

# E-learning Method and University Life of Married Female Students in Patriarchal Social Structure in Sociological Perspective

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## Abstract

Education is a process and means of human empowerment and social transformation. There are both formal and informal practices in educational processes. University is a unit of the formal education system that provides specific knowledge and skills in a universal context. Face-to-face teaching is traditionally practiced as the teaching pedagogy in university education in Nepal. This paper analyzes the challenges and opportunities of e-learning for married female students within the university context under the patriarchal social structure. Married female students' in-depth interviews based on the challenges and opportunities they faced in the e-learning system in university education have prepared the cases through their narratives as the primary data of the research. The cases have been collected by purposive sampling through the university level of students. The content analysis method has analyzed both primary and secondary data types. Married female students have been found to suffer from problems with individual devices, financial problems, computer literacy, regularity of electricity, and poor internet quality. Similarly, they have to face house-loaded problems during class time. They have the opportunity to manage household activities and adapt to new technology in learning, saving travel time and cost under the e-learning system of university life. The theoretical explanation of patriarchy only gets partially analog except for the partial application of its assumptions in the e-learning system, mainly for the married female students of the university.

## Keywords

Education, e-learning method, gender, patriarchal social structure, married female student

## INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a pathway to a brighter future, shaping individuals, societies, and nations towards their goals. It equips students with the cognitive tools necessary to tackle real-world challenges and is crucial for economic success and social mobility (Gnawali,

2020). Education is not just a fundamental human right; it is a catalyst for realizing all other rights, profoundly impacting the fabric of societies (UN, 2020). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely disrupted education, necessitating the adoption of online learning as traditional educational institutions, from schools to universities, faced

closures to curb the spread of the virus (Ghimire, 2020). To maintain academic continuity, educational institutions worldwide swiftly transitioned from traditional face-to-face classroom settings to remote and online learning formats. According to Winthrop (2020), the pandemic affected 87 percent of students globally, out of 1.5 billion learners, during school closures. E-learning tools have emerged as essential aids for instructors, schools, and universities, facilitating students during educational disruption (Subedi et al., 2020). In this sense, pedagogical methods of the past face-to-face physical learning in the classroom were transformed by the e-learning system during the 19th period in all educational institutions from lower to upper levels.

Teaching - learning cannot be static. It changes with time. The teaching process must meet the needs of the time and society. In this context, teaching is often called dynamic. Ghaith (2010) has insisted on knowledge of technology for learning. Similarly, Sargoet et al. (2017) have focused on digital technology to help learners hold knowledge and skills. There are different learning theories, and Ackerman and Hu (2011) also talked about students' learning theory for gaining and maintaining knowledge and skills during learning. The teachers must be familiar with the technology of the pedagogical approach. Hime and Schulenberg (2013) presented their views about the personal understanding of education,

the educational environment of the teachers, and how they interact with learners technologically. Likewise, Moser (2016) claims that digital tools are most appropriate for the pedagogical and technological teaching-learning approach. Moreover, Wild et al. (2020) have argued that traditional theories need to be more relevant and apt in teaching through technological pedagogy in the face of students' pressures within the pedagogical environment. Similarly, Hara et al. (2000, p. 148) and Broup et al. (2013) have emphasized the importance of teachers' involvement in online teaching, highlighting that teaching and learning can only be effective with technological interaction. Sivo et al. (2018) have also discussed the effectiveness and limitations of technology's use in teaching, emphasizing the need for technology integration within the educational environment.

Furthermore, information communication has been crucial in addressing educational challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kamendz (2020) suggests that students and teachers were compelled to embrace technological tools as a means of teaching despite their preference for traditional methods. Garaba et al. (2015) and Samuel & Zaitton (2006) acknowledge a general inclination towards traditional classroom learning but stress the importance of studying technology's role, particularly in times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, where it became instrumental in the pedagogical process. Similarly, Al-

Smadi et al. (2009) advocate for an online education system tailored to the needs of learners through technology. Likewise, Dewey (1938), Lipman (2003), and Pierce (1995) argue that an e-learning system that addresses cognitive teaching methods is essential for meeting the demands of distance learning. In this context, the e-learning system became a mandatory educational learning method in schools for university-level students, even in Nepal during COVID-19. So, the married female students who were even unable to take classes physically due to patriarchal social structure systems and their roles in household affairs also got an alternative opportunity to learn from their own houses. In this context, the article has been generated to focus on and explore the fact that married female students at the university level got opportunities or challenges through alternative forms of e-learning systems.

The social structure reflects a combination of specific units of society (Adhikari et al., 2024). The learning process is also functioning as a unit of social structure. Similarly, the learning process is always determined by the social structure. Specific production patterns always guide the social structure (Adhikari, 2020). The social structure of Nepal is patriarchal, and it has dominated female married students. Whatever technology is introduced, their learning is determined by the patriarchal social structure of the married female students of the University of Nepal. In this respect, the university's married

female students have the opportunity to learn from their own houses. However, they had to deal with other domestic affairs during the time of taking online classes. They had to face more challenges than opportunities due to Nepal's patriarchal social structure. However, the utilization of technology offers several advantages in education. Elmorshidy (2013), Kale & Akeoglu (2008), and Petkot et al. (2015) have highlighted the benefits of integrating technology into education, such as accessing various web materials and transforming the learning environment from passive to active. Similarly, Perven (2016) argues that online learning environments can enhance the dynamism and engagement of the pedagogical process. Moreover, Al-Marroof & Al-Emran (2018) and Shaharancee et al. (2016) have observed positive outcomes in learning using Google Classroom, emphasizing its efficacy in education. Online programs represent the latest technological advancements, as noted by Ryan et al. (2010), who view online teaching and learning as cutting-edge tools. Similarly, Lin et al. (2017) and Moor (1998) have underscored the significance of online interaction as a vital aspect of the educational system. Likewise, Borup et al. (2003) argue that the absence of interaction in online teaching and learning undermines its academic effectiveness. It is a challenge for the ring system. In this respect, E-learning compelled by COVID-19 has been one of the challenges to an effective pedagogical

system in Nepal to be adopted in alternative teaching methods of physical face-to-face face-to-face room educational activities.

In response to the challenge, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology of Nepal issued 'Teaching Learning Guidelines' on May 31, 2020, advocating for adopting alternative teaching methods to resume educational activities. As a measure of social distancing to curb transmission, the abrupt closure of campuses prompted a shift from face-to-face classes to online learning systems. This shift has underscored the importance of leveraging e-learning tools and platforms for effective student engagement (Rashid & Yadav, 2020). UNESCO has also committed to ensuring quality education by facilitating access to education through distance learning initiatives. Proserpio and Gioia (2007) highlight the rapid transformation of the learning system through technology, emphasizing its increasing importance for students' learning experiences. While there is a logical necessity for teaching methods to evolve, transitioning to Internet tools and computer-based communication presents a complex challenge for students. UNESCO's initiative, 'Radio Pathashala,' responds to this need by promoting radio education programs (UNESCO, 2020). It means that even the radio education program is an e-learning system. It was one of the alternative pedagogical systems and one of the opportunities to be adopted

in Covid-19 for junior to higher levels students.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed potential opportunities within Nepalese education systems, although the full impact would only be realized once lockdown measures were lifted and universities resumed operations. This period of disruption resulted in significant pressure on teachers and students to catch up on lost time, potentially affecting the quality of student intake. In Southeast Asia, the worsening COVID-19 situation has led to the closure of several schools, prompting many universities to shift from in-person to online classes to mitigate further transmission. However, this sudden transition has raised concerns among educators in the region, mainly due to a significant portion of the population's lack of internet access and electronic devices (Jalli, 2020). Considering these challenges, this paper aims to analyze the obstacles and opportunities of e-learning for married female university students during COVID-19 in 2019.

In other words, Proserpio and Gioia (2007) highlight the rapid transformation of the learning system through technology, emphasizing its increasing importance for students' learning experiences. (Rashid & Yadav, 2020) have discussed the importance of e-learning. Borup et al. (2003) argue that the absence of interaction in online teaching and learning undermines its academic effectiveness. Elmorshidy (2013), Kale

& Akeoglu (2008), and Petkot et al. (2015) have highlighted the benefits of integrating technology into education. Perven (2016) argues that online learning environments can enhance the dynamism and engagement of the pedagogical process. Moreover, Al-Marroof & Al-Emran (2018) and Shaharancee et al. (2016) have observed positive outcomes in learning through the use of Google Classroom. Ryan et al. (2010) view online teaching and learning as cutting-edge tools. Similarly, Lin et al. (2017) and Moor (1998) have underscored the significance of online interaction as a vital aspect of the educational system. Jalli (2020) has argued that the sudden transition has raised concerns among educators in the region, mainly due to the lack of internet access and electronic devices among a significant portion of the population. However, all of the critics and researchers mentioned above have discussed the opportunities and challenges of the e-learning system. However, they still need to analyze the challenges and opportunities of married female students in the patriarchal social structure of the University of Nepal. In other words, numerous researchers have examined online and e-learning pedagogical systems across various contexts, pre-pandemics, during, and post-COVID-19. However, there is a notable gap in exploring the specific experiences of married female students within these systems. Therefore, this research aims to address this gap by investigating how married female students were

navigating the e-learning pedagogical system during the COVID-19 pandemic and exploring the benefits they derived from online education and how it had become challenges for married female students during COVID-19 and during as well as even one of the opportunities for them aftermath of COVID-19. Hence, the following research questions have guided the article:

A) What type of opportunity have the married female students of university of Nepal got by the e-learning system?

B) How have married female students of the University of Nepal faced challenges in the e-learning system?

This research has attempted to explore the opportunities and challenges faced by married female students at the university of the patriarchal social structure of Nepal. The article aims to reveal the challenges faced by the married female students's university of the patriarchal social structure of Nepal in the e-learning system and to analyze the opportunities gained by the married female students of the university of the patriarchal social structure of Nepal in the e-learning system.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Nepalese social structure is patriarchal. The e-learning practice of university education and the participation of married female students in university has been adopted as the assumption of its

ontology. The interpretive approach is required to identify and analyze the feelings and experiences of the university's female married students in e-learning practice. For this approach, qualitative research design is preferred. In qualitative research design, there are various procedures such as case studies, observation, and ethnography (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Among them, the case study method has been applied in this research. Married female students' in-depth interviews based on the challenges and opportunities they faced in the e-learning system in university education have prepared the cases through their narratives as the primary data of the research.

Tribhuvan University in Nepal holds a prominent position as one of the country's earliest and most influential institutions. With over sixty constituent colleges and thousands of affiliated campuses spread across the nation's seven provinces, it caters to nearly eighty percent of direct-level education, offering programs from bachelor's to Ph.D. levels. However, due to the country's challenging topographical terrain, ensuring quality internet service nationwide poses a significant obstacle. Consequently, obtaining primary data from the entire university population is impractical. Therefore, the research employs stratified and purposive sampling methods. Participants were stratified based on their academic levels: bachelor's, master's, M.Phil., and Ph.D. Fifteen bachelor's students, ten master's students, five M.Phil.

students, and five Ph.D. students were purposively selected for the study. Through the case study method, narratives were obtained from these participants to serve as primary data. These narratives were then analyzed to identify the challenges and opportunities of e-learning for married female students, categorized into various themes. Thematic analysis has been conducted based on the content of these narratives to analyze the data effectively. Additionally, secondary data have been gathered from scholarly articles, reference texts, and existing documents. Content analysis, deemed particularly suitable for qualitative data interpretation (Neuman, 2007), has been employed to analyze both primary and secondary data.

The significance of this study is rooted in the Nepali societal context, characterized by a patriarchal structure where married individuals, particularly women, are typically engaged in domestic responsibilities and often face barriers to pursuing further education. The emergence of COVID-19 prompted the adoption of e-learning systems across all educational levels, with Tribhuvan University mandating online education nationwide. This shift also impacted married female students, yet the extent of their benefit or detriment from this new e-learning model remains uncertain. Therefore, this research aims to explore the implications of e-learning within a patriarchal society, mainly focusing on its effects on married female students,

shedding light on previously unexamined aspects of educational dynamics. This research assists in the formation of policy in the pedagogical system to the policymakers from the government level to reform and transform the e-learning approach mainly to the married female students of the university level, to explore the complicities of poor internet in the rural areas and to address such issues for the effective ways of e-learning system in the entire nation.

According to patriarchal theoretical perspectives, female roles are often subordinate to males within society, lacking opportunities for empowerment. Walby (1990) contends that patriarchy is maintained through male dominance over women, facilitated by the active support of patriarchal, capitalist, and racist systems within the state, despite some limited reforms such as equal educational opportunities. Similarly, Tong (1989) suggests that patriarchal societies often view women as inherently oriented toward providing pleasure rather than as equal and rational beings. In the same way, Bernard (1982) argues that marriage tends to reinforce women's subordination to men, with women often relegated to domestic and caregiving roles within the family, which can diminish their societal status. Gender is identified as a primary unit of social organization (Ritzer, 2000). Like many others, Nepalese society is deeply entrenched in patriarchal structures (Sharma, 2001). In this respect, this article is

framed within the patriarchal theoretical framework, examining the challenges and opportunities of e-learning methods for married female students within the context of patriarchal social systems in university life.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Challenges and opportunities of e-learning method for married female students

The education sector has been significantly disrupted by the global health crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly impacting the learning environment and students worldwide. The rapid advancement of technology has ushered in substantial changes in education. However, various challenges have emerged alongside these changes due to the pandemic. These include lack of preparedness, limited student interaction, absence of physical class activities, and the sudden shift to online learning. Governments worldwide have initiated responses to mitigate the pandemic's adverse effects on education. Despite their unfamiliarity with technology, teachers accustomed to traditional teaching methods were compelled to adapt to digital tools. Similarly, students, including married females, faced obstacles in transitioning to online learning due to limited technological proficiency, affordability of high-speed internet, and challenges with interaction in home environments. While e-learning offers flexibility by eliminating the

need for a physical classroom, many students may need help to adapt. However, addressing the challenges of e-learning requires support and the implementation of best practices to ensure students' success in this new learning environment. Embracing the transition from traditional classroom methods to e-learning is essential for instructors and students. Drawing from insights from case studies, the challenges and opportunities of an e-learning system for married female students are outlined below.

### **E-learning method and challenges for married female students**

While online learning provides a variety of new options for education, it also presents its own set of obstacles, and married students still have a long way to go in making online learning accessible and fulfilling household duties. Based on data from the case study, some problems of married female students in the e-learning system under the patriarchal social structure have been analyzed.

### **The problem with devices and the internet**

One of the primary challenges of e-learning is the persistent need for more reliable internet access, particularly in rural areas, although technical issues also arise in urban centers. This connectivity issue poses a significant obstacle for married students, impacting their ability to engage in their studies effectively. Many students, especially those in rural areas, need more access to high-

speed internet connections to participate in e-learning platforms. Consequently, they need help accessing virtual learning environments and other online resources that depend on internet connectivity. Additionally, technical challenges arise during online classes, as some students are unfamiliar with technology and computer programs. The speed of their internet connection affects their ability to join classes promptly and participate in live lectures without interruptions.

For example, a newly married student (Case-1) described the struggle of obtaining internet access in her village, resorting to costly data plans that are not sustainable for everyday use. Access to Wi-Fi in rural areas remains a rare luxury, making it challenging for individuals like her to attend online classes consistently. Despite managing household responsibilities and attending face-to-face classes, transitioning to e-learning exacerbates her difficulties due to technical issues, resulting in missed classes and hindering her learning process.

Similarly, another student (Case-2) relied on her husband's laptop for e-learning activities, as smartphones were often incompatible with virtual class platforms. However, her husband's need for the laptop for work led to missed virtual classes and hindered her ability to prepare presentations. These examples underscore the challenges married female students face in the e-learning process.



### **The problem with household chores**

Household e-learners find it challenging to allocate time for traditional in-person learning due to their domestic responsibilities, necessitating their continued reliance on e-learning methods. Similarly, the global lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic compelled students worldwide to participate in online classes. Annamalai (2001, p.1585) acknowledges that while online learning during COVID-19 posed numerous challenges, it was ultimately accepted by students, parents, and teachers.

(Case-3) A married female student residing with her mother-in-law expressed that juggling household responsibilities while attending classes from home proves challenging, especially when unexpected guests visit. Daily domestic chores often take precedence over academic obligations, creating disruptions to her college work.

(Case-7) Another married female student residing with relatives in Kathmandu highlighted the overwhelming demands of balancing multiple roles within the family, leading to chaos and insufficient time for academic pursuits. The clash between familial expectations and the time required for e-learning contributes to poor academic performance.

(Case-4) Additionally, a married female student noted

challenges in managing her time between her studies and family responsibilities, leading to misunderstandings with her husband regarding the time allocated to them and their children. The prevailing patriarchal social structure in Nepali society limits women's educational opportunities, with familial duties and societal norms inhibiting married women from pursuing further education.

Based on the cases (Case-3), (Case-7), and (Case-4), the challenges faced by the university's married female students have been presented. The (Case-3) has displayed the challenges of the married female student who has engaged with domestic responsibilities such as managing the unexpected guests in the house and getting disrupted in class. She has been living with her mother-in-law even though she does not get support in handling minor household tasks while taking online classes from home. Likewise, (Case-7) a married female university student is dwelling in her relative's house in Kathmandu and is not free from handling the household tasks and the e-learning classes side by side. She has often been disturbed during class time. As a result, she has poor academic performance, which she has accepted as the challenge of domestic responsibilities and obligations even though she is living in her relative's house in Kathmandu. In the same way (Case-4), the married female student has revealed the challenge of managing the time for both her studies

and domestic responsibilities. She has to balance herself due to the patriarchal social structure, and it has created misunderstandings even with her husband regarding the time of handling the children and fulfilling her household duties. These challenges are the challenges generated by the patriarchal social structure for the married female students of the university.

### **Gender role as a barrier**

In e-learning, women face significant constraints due to their extensive domestic responsibilities, which consume most of their time. This situation is exacerbated by their limited technological knowledge, posing considerable challenges in today's digital world. Gender roles hinder married female students from accessing and excelling in education (Lorber, 1994). Societal expectations dictate that married women prioritize their spouses' households upon marriage, often leading to parental beliefs that education for married women holds little value. In patrilineal societies, educational opportunities for women remain limited (Brettell & Sargent, 2001). Case (2) illustrates how Nepali women are ingrained with prioritizing family duties over attending online classes. Despite their desire to engage in e-learning, they must fulfill household responsibilities and family obligations, even at the expense of missing virtual classes.

Most married female students felt overwhelmed by academic demands and domestic

responsibilities, with insufficient time to manage both effectively. One student noted that attending classes while facing a backlog of household chores undermines her ability to concentrate. Another student highlighted the challenge of completing significant academic work within limited time frames.

### **Financial problem**

Financial constraints pose significant challenges for married female students, particularly when accessing updated technologies necessary for e-learning. (Case-5) highlighted the stress of managing finances for family obligations and education, including additional college fees and internet access expenses. (Case-8) mentioned working to cover expenses for food, accommodation, and bills, but the loss of employment has heightened concerns about future semesters. Social norms, such as early marriage, financial burdens associated with college fees, and limited opportunities, also impact married women's education. Despite these challenges, some women exhibit psychological resilience and receive support from their parents and in-laws to manage academic activities.

### **The problem of the learning environment**

Educational institutions must actively promote and support the transition to online teaching methods. They should establish appropriate structures to facilitate academics in

bridging the gap between traditional classroom settings and online learning environments. Married students often struggle to find a conducive environment for virtual learning due to interruptions from family responsibilities. Balancing household chores, familial duties, and complex college obligations can be extremely challenging. For instance, (Case-4) shared her difficulties attending online classes while caring for her infant in a nuclear family setup, as daycare options are unavailable due to pandemic-related closures. Another married student recounted conflicts with her husband over the time she dedicates to online education instead of household duties, highlighting the lack of time for family and clashes with college schedules.

Married female students often juggle multiple responsibilities as household caretakers and job holders. (Case-8) described how she lost her job due to difficulties managing her studies, job, and household chores, leading to decreased efficiency. She also noted the absence of classmates in e-learning, making it challenging to complete teacher assignments.

Furthermore, (Case-11) and (Case-5), both master's level students, shared their struggles in balancing office work with academic responsibilities, resorting to group discussions with colleagues to catch up on tasks. Additionally, (Case-5) mentioned requesting support from her husband to manage household duties during her classes, leading to disagreements between the couple.

All of the cases, as analyzed under the heading of the problem of the learning environment (Case-4), (Case-8), (Case-11), and (Case-5), the married female students of the university have presented their challenges in the e-learning environment, respectively. (Case-4) A married female student at the university needs help managing online classes since she lives in a nuclear family and has to take care of her infant; she does not get any support from the childcare center due to COVID-19. This case even narrates the conflict between herself and her husband due to her over-dedication in her online college classes and her failure to give enough time to the family. Likewise, the (Case-8) married female student of the university has lost her job due to online classes and other domestic affairs.

In the same way, (Case-11) and (Case-5) married female students with master's degrees have to struggle to manage the office and their online classes side by side at a time. She has to ask her husband to support the household work in managing so that she can handle the office work. However, in the patriarchal social structure, it has become impossible to get support for her, and it instead creates a dispute between the couple only. These cases have revealed only the challenges of e-learning in the life of married female university students rather than the opportunities.

### **Computer Literacy**

Online learning is straightforward for individuals who are comfortable with technology but presents significant challenges for those who need to be tech-savvy. Garcia et al. (2014) have highlighted students' difficulties in time management and independent technology usage in e-learning. Computer literacy emerges as a significant obstacle in online education, as noted by Ministry of Education Malaysia (2016), which also reflects poor technology proficiency among school-level students. Similarly, this issue persists among university-level students in Nepal.

While many students possess technological proficiency, the need for computer literacy remains a significant issue among contemporary students. Numerous married female students need help with basic software programs such as Microsoft Word, Zoom, Google Meet, and MS Teams, hindering their ability to navigate e-learning platforms and manage their coursework. (Case 7) exemplifies a married female student with limited mobile phone usage skills, finding it challenging to adapt to the e-learning environment and requiring time to adjust to new learning methods.

The transition from traditional classroom learning to online platforms presents challenges for students, particularly those who need to be digitally adept, leading to issues with motivation. However, with appropriate instructor support, students can succeed in e-learning environments. Competency in

technology is essential for students to effectively participate in online classes, enabling them to manage assignments and course materials proficiently. Introductory computer literacy courses can enhance students' understanding and proficiency in utilizing technology for academic purposes. (Case 3) recounts the experience of a married female bachelor-level student who acquired basic computer skills by watching YouTube videos, managing household chores during the day, and learning at night. She struggled with tasks such as signing up, attending live classes, submitting assignments, and communicating with teachers and peers due to her lack of proficiency.

### **E-learning system and opportunities for married female students**

A married female student (Case-2) has brought a positive sense of saving time. E-learning systems have brought about cost savings for married women by reducing expenses related to time and travel, enabling them to allocate more time to family responsibilities. Married women can now engage in household chores and childcare and attend online classes simultaneously, benefiting from the convenience of learning from anywhere with internet access. E-learning allows students to learn at their own pace, facilitating effective time management and eliminating the need for daily commutes to college. Moreover, it is generally more cost-effective, saving on transportation, textbooks, and other college-related

expenses. For married students seeking flexibility in their college attendance, e-learning offers various advantages.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly transformed education, as students can now access their courses and study materials online, allowing them to learn at their convenience.

### **Adaptability and flexibility**

A married female student (Case-3) has stated that e-learning is adaptable because it is flexible in time, and the students and teachers manage their suitable time for learning. E-learning offers a flexible and adaptable solution for married women balancing household duties and studies. They can choose their study times, even during late hours, accommodating their busy schedules. With e-education, there is no waiting for college hours to interact with teachers; communication happens through email or chat. A working married female student mentioned she could attend classes from home or the office, fitting them into her available time slots. Managing household tasks alongside class activities becomes more accessible with this flexible e-class routine. Additionally, e-learning eliminates rigid schedules, allowing married women to access lectures conveniently. Virtual submission of tests and assignments further enhances the benefits for these students.

### **Better learning opportunities**

A married female student (Case-10) has taken the online system as the only way to engage in the learning process. E-learning platforms have revolutionized learning by providing married female students access to course materials, allowing them to review content repeatedly at their convenience. This flexibility empowers students to form their opinions on lectures and create notes according to their schedules. A married female student pursuing a master's degree expressed satisfaction with the diverse courses available, saving her time and enriching her knowledge. Additionally, e-learning facilitates connections with teachers through email, a valuable asset for busy married students. The flexible study schedule enables students to manage their time efficiently, reducing the stress of attending physical classes regularly. Consequently, e-learning emerges as a compelling alternative to traditional classroom settings, fostering increased participation, enhanced focus, and improved academic performance.

Student attendance has notably surged due to eliminating the need to commute to class. With the option to interact with professors remotely, many students feel more secure and actively engage in class discussions. A married female student pursuing a master's degree mentioned that the ability to attend class from any location and at any time has relieved her of travel concerns. Consequently, e-learning has enabled married women to strike a better balance between

household responsibilities and academic commitments, leading to increased efficiency in attending classes.

A married female student (Case-10) emphasized how online learning allows them to focus on lectures and make optimal use of technology fully. Married female students can engage directly with teachers and participate in discussions during virtual classes. They have successfully balanced household responsibilities with online activities. This data shows that the married female student has even gained the opportunity to learn through the e-learning system.

#### **Helpful to manage family time**

A married female student (Case-10) has even expressed the idea of managing time for the family. The advantages of e-learning are evident, particularly in saving time and money on commuting for married students, which is a significant consideration for Nepali women. A married female student living in a joint family highlighted how sharing household responsibilities among family members, including her father-in-law and husband, has afforded her more time for studies. Being able to stay close to her family while studying has been particularly beneficial during the pandemic. This innovative approach to learning provides married women with busy domestic schedules with a flexible and holistic educational experience, meeting modern digital

needs. It fosters an environment of collaboration, choice, and access to various technical resources, enhancing the effectiveness of online learning.

#### **E-learning has helped to save students from exposure to infections**

In (Case-10), a married female student expressed concerns about her family members' fear of contracting the virus. E-learning has provided a sense of reassurance by allowing students to avoid crowded spaces and potential exposure to infections. By attending virtual classrooms from home instead of going to college, married female students have been able to protect themselves and their families from the spread of the virus. Remaining at home has also contributed to maintaining robust immune systems, as they are not exposed to potential sources of illness. This approach has helped in preventing the spread of COVID-19. It has allowed them to focus on consuming fresh and nutritious foods throughout the day, boosting their immunity to combat potential virus symptoms.

#### **Adaptation to Technology**

A married female student at the bachelor level (Case-6) initially struggled with using mobile and laptop devices but has since become comfortable with new technology. She highlighted how the shift towards result-oriented education in e-learning has increased participation and engagement. This method allows for adapting information in virtual

classrooms to meet each student's specific learning needs and preferences. For example, married female students unfamiliar with virtual learning can be guided through tutorials and videos. They can also utilize various technologies, such as online audiobooks, to tailor their learning experience to their requirements. This personalized approach enhances learning outcomes by addressing individual needs. The focus of technology-driven education is not just about integrating new technologies into classrooms but also about adopting new strategies to improve student performance and participation throughout the learning process. The emergence of e-learning presents a unique opportunity to transform education into a student-centric, customizable experience, enabling married female students to attend classes and learn at their own pace.

## CONCLUSIONS

Married female students in university settings have encountered both challenges and opportunities within the e-learning system. On one hand, they have effectively managed their time between family obligations and academics, benefiting from the flexibility of online education and saving on travel expenses. However, they also need help adapting to new technologies and dealing with individual device management and financial constraints. Factors like irregular electricity supply and poor internet quality in rural areas have

further compounded their challenges. Additionally, societal expectations regarding gender roles have placed added pressure on married female students to juggle domestic and academic responsibilities simultaneously, often resulting in disruptions from childcare and household tasks during online classes.

Despite these obstacles, the e-learning system has allowed married female students to continue their education from the comfort zone of their homes, particularly amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. It has prompted a reevaluation of traditional educational norms and highlighted the potential for remote learning to empower married women to pursue their academic goals while managing their domestic duties. Ultimately, while patriarchal social structures may persist in Nepalese society, the e-learning experience has demonstrated that married female students can benefit from alternative educational approaches and enhance their academic achievements. Married female students face challenges in physical classrooms and e-learning, such as performing the role of the daughters-in-law in the house. However, it has both pros and cons for married women who have to manage both household affairs and e-learning simultaneously in the patriarchal social structure. Furthermore, e-learning has become an alternative pedagogical system even today after COVID-19. It has been adopted as one of the valuable methods of educational activities for those who are unable to

attend the physical classroom regularly, especially for married female students, and either it has become an opportunity or a challenges for many daughters-in-law in the patriarchal social structure has assisted to explore the facts that married female students have got one of the opportunities of learning from their own houses but at the same time they been facing number of challenges like poor internet supply in the remote rural areas, being engaged in domestic affairs while taking the classes in online and the like. Hence, the patriarchal social structure assumes that married female students of the university are not allowed married female students in educational activities partially because the e-learning system has provided opportunities for learning from home. It has been shown that the university's married female students have faced some challenges. However, they are grasping the opportunities to learn from their homes by facing minor hurdles and disturbances in domestic household affairs. The patriarchy theory only gets completely analog if for the partial application of its assumptions in the e-learning system, mainly for the married female students of the university.

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