems through a number of normative and rule-creating activities (Jacobson 1984 as cited in Yang 2009, p. 175). This shows that the IOs play significant roles by spreading the relevant information in the process of educational policy formation, implementation and evaluation throughout the globe. Such organizations conduct various activities for worldwide educational policy convergence which include the exchange of information, charters and constitutions, standard-setting instruments, and technical and financial resources (McNealy and Cha 1994 as cited in Yang 2009, p. 175).

It is believed that almost all the countries throughout the world are trying to cope with the changing phenomenon of globalization. Education is one of the most important sources that can lead the country towards globalization and is also impacted by the globalization (Al'Abri 2011). Due to this, the countries around the world have been responding to the challenges of globalization and the information age by expanding their higher education systems (Ashcroft 2004). To expand HE systems, it is essential to globalize higher education policy which is possible through the assistance of IOs (Shahjahan 2012). IOs can assist the countries with their different supports such as financial aid, policy directions, and publications. After reading the work of Shahjahan (2012, pp. 384-388), the following points can be picked out on how IOs transmit and globalize HE policies/agendas:

- IOs globalize higher education policy through various discursive roles, and increasingly shift the location of policy articulation from the national/local toward the global.
- IOs also globalize higher education policy (i.e. global discourses enter national/local discourses) through their recommendations merging with national policy discourses.
- IOs also globalize higher education policy by forging common policy agendas at the supranational level.

Tilak (2010) has studied the financing of education for development in the Asian region. He asserts that the international loans and grants, both bilateral and multilateral, have been important sources for the financing of education in some of the Asian countries. Moreover, almost all the low income countries of this region receive small to significant amounts of external aids for educational development. In this sense, there is somewhere inevitable connection between IOs and national higher education through the means of financing which seems directly or indirectly essential for carrying the common agendas and assisting in the formation and implementation of the policies for globalizing higher education.

3.2.2 Reflection on Various Roles of International Organizations

There are many international organizations which have their own roles in the field of higher education. These organizations include the World Bank, UNESCO, OECD, EU, and so on. These organizations engage with different aspects of higher education policy making. Sometimes, they have the similar agendas and issues while in some other cases their agendas and issues differ. Sadlak and Hufner (2002) view that the World Bank, with reference to higher education, plays a significant role not only through its lending practices but also by getting directly involved in analytical work, policy advice and technical assistance. This reflects that the WB is actively involved in the field of HE. Similarly, in regards to UNESCO, they assert that it involves in the promotion of research on higher education, especially related to educational policy and decision making; and supports the functioning of a whole web of international networks for dissemination and communication of information on higher education (ibid.).

Since two major organizations, namely the World Bank and UNESCO have been taken for the study; it is relevant to analyze their activities in Nepal with reference to their global

activities. Some of the areas of their activities are identical while a few are different. Shahjahan (2012, p. 373) lists out the following main higher education activities of the WB and UNESCO globally:

Table 2: Major Activities of the World Bank and UNESCO in the Field of HE

World Bank	UNESCO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ produce policy reports ➤ provide financial support (e.g., loans, funding initiatives) ➤ collect and analyze data ➤ offer policy advice ➤ sponsor inter-national/regional conferences and networks (e.g., South-South networks) ➤ supply technical support ➤ provide analytical assistance (to help governments decide on possible reforms in higher education) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ data collection ➤ standard setting, through its regional conventions ➤ policy research reports ➤ nonbinding guidelines (e.g., 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel) ➤ foresight projects ➤ technical assistance ➤ international conferences and networks

Adapted from Shahjahan (2012, p. 373)

Although there are many roles of IOs, Shahjahan (2012, pp. 380 - 398) concludes under three major roles which are discussed below:

i. IOs as Discursive Forces

IOs play a significant role while framing the higher education policy. They assist the policy makers with their “policy texts, categories, ideas, numbers, and spaces of equivalence” (Shahjahan 2012, p. 381). They circulate and make their policy texts available for the citation and acknowledgements. Sometimes, some IOs have some particular similar ideas. For example, most of the IOs promote equality of access (Cloete et al. 2006), lifelong learning (Jakobi 2009), construct a global quality assurance (QA) policy in higher education (Henry et al. 2001), market oriented higher education reform and etc. Generally, IOs use international

language to introduce various “frames of general acceptability” (Shahjahan 2012, p. 383) in global higher education policy. It is also important to mention that IOs globalize HE policy through their recommendations merging with national and local policy discourses (Gounko and Smale 2006; Yannig 2010). Moreover, they provide data/indicators for comparison or to global spaces of equivalence (Shahjahan 2012) for maintaining the quality of higher education which is essential for the competitiveness of the ‘modern society’ (Saarinen 2008).

ii. IOs as Global Networkers

Another important role of IOs is that they function as global networkers. Shahjahan (2012) mentions “IOs introduce complex dynamics into the higher education policy by building network relations across new higher education policy communities” (p. 386). They organize various meetings and seminars to discuss the common issues on higher education. Different IOs assist and facilitate stakeholders from different contexts to get together and collect different ideas which are suitable for that particular time and period. They set and connect the members' policy agendas; and coordinate for the policy implementation among members (ibid.). In some cases, different IOs work with the same agendas in the same way while in some other cases, they differ and they put different views. For example, the specific contexts of their mission, needs and activities can differ considerably (Hufner et al. 1997). IOs also act as policy bridges between different regional contexts, and in turn globalize higher education policy (Shahjahan 2012), for example, the agreement between the EU and five states of Central Asia to work together on an international basis.

iii. IOs as Coordinators

Actually, under this role, we seek to find out the degree and nature of the involvement of IOs in the formation and implementation of national higher education policies with reference to their technical support. It is also considered whether IOs act as advisor or complementary to higher education policy. In addition to this, it is also observed how global agendas favored by international organizations affect the nature of national policies and the policies of HEIs. The degree is concerned with the supply of technical resources and their effects in implementation. They may also help to bring co-ordinations among HEIs at national as well as supranational level. Global policy space is composed of many sectors such as IOs, national players, NGOs and many more. The salience of IOs varies nationally as well as regionally as

there is more marginal and advisory roles of IOs in developed countries and such countries may use IOs to advance their agendas (Shahjahan 2012). This shows that these countries may influence in decision making. He also asserts the view that the more the countries depend on IOs, the lesser they are independent in policy making (ibid.). As a result, there is more and direct influence of IOs in the countries having low income. However, the attempts have been made to change the trend due to various criticisms. For example, the WB has recently shifted from top-down conditionality to a “country ownership model whereby client countries can now propose projects to be funded” (Verger 2009, as cited in Shahjahan 2012, p.395). Finally, it is also found that HEIs differ in terms of autonomy as some HEIs use various forms of autonomy to enact and mediate in the use of global policy space (Shahjahan 2012). HEIs are the actors of the IOs' policy implementation where IOs may offer various technical recourses for the effective implementation of the global agendas carried by them.

The above interpretation can be summarized in the following table mainly based on the literature of Shahjahan (2012):

Table 3: Major Roles of IOs in Globalizing HE Policies

As Discursive Forces	As Networkers	As Coordinators
Provide policy texts, categories, ideas, numbers, languages necessary for constructing HE policy in various contexts	Serve as global networkers by sponsoring and building policy learning platforms connecting different stakeholders whereby policy ideas gather and spread to tackle common policy issues	Provide various technical resources to ensure policy implementation among members where the degree of influence in national policy making may differ from country to country.

Based on Shahjahan (2012)

3.2.3 Reflection on the Mechanisms of International Organizations' Influence

The global flows of education ideas and policies have also grown along with the phenomenon of globalization and the intensification of the knowledge-based economy (Wende 2011). This growing trend, out of some others, has resulted in the development of certain global higher education agendas. Such global agendas on higher education have an essential dominance in

framing the policies at national level, for example, they are normally transmitted to different nation states and presented as the policy options while framing the national policy by different international organizations such as the World Bank and UNESCO. In support of this, Verger et al. (2012) state “IOs are conceptualized as key transmitters of particular views of education and educational reform, basically instrumental and market oriented, to national contexts” (p. 15). Moreover, Lebeau and Sall (2011) specifically express the influence of the WB and UNESCO on higher education and mention that these IOs have dominated the conceptualization of higher education and development, and influenced the main initiatives taken. At the same time, they also have exercised more or less influence on other global, regional or local stakeholders.

The world has been transformed as a small global village; as a result, the borders among the nations are not the barriers (Al'Abri 2011) for following uniform global trends. However, there are different mechanisms of influence while transmitting the global agendas by international organizations. Such impacts and influences are “mediated in different ways across developed and developing countries with international organizations having more direct and less mediated effects on the developing nations” (ibid., p. 491). In this regard, Dale (1999) categorizes a series of voluntary and compulsory global mechanisms, normally related to international organizations, which, in recent decades, have acquired more centrality than traditional mechanisms of external influence such as ‘policy borrowing’ and ‘policy learning’. He has termed “policy borrowing” and “policy learning” as “traditional” or “orthodox” mechanisms of external influence (ibid., p. 5). The new mechanisms are supposed to be more detail and can provide a proper framework for evaluating different effects. Following the idea of Dale (1999), these new mechanisms have been briefly described below.

i. Imposition

Imposition is reflected when the external factors such as IOs or powerful countries compel some other countries to follow particular education policies. For example, there are some criticisms with the working performance of the WB and the IMF where they are said to impose policy on loan conditionality.

ii. Harmonization

Harmonization is realized when the member countries of any international/regional organization or an area mutually agree to follow common policies. For example, there is practice of EHEA for implementing the similar HE policies in the area.

iii. Dissemination

This type of mechanism is realized when an international organization tries to convince the country for the implementation of certain policies. For example, supply of their technical assistance or publications (annual reports, journals, data bases and etc.) can be used to persuade the country.

iv. Standardization

It occurs when the international community defines and forms a set of certain policy principles or standards that frame the country's behavior. For example, the PISA helps to standardize the curricular content at the global level, international QA system promotes the quality of HE.

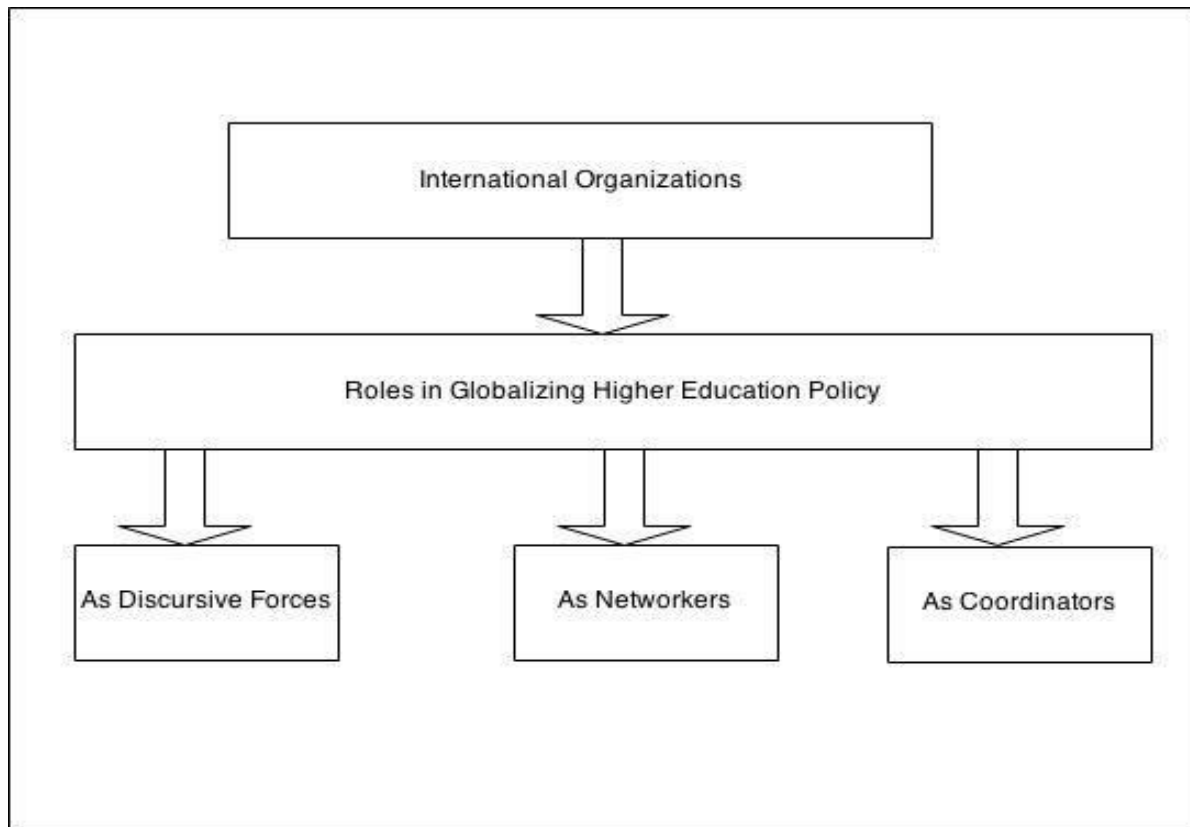
v. Installing Interdependence

This mechanism appears when the countries agree to achieve common objectives to tackle problems which require international co-operation. For example, Education for All, Climate change, Millennium Development Goals.

3.3 Analytical Framework

Analytical framework is a guideline to analyze the data and move towards the findings. The researcher has presented two different diagrams to analyze the data depending on the research questions. These two diagrams are based on different views of scholars particularly Shahjahan (2012) and Dale (1999).

Figure 2: Roles of IOs with Reference to Global HE Policy

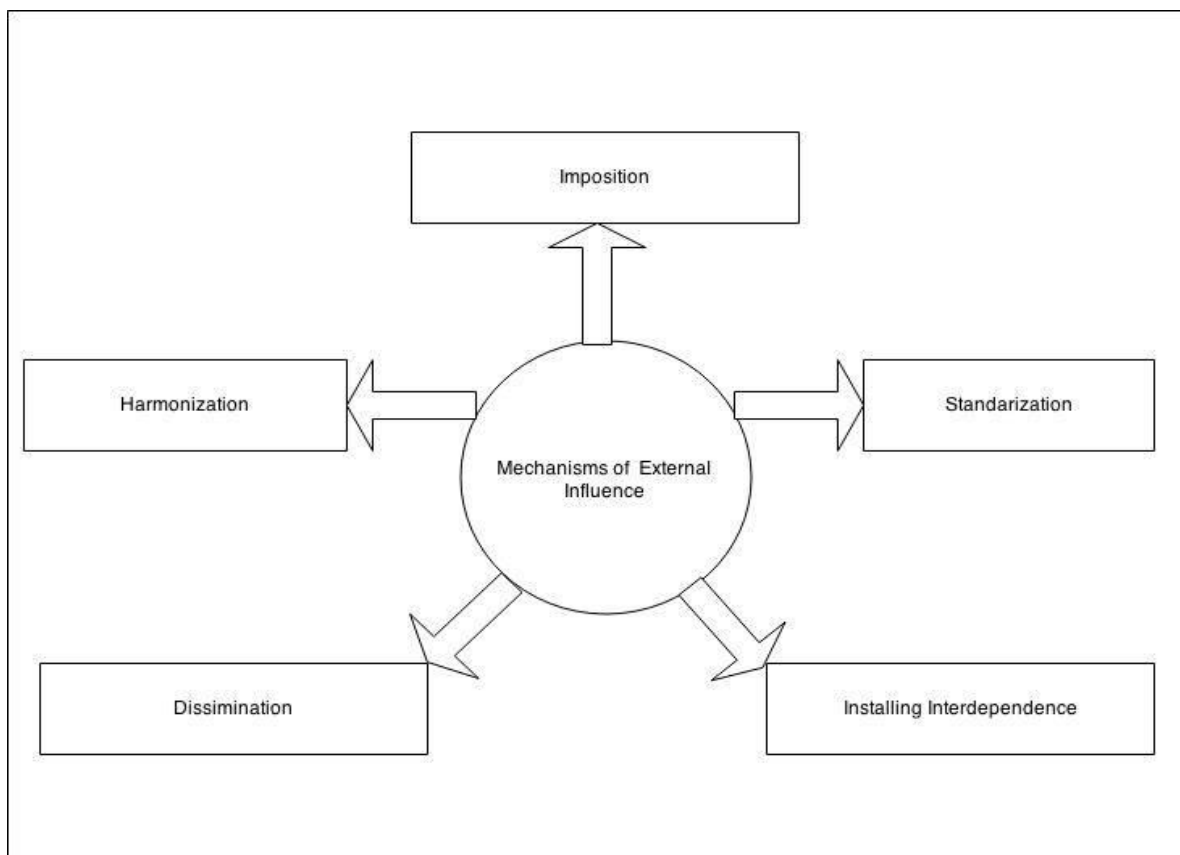


Based on Shahjahan (2012)

The above diagram has been prepared mainly based on the literature Shahjahan (2012) along with some other supportive literatures which have already been discussed in the previous sections. According to him, the term ‘policy’ not only refers to the texts or the rules/laws but also the policy process as a vehicle through which policy messages or values are constructed, circulated, contested, or modified (Shahjahan 2012). The diagram shows that international organizations have three major roles in transmitting/globalizing higher education policy/agenda. These roles are- as discursive forces, as networkers, and as coordinators (ibid.). The same concept has been utilized as the analytical framework to analyze the findings on how the international organizations are transmitting the global higher education agendas to Nepal. To be specific, it has given a guideline for the analysis of the responses obtained from the interviewees and related information from the selected documents to seek whether the World Bank and UNESCO are acting as ‘discursive forces, networkers or coordinators’ in bringing global issues to Nepalese higher education policy.

It has been found from the earlier discussions that the way the international organizations transmit the global educational policy results different mechanisms of influence. For example, it is normally experienced that international organizations impose their policy interests, objectives and philosophies in developing nations via conditionality linked with loans (Al'Abri 2011). Dale (1999) has stated five new mechanisms of influence excluding traditional mechanisms of influence viz. 'policy borrowing' and 'policy learning'.

Figure 3: New Mechanisms of External Influence



Based on Dale (1999)

The diagram shows that there are five different voluntary and compulsory mechanisms, through which the external effects on national education systems are carried and delivered (Dale 1999), normally related to international organizations, which bring influence in shaping national education policy. This has been used as a framework for analyzing the data; particularly related to how the activities of the World Bank and UNESCO are influencing the Nepalese HE system while transmitting globally dominant HE issues to Nepal. The study has also explored which mechanism is more dominant in relation to the World Bank and UNESCO in Nepal.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the overall methodological framework which consists of research design, research methods along with data collection and data analysis procedures. This is followed by the discussion of the validity and reliability of the study. Finally, the chapter presents the limitations of the study.

4.1 Qualitative Research

The present research is a case study that follows qualitative research strategy and methods. Anderson (1998) defines qualitative research as “a form of inquiry that explores phenomena in their natural settings and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them” (p. 119). In the same way, Flick (2006) asserts that the correct choice of appropriate methods and theories is one of the most important features of qualitative methods. In the same way, the researcher attempts to understand the world from the participants’ points of view in qualitative research (Bryman 2012; McMillan 2012). There are certain procedures of qualitative data analysis which include “organizing, accounting for and explaining the data, in short making sense of data in terms of the participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities” (Cohen et al. 2007, p. 461).

Accordingly, this study implies the appropriate and multiple methods of data collection, for example, interview, field notes and document analysis. While analyzing, the steps presented by Cohen et al. (2007) such as organization, explanation, taking out themes and noting patterns were carefully followed. The participants’ views had the important role in leading the researcher towards more accurate findings similar to the views of Bryman (2012) and McMillan (2012).

4.2 Case Study Research Design

A case study is an intensive analysis of a single case i.e. person, institution, group or event with the developmental factors in relation to the context (Bryman 2012). In the same way, Yin (2014) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (p. 16). This shows

that a phenomenon or a case is the core part of the case study where the in-depth analysis is made. In case study, qualitative researchers utilize the multiple sources and methods of data collection, for example, interviews, observations, document analysis, and reports (McMillan 2012; Yin 2014).

The present study can be linked to the above ideas of the scholars. This study is a case study as it analyzes the single case i.e. the role of IOs mainly confined to the World Bank and UNESCO in transmitting global HE trends to Nepal. It makes the analysis of the contemporary phenomenon concerned with the World Bank and UNESCO in real context of Nepal, in line with Yin (2014). In addition, the study has utilized the multiple methods and sources of data collection as suggested by (McMillan 2012; Yin 2014). These methods and sources include interviews, document analysis and field notes, which have been discussed in detail in the following sections.

4.3 Methods of Data Collection

Data collection process is “the key point of any research project” which utilizes different methods such as interviewing, questionnaires and field notes (Bryman 2012, p. 12). The present study has utilized the multiple methods and sources of data collection as per the nature of research design. The multiple methods of data collection have been utilized to drive the research projects towards more accurate findings as recommend by (Bryman 2012; Yin 2014). The main target of using such process is to establish the greater extent of validity and reliability.

4.3.1 Semi-structured Interview

Interview is a common tool of data collection in qualitative research. Bryman (2012) mentions that qualitative interview is useful to obtain “rich and detailed answers” (p. 470). Furthermore, semi-structured interview is used to collect the information from the informants with flexibility (Bryman 2012). While using such interview “the researcher can keep an open mind about the contours of what he or she needs to know about” (ibid., p. 12). The main purpose of this type of interview is to get in-depth information from the respondents (Bryman, 2012; Creswell 2012; McMillan 2012). The researcher had prepared an interview guide, as suggested by Bryman (2012) to cover specific topics. He asserts that the researcher has a list

of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred as an interview guide, in a semi-structured interview (ibid.).

With regard to this study, the researcher has used semi-structured interview as the primary tool of data collection. The interviews were conducted with six different persons who have taken part in framing the higher policy through different times. Attempt has been made to collect the information from their responses and have their perspectives on the role of the WB and UNESCO in the development of higher education policy in Nepal in correspondence with the global trends of HE.

4.3.2 Purposeful Sampling

It is the first task of the researcher to identify the appropriate respondents for the interview of the research and how many to take. Regarding the sampling of respondents for interview, the researcher has adopted the purposive sampling procedure in order to get the relevant informants as Bryman (2012) mentions that purposive sampling allows participants relevant to the research questions that are being posed. The main purpose of choosing purposive sampling “lies in selecting information-rich cases for the study in depth”, which helps the qualitative researcher understand the great deal about the central issues based on the research questions of the study (Patton 1990, p. 169). The researcher selected six people purposefully for the interview based on their involvement and contribution in framing the higher education policy. They are the policy contributors from different fields but working for the development of higher education in Nepal. They are from the Ministry of Education, University Grants Commission, World Bank, UNESCO and Educationist from education sector.

Table 4: Interview Overview

Title of Interviewee	Role in HE	Code	Date of Interview
Programme and Planning Officer, UGC	Participator of Regular HE Discussion at UGC	UGC ₁	20.07.2014
Advisor, UGC	Technical Advisor of SHEP, Thematic Committee Member of HE Policy Framework	UGC ₂	10.08.2014
Consultant, WB	Team Leader and HE Consultant, WB Group Nepal	WB	05.08.2014
National Programme Officer, UNESCO	Team Leader of Education Sector, UNESCO Office in Kathmandu	UNESCO	01.08.2014
Secretary, MOE	Supervisor of Overall Education Sector in Nepal	MoE	04.08.2014
Educationist	Member of UGC, Member of HE Policy Framework	EDU	25.07.2014

4.3.3 Field Notes

Field notes also play an important role in qualitative research. They are normally the written records of the experience that the interviewer achieves while he is in the actual field. They include the actions, activities, reflections and experience of both the interviewer and interviewees. McMillan (2012) regards that a qualitative researcher gets two kinds of information from his field notes which include: descriptive (e.g. description of setting like time, place; participants' looks; reactions; etc.) and informative (e.g. researchers' personal feelings; thoughts; etc.). Field notes help to understand the true perspectives of the subject matter being studied. They assist the researcher to present findings in order to address the research questions (Bryman 2012; McMillan 2012).

In the same way, the researcher prepared the field notes while he was in the field. The notes were also developed right after conducting each interview covering the actual experience.

They included both the types: descriptive and informative. They were highly supportive while presenting and analyzing the findings of the study which addressed the research questions.

4.3.4 Document Analysis

Document Analysis has been used as an additional tool of data collection as per the nature of the research. Documents have been especially used to erase the questions arose after the researcher got the responses from the informants. This helped him fill the gaps and validate the information. Moreover, documents were also consulted while framing the research questions. Bryman (2012) advocates document analysis as an important instrument of qualitative research.

The researcher has reviewed some documents of the World Bank and UNESCO particularly related to higher education policies such as, various declarations on higher education (for example, World Declaration on HE for 21st Century: Vision and Action by UNESCO on October 9, 1998), policy documents (for example Policy Paper for Change and Development in HE by UNESCO 1995), reports (for example, Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise, Report of the Independent Task Force by World Bank/UNESCO 2000; Higher Education: The Lessons of Experience by World Bank 1994), journals, conference papers and etc. to analyze their policies with special focus in globalizing higher education. At the same time, different documents such as education policy documents, annual reports, annual budget reports, journals, conference papers and etc. produced by the Ministry of Education, Nepal Government; and the University Grants Commission were reviewed to seek and analyze the influence made by the policies of the WB and UNESCO. In addition, the proposed higher education policy document formulated by the UGC under the assistance of Nepal Government was also utilized for getting information. These documents have been utilized from the view point of how the World Bank and UNESCO have actually promoted global trends of HE into Nepal's HE context. Among many, some of the highly focused documents have been listed in the table below.

Table 5: Overview of Documents Used for the Analysis

S. N.	Title of the Documents	Translated Title	Publisher
1.	Shakshik Suchana, 2071	Information on Education, 2014	MoE
2.	Uchcha Shiksha Policy Prastawana, 2070	Proposed Higher Education Policy, 2013/14	UGC
3.	IMIS Reports on Higher Education	IMIS Reports on Higher Education	UGC
4.	Annual Reports of the UGC	Annual Reports of the UGC	UGC
5.	Reports on Different Higher Education Projects (HEP, SHEP, HERP)	Reports on Different Higher Education Projects (HEP, SHEP, HERP)	World Bank
6.	Press Release of UNESCO Kathmandu Office, 2011	Press Release of UNESCO Kathmandu Office, 2011	UNESCO

4.4 Process of Data Analysis

The researcher has utilized multiple methods and sources of data collection such as semi-structured interview, document analysis and field notes. As a result, there was a huge and complicated amount of information. The procedures of coding and generating the themes were applied to make the data more systematic and meaningful. This helped the researcher reduce the large amount of data to make a sense of it as suggested by Bryman (2012).

The interviews were recorded with the view that the information obtained from the respondents would not be lost. Out of six interviews, five were taken in English language while one was in Nepali language. All the interviews were transcribed listening to them as many times as it needed. The interview that was taken in Nepali language was also translated into English language. The collected information from the field notes was really helpful to recall the moments that took place with the informants during the fieldwork time. In addition, the necessary information from the selected documents was also sorted out. This really helped the researcher fill the gaps that emerged among the data collected through interviews. Finally, the findings were analyzed and discussed in line with the concepts and theories discussed in previous chapter.

4.5 Issue of Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important criteria of producing the quality of any research. They are two major components in designing, analyzing and judging the quality of qualitative research (Patton 2002). The triangulation in the qualitative research indicates the use of multiple methods or sources of data collection and analysis (Bryman 2012; Lambert 2102). This is also one of the strengths of the case study research where the retrieved information can be cross-checked over a number of different sources (Yin 2014).

The term validity in the research refers to whether the research is exactly measuring what it claims to be measuring (Bryman 2012). Validity can be divided into internal validity and external validity. Internal validity refers to “whether there is a good match between researchers’ observations and the theoretical ideas they develop” (ibid., p. 390). The stronger the match between these two, the higher the study is internally valid. On the other hand, external validity refers to “the degree to which findings can be generalized across social settings” i.e. beyond the specific research context (ibid.). Establishing validity also depends on how properly the data collection methods have been utilized. For example, in interviews, the best way of achieving greater validity is to minimize bias as much as possible (Cohen et al. 2007). In this study, the researcher has tried to establish the validity by the use of triangulation. This also helped to minimize the bias.

On the other hand, reliability refers to the consistency in measurement. It concerns with whether the results of a study are consistent and repeatable with the same set of instruments (Bryman 2012). The goal of reliability is moreover to minimize errors and biases in the study, which will be ensured by documenting the chains of thoughts that have led to certain decisions in the phase of the study design and data collection, and by staying in close consultation with the supervisors (Yin, 2014). With regard to this study, the multiple methods of data collection and data analysis were applied. For example, related documents in addition to the primary tool of data collection i.e. interview have been used to validate the data and make the result of the study more reliable. Moreover, the perineal feedbacks and guidance on the appropriate research procedures from the supervisor are other strengths of the study for establishing the reliability.

4.6 Potential Ethical Issues

Carrying out any research on any topic is a challenging task. There are several ethical issues that must be taken into consideration while conducting such research. Bryman (2012) mentions:

the ethics of social research bring us into a realm in which the role of values in the research process becomes a topic concerns. They revolve around such issues as: How should we treat the people on whom we conduct research? Are there activities in which we should or should not engage in our relations with them? (p. 130)

Following the same idea, the researcher has tried his best to maintain the value by being aware on the rights and independency of the participants. He respected the respondents and their busy schedule. Keeping this in mind, he had managed the time with them in advance. He also clarified how the participants (organizations and people) would be benefitted from the findings of the research. The participants were not sampled depending on the relations rather they were selected depending on who could provide the best information.

Regarding the issue of ethical principles, Diener and Crandall (1978 as cited in Bryman 2012) discuss four principles in social research which include: harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception. These principles were considered while carrying out this research. The ethical principle ‘no harm’ was maintained with the assurance that the participants including the researcher would not have any harm and discomfort while conducting the interviews. To obtain the principle ‘informed consent’, the attempt was made to establish the agreement with the interviewees through E-mails. They were even verbally mentioned about the purpose of the study before conducting the interviews. ‘Invasion of privacy’ is another important ethical principle. To maintain this principle, the participants were clarified that the information collected would be confidential and utilized for no other than the research purpose. Considering the rights of the participants, they were allowed to withdraw the interview at any time and use the language of their comfort as the medium of the interview. The last ethical principle ‘deception’ was considered with the attempt of representing the researcher’s field work with what it actually is. The interviews were recorded and the field notes were prepared while being in the field for minimizing the deception.

To make the study more ethical, the participants were assured that the result would be provided to the institution and the authority from where the data were collected for the further improvements of their planning.

4.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is a case study dealing with the context of a single country of South Asia i.e. Nepal. Further, the study is limited to the largest two international organizations working in the sector of education in Nepal, viz. the World Bank and UNESCO. The study is rather confined to how the World Bank and UNESCO transmit globally dominant HE issues to Nepal. However, the study has been done observing broadly confining activities of the World Bank and UNESCO related to the major global HE issues such as equity and access, quality assurance and accreditations, financial sustainability, knowledge sharing across borders, institutional autonomy and ICT in HE; which are the recent policy directions of the WB and UNESCO. The study is also limited to the activities from 1990 and onwards as this is the most important period for the reformation of higher education and political restructuring (monarchical to republican system) in Nepal. For example, there are reformations in the examination system, structures of the academic programmes, and changes in curriculum. In addition, the World Bank started its projects for the reformation of HE during 1990s.

The findings are based on the responses made by the persons who have directly or indirectly taken part in formulating the higher education policy and related policy document analysis. The respondents were purposively selected because of their availability and available resources. Only the selected policy related documents of Nepal Government, the UGC, the WB and UNESCO were utilized for the study. The findings are also limited to relatively short period of time. As there were no particular Higher Education Policy documents till the date, the recently proposed higher education policy document was selected for the study. The findings may not be applicable in the context of other countries in South Asia sharing some similar features.

5 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter presents and analyzes the data and at the same time discusses the findings.

The chapter has been divided into four sections. Section- A responds to the first research question: How are the World Bank and UNESCO interacting with Nepal's HE sector? Are they 'discursive forces, networkers or coordinators' to bring globally dominant HE topics to Nepal? In the same way, Section-B concerns with the second research question: What are the existing mechanisms of influence observed with the activities of the World Bank and UNESCO in bringing globally dominant HE ideas to Nepal? Likewise, Section- C deals with the third research question: How do the individuals involved in policy making understand the significance of the World Bank and UNESCO in transmitting globally dominant HE concepts to Nepal? Finally, Section-D summarizes the involvement of the World Bank and UNESCO in Nepal's HE development.

Section- A

Role and Activities of the World Bank and UNESCO in Nepalese Higher Education

It has been found from the discussions of different literatures in the previous chapters that IOs carry out different activities to spread the global trends of HE into the national HE system (Shahjahan 2012). Similarly, the World Bank and UNESCO are conducting various activities such as providing financial assistance, publication activities, conducting meetings and seminars to introduce and include the globally dominant ideas into Nepal's HE system. The findings related to such activities of the World Bank and UNESCO collected from the interviews and the documents have been presented and discussed separately in the following sections.

5.1 Role and Activities of the World Bank

The World Bank has been important international organization acting for the development of HE in Nepal. It has been conducting different activities such as policy advice, publications,

workshops and seminars through the launch of different HE projects viz. HE Project (HEP: 1993-2001), Second HE Project (SHEP: 2007-2014), and HE Reforms Project (HERP: 2015-2020) as the third HE project which has recently started. These projects had some specific plans as per the need of the country and the global trends of HE. The section 5.1.1 highlights the activities of the World Bank within these projects. Further, after having looked at the World Bank activities, two more issues as per the requirement of the study have been discussed in sections 5.1.2 and 5.1.3. These issues include whether (i.) the presented activities have something to do for the promotion of global HE topics into Nepal's HE and (ii.) the World Bank is acting as 'discursive force, networker or coordinator' based on the activities performed.

5.1.1 Highlights of the World Bank Activities

The first project HEP had a plan to bring systematic changes in the HE system. It was mainly focusing on Tribhuvan University (TU) which was almost the single leading university and "accounted for over 95% of the Nepal's enrolment in higher education during the preparation of this project" (World Bank 2002, p. 2). The project basically aimed for the systematic reforms through the changes in the administrative, managerial, and financial system of the university. The policy objectives of this project were grouped into four components viz. "(a) institutional development; (b) facilities improvement; (c) instructional delivery and assessment and (d) higher secondary education reform" (ibid., p. 28). The output was achieved satisfactorily. The following extract from the same document of the World Bank gives more understanding on it:

The project was aimed at systemic changes in the administrative, financial, and management processes of the university, thus paving the way for systemic reforms in higher education. The project achieved its objectives satisfactorily by helping TU (including powerful faculty and student unions) internalize the need for initiating reforms with far-reaching implications, such as introduction of block-grant funding and courses based on full cost recovery. (ibid., p. 4)

After the implementation of the HEP, the SHEP got over in 2014. It helped the UGC to develop a data system, including a framework of indicators, tools, and modality for annual data collection, regular data updating, analysis and reporting, which is very useful for

monitoring and updating HE status of the country (UGC 2014). Moreover, according to World Bank (2015), these were the major achievements of SHEP:

(i) the establishment of a Quality Assurance and Accreditations (QAA) system and accreditation of 12 campuses; (ii) the granting of autonomy to four TU campuses; (iii) the introduction of 28 new market-oriented programmes; (iv) funding for over 700 research projects on a competitive basis; (v) disbursement of performance-based grants to 89 community campuses; (vi) the introduction of formula-based funding (FBF) for universities; and (vii) pro-poor targeted financial assistance for over 14,000 students identified through proxy-means testing (PMT)¹². (p. 3)

The recent WB project HERP has the following story. In spite of several reforms, there were a few agendas, which were not completed by the time SHEP got over. Such agendas include improving the quality and relevance of HE, expanding enrollment, especially for students from disadvantaged economic and social backgrounds, and strengthening the internal efficiency of HEIs (ibid.). In addition, there were some recommendations made by the recently framed Higher Education Policy. Considering both areas, the Government of Nepal prepared a National Programme for Higher Education Reform and Development (NPHRD)¹³ particularly dedicated to HE reforms, which include:

(i) examination reforms, particularly adherence to an academic calendar; (ii) expansion of an autonomy agenda to include academic autonomy for affiliated campuses; (iii) expansion of Formula Based Funding (FBF), including the implementation of performance-based funding (PBF); (iv) expansion of QAA systems; (v) continuation of a poverty-targeted scholarship programme; and (vi) expansion of new academic programmes and research in areas of priority for national development. (ibid.)

The Government of Nepal (GON) requested the WB to continue the financial support for the implementation of this National programme. As a result, the Higher Reforms Project (HERP) has recently started. It aims to provide financial and technical support to assist the GON in addressing its challenges in the sector with an enhanced focus on results and cover the areas

¹² Proxy Means Testing (PMT) is a targeting methodology

¹³ http://www.ugcnepal.edu.np/ugc_header_images/Annex-5-i-ii-Areasof-PriorityforNewPrograms-and-Guidelines-forSelectionof-Programs-Institutions.pdf

planned by NIPHERD to contribute to Nepal's economic growth, competitiveness and the achievement of its poverty reduction goals (ibid.).

The similar kind of understanding was there with the World Bank official when the question about the working areas of HERP was asked. The response was like this:

First, the project is supporting quality assurance and accreditation. Second, making funding type to output, initiate formula based funding. The number three is the project will support greater decentralization leading to academic calendar including publications of results on time. Fifth, it will help in promoting new programmes and revising the existing programmes. Sixth, it will help in research and development funding. Seventh, it will promote equitable access to HE by selecting students from financial assistance which essentially mean that students belonging to bottom group will get the financial assistance from the project. These are the seven areas. (Interview: WB, 05/07/2014)

In this way, the WB has an important role in the development of HE in Nepal. The following excerpt from the document of World Bank (2015) also makes it clearer to understand its role in the global periphery:

The WB is the only development partner with significant involvement in HE in Nepal. It is uniquely placed to support the reform agenda of the Government of Nepal (GON) owing to its significant global knowledge in the area of HE and rich country knowledge accumulated through sustained engagement in the sector in Nepal. (p. 4)

As there was no particular HE policy document, it was the target of preparing one specific HE policy document by the end of this project. As per the target, SHEP facilitated to frame a HE policy under the major responsibility of the UGC (World Bank 2015; Ministry of Education 2014). Now, this has been submitted to Nepal Government. It is difficult to describe the HE development in Nepal without mentioning the roles the WB has performed for this. In this sense, one of the officers from the UGC addressed "the WB had one provision in SHEP for HE policy formation. There was a target to prepare and send the HE policy document to the government by this date" (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014). From this, it is easy to speculate that the World Bank is in the front to encourage the country and the policy makers to realize the need of the appropriate HE policy document.

The WB has been found to be an important actor to bring some international practices along with the funding. It is also found from the responses of the interviewees that the WB sometimes provides experts from the international environment while framing the national policies, which helps to work more in the line with global HE trends. In this regard, the respondent from the UGC further stated:

The WB has contributed for globalizing HE because it helps to bring some international practices to include such policies. Sometimes the education experts of the WB working in other countries also participate in different stages of our HE policy formation process. We include their feedbacks. This shows that the WB has helped a lot to globalize higher education. (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014)

In the process of Nepalese HE policy making framework, the data and indicators regarding HE development produced and collected by the WB play an important role. Different data from the World Bank documents, papers and publications have been utilized as the indicators while formulating the national HE policy in Nepal (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014). Many citations of the World Bank documents in the reference list of the HE policy document of Nepal can be taken as the evidence for this.

The WB has assisted in accumulating various data regarding the HE development which is very important in developing the plan and policies of HE in Nepal. For example, the UGC in Nepal started to publish the HE data through the publication of Higher Education Information Management System (HEMIS) with the support of the World Bank project SHEP (World Bank 2015). One of the respondents from the UGC also remarked that the World Bank provides various data regarding the indicators of educational development and these data and indicators are taken as reference in policy formation process (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014). Regarding the WB, it is also found that their funding through various projects is the most important activity. Besides, their participation and involvement in every discussion and meeting is another important part to share the global issues. In this matter, the UGC officer further added “Their main support is finance. Another is their involvement and participation. They send the representative in every discussion and meeting and share the globally dominant issues” (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014).

Another activity of the WB in Nepal is to take part in various activities such as policy formation and implementation of the HE development in Nepal (Interview: UGC₁,

20/07/2014; WB, 05/08/2014). Their suggestions and feedbacks are highly appreciated. This evidence can be justified from the responses such as “[...] there is participation from WB and they have given feedbacks but not much influence. We consider their feedbacks, comments and suggestions” (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014). His response indirectly hints out that HE in Nepal is not completely free from the influence of the WB. In addition to this, the educationist who took part in policy formation process sees the role of representatives from the WB as “[...] they give some inputs and based on those inputs, we design and sign the policy” (Interview: EDU, 25/07/2014).

Actually, the World Bank has been found to provide the international experiences and accepted HE practices. It also sometimes provides advice to other IOs for example, UNESCO. In this regard, the WB education officer directs his ideas saying “We do provide advice in terms of what is the international experience. Good HE and countries are free to choose from and also only WB which provides advices to other organizations such as UNESCO as you have mentioned” (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014). He further told that they discuss with the government for quality and relevance of the HE as per the changing concept of globalization. Moreover, he noted that the World Bank assists the government to implement the policy.

From the field interview, it has also been found that the WB in Nepal believes in promoting faculty and student exchange programmes for updating the knowledge. They assist this along with the funding through different projects. It was like this in the words of the WB official:

[...] you need to have experience from other countries as well as you have to send students to other countries and faculty exchange [...]. The issue as of now is really getting quality compatible and facilitate that sorts of exchange so that knowledge flow is not one way but becomes two ways. Nepal's HE quality is elevated to next level. We give feedbacks for promoting mobility along with financial assistance. (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014)

The WB officer also added that the WB encourages for the international collaboration. It has started a project to promote quality assurance and accreditation in Nepal (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014).

The new project of the WB which is under preparation is going to promote the universities in Nepal to follow the standards of research-oriented international universities. This will

encourage the new research-oriented and market-oriented programmes (World Bank 2015) required for maintaining international standard which the WB official has termed as the “new generation programme” to be compatible in the global market. This can be understood from his response as:

Similarly, the new project under preparation is also trying the universities to adapt new generation programmes. New generation programme is really compatible with reputed international universities. The programme will be research oriented; the programme will be developing analytical skills programme, solving skills, independent skills [...] (international standard programme which we call new generation programme now). (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014)

When the question whether the WB supports for the promotion of English language at HE level, it was found that English language has been realized as one of the important factors for producing graduates with global competence. Hence the priority has been given to English language without discouraging local languages in HE. There have been frequent diplomatic discussions with the officials from the WB but they still lack documentation. One of the respondents had this to express as “No, it's not clearly written about that. But the understanding is that we need to promote English language without discouraging other languages. We have such diplomatic discussion but not documented. The WB does support for this” (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014).

In a nutshell, the activities of the WB are diverse but have been successfully carried out through the launch of different projects that are proposed by the government and primarily funded by the WB. The activities of the WB were concluded by one of the UGC officials as “It gives funds, participates physically, gives training, and conducts seminars and so on” (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014). The above presented activities lead us to think on how these activities have assisted in bringing global HE topics to Nepal and whether the World Bank is serving as ‘discursive force, networker or coordinator’ putting them to the framework on roles of IOs in globalizing HE policy as discussed by Shahjahan (2012). The following sections deal with these particular areas.

5.1.2 How are the Activities of the World Bank Promoting the Global HE Topics into Nepal's HE?

It can be seen from the analysis of the above discussions that the support of the World Bank either in the form of financial aid or other ways has played an important role for the transmission of globally dominant HE topics into Nepalese HE. Quality assurance and accreditations, equity and access in higher education, financial sustainability, knowledge sharing across borders, institutional autonomy and ICT in HE have been broadly confined to the discussion among many others.

Quality Assurance and Accreditations (QAA) system in HE has become an inevitable part of HE globally. It is an important aspect for maintaining quality of HE throughout the world. As a result, the QAA system was established in Nepal with the support of the SHEP and the current project HERP has the target to expand it (World Bank 2015). The accreditations of 12 campuses under Tribhuvan University were successfully carried out under SHEP. Now, the target is to include more number of campuses and maintain quality with the view that it will produce quality manpower that can be applicable throughout the globe.

The issue of Equity and Access is another important challenge in the field of HE globally and particularly more serious in the countries having low income. However, Nepal is trying to improve this issue with the support of the World Bank. The World Bank project HERP targets to promote equitable access to HE expanding enrollment, especially for students from disadvantaged economic and social backgrounds (World Bank 2015; Interview: WB, 05/08/2014). In other words, the project will financially assist the students belonging to the bottom group who are not economically sound and deprived of education.

Financial Sustainability is equally important for the promotion of quality HE and HEIs. The World Bank does have important role to make Nepal's HE financially sustainable. For example, by the end of the SHEP, there was the disbursement of performance-based grants to 89 community campuses; and the initiation of the formula-based funding. The currently started project HERP targets to reform these areas further (World Bank 2015). In addition to these, the funding support for promoting research is another important activity in Nepal's HE. For example, the funding was provided for over 700 research projects on a competitive basis during the implementation of the SHEP (ibid.). This shows that the World Bank gives priority to the research activities.

Now, the world is transferred into a small global village. The knowledge produced is not limited to a single country and as a result it is shared across borders. The knowledge sharing across borders is an important policy direction of the World Bank globally. As per this direction, the World Bank has carried out different activities for promoting this area in Nepalese context too. Some of such activities found from the interviews and the documents include promoting exchange programmes, providing experts while designing the policy documents, supports for the different seminars and conferences (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014; UGC₂, 10/08/2014). The World Bank has supported the reform agenda of the Government of Nepal (GON) owing to its significant global knowledge in the area of HE and rich country knowledge accumulated through sustained engagement in the sector in Nepal (World Bank 2015). English language has been encouraged for the higher studies and research without discouraging the local languages so that it will help in exchanging or sharing the knowledge. In this sense, the World Bank has a positive role for the promotion of English although it has not been documented (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014).

The agenda of institutional autonomy has been another dominant issue in the present days. As a result, it has also got the space in Nepalese HE too. The World Bank has supported to expand implementation of this issue. For example, the project SHEP was over with the granting of autonomy to four campuses of TU and the current project HERP includes the expansion of an autonomy agenda to include academic autonomy for affiliated campuses (World Bank 2015). In the same way, the promotion of ICT in HE has been a necessary aspect globally. The enrollment in the ICT is very low in Nepal. The government has been aware on it. It has established many ICT programmes and managed scholarships to the students pursuing to these areas through the assistance of the World Bank projects (ibid.).

5.1.3 Do the World Bank Activities Reflect it as ‘Discursive Force, Networker or Coordinator?’

Through the examination of the data regarding different activities of the WB, it can be declared based on Shahjahan (2012) that the WB has been acting as all the three forms: ‘discursive force, networker and coordinator’ through different projects.

As Discursive Force

In the HE policy formation process, the WB agendas have been found to have a significant position in the context of Nepal. It seems from the responses and documents that it assists the policy makers with their policy texts, categories, ideas, numbers, and spaces of global equivalence as mentioned by Shahjahan (2012). Some of the globally dominant issues of HE such as promoting equality of access (Cloete et al. 2006), lifelong learning (Jakobi 2009), constructing a global quality assurance (QA) policy in higher education (Henry et al. 2001), market-oriented higher education reform also have space for discussion in Nepalese HE due to the effort of the WB. For example, quality assurance, market-oriented HE reforms, and equality of access are a few out of many such areas in SHEP and HERP (World Bank 2015). Likewise, their recommendations and advice have been appreciated in Nepalese higher education policy making, which has been notified by the responses of the interviewees and the data from the documents. At this point, it is relevant to connect this idea to the assumptions that IOs globalize HE policy through their recommendations merging with national and local policy discourses (Gounko and Smale 2006; Yanng 2010). The WB also has been seen as a positive actor in promoting English language as a global language in HE in Nepal which cannot be found in any document but can be understood from different responses made indirectly. Shahjahan (2012) reckons that IOs use international language to introduce various 'frames of general acceptability' for example, a common framework developed in English. In this way, it is worth mentioning here that the WB has been acting as discursive force in the context of Nepalese HE.

As Networker

It has been found acceptable to mention that the WB has become an important international organization working for the development of HE in Nepal. The data presented from the interviews and the documents show that the WB is facilitating various seminars and meetings in connection with the HE policy development. Such meetings were within the country and outside the country (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014; WB, 05/08/2014). The attempts made during the recently formulated HE policy can be taken as the example where the WB conducted many consultations (World Bank 2015). Such activities of the WB are, of course, useful to introduce complex dynamics into the higher education policy as argued by Shahjahan (2012). Besides, the participation of the WB education experts working in other

countries has supported with feedbacks and suggestions in different stages of Nepalese HE policy formation process (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014). This phenomenon seems to work as a bridge to bring international practices. On the other hand, it also assists to establish networks between HE policy communities as considered by Shahjahan (2012).

As Coordinator

Examining the data on different activities of the WB in Nepal with reference to Shahjahan (2012), it can be stated that the WB is also working as coordinator to link Nepal among different countries and HEIs. It is assumed that the HE issues from different parts of the world are taken for the discussion and the final conclusion is drawn with the most dominant one at the global level. IOs are believed to coordinate in such processes. The WB in Nepal has been found to help in such processes as it has used its funds through projects for the participation of people of Nepal with their agendas for the discussion at global level. For example, Tribhuvan University (TU) in Nepal hosts the 12th International North East West South (NEWS) Conference of Global University Network from 15 - 18 May 2015.¹⁴ There is support of the WB to TU through the UGC for conducting such programmes and improving the network. It is expected that this will increase the network among HEIs.

In addition, the WB funded project (HERP) aims to provide financial and technical support to implement the recommendation made by Higher Education Policy (World Bank 2015) which has recently been framed based on the present global perspectives. Shahjahan (2012) assumes IOs, as coordinators, provide various technical resources to ensure policy implementation among members. This indicates that the WB in Nepal is also working as coordinator.

In summary, the WB has been found to act as ‘discursive force, networker and coordinator to transmit global HE issues to Nepal; as seen the roles of IOs in globalizing HE policy by Shahjahan (2012). It has been noticed that different activities of the WB are intertwined for the improvement of HE in Nepal through different projects.

¹⁴ <http://tribhuvan-university.edu.np/12th-international-n-e-w-s-conference-in-kathmandu/>

5.2 Role and Activities of UNESCO

UNESCO has been another important international organization acting for the development of HE in Nepal. It has also been conducting different activities such as policy advice, publications, workshops and seminars. The section 5.2.1 highlights the activities of UNESCO. Further, as done in the previous sections of the World Bank, two more issues as per the requirement of the study have been discussed in sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3. These issues include whether (i.) the presented activities have something to do for the promotion of global HE topics into Nepalese higher education and (ii.) UNESCO is acting as ‘discursive force, networker or coordinator’ based on the activities performed.

5.2.1 Highlights of the UNESCO Activities

Similar to the WB, UNESCO also conducts different activities for the promotion of HE in Nepal. The UNESCO Office in Kathmandu supports national efforts in developing a comprehensive higher education policy in Nepal (UNESCO Office in Kathmandu 2011).

UNESCO has been found to have some activities to link the country with other countries both at regional and global level. For example, UNESCO has university networks, the Asia-Pacific deans’ forum and so on. The officer from UNESCO stated in his own words as “UNESCO has been working globally. As I said earlier, we have university networks, we have deans’ forum. In Asia and Pacific, there is a deans’ forum where the deans from different faculties meet and discuss together time and again” (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014). However, the focus of UNESCO is found more on school education than on the higher education. This is because the basic education is in priority from the government side and UNESCO, being an UN agency and inter-governmental agency, works with the government priority (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014). As a result, the UNESCO activities in the field of HE are less and very recent (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014). There are some differences in working performance of the World Bank and UNESCO in Nepal’s HE sector in terms of the nature of their projects and power. This can be understood from the expression of one of the respondents as:

WB has lots of money and power together. UNESCO is powerless and put low amount of money. UNESCO basically works with pilot projects only such as the projects of two thousand dollars, three thousand dollars, ten thousand dollars and that type of

money is there with UNESCO. But the WB has projects of large amount. (Interview: EDU, 25/07/2014)

The above expression shows that the World Bank has invested more resources than UNESCO in the field of HE. This can be linked to the idea of Al'Abri (2011) and Rizvi and Lingard (2010) who assert that the more funding international organizations invest in a member country, the more powerful and influential role they perform there. However, UNESCO also has been found to transmit globally dominant HE issues as it sends different people to different places to attend seminars and meetings. This will obviously help to be familiar with the global issues and frame the national policy accordingly. The officer from UNESCO office said:

UNESCO office in Kathmandu sends experts to participate in regional forums, regional meetings, so that they can get benefit on what is going on in other parts of the world. HE is not something that is confined within the territory/nation boundary but it is a cross border issue. So that UNESCO is very much engaged in that issue. If you look at the HE policy of the UGC, there are lots of references. In this sense, UNESCO's Work is very much acknowledged while devising the HE policy. (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014)

In addition, UNESCO sometimes organizes different workshops on HE policy. They invite different international experts and discuss the issues in the conference and workshop (UNESCO Office in Kathmandu 2011). The UNESCO officer also reminded of such workshop as:

In 2011, we had organized one national workshop on HE policy development where we had invited international experts. So, the workshop was organized and basically supported by UNESCO and it was hosted by the National Planning Commission and University Grants Commission basically. The National Planning Commission requested UNESCO how UNESCO experts can help for devising the HE policies. (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014)

Another respondent from the UGC also supported the same view saying that UNESCO provided some expertise with time to hold the policy conference in 2011 (Interview: UGC₂, 10/08/2014).

It has also been found from the UNESCO officer that they assist to develop university network. It even helps the individual university to promote resource center for ICT. The UNESCO officer added:

We provide them assistance. For example, in Kathmandu University, school of education, we have created a kind of resource center for ICT in education through which they do the networking among the universities. For example, with the faculty of education in TU, we have been working with them to promote the inclusive education school pedagogy where they have a network. (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014)

Another important task of UNESCO in Nepal is that it always promotes the graduates to be competent in the global labor market. For this, it focuses on vocational, technical and skill-oriented education. It gives the feedbacks and comments while designing HE policy to lead HE system in that direction. The UNESCO officer further said:

UNESCO always promotes the graduates from different countries [...]. UNESCO is always promoting cross border education, vocational education, technical and vocational training. These trainings will help people to get better opportunity in other countries. We give feedbacks for formulating the HE policies in that direction. (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014)

UNESCO office in Kathmandu takes part in different programmes at global level. It also prepares the programmes at local level based on the basic needs. He said “[...] global programmes basically and within this global programme, we prepare our programme at local level based on the local needs. We also do develop here in Nepal. We have our UNESCO national educational support strategy” (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014).

Being English as global language, it has been found that it is appreciable for UNESCO to promote English language in HE though they do not impose. One of the respondents said:

I can see that English is enough for communicating with many of the people of the world. We can think of different languages but we can develop one language as a common language of understanding. In the international level, the English is working very well. We are also focusing English language too. UNESCO and WB also would

like us to promote English language although they do not recommend directly.
(Interview: EDU, 25/07/2014)

UNESCO Institute for Statistics produces a range of indicators to track trends in tertiary education at the global, regional and national levels (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2014). It has been found from the field study that they are useful while framing HE policies viewing the international standard. For example, the recently published report “Higher Education in Asia - Expanding Out, Expanding Up: The rise of graduate education and university research” provides a comprehensive view to evaluate different strategies to expand graduate education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2014a) with particular focus on the developing countries like Nepal. This is, of course, useful in the context of Nepal too. In support of this, one of the respondents said “[...] we use various data sometimes as indicators and even we have used some of their papers in bibliography” (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014).

In addition, one more example of how UNESCO is promoting the globally dominant issues in Nepal can be understood from the following task as well. UNESCO office in Kathmandu along with the UGC had also published a report on “Advancing Policy Options for Higher Education: Improving Transition and Access to Higher Education in Nepal” in 2008. The findings of the report were supposed to provide policy directions and options for reform in higher education in Nepal (UNESCO 2008) in such a way that it would improve the access in HE which is also the global agenda of UNESCO in HE (Shahjahan 2012).

Finally, it can be obtained from the data about the activities of UNESCO that it is trying to work in line with the global policy direction of UNESCO in the field of HE. For example, UNESCO office in Kathmandu mentions in one of its press releases that UNESCO:

[...] deals with cross-border higher education and quality assurance, with a special focus on mobility and recognition of qualifications, and provides tools to protect students and other stakeholders from low-quality provision of higher education.
(UNESCO Office in Kathmandu 2011)

This seems that UNESCO is trying to follow its global agendas even in Nepal when we compare the above information with the view of Shahjahan (2012) which states that quality assurance, recognition of qualification and cross border education are the global agendas considered by UNESCO. However, it has been realized by the UNESCO official that it has

not been able to do as much as it had to do in the areas targeted. He declared that this is due to Nepal Government's priority in school education as UNESCO works in collaboration with the government (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014).

To wrap up, the HE activities of UNESCO in Nepal are fewer in comparison to its School activities and the HE activities of the WB. However, whatever activities (for example, technical assistance, financial assistance, knowledge sharing and etc.) it does in HE hold the significant value and familiarize the Nepalese HE to the changing dynamics of global HE. The following sections deal with how the above presented and discussed activities have supported in bringing globally dominant HE ideas and whether UNESCO is discursive force, networker or coordinator with the analysis of the activities with reference to Shahjahan (2012).

5.2.2 How are the Activities of UNESCO Promoting the Global HE Topics into Nepal's HE?

After analyzing the above activities of UNESCO, it is also found that UNESCO is also assisting in bringing the globally dominant HE issues into Nepal. UNESCO is also trying to support for the improvement of the QAA system of HE in association with Nepal Government and the World Bank. This can be seen from their press release which mentions that UNESCO deals with the cross border education and quality assurance (UNESCO Office in Kathmandu 2011). In the same way, promotion of equity and access in HE has been another important part of UNESCO. The report "Advancing Policy Options for Higher Education: Improving Transition and Access to Higher Education in Nepal" published by UNESCO office in Kathmandu along with UGC in 2008 has given some directions for framing HE policy that encourages for the promotion of equity and access.

In terms of financial support, the role of UNESCO on HE in Nepal is not as strong as that of the World Bank. UNESCO launches very small pilot projects as mentioned by one of the respondents (Interview: EDU, 25/07/2014). However, it manages funds to organize different seminars, workshops and for the exchange of experts (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014). Another issue, knowledge sharing across borders, has got significant position. There are many evidences which show that UNESCO has supported for the promotion of this issue. One of the worth mentioning evidences is the huge national workshop on HE policy development basically supported by UNESCO and it was hosted by the National Planning Commission and

the University Grants Commission. UNESCO had invited many international experts during the workshop. Along with this, UNESCO office in Kathmandu sends experts to participate regional forums, regional meetings where the latest kind of global knowledge can be shared (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014). UNESCO prefers promoting English language for higher studies and research without discouraging other local languages although there is no direct recommendation (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014).

The issue of institutional autonomy has not been found in the focus of UNESCO as that of the World Bank (Interview: UGC₂, 10/08/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014). However, the UNESCO has carried out some efforts in promoting ICT in HE. It supports the individual university with the resource center for ICT. One of such examples is that UNESCO has created a kind of resource center for ICT in education in Kathmandu University, School of Education, through which they do the networking among the universities (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014).

In this way, UNESCO is assisting Nepal to uplift its HE system as per the recent trends of global higher education trends.

5.2.3 Do the UNESCO Activities Reflect it as ‘Discursive Force, Networker or Coordinator?’

It is not the justice to ignore the activities of UNESCO in bringing the latest global dynamics into Nepalese HE although they are found to be less in numbers while comparing them to that of the WB. Therefore, the activities of UNESCO presented in the earlier section also have been discussed relating to the idea of Shahjahan (2012).

As Discursive Force

UNESCO in Nepal is acting as discursive force in the sense that it has been providing policy texts, ideas, numbers and spaces of equivalence. A few examples can be noted here to show as a proof. UNESCO office in Kathmandu published a report called “Advancing Policy Options for Higher Education: Improving Transition and Access to Higher Education in Nepal” in 2008, which assisted with the clear direction for the formulation of the HE policy (UNESCO 2008) in such a way that it would be helpful to increase and ensure “the equality of access” which is a global phenomenon in HE and promoted by international organizations (Cloete et al. 2006). Similarly, recently the UNESCO Institute for Statistics has published a

report on “Higher Education in Asia - Expanding Out, Expanding Up: The rise of graduate education and university research” which examines the dynamics associated with the growth of graduate education in Asia (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2014a). This, of course, can be used as an indicator to maintain the pace of standardization of HE in Nepal considering HE development at regional and global level. UNESCO also has been found to promote different technical and skill as well as market-oriented HE in Nepal (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014) which is also the other issue at global level.

As Networker

UNESCO in Nepal has helped to develop networks between HEIs within the country as well as outside the country. For example, UNESCO has university networks, the Asia-Pacific deans’ forum where “the issue of complex dynamics into the HE policy” (Shahjahan 2012, p. 386) can be introduced and discussed. In addition, it has been conducting different seminars, workshops and meetings for the formulation of effective HE policy. For instance, “A Conference on Higher Education Policy in Nepal” was organized by UNESCO in February 2011 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The key themes included governance and management, access and equity, financing and quality of higher education and regional and international trends in higher education and their effects on higher education policy in Nepal (UNESCO Office in Kathmandu 2011). Such attempts of UNESCO have great role in developing Nepal’s HE to international standard. UNESCO also invites people and experts from all around the world to discuss the issues. For example, there were people and experts from different parts of the world in the conference. These people included national key stakeholders such as policy makers, education planners, staff and members of faculties of HEIs, and private sector representatives, a variety of international higher education experts, including specialists from UNESCO’s International Institute of Educational Planning, the World Bank, the National University of Education Planning and Administration of India, the Australian Universities Quality Agency and the University Grants Commissions of Bangladesh and India along with representatives of political parties and teacher and student unions (ibid.). Such activities of UNESCO are supportive to act as policy bridges between different regional contexts, and in turn globalize higher education policy as regarded by Shahjahan (2012).

As Coordinator

By examining various activities of UNESCO, it can be stated that it also works as coordinator to bring the globally dominant HE concepts to Nepal. Under this, it is observed how IOs provide various technical resources to ensure policy implementation among member countries and coordinate among HEIs since some HEIs use various forms of autonomy to enact and mediate in the use of global policy space as viewed by Shahjahan (2012). In the context of Nepal, UNESCO has helped to promote technical education and inclusive education which do have enough space for the discussion at global level too (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014). For example, in Kathmandu University, school of education, UNESCO created a kind of resource center for ICT in education through which they do the networking among the universities. In addition, UNESCO has been working with the faculty of education in Tribhuvan University to promote the inclusive education school pedagogy where they have a network.

To outline briefly, UNESCO is also discharging its different activities as ‘discursive force, networker, and coordinator’ along the lines of its global HE mandate (see Chapter One, Section 1.2). However, it is found that they have done much in school education; but have just started and still have many more to do in HE sector in Nepal (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014).

Section- B

Influencing Mechanisms of the World Bank and UNESCO Activities

This section examines the World Bank and UNESCO’s mechanisms of influence and how their influence is translated into different activities. It has been found that there are certain influences of IOs when they are involved in the national policy making affairs. This section discusses the related data presented and discussed in the earlier section with reference to the new mechanisms of external influences forwarded by Dale (1999). According to him, there are five different voluntary and compulsory mechanisms, normally related to international organizations, through which the external effects on national education systems are carried and delivered. These mechanisms include: imposition, harmonization, dissemination, standardization and installing interdependence. The activities of both the WB and UNESCO

in Nepalese HE reflect either of the mechanisms or sometimes more than one or two; although the degree of proportion is slightly diverse.

5.3 Influencing Mechanisms of the World Bank Activities

It has been found from the data that the WB has many different activities for the development of Nepalese HE with reference to globalization. It has conducted various activities through different projects since its involvement. As the time has changed, the nature and the way of discharging the activities have also changed. For example, the WB has recently shifted from top-down conditionality to a “country ownership model whereby client countries can now propose projects to be funded” (Vergier 2009, as cited in Shahjahan 2012, p. 395). As a result, the type of mechanisms of influence has changed. This slightly implies in the context of Nepal too. In connection to this, it is noteworthy to mention that the WB Bank provided the funds without referencing the projects in the initial phases while it started to work through different projects viz. HEP (1993-2001), SHEP (2007-2014), and HERP (2015-2020) which were proposed by Nepal government. However, it is found that the Government’s propose is based on the recommendation of the WB and its earlier tasks (Interview: MoE, 04/08/2014; UGC₁, 20/07/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014).

After the careful examination of different activities of the WB as collected from the interviewees and the documents as the data of the study, it can be explored that the mechanism of imposition has still got more dominance. In the view of Dale (1999), ‘imposition’ is activated when external factors, such as international organizations or powerful states, compel some countries to take on particular education policies along with some conditionality. In case of Nepal, the WB has invested the largest amount of funding in higher education. It has been noticed from the data that the WB brings agendas along with the funding in Nepal (Interview: EDU, 25/07/2014). Being a country having lower income, their funding along with the agendas has been easily accepted. This is due to the conditionality associated with aid which normally places pressures on nation-states’ education policies particularly in countries having lower income (Rizvi and Lingard 2010). However, most of the agendas of the WB are in line with the globally dominant HE agendas that have helped to bring positive reformation in accordance with the global dynamics. For example, the projects SHEP and HERP aim to bring reformations in examination systems in HE, particularly in Tribhuvan University (World Bank 2015). As a result, semester system instead of annual

system and home assignment system instead of taking overall annual exam at the end of the course were also proposed by the WB (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014). This shows that the WB brings agendas to make quality better. Unfortunately, some of the agendas may not be suitable in terms of locality and country contexts. Many responses were found to have criticized the activities of the WB indirectly saying that the WB represents the interests of the developed world and impose them to the countries having low income like Nepal (Interview: EDU, 25/07/2014; UGC₁, 20/07/2014; UGC₂, 10/08/2014). This resembles the ideas of Bassett and Maldonado (2009) and Al'Abri, (2011) which also assume the similar view. In this way, the WB is also not far from the criticisms although it is trying to do the best from its side.

At the same time, the other mechanisms also can be found side by side. The mechanism of dissemination equally gets the space in this regard. Under this mechanism, an international organization uses persuasion and its technical knowledge to convince countries on the implementation of certain policies for example, through annual reports, best practices databases and technical assistance (Dale 1999). Nepalese HE policy makers make the use of different data and technical support from the WB while framing HE policy (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014). For example, there is participation of the WB experts in usual meetings and discussion of HE issues (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014; UGC₁, 20/07/2014).

The mechanism 'standardization' also can be found with the activities of the WB. As we know, Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) establish a framework for certain norms and values that can determine reliability and validity; which ultimately supports for standardization of HE. In the same line, Shahjahan (2012) mentions that quality assurance and relevance are the global agendas of HE considered by the WB. Looking at the activities of the WB in Nepal, one observes that SHEP established a QAA system and accreditation of 12 campuses where HERP aims at the expansion of QAA systems (World Bank 2015). Sometimes, it is very difficult to find out which mechanism of influence appears there. In that sense, it can be argued that mechanisms of influences may sometimes overlap. One such example can be drawn from the presentation in earlier section here. Nepal Government decided to phase out the proficiency certificate level from the university and develop the school education up to grade 12 which was proposed by the WB (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014; UGC₂, 10/08/2014). It was quite challenging to change this system. The reason was similar to the vision of Lebeau and Sall (2011) which state "Policies proposed by,

or in some cases imposed by, the WB have been particularly challenging for the capacity of states to regulate the provision of educational opportunities” (p. 143). The WB spent big amount of funds through SHEP to improve Higher Education System. This support was to: “(i) permit the better functioning of universities by phasing out Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) programmes; and (ii) allow higher secondary schools to expand their capacity and increase access to students living in rural areas” (World Bank 2014). This, on the one hand, shows that there is imposition. Next, it was done to maintain the standard as per the international HE standard. This, on the other hand, leads us to think that there is standardization. Furthermore, the WB provided infrastructures and technical supports for the development of higher secondary education to persuade and attract the flow towards it but not towards the proficiency certificate level of the university (ibid.). This directs us to think that there is dissemination. In this way, there may be more than one mechanism of influences at a time. Another mechanism ‘harmonization’ also can be found with the activities of the WB. For example, Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN)¹⁵ was established in 2004 with the support of the World Bank and UNESCO and (Lee et al. 2012). The World Bank in Nepal also assists the country for its participation in different regional forums. For example, the UGC in Nepal has become a member of the APQN and International Network of Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (INQAAHE)¹⁶ after the implementation of SHEP (World Bank 2014). This has encouraged the country to follow some common policies, especially regarding the quality, in harmonized environment in the area.

The next mechanism ‘installing interdependence’ also can be seen with its activities that are linked to the Millennium Development Goals where the countries have agreed to achieve common goals. For example, Nepal had also agreed to eliminate gender disparity¹⁷ and as a result it made a significant progress with the support of the World Bank. The percentage of females among HE graduates increased from 23% to 44% exceeding the target of 35% when the SHEP got over (World Bank 2014). The World Bank also assumes that the poverty eradication is possible through the common agreement on the production of skilled manpower (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014).

To conclude, the WB is transmitting globally dominant HE topics into Nepal with different activities through certain projects in such a way that they are resulting different senses of

¹⁵ <http://www.apqn.org/>

¹⁶ <http://www.inqaahe.org/main/about-inqaahe>

¹⁷ <http://www.np.undp.org/content/nepal/en/home/mdgoverview.html>

effects such as ‘imposition’ being the most dominant while ‘dissemination’ and ‘standardization’ the followers of it. The rest others also hold some space but are less dominant in comparison.

5.4 Influencing Mechanisms of the UNESCO Activities

UNESCO is also found as an important international organization to conduct different activities for the promotion of Nepalese HE as per the international standard. From the field study and document analysis, it has been found that it does not have as much role as the WB has. As a result, the influences are minimal in comparison to that of the World Bank. The overall evaluation of the data showed that there is no sense of imposed policy in the case of UNESCO as is with the WB.

Through the analysis of UNESCO activities, ‘dissemination’ has been found as the most dominant mechanism of influence. This mechanism of influence is found when an international organization uses persuasion and its technical knowledge to convince countries on the implementation of certain policies for example, through annual reports, best practices data-bases and technical assistance (Dale 1999). The UNESCO in Nepal provides various technical assistance, for example resource center of ICT, experts for framing HE policy. Besides, abundant number of policy reports documents and data of UNESCO are acknowledged while designing the policy.

Similarly, UNESCO is found to expand its activities in the areas such as quality assurance and accreditation, recognition of qualification, cross border education (UNESCO Office in Kathmandu 2011) through different pilot projects. The main aim of such activities is to standardize the Nepalese HE with respect to international standard. So, there seems the mechanism of standardization to occur. The mechanism of ‘standardization’ occurs when the international community defines and promotes the adherence to a set of policy principles and standards that frame the countries’ behavior (Dale 1999). The mechanism of “installing interdependence” also can be seen with the activities of UNESCO. The report “Advancing Policy Options for Higher Education: Improving Transition and Access to Higher Education in Nepal” and “the Conference on Higher Education Policy in Nepal in 2011” can be taken as support for the formulation of HE policy in such a way that it would fulfill the MDG through increasing access to HE and removing poverty (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014). The EFA

in Nepal, which is the mandate of UNESCO, is another good example where Nepal has also agreed with other countries to achieve common objectives with the support of international cooperation. However, it primarily focuses on school education. The rest mechanism, 'harmonization' also can be linked to the activities of UNESCO. For example, UNESCO in Nepal also encourages HEIs to participate in the programmes of APQN and there is deans' forum in Asia-Pacific region (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014). It helps to increase the cooperation among the nations and follow similar policies to strengthen the quality.

In brief, the efforts of UNESCO to update the Nepalese HE with reference to global perspectives seem marginal and thus result marginal effects. The mechanism of 'dissemination' has been realized as the most dominant one and 'standardization' the follower of it. At the same time, other mechanisms also do have important space.

Section- C

Perception towards the Significance of the World Bank and UNESCO

It has been found from the interviews and documents that the WB and UNESCO have been found significantly dominant in the development of HE in Nepal as viewed in many literatures such as Sadlak (1998), Frey and Stutzer (2006), Yang (2009), Al'Abri (2011), and Shahjahan (2012). Both of these IOs have been found important to shape the contexts for national HE policy. However, the UNESCO is less involved than the WB in the development of HE in Nepal. This has led to the thought that the roles different IOs discharge may vary in terms of the areas and the contexts of the country. The following sections deal with how different individuals involved in HE policy making perceive the significance of the WB and UNESCO.

5.5 Perception towards the World Bank

The World Bank has been supporting the HE system of Nepal through different projects: Higher Education Project (HEP), Second Higher Education Project (SHEP) and Higher Education Reforms Project (HERP). These projects support in the forms of finance, technology, sharing of ideas, advice and so on (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014). Being the country having low income, the WB has been found as an influential agent in terms of

financing HE in Nepal, which is in line with the view of Al'Abri (2011). In addition, the data from the interview and documents show that the WB has influenced Nepalese HE system through a number of normative and rule creating activities, which Jacobson (1984 as cited in Yang 2009, p. 175) believes.

The people involved in HE policy formation process including the individual from the World Bank itself perceive the World Bank as an essential actor. However, they understand and explain the roles of the World Bank from their own perspectives and angles. The major gist of their views shows that the World Bank is working to develop the quality of the HE that can be compatible throughout the globe. The World Bank official concludes the importance of the WB for the development of HE in Nepal from two perspectives: funds and knowledge. He puts his idea as:

The WB gives two products. One product is finance and another product is knowledge. Knowledge is basically sharing, it's not imposed. All WB does is it gives ideas about policies in different places, gives access to international knowledge. It's up to the government to choose from that knowledge. Don't say that WB brings policies. WB never brings policies. It gives choices. (Interview: WB, 05/08/2014)

The perception of the educationist was slightly different. He asserts that the World Bank has important role but at the same time there are some contexts in which some of the issues are to be included in the national HE policies due to the loan conditionality as opined by Rizvi and Lingard (2010).

The UGC officials expressed their understandings in positive way. They see that the World Bank has very active role in the development of HE. According to them, the World Bank representatives are always ready to give their feedbacks and constructive suggestions for the reformation of HE. The feedbacks and suggestions are highly appreciated and considered. Besides, their funding is the most essential part which is the major source for HE reforms processes (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014; UGC₂, 10/08/2014).

After all, it can be observed from the responses that the WB is an essential actor in updating the national HE issues in terms of global perspectives. The updated knowledge along with the funding is an important factor of the WB for getting the dominance.

5.6 Perception towards UNESCO

In the same way, most of the individuals involved with HE policy making felt that UNESCO also has some kind of role in the HE policy making process as it has been providing updated knowledge through the exchange of experts (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014; UGC₁, 20/07/2014; UGC₂, 10/08/2014). They do also have substantial impacts in HE policy thinking in Nepal. It is a common understanding that UNESCO, being the part of United Nations, brings globally updated knowledge and information in Nepalese HE since knowledge sharing across borders is one of its policy direction as mentioned by Shahjahan (2012).

The UNESCO official has the understanding that universities in Nepal are unable to provide the latest kind of knowledge to solve the global issues because of the lack of necessary resources as the country is having lower income. He further emphasizes for the participation of such universities in different forums of UNESCO so that they can have access to the latest global discussions on HE (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014).

One of the respondents from the UGC seems very much positive about the role of the UNESCO. He asserts that UNESCO is trying to work along the line of its global mandates, for example, quality assurance and accreditation, equity and access, and the use of ICT as mentioned by Shahjahan (2012), in Nepal. However, they are not sufficient enough which means the activities are not that much regular and frequent as that of the World Bank. He puts his view in his own words as:

UNESCO is totally in the areas of education and science in particular and as well as the focus in HE. One is quality assurance and accreditation. The other is information management and exchange. The third is concerned of equity and access of HE. So, this overarching UNESCO consideration is that we can take as a kind of UNESCO policy. And those UNESCO policies, they do impart substantial impacts in policy thinking in many countries including Nepal. (Interview: UGC₂, 10/08/2014)

Almost all the respondents have the perception that although UNESCO is involved in HE, its primary focus is on school education. They opined that UNESCO has slightly increased its involvement in the HE in the recent years, and still it needs to go further for updating the Nepalese HE as per the changing dynamics of global HE system (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014; UGC₁, 20/07/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014).

All the respondents accepted that UNESCO has an important role in bringing latest global trends of HE into Nepal's HE system. This has been done through the exchange of scholars, experts in different workshops, seminars and meetings, publishing documents, making worldwide data available and so on (Interview: UNESCO, 01/08/2014; UGC₁, 20/07/2014; UGC₂, 10/08/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014).). At the same time, they admitted that these activities are less than that of the World Bank.

To sum up, all the people involved in HE policy making in Nepal consider that UNESCO has an important role to perform in transmitting globally dominant HE issues to Nepal. However, they realized that it does not have as much dominance as the WB does (Interview: UGC₁, 20/07/2014; EDU, 25/07/2014).

Section- D

Summary on the Involvement of the World Bank and UNESCO

It has been found from the discussions that the World Bank and UNECO have significantly involved in the development of HE in Nepal. This has been explored through the analysis of their different activities guided by the analytical frameworks based on Shahjahan (2012) and Dale (1999). The former especially guides for the analysis of the activities of the WB and UNESCO to see whether they are discursive forces, networkers or coordinators in transmitting global HE trends. Additionally, the latter guides for the analysis of the activities to see the existing mechanisms of influence which include: imposition, harmonization, dissemination, standardization and installing interdependence.

After examining the data from the interviews and documents, it is summarized that the World Bank has involved in Nepal's HE development after 70s and actively involved after 90s. It has been found as the major international organization among many others to work for upgrading the quality of HE. It has tried to solve minor to the major challenges appeared within the HE system along with the other stakeholders such as the government, the UGC and other organizations. For examples, some of the areas of challenges are equity and access, funding, quality and so on. The reforms in HE are particularly made through the launch of different projects having certain objectives and activities that are intended to be accomplished.

The analysis of its activities connected to the transfer of global HE trends has shown that the World Bank has been acting as ‘discursive force, networker and coordinator’ as asserted by Shahjahan (2012). The participation of the World Bank representatives in every discussion and meeting of the HE issues has been found to be very effective. Their feedbacks and suggestions have been appreciated and highly utilized in the policy making process. The involvement has been found very influential to reform Nepal’s HE although there are some criticisms regarding its imposing mechanism of influence connected to the loan and funding conditionality which aligns the idea of Rizvi and Lingard (2010).

The involvement of UNESCO in Nepalese Higher Education is also notable. It has been found that it does not have a very long history of its involvement as that of the World Bank. Through the judgment of the responses made by the interviewees and document analysis, it can be seen that the involvement of UNESCO in school education is longer and stronger than its involvement in the field of HE. This has been found due to the Government’s priority to work with UNESCO in school education. However, its participation in HE sector has increased since the last decade. Almost all the respondents including the UNESCO officials admitted that UNESCO need to perform its participation more actively than what has been doing at the moment. It has been found to conduct different seminars and workshops on HE. However, it has been seen from the documents and responses that such seminars and workshops are not very frequent. The participation of the UNESCO representatives in the HE discussions and meetings has not also been found that much regular as that of the World Bank representatives. The data and documents gathered by UNESCO seem to have important role while framing the HE policy document. For example, this can be observed from the acknowledgements that has been made in policy document. This has obviously positive role to update the Nepal’s HE in line with the global trends of HE. Overall, the UNESCO’s involvement in Nepalese HE is remarkable although it still needs more engagement to smoothly follow the global policy directions mandated by the UNESCO (see Chapter One, Section 1.2).

In this way, the World Bank and UNESCO representing as the IOs working in the field Nepal’s HE have played their roles in line with the idea of Shahjahan (2012) and their activities within these roles reflect different mechanisms of influence as viewed by Dale (1999). However, the extent to which these IOs play their roles and possess influencing mechanisms has differed.

6 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides an overall summary of the study and conclusion drawn from the findings. In addition, the recommendations for policy implications and further research have been presented at the end.

6.1 Overview of the Study

The study mainly focused on how the WB and UNESCO have involved in Nepal's HE system with the transmission of globally dominant HE trends as they are the two important IOs working in the field of HE in Nepal. To deal with this question, the study attempted to identify the different roles of the WB and UNESCO through the analysis of their activities particularly concerned with the intended matter. Similarly, the study has also looked into the mechanisms of influence observed with the activities of the WB and UNESCO for the aforementioned purpose. More specifically, the study has centered more towards how globally dominant HE issues such as equity and access, quality assurance and accreditations, financial sustainability, knowledge sharing across borders, ICT in HE and institutional autonomy, which are also the recent policy directions of the WB and UNESCO in HE, have got the space for discussion in Nepal's HE system.

The study was carried out using a qualitative research methodology and its procedures. The interview and the document analysis were used as the research tools for carrying out the study. Six different people involved with HE policy making from different fields, such as UGC, WB, UNESCO, MoE and Education Sector, were purposively selected for the interviews. Additionally, the documents from the WB, UNESCO, MoE and UGC did have equal dominance in filling the gaps of the responses of the interviewees. It is assumed that this has been a positive aspect for promoting the validity and the reliability of the study. Thereafter, the findings from the data were presented and discussed in the light of the works carried by Shahjahan (2012) and Dale (1999). The former was actually applied to explore the role whereas the latter was utilized to investigate the mechanisms of influence. In this way, the findings of the research were outlined.

6.2 Conclusion of the Findings

This section presents the conclusion of the findings that have been explored through the procedures of qualitative research methodology. The main research question of the study was “How are the World Bank and UNESCO transmitting global higher education trends into Nepal’s higher education development?” and the further supporting questions were developed to dig into the overall answer to this question. The available evidences and the responses of the interviewees showed that the WB and UNESCO are important IOs to bring globally dominant HE topics to Nepal. Then the study further went to seek how they transmit and what sorts of changes were there with such activities i.e. mechanisms of influence referred by Dale (1999).

The first supporting research question “How are the World Bank and UNESCO interacting with Nepal’s HE sector? Are they ‘discursive forces, networkers or coordinators’ to bring globally dominant HE topics to Nepal?” has had a look on detailed activities and the roles the WB and UNESCO have been playing to involve globally dominant HE topics into Nepalese HE system for discussion. After analyzing the data from the interviews and documents, it has been found that both IOs act as ‘discursive forces, networkers and coordinators’ to transmit global HE issues to Nepal. The WB is carrying out its different activities through different projects: HEP, SHEP and HERP. For example, in regards to the WB, it provides different policy texts, ideas, and recommendations (as discursive force); conducts different meetings, seminars, and provides experts (as networker); and provides technical assistance and coordinate between HEIs and member countries (as coordinator). However, UNESCO is working without projects like that of the WB. It has very small pilot projects. It also provides data in the forms of different reports, advices and recommendations (as discursive force); develops university networks, organizes different conferences and meetings (as networker); and provides technical assistance such as ICT resource center, coordinate among HEIs (as coordinator). Comparatively, the activities of UNESCO are less intensive than those of the WB. It is also explored from the study that UNESCO has done much in school education; but has just started to expand into the area of HE in Nepal. Both of these IOs have been found to be working along the lines of their global HE mandates to some extent.

The second guiding question of the study “What are the existing mechanisms of influence observed with the activities of the World Bank and UNESCO in bringing globally dominant

HE ideas to Nepal?" has dealt with the existing mechanisms of influence linked to the activities of the WB and UNESCO in Nepalese HE. It has been found from the discussion of the findings that the activities of both the WB and UNESCO have different mechanisms of influence. In case of the WB, the mechanism of 'imposition' is still found at the top where the mechanism of 'dissemination' follows it and then the mechanism of 'standardization'. For example, most of its activities enter into Nepal along with the funding conditionality which reflects the mechanism of 'imposition'. In the same sense, the huge investment by the WB to phase out PCL from the university system can be taken as a concrete example. In the same way, the accessible availability of data through different reports and the technical support reflect the mechanism of 'dissemination'. There are sufficient reports and data system made available by the WB in Nepal. Furthermore, the QAA system established on the purpose of the WB seems to reflect the mechanism of 'standardization'. It has provided the opportunities for HEIs and their programs to assess their performance and their weaknesses ultimately resulting in better quality (UGC 2013a). The mechanism of 'harmonization' can be realized with the activity of the WB assisting the UGC to join APQN whereby Nepal accepts some agreement for common policy that enhances the quality. Likewise, the efforts of the WB to remove gender disparity for meeting the objective of the MDG can be linked to the mechanism of 'installing interdependence'.

Similarly, in regards to UNESCO, the activities are marginal and the influences are marginal. The mechanism of 'dissemination' has been realized as the most dominant one while the mechanism of 'standardization' comes after it. For example, UNESCO has provided various data through reports and technical supports like ICT resource center indicates the mechanism of 'dissemination'. Further, it is expanding its activities in the areas such as quality assurance and accreditation, recognition of qualification, and cross border education which are quite related to the mechanism of 'standardization'. In the same way, the mechanism of 'harmonization' is felt with the UNESCO activity where it assists Nepal to join different regional forums such as APQN and share some common policy. The next mechanism 'installing interdependence' can be exemplified with the activity of UNESCO to assist the country in meeting the objectives of the MDG by improving the equity and access through the means of publication and conducting the workshop. In comparison with the WB activities, the mechanism of 'imposition' is not apparent with the UNESCO activities.

The last supporting question “How do the individuals involved with policy making understand the significance of the World Bank and UNESCO in transmitting globally dominant HE concepts to Nepal?” has explored on whether the WB and UNESCO are really important to transmit globally dominant HE issues to Nepal from the perspectives of people involved in HE policy making. The responses of the interviewees were analyzed to explore the possible answer. The responses showed that both the WB and UNESCO have significant roles for the development of HE in Nepal with the pace of global dynamics of HE. Although some of their areas of involvements are identical, the WB has more to cover and has more significant influence. Many of the responses seemed positive towards the activities of both IOs, while others expressed some concern. For example, such exceptional cases include the imposing nature of the WB and insufficient activities of UNESCO in accordance with its global mandates. After all, it is understood that the national HE system has the chance to align with broad global changes in HE mainly due to the WB in particular and UNESCO in general in the context of Nepal.

6.3 Recommendations

The researcher has gained lots of experiences and ideas while carrying out this thesis. The field study was an important part of it. Besides, the documents consulted during the study also broadened the areas in his mind. Moreover, the findings explored through the in-depth study are the most significant part. The recommendations for the policy implication have been made based on the findings of the study whereas the recommendations for the further studies in this particular area have been suggested based on both the experience and the findings of the study.

6.3.1 Recommendations for the Implications of Policy

The findings of this research are supposed to provide some specific ideas to the people involved in HE policy making in Nepal. The study also provides some feedbacks to the WB and UNESCO reflecting on their activities. This will, of course, be a supportive research to bring effective reformations in their working performance.

It has been found from the study that the activities of the WB are far more imposed types than that of UNESCO. At the same time, it is worth mentioning here that the way the WB is working has changed as the time has changed. It has been moving slightly from the direction

of ‘imposing’ mechanism to the mechanism of ‘dissemination’. Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended to the WB to be still more flexible in terms of launching different projects in the sense that their funding does not mean all their agendas should be followed from the top to the bottom. However, their attempts on this issue have been seen in improving order, it is not done absolutely. The findings also imply that the HE policy should be developed in such a way that there should be local global connection. It is found that the WB can be criticized based on the argument that it represents the interests of developed countries. It is recommended to the WB officials to work in such a way that it can get rid of such criticism and establish a good image. The study has also found that their focus is not on software knowledge like promoting online education. They are spending more on constructing the buildings of HEIs. It is recommended to look for that direction too.

On the other hand, the activities of UNESCO in Nepalese HE are found to be fewer in comparison to its global mandates. Therefore, it is recommended to include more areas of HE along with the school education, which is in their focus. In addition, the participation of UNESCO representatives in different discussions of HE issues has been found inadequate. It is recommended that they should not miss such discussions and meetings when they have space there.

Furthermore, the people involved in HE policy making in Nepal should not blindly accept the agendas of the IOs if they are not suitable for the national contexts as well. It has been realized that they are more inclined towards the ideas of the WB. It is equally important to have the considerations on the ideas of all the IOs working in the sector and grasp the best choices.

6.3.2 Recommendations for the Further Studies

It is not possible with an individual Master’s thesis to explore everything covering all the issues related to the areas of the WB and UNESCO with reference to HE in Nepal. Therefore, the researcher would like to make some recommendations for the possible studies in this particular area.

First of all, the separate in-depth study of the WB activities and UNESCO activities can be extended on the same issues. It can be carried out looking at their entire global mandates. The result can be examined how thoroughly they are acting at the national level in comparison to

their global mandates. Secondly, equity and access in HE of Nepal is a challenging issue. A systematic study on how the WB and UNESCO have helped to improve the issue of equity and access can be another interesting area. Thirdly, a comparative study between the WB activities and UNESCO activities for the overall reformation of Nepalese HE can be a suitable area as both of them are working in the field of education in Nepal. Next, a further expansion of the present study on how the shifts of the influencing mechanisms of the activities of the WB and UNESCO have changed as per the different time periods may be other important area. Further, it may be also possible to seek the role of the WB and UNESCO for the promotion of local issues in HE agendas. In addition, the separate studies of the role of the WB and UNESCO on establishing the issue of Quality Assurance and Accreditations of HE can be other matters for the further studies. In this way, there are still many more issues to be studied in this particular area.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Name of the Interview:

Organization/Institution:

Current Position:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Past Involvement and Experience:

General Section

1. Can you please introduce yourself with your position at this organization along with your involvement in framing HE policy in Nepal?
2. How do you perceive the term globalization in relation to higher education?
3. Do you think the international organizations like the WB and UNESCO have something to do in bringing global HE trends into national higher education policy? If yes, in what ways?
4. Do you have any experience of such evidences where the WB and UNESCO have significant roles in transmitting globally dominant HE concepts to Nepal?
5. Do you think Nepalese HE Higher Education policies are influenced by the WB and UNESCO activities? How?
6. Have you experienced any encouraging activity and support from the WB and UNESCO to promote research oriented activities and programmes in HE? If yes, could you please give some evidences?

Specific Section

Interview Guide for the UGC Officials

1. What is the role of the UGC in framing HE policy?
2. Are the representatives from the World Bank and UNESCO invited to every discussion and meeting of the HE development?

3. Do they have regular presence and provide appropriate feedbacks?
4. Have you experienced any direct or indirect pressure to follow their agendas from them?
5. To what extent their data and documents are utilized while framing HE policy?

Interview Guide for the WB Higher Education Official

1. Can you please briefly explain the involvement of the World Bank in Nepalese HE development?
2. Are you regularly invited to participate in the discussions and meetings of HE development? What are your roles there?
3. Does the WB provide some specific policy directions along with the support of finance?
4. What do you think about the provision of the WB policy for promoting networks between HEIs within border and across border? Does it work as a mediator among universities?
5. Does the WB co-ordinate with other IOs while promoting HE in Nepal? Can you please give some evidences?

Interview Guide for UNESCO Education Official

1. Can you please briefly explain the involvement of UNESCO in Nepalese HE development?
2. Are you regularly invited to participate in the discussions and meetings of HE development? What are your roles there?
3. Does UNESCO provide some specific policy directions along with the support of finance?
4. What do you think about the provision of UNESCO policy for promoting networks between HEIs within border and across border? Does it work as a mediator among universities?
5. Does UNESCO co-ordinate with other IOs while promoting HE in Nepal? Can you please give some evidences?

Interview Guide for the Secretary of MoE

1. What about the feedbacks and suggestions of the WB and UNESCO in preparing HE policy in Nepal?
2. Do the WB or UNESCO provide more funds for HE development? How do they provide the funds and is it conditional?
3. What about the recent plan of Nepal Government for globalizing HE policy in Nepal? Are there any strategies to make our educational degrees equivalent to that of international universities?
4. Can you please tell me something about the recent proposed HE policy document? Does this include any issues concerned with the current global HE trends of HE such as quality assurance, equity and access of HE, ICT in HE and so on?
5. Can you please briefly put your views on the negative and positive consequences of involving the World Bank and UNESCO in HE development of Nepal?

Interview Guide for the Educationist

1. Are you regularly invited to participate in the discussions and meetings of HE development? What are your roles there?
2. How has Nepal been trying to follow the global trends of HE? How do you evaluate the roles of the WB and UNESCO in promoting globally dominant HE topics to Nepal?
3. Have you realized the regular presence and appropriate feedbacks from the representatives of the World Bank and UNESCO in every discussion and meeting of the HE development?
4. Have you experienced any direct or indirect pressure to follow their agendas from them?
5. To what extent their data and documents are utilized while framing HE policy?

Appendix 2: Key Publications/Policy Frameworks of the World Bank

Publication	Challenges	Main Messages	Bank Role/Strategy
Higher Education: Lessons of Experience (1994)	Need to re-examine “rate of return” priority that de-emphasized higher education in favor of primary and secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher education is “of paramount importance for economic and social development”; • a crisis in higher education is emerging around the world, caused by diminished public funding, rapidly increasing demand for higher education, and operational inefficiencies at the institutional level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diversification of institutions, including private institutions; • diversification of funding sources, including cost-sharing, and linking funding with performance; • re-examining the links between government and higher education institutions; • focusing policy developments on quality and equity objectives
Higher Education in Developing Countries. Peril and Promise (2000)	Crisis in higher education in developing countries must be managed to ensure higher education (HE) fulfills its mission of promoting sustainable, cultural,	<p>Major areas of concern include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • privatization, • access (particularly for women), • diminished government funding, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding (focusing on mixed source models); • resources (effectively using physical and human capital); • governance (promoting

	social,, and economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased demand for HE 	<p>structures for good governance and effective management); and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> curriculum development (with focus on complementary elements such as general education and investment in science and technology)
Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education (2002)	Remaining challenges include expanding the HE sector to meet increasing demand, inequality of access and outcomes, quality assurance concerns, and the need for more effective governance and management structures	<p>Programmatic support for HE should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriate to each country's circumstances; involve planning for development at institutional, local and national levels; promote autonomy and accountability; focus on capacity enhancement and regional sharing of successful experiences and 	<p>Asserts the need for locally driven higher education initiatives that can be supported and enhanced by the international expertise offered by a multilateral organization like the Bank.</p> <p>Identifies significant global public goods that countries on their own may not be able to handle effectively, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> human capital migration (brain drain);

		<p>models;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sequence activities in a manner consistent with the entire development agenda for any one country; and • acknowledge political nature of higher education reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intellectual property concerns; • the challenge of quality assurance for borderless higher education; • the digital divide; and • the impact of the global trade in services on HE
<p>Education Sector Strategy Update (December 2005)</p>	<p>Recognizes the key role of education advancement at all levels and the significant linkages between education and the rest of the economy</p>	<p>Emphasizes three themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrating education into a countrywide perspective; • broadening the strategic agenda through a system-wide approach (from early childhood development through tertiary education); and • becoming more results oriented 	<p>Support Bank's broader focus on education-labor market linkages, with more systematic attention to secondary and tertiary as pillars of the knowledge economy, to complement efforts made in expanding primary education through Education For All</p>

Adapted from Salmi et al. (2009, pp. 104-105)