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Vinayak Interdisciplinary Journal (VIJ) is a peer-reviewed journal published by Research Management Cell of Vinayak Siddha College, Kathmandu-7, Chabahil. VIJ publishes interdisciplinary papers as peer-reviewed articles especially from Nepal. The authors are solely responsible for the views expressed in their articles.

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Editorial

It is with immense pleasure and a deep sense of academic responsibility that we present the inaugural issue of the **Vinayak Interdisciplinary Journal (VIJ), Volume 1, Issue 1**, published by the **Research Management Cell (RMC) of Vinayak Siddha College, Kathmandu, Nepal**. The publication of this first issue marks a significant milestone in the institution's commitment to promoting research culture, academic excellence, and scholarly collaboration across diverse disciplines.

The **Vinayak Interdisciplinary Journal (VIJ)** is the first **double-blind peer-reviewed** journal published by Vinayak Siddha College. Established with the vision of creating a vibrant platform for intellectual discourse, the journal encourages researchers, educators, practitioners, policymakers, and students to share original research, theoretical insights, and innovative practices that contribute to academic and professional advancement. The journal embraces interdisciplinary scholarship by bringing together research from Education, Language and Literature, Translation Studies, Business and Management, Economics, Finance, Political Science, Gender Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Environmental Studies, Public Health, Tourism, Human Resource Management, and other related fields.

As an emerging scholarly publication, VIJ is committed to maintaining high academic standards through a rigorous double-blind peer-review process that ensures the originality, quality, and integrity of every published article. We are also pleased to announce our institutional commitment to fulfilling the necessary academic and technical standards required for indexing the journal in the **Nepal Journals Online (NepJOL)** platform in the near future. This initiative reflects our dedication to increasing the visibility, accessibility, and international recognition of the scholarly works published in VIJ.

The inaugural issue comprises a rich collection of research articles contributed by distinguished academicians and emerging scholars from various universities and institutions across Nepal. Collectively, these studies reflect contemporary academic concerns while offering practical and theoretical contributions to their respective disciplines.

In this volume, **Aashish Bartaula and Ramesh Bista** investigate the impact of workplace harassment on employee performance in Nepali commercial banks, emphasizing the importance of psychologically safe working environments. **Bibek Khatri** examines the causes, consequences, and preventive strategies related to bullying among Grade 10 students, highlighting the collective responsibility of schools, families, and communities. **Binod Shahi** evaluates the effectiveness of training and development programs for administrative employees at Tribhuvan University, underscoring their role in enhancing organizational performance. **Bishal Bhattarai** presents a conceptual discussion of cross-cultural management theories and their practical implications in multicultural organizations.

Ganesh Kumar Bastola explores conceptual and practical dimensions of translation studies, discussing theoretical perspectives and contemporary challenges in translation practices. **Kabi Pudasaini** critically reviews the evolving discourse on substantive representation of women in

Nepali politics, emphasizing the need to move beyond numerical representation toward meaningful political participation. **Khagendra Prasad Guragain** offers an ecocritical interpretation of literary texts by Kenneth Rexroth and Robert Frost, demonstrating the enduring relationship between humanity and nature. **Kiran Khadgi** investigates the current status of suicide prevention in Nepal and advocates for coordinated, community-based mental health interventions. **Kiran Shrestha** compares Buddhist economics with traditional economic thought, presenting ethical and sustainable alternatives for contemporary development challenges.

Similarly, **Krishna Kumar Bohora** examines the contribution of the Association of Preschool Educators Nepal (APEN) to women's leadership development and empowerment within Early Childhood Development. **Murari Karki, Padam Bahadur Lama, Nabaraj Poudel, and Basudev Lamichhane** analyze the relationship between financial literacy, financial socialization, and saving behavior among Nepalese youth. **Seema Humagain and Ram Prasad Gajurel** assess the contribution of Hetauda Industrial Estate to sustainable local livelihoods and regional socio-economic development. **Ramesh Bista and Ashish Bartaula** examine how different dimensions of banking service quality influence customer retention in Nepal's commercial banking sector. **Rajeev Kumar Sahani** investigates behavioral biases affecting investment decisions among NEPSE investors, contributing to the growing field of behavioral finance.

Furthermore, **Shakti Raj Nepal** explores various forms of linguistic oppression experienced by female researchers at Tribhuvan University and offers recommendations for creating more equitable academic environments. **Sushma Acharya** examines the interaction between Buddhist monastic transformation and community development within the heritage landscape of Lumbini, contributing an innovative theoretical perspective to tourism and development studies. **Tikaram Linkha** critically compares online, blended, hybrid, and face-to-face teaching-learning approaches, recommending contextually appropriate instructional models for Nepal. In addition, the volume includes valuable scholarly contributions written in the Nepali language, which further enrich the journal's interdisciplinary and multilingual character by addressing contemporary issues in higher education and pedagogical practices.

राम कृष्ण सिंखडाले उच्च शिक्षामा प्रयोग भइरहेका नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिहरू, तिनको कक्षाकोठा शिक्षणमा परेको प्रभाव तथा शिक्षकहरूको अनुभवको विश्लेषण गरेका छन्। अध्ययनले सहकार्यात्मक, विद्यार्थी–केन्द्रित तथा प्रविधिमैत्री शिक्षण पद्धतिले सिकाइ, सहभागिता र शिक्षणको गुणस्तर अभिवृद्धि गर्न महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका खेल्ने निष्कर्ष प्रस्तुत गरेको छ।

The articles presented in this inaugural issue demonstrate the richness of interdisciplinary inquiry and reflect the growing research capacity of Nepali scholars. Collectively, they contribute meaningful knowledge that will benefit researchers, educators, policymakers, development practitioners, and students while encouraging evidence-based academic dialogue across multiple disciplines.

The Editorial Team expresses its heartfelt gratitude to all authors for entrusting us with their valuable scholarly works. We extend our sincere appreciation to the reviewers whose constructive comments and rigorous evaluations have significantly enhanced the quality of the published articles. Our special thanks also go to the members of the Editorial Board, the Research

Management Cell, the Campus Management Committee, and the entire academic community of Vinayak Siddha College for their continuous encouragement and institutional support throughout the publication process.

As this is the first issue of the **Vinayak Interdisciplinary Journal (VIJ)**, we view it as the beginning of a long-term academic journey rather than merely a publication. We remain committed to strengthening research culture, promoting ethical scholarship, expanding international collaboration, and achieving indexing in **NepJOL** and other recognized academic databases in the years ahead.

Finally, we warmly invite researchers, academicians, practitioners, and students from Nepal and abroad to engage with the articles published in this issue and to contribute their original research to future volumes of the **Vinayak Interdisciplinary Journal (VIJ)**. We believe that sustained scholarly collaboration and interdisciplinary dialogue will continue to advance knowledge and contribute meaningfully to national and global academic communities.

Editorial Team
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Association of Workplace Harassment and Employee's Performance in Nepali Commercial Banks

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Abstract

This study explores the association between workplace harassment and employee performance in Nepali commercial banks, focusing on four major forms of harassment verbal, physical, mental, and digital. The findings reveal that all forms of harassment negatively influence employee performance, with mental and verbal harassment emerging as the most detrimental. These forms of mistreatment reduce employee motivation, satisfaction, and overall productivity, while digital and physical harassment, though less frequent, still contribute to emotional distress and workplace tension. The study highlights that addressing workplace harassment requires not only legal enforcement but also organizational commitment to fostering respect, fairness, and psychological safety. The results offer valuable implications for policymakers and HR practitioners in Nepal to design effective anti-harassment policies, strengthen grievance mechanisms, and promote a supportive organizational culture that enhances employee well-being and performance.

Keywords: workplace harassment, employee performance, mental harassment, organizational culture

Introduction

Workplace harassment has become an increasingly critical concern in contemporary organizations, influencing both employee well-being and overall organizational performance. It refers to any unwelcome verbal, physical, psychological, or digital behavior that humiliates, threatens, or demeans an employee in their professional environment (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], 2021). Such behavior may manifest through bullying, intimidation, verbal abuse, gossip, or unwanted advances, creating a hostile atmosphere that undermines employee morale and productivity (Einarsen et al., 2011). Globally, workplace harassment is recognized not only as a violation of human rights but also as a major occupational health and safety issue that adversely affects individuals and institutions alike (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2019). Research consistently highlights that exposure to workplace harassment leads to anxiety, reduced job satisfaction, absenteeism, and high turnover rates, thereby weakening employee performance and commitment (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018).

In Nepal, however, workplace harassment remains an underexplored phenomenon despite its rising prevalence in corporate and financial sectors. The Government of Nepal's Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention) Act, 2015 (2071) represents an important milestone in addressing gender-based misconduct, yet its scope remains largely confined to sexual harassment, leaving other forms such as verbal, mental, and digital harassment legally and institutionally unaddressed (Pandey, Sapkota, Lohani, & Acharya, 2015). In many organizational settings, particularly in commercial banks where hierarchical structures, workload pressure, and performance demands are prevalent, employees often experience subtle or overt forms of harassment that go unnoticed or unreported. These behaviors not only erode employees' psychological safety but also impede their motivation, engagement, and task performance. While studies in developed contexts have examined the detrimental effects of harassment on employee outcomes (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010; Long, Tan, & Ismail, 2016), the absence of empirical research in Nepal limits the understanding of how various forms of harassment influence employee performance in this unique socio-cultural and institutional setting.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the association between workplace harassment and employee performance within Nepali commercial banks. Specifically, it aims to identify the most influential forms of harassment among digital, verbal, mental, and physical that affect employees' performance levels. Understanding this relationship is vital as workplace harassment, if unaddressed, can lead to diminished job satisfaction, decreased efficiency, and lower organizational morale. The significance of this research lies in its contribution to both practice and policy. For practitioners, the findings provide insights into the development of safer and more inclusive workplace environments through proactive HRM strategies, awareness training, and robust grievance mechanisms. For scholars and policymakers, this study enriches the limited Nepali literature on non-sexual forms of workplace harassment and their behavioral consequences, offering a foundation for future empirical inquiry and policy reform aimed at fostering ethical, respectful, and performance-oriented organizational cultures.

Literature Review

Workplace harassment encompasses a range of unwelcome behaviors physical, verbal, mental, or digital that undermine employee dignity and psychological safety. Globally, such behaviors are recognized as critical organizational stressors leading to decreased job satisfaction, higher absenteeism, and lower productivity (Einarsen et al., 2011; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018). The typologies of workplace harassment are diverse: physical harassment involves unwanted physical contact, threats, or acts of intimidation (Gannon, 2017); verbal harassment includes insulting remarks, derogatory language, or verbal aggression (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2010); mental harassment, also termed psychological bullying, consists of persistent intimidation, humiliation, or exclusion that erodes emotional well-being (Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, & Alberts, 2007); and digital harassment or cyberbullying manifests through online threats, false accusations, or abusive communication (Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2012). Empirical studies have confirmed that all forms of harassment significantly impair employees' morale, job engagement, and performance outcomes (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010; Samnani & Singh, 2020).

Theoretical explanations of harassment and performance often draw on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), both suggesting that workplace mistreatment disrupts trust and reciprocity between employees and organizations, thereby diminishing motivation and performance. Harassed employees often report emotional exhaustion, burnout, and reduced creativity (Zhou & George, 2003). For example, Aquino and Thau (2009) demonstrated that physical and verbal harassment lead to lower task performance and organizational citizenship behavior, while Duffy, Ganster, and Pagon (2002) emphasized that social undermining, a subtle form of psychological aggression reduces satisfaction and increases turnover. Similarly, research on digital harassment which shows that exposure to online bullying predicts emotional distress, absenteeism, and declining performance (Akram & Ali, 2020; Safdar & Kamal, 2021). In Nepal, studies by Adhikari (2018) and Shrestha (2018) reveal that harassment within commercial banks, whether verbal, physical, or digital has significantly decreases job satisfaction and performance while increasing turnover intention, echoing global findings.

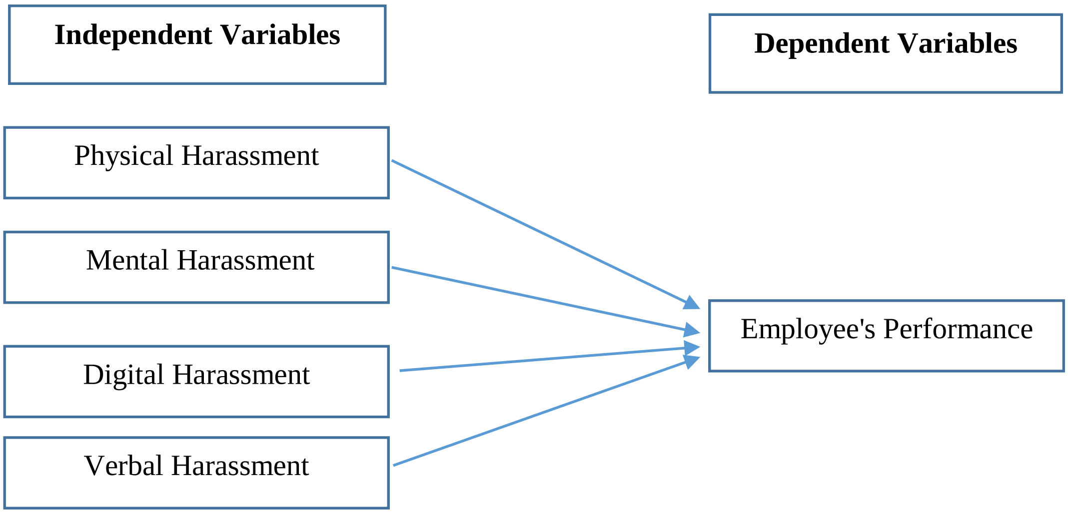
Employee performance itself is a multidimensional construct encompassing task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Spector & Fox, 2005). Task performance refers to completing assigned duties effectively and contributing to organizational goals, while contextual performance involves voluntary, cooperative behaviors that enhance workplace functioning (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Harassment disrupts both dimensions by fostering psychological strain, emotional exhaustion, and reduced engagement (Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2010). Furthermore, repeated exposure to harassment is linked to counterproductive behaviors such as absenteeism, retaliation, and withdrawal (Dalal, 2005). Studies from Nepal (Khadka, 2019; Maharjan & Shrestha, 2017) reaffirm these findings, emphasizing that harassment undermines employee commitment and diminishes productivity within service industries, particularly the banking sector. Despite such evidence, comprehensive empirical analysis of the combined effects of physical, mental, verbal, and digital harassment on employee performance in Nepali commercial banks remains limited, presenting a critical research gap this study seeks to address.

Empirical studies across organizational behavior and occupational psychology have consistently demonstrated that workplace harassment, whether physical, verbal, psychological, or digital has detrimental effects on employee attitudes, well-being, and performance outcomes. Hershcovis and Barling (2010) conducted a meta-analysis showing that exposure to workplace aggression significantly decreases task performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction, while Nielsen and Einarsen (2018) identified bullying as a chronic occupational stressor that leads to emotional exhaustion, absenteeism, and reduced productivity. Similarly, Hauge, Skogstad, and Einarsen (2010) emphasized that persistent harassment lowers motivation and deteriorates both individual and team performance.

The source and nature of harassment also determine its severity. Tepper (2000) found that abusive supervision characterized by verbal humiliation and intimidation has directly undermines employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior. Duffy, Ganster, and Pagon (2002) demonstrated that social undermining, a subtle form of psychological harassment, erodes interpersonal trust and cooperation, resulting in lower performance and higher turnover. Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, and Alberts (2007) confirmed that mental harassment significantly increases burnout and emotional exhaustion, impairing concentration and work quality. Likewise, Farley et al. (2016) found that digital or cyber harassment creates psychological distress and reduces productivity, while Gannon (2017) associated physical harassment and workplace violence with increased absenteeism and lower performance.

In the South Asian and Nepali context, limited empirical research exists, but emerging evidence reveals similar trends. Adhikari (2018) reported that workplace harassment among female employees in Nepali commercial banks negatively affected their performance and morale, and Shrestha (2018) found that harassment significantly reduced job satisfaction while increasing turnover intention. These findings mirror international evidence, confirming that harassment, regardless of its types has undermines employee motivation and job efficiency. However, Nepal-specific studies remain scarce, highlighting a critical research gap regarding how multiple forms of workplace harassment collectively influence employee performance within the country’s commercial banking sector.

Research Framework



Source: Aryl and Buchpttanaskda (2019)

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative method with descriptive and causal-comparative design to examine the relationship between workplace harassment and employee performance in Nepali commercial banks. Data were collected from 279 employees working in Standard Chartered Bank Nepal, Everest Bank Limited, and Nepal SBI Bank, selected through judgmental sampling. A structured questionnaire, adapted from Aryal and Bunchapattanasakda (2019), measured four independent variables physical, mental, verbal, and digital harassment and the dependent variable, employee performance, using a five-point Likert scale.

The survey was distributed online to ensure anonymity and voluntary participation. Data were analyzed using SPSS (v26) for descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression to determine the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Reliability was tested through Cronbach's alpha, ensuring internal consistency ($\alpha \geq 0.70$). The methodology provided a sound empirical framework to assess how various forms of workplace harassment influence employee performance in the context of Nepali commercial banks.

Data Analysis and Discussions

The reliability analysis shows that all the variables used in the study demonstrated high internal consistency, as the Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.731 to 0.894, exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The findings of this study present a clear understanding of the relationship between workplace harassment and employee performance in Nepali commercial banks.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics

Category	Variables	F	%
Age	Below 30	99	35.5
	31–40	135	48.4
	41–50	33	11.8
	51 and above	12	4.3
Gender	Female	162	58.1
	Male	117	41.9
Organization	SCB	112	40.1
	SBI	89	31.9
	EBL	78	28
Education Qualification	Intermediate (+2)	9	3.2
	Bachelor’s Degree	120	43
	Master’s Degree	150	53.8
Job Position	Trainee	85	30.5
	Assistant	103	36.9
	Officer	67	24
	Manager	24	8.6

n= 279

Note. Field Survey 2024

A total of 279 respondents participated, representing employees from Standard Chartered Bank Nepal, Nepal SBI Bank, and Everest Bank Limited. Among them, 58.1% were female and 41.9% were male, with most respondents aged 31–40 years (48.4%). The majority held a Master’s degree (53.8%), and the largest group were Assistants (36.9%), indicating strong representation from mid-level employees.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Verbal Harassment	1.27	0.68	Rarely experienced
Physical Harassment	1.73	1.13	Rarely experienced
Digital Harassment	1.90	1.13	Occasionally experienced
Mental Harassment	1.76	1.05	Rarely experienced
Employee Performance	3.93	1.07	High/Positive performance

Note: Field Survey, 2024

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 show that lower mean values (closer to 1) represent less frequent experiences of harassment, while higher mean values (closer to 5) indicate more frequent occurrences. In this study, the low mean scores for verbal, physical, and mental harassment suggest they were rarely experienced, whereas digital harassment was occasionally experienced. Conversely, the higher mean score for employee performance (3.93) reflects a high or positive level of performance among respondents.

Table 3

Correlation Analysis of the Variables

Variables	JS	VH	PH	MH	DH	N
JS	1					279
VH	-0.521**	1				279
PH	-0.498**	.157**	1			279
MH	-0.532**	.472**	.135*	1		279
DH	-0.429**	.560**	.155*	.683**	1	279

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: Field Survey, 2024

The correlation results reveal significant negative relationships between all forms of workplace harassment and employee performance. Mental harassment (r = –0.532) and verbal harassment (r = –0.521) show the strongest negative effects, followed by physical (r = –0.498) and digital harassment (r = –0.429), indicating that increased harassment lowers performance levels. Positive correlations among harassment types, such as between mental and digital harassment (r = 0.683), suggest these behaviors often co-occur. Overall, the findings highlight that various forms of harassment collectively undermine employee well-being and performance in Nepali commercial banks.

Table 4

Regression Analysis

Model Summary				
R	0.65			
R Square	0.42			
F Value	24.95			
P-Value	0.01			
Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	P-Value
Constant	4.1		24.9	0.00
VH	-0.26	-0.28	-3.9	0.00
PH	-0.18	-0.19	-2.6	0.03
MH	-0.29	-0.32	-4.3	0.00
DH	-0.21	-0.22	-2.95	0.02

Note: Field Survey, 2024

The regression results indicate that the model is statistically significant ($R = 0.65$, $R^2 = 0.42$, $F = 24.95$, $p < 0.01$), meaning 42% of the variance in employee performance is explained by harassment variables. All predictors have significant negative effects, with mental harassment ($\beta = -0.32$) exerting the strongest influence, followed by verbal ($\beta = -0.28$), digital ($\beta = -0.22$), and physical harassment ($\beta = -0.19$). This implies that higher harassment levels especially mental and verbal substantially lower employee performance.

Discussions

The findings of this study reaffirm that workplace harassment significantly influences employee performance in Nepali commercial banks. The overall regression model ($R = 0.65$, $R^2 = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) indicates that 42% of the variation in employee performance is explained by the combined effects of verbal, physical, mental, and digital harassment. Among these, mental harassment ($p = 0.000$) emerged as the most influential predictor, aligning with Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, and Alberts (2007) and Nielsen and Einarsen (2018), who emphasized that psychological mistreatment such as humiliation and emotional pressure leads to burnout, withdrawal, and reduced productivity. Similarly, verbal harassment ($p = 0.000$) showed a strong negative relationship with performance, consistent with Tepper (2000) and Cortina et al. (2001), who found that verbal hostility and incivility diminish motivation and cooperative behavior in organizations.

While digital harassment (p = 0.003) also exhibited a significant negative effect, its impact was relatively lower than verbal and mental forms. This finding supports Farley et al. (2016), who reported that cyberbullying in the workplace impairs employee concentration and increases emotional exhaustion. Physical harassment (p = 0.010) showed a comparatively weaker influence, aligning with Gannon (2017), who noted that overt physical misconduct is less frequent but still damaging to workplace trust and morale. The presence of these effects in Nepali banks indicates that harassment extends beyond physical acts to subtle psychological and technological forms, a concern increasingly noted in modern service sectors.

These results collectively confirm that harassment irrespective of its form impacts employee well-being, commitment, and productivity. However, compared with studies in Western contexts, the Nepali data reveal a stronger role of mental and verbal harassment, possibly reflecting hierarchical workplace cultures and power distance norms that discourage reporting. Thus, improving employee performance in commercial banks requires a holistic HRM approach that strengthens grievance mechanisms, promotes psychosocial awareness, and integrates preventive policies addressing both traditional and digital dimensions of workplace harassment.

Conclusion

This study concludes that employee performance in Nepali commercial banks is significantly influenced by multiple forms of workplace harassment such as verbal, physical, mental, and digital. The findings reveal that mental harassment exerts the strongest negative effect on performance, followed by verbal, digital, and physical harassment, indicating that psychological mistreatment and verbal hostility are more pervasive and damaging than overt physical aggression. These outcomes align with the principles of Social Exchange Theory (SET), suggesting that when employees perceive unfair or abusive treatment from colleagues or supervisors, their motivation to reciprocate through productive behavior diminishes.

Furthermore, the results support earlier empirical findings (e.g., Tepper, 2000; Einarsen et al., 2003) that harassment disrupts emotional stability, reduces job satisfaction, and increases withdrawal behaviors, ultimately lowering individual and organizational effectiveness. The significance of digital harassment also highlights the evolving nature of workplace mistreatment in technologically driven environments, where cyber misconduct can silently undermine employee morale and focus.

Overall, this study underscores that workplace harassment, regardless of form, remains a critical determinant of performance and organizational health. For Nepali commercial banks, fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive work culture through strict anti-harassment policies, confidential grievance mechanisms, and psychosocial training is imperative. Future research could expand this inquiry by examining mediating variables such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction, or by comparing public and private sector institutions to provide broader insights into the dynamics of workplace behavior and employee outcomes in Nepal's service industry.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared having no conflict of interest associated with this study.

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Causes and Consequences of Bullying in Grade 10

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Abstract

Bullying remains a persistent and challenging issue in secondary school students, particularly those in Grade 10, significantly affecting both their academic performance and moral conduct. Grade 10 students are uniquely vulnerable to bullying as they are in mid-adolescence; a critical phase of physical and psychological development. This study aims to explore the primary causes and consequences of bullying in Grade 10 students to identify effective, actionable solutions for its prevention and reduction. Utilizing a qualitative and interpretative research design, this study reviews and analyzes relevant literature, including academic books, research articles, educational reports, and institutional policies etc. The findings reveal that bullying is driven by multifarious factors, including individual personality traits, peer pressure, school and family environments, social media, and cultural influences etc. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that bullying has devastating consequences for both victims and perpetrators, leading to psychological distress, poor academic performance, behavioral problems, low self-esteem, and long-term mental health challenges. The study concludes that addressing bullying effectively requires collaborative efforts from students, teachers, parents, and school stakeholders to cultivate a secure, supportive, and inclusive learning environment.

Keywords: bullying, Grade 10 students, academic performance, behavior, psychological impact.

Introduction

In secondary level schools, particularly within Grade 10, bullying has become one of the most inescapable challenges affecting students' quality learning and moral character. Bullying refers to intentional and repeated hostile behavior involving an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. It may manifest through multifarious modes, including physical assault, verbal confrontation, mocking, and cyberbullying. All these forms of bullying severely affect students' academic performance, psychological well-being, social relationships, and overall moral character.

In different human development phases, adolescence is considered a critical stage due to rapid physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes (Erikson, 1968). Grade 10 students, who are generally in the middle to late adolescent stage, often encounter challenges related to identity formation, peer relationships, social acceptance, and academic expectations. Often, these challenges create confusion, hesitation, fear, and doubt. When students remain mentally unsteady, they express their internal changes in different behavioral ways.

A considerable body of research has investigated the prevalence, patterns, and impacts of bullying in schools. Many studies have employed quantitative and empirical approaches to measure the extent of bullying and its effects on students. However, there remains a distinct need for conceptual and interpretative analyses that synthesize existing knowledge and provide a deeper understanding of the underlying causes and consequences of bullying.

This article offers a conceptual and interpretative study rather than an applied or empirical investigation. It does not collect primary data through surveys, interviews, observations, or experiments. Instead, it critically examines and interprets existing relevant books, research findings, educational reports, and theoretical perspectives related to bullying in Grade 10 students.

The primary objectives of this study are to identify the major causes of bullying among Grade 10 students and to examine its consequences on students' academic performance and moral conduct. It also discusses possible measures that may contribute to nurturing safe, peaceful, and more inclusive school environments.

Methodology

This study applies a qualitative research design grounded in a conceptual and interpretative framework to examine the causes and consequences of bullying in Grade 10 students. The research adopted a descriptive and analytical approach, relying exclusively on secondary data sources to explore the various psychological, social, and educational dimensions of bullying within school settings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The study seeks to build a comprehensive understanding of bullying through the critical examination and interpretation of existing scholarly literature.

Data were collected from a wide range of academic sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, research reports, dissertations, educational policy documents, and publications from national and international organizations. The collected literature was analyzed using thematic content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The analysis further explored the relationships between identified causes and their associated consequences, drawing upon relevant theoretical perspectives from educational psychology and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977).

Results and Discussion

The thematic analysis of the selected literature exposed that bullying in Grade 10 students is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by individual, family, peer-related, school-based, socio-cultural factors, and digital spaces. The reviewed studies consistently indicate that bullying is not the result of a single cause but emerges through the interaction of personal characteristics and environmental influences. Likewise, the consequences of bullying extend beyond immediate interpersonal conflicts and significantly affect students' psychological well-being, academic performance, and social development.

Causes of Bullying in Grade 10 Students

Peer Pressure and the Desire for Social Recognition

One of the most frequently identified causes of bullying is peer pressure and the desire for social recognition. Adolescents often seek social acceptance and status within peer groups, and some students engage in bullying behavior to establish dominance, form an identity, gain popularity, and secure a favorable position among friends and social circles (Salmivalli, 2010). The literature suggests that bullying may be reinforced when aggressive behavior is admired, tolerated, or rewarded by peers.

Family Environment and Parenting

The analysis further indicates that family dynamics play a significant role in shaping students' behavior. Studies have shown that exposure to domestic conflict, harsh parenting, neglect, inadequate supervision, or inconsistent discipline may contribute to aggressive tendencies among adolescents (Baldry, 2003). According to social learning frameworks, exposure to aggressive behavioral models at home directly influences peer-directed aggression (Bandura, 1977). On the contrary, supportive family environments are associated with lower levels of bullying behavior (Lereya et al., 2013).

School Environment

The reviewed literature highlights the importance of the school environment in either facilitating or discouraging bullying behavior. Schools characterized by weak disciplinary systems, inadequate supervision, poor teacher-student relationships, and limited anti-bullying initiatives tend to experience higher levels of bullying.

Social Media and Digital Influences

Cyberbullying has become a major concern among adolescents due to the widespread use of social media, messaging applications, and other digital platforms. Unlike traditional bullying, cyberbullying can occur at any time and reach victims beyond school environments, making its effects more persistent and difficult to escape. The anonymity and broad audience provided by online platforms may encourage aggressive behavior and increase the likelihood of harassment (Zhu et al., 2021). Harmful messages, rumors, photographs, and videos can spread rapidly across social networks, causing emotional distress, anxiety, depression, and reduced self-esteem among victims (Li et al., 2024). Research also indicates that problematic social media use is associated with greater involvement in cyberbullying among adolescents (Badrakh et al., 2025)

Consequences of Bullying in Grade 10 Students

Psychological Consequences

Bullying can have serious psychological effects on victims, influencing their emotional well-being and mental health. Students who are repeatedly bullied often experience anxiety, depression, fear, loneliness, low self-esteem, and emotional insecurity. Continuous exposure to bullying can damage a child's self-confidence and sense of personal worth, making it difficult to develop resilience and positive self-perception. In severe cases, victims may experience chronic stress, emotional distress, and symptoms associated with mental health disorders (Hawker & Boulton, 2000).

Academic Consequences

Bullying negatively affects students' academic performance and engagement in school activities. Victims often struggle to concentrate in the classroom because of fear, stress, and emotional distraction. Many students become reluctant to participate in discussions, group activities, or extracurricular programs. Some may avoid attending school altogether, leading to increased absenteeism and reduced learning opportunities. As a result, bullying is frequently associated with lower academic achievement, decreased motivation to learn, and poorer educational outcomes (Juvonen et al., 2011).

Social Consequences

Bullying can significantly impair a student's social development and interpersonal relationships. Victims often experience social isolation, withdrawal from peer interactions, and difficulties in establishing trusting friendships. Repeated victimization may lead to feelings of rejection and exclusion from social groups. At the same time, students who engage in bullying behaviors may develop long-term patterns of aggression, hostility, and antisocial conduct. These social difficulties can persist beyond adolescence and affect future relationships, community involvement, and overall social adjustment (Wolke & Lereya, 2015).

Conclusion

Bullying among Grade 10 students remains a significant educational and social issue that negatively affects students' psychological well-being, academic performance, and social relationships. This review found that bullying is influenced by multiple factors, including peer pressure, family environment, school culture, social media influences, and individual behavioral characteristics. The consequences of bullying extend beyond immediate emotional distress and may contribute to long-term psychological, academic, and social difficulties.

The findings imply that schools should adopt comprehensive anti-bullying strategies that focus on prevention, early identification, and timely intervention. Teachers should be trained to recognize and respond effectively to bullying incidents, while schools should establish clear reporting mechanisms and consistent disciplinary procedures. Regular awareness programs, social-emotional learning activities, peer-support initiatives, and counseling services can help foster empathy, respect, and positive relationships among students. Parents should also maintain close communication with their children and collaborate with schools to address behavioral concerns. Through coordinated efforts involving students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, schools can create a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment that reduces bullying and promotes students' overall development and well-being.

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Employees perception on effectiveness of training at Tribhuvan university, central campus, Kirtipur

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Abstract

Training and development are indispensable strategic tool for enhancing employee performance and organizations. Training is teaching or developing in oneself or others, any skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies. When universities deal with fast developments in technology, stronger accountability and changing expectations, training and developing their staff has become essential. The main objectives of this study are to examine the employee's perception on effectiveness of training at central campus, Tribhuvan university, kirtipur. This study looks at how various training strategies can bring about better behaviour, more skills and more effective results for the organization. Descriptive research design and mixed research method was adopted for this study using questionnaire. The need for training arises an account of the requirement to fill gap between organization required competencies and existing level of skills and knowledge possessed by that person. One thing that concern with the training of TU is that the work structure of administrative staff seems still traditional. They are not enough progressive because there is not enough opportunity for training, the training and development program in TU has been improving gradually. The research identifies the key role played by training in the performance of employees, job satisfaction, job security, and knowledge enhancement of the employees. However, some gaps occur in terms of resource availability and content appropriateness. From this research the researcher found that most of employees responded that training is very necessary for university staff but is not sufficient yet. and needs to reform training program.

Keywords: administrative, effectiveness, workforce, e-governance, perspectives, affiliated

Introduction

Training refers to the imparting of specific skills, abilities, and knowledge to an employee. Training programs seek to broaden and develop the individual. Development is not primarily skill-oriented. It provides general knowledge and attitude which will be helpful to employees in higher positions. Organizations are facing increased competition due to globalization, changes in technology, political and economic environment and therefore prompting these organizations to train their employee to enhance their performance. Training is a type of activity which is planned, systematic, and it results in enhanced level of skill, knowledge and competency that are necessary to perform work effectively (Gordon,1992). Training is teaching and developing in oneself or others any skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies. It has specific goal of improving one's capability, capacity, productivity and performance, training and development are often used to close the gap between current performance and expected future. Training and development falls under HRD function which has been argued to be an important function of HRM (Weil & Woodall,2005). Training and development is not only taken as a measure of reducing accident but it enhances the job performance of the employees. The success, continuity and prosperity of an organization or institution are possible only with competent employees and managerial cadres such competent employees and managers become available through imparting them training and development opportunity. in recent period development of human resource has gained significant attention in the organizational set up for organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Broklyn,1988). Training is effort initiated by an organization to foster learning among its worker (George & Scott, 2012). training vary from organization to organization in relation to quality and quantity of training factors, which may include the degree of external environmental change, degree of change in the internal environment, current suitable skills in the existing workforce and level to which the management see training as a motivating factors in the workplace (Cole,2002) Training is very important in the T.U. staff specially when it has to be the main backbone of running the university campus. Different staff are responsible for the smooth run of the different department of T.U. Employees are key pillars of any organization and institution and employees need adequate amount of knowledge skills, attitudes and perception to perform their tasks appropriately whenever the university find that there is a gap between the level of knowledge, skills, and attitudes possessed by the employees and the same demanded by the job. They try to bridge such a gap through the injection of training program. Through such program they also have been found trying to motivate their employees towards modifying and sharpening their attributes. Training is one of the programmed activities of university which tries to increase employee`s efficiency Arm strong (2001). sets out three specific training objectives to the employees. The first objective is to develop the competency of employees and improve their performance. Second objective is to help people grow within the organization in order that, as far as possible its future needs for human resource can be met from within the organization and the third one is to reduce the learning duration for employees starting in new jobs on appointment, transfer or promotion and ensure that they become fully competent as quickly and economically as possible. Therefore, it is very important for the organization to offer systematic training and development program for their employees. Training is very crucial to any public sector organization to improve the performance and competence for its employees

(Ngirwa, 2009). Most of the public sector organizations in Nepal have special units or sections which provide staff training and development so as to cope with the constantly changing demands of the work environment but in the Tribhuvan University there has been concern that training and development activities are not well planned, not systematically implemented and not coordinated in a specific department or unit. The interaction with some of the employees indicated that little attention is being paid by the management on the planning and implementation of the training program. Training Methods includes On the Job Training Method such as Coaching, Mentoring, Job Rotation, Job Instructional Training, and Off the Job Training Methods which includes Special Lecture, Simulation, Vestibule Training, Case Studies, Role Playing, Management Games. The criteria used for evaluating training effectiveness can be Reaction criteria, Learning criteria, Behaviour criteria, Results criteria. And Methods for evaluating training effectiveness are Observation Method, Test- retest Method, Pre-post-Performance Method, Experimental-control Group Method, Trainee Surveys, Cost Effectiveness Analyses. The core aim of this article is to find out the employee perception on effectiveness of training and development at central campus, Tribhuvan university, Kirtipur.

Table no. 1

Current status of employee training in T.U.

Following table, no 1. Shows the total number of trainings, term of training and number of employees participated in training program in different fiscal year.

Fiscal year	Term(days)	Officers	Senior office assistant	Office assistant	Senior accountant assistant	Senior library assistant	Library assistant	Staff nurse	Accountant assistant	Technical assistant	Total No of employee
2076/0778		71									71
2077/0788		84									84
2078/0798			387							66	453
2079/0808			62	119	88	20	23	35	16	13	376
2080/0818		33						44			77

Sources: coordination division, T.U.

The above table shows the current status of training program operated by Tribhuvan university in different fiscal year. The term of the training is 8 days for every fiscal year. Most of the employee were participated in fiscal year 2079/080 as compared to other year. As shown in the above table earlier two fiscal year i.e. fiscal year 2076/077 and 2077/078 non-officer employees were not participated in the training program. Staff nurses were only participated in fiscal year 2080/081.

State of the problem

It has been recognized that training and development programs improves knowledge, skills and the capacity of individual for doing a particular job. Most of the public sector organizations in Nepal have special units or sections which provide staff training and development so as to cope with the constantly changing demands of the work environment but in the Tribhuvan University there has been concern that training and development activities are not well planned, not systematically implemented and not coordinated in a specific department or unit. The interaction with some of the employees indicated that little attention is being paid by the management on the planning and implementation of the training program.

The education policy directly affects the education development of the country. In order to operate these functions properly and effectively it requires the skilled and competent manpower. Efficiency of the staff benefit is not enough to meet of current university problem. This study was focused on following questions. The problem of this study is that How is the employee`s perception on effectiveness of training at Tribhuvan university, central campus, kirtipur? And, The primary objective of this study is to review and analyse the employee`s perception on effectiveness of training at Tribhuvan university, central campus, kirtipur. This study intended:

Significance of the Study

Tribhuvan University being oldest and largest university of Nepal it is operating as monitor, controller, and leader of higher educational institution. It plays significant role in the formulation and implementation of the overall educational policies and programs of the country. These functions can`t be fruitful until providing the training and development programs thus the study of training and development for such autonomous university is of great significance. The focus of this study lies mainly in filling a research gap of training in Tribhuvan University. This kind of study definitely provides useful feedback to the policy maker T.U. and also to the government institutions sectors. There are so many research has been made in other organization of government. But it is difficult to find the research on the training of administrative staff of Tribhuvan University. Therefore, the decision to conduct this study is justified. This research study increases the quality of literature and analysis of information sources that it holds. This research realizes the importance of training to both the employees and the organization. The study is also needed to examine the usefulness of the training programs conducted and to see whether really there is relationship between the requirement of the jobs and the objectives of the training. This study helps to take necessary steps for removing the obstacles and hindrances in training.

Limitations of the Study

Training could have different aspect such as need identification, module design, and application of different type of training, pedagogy used; follow up of the training etc. But this study covers on employee`s perception on effectiveness of training at Tribhuvan university central campus kirtipur. Usually, it is almost impossible for a piece of work of this nature to be realized without difficulties or limitations. Some research limitations in this study are as follows:

- This study was primarily concerned with central campus of Tribhuvan University.
- As the objectives of the study is to analyze the employee`s perception on effectiveness of training provided to the administrative staff (non-teaching staff) of Tribhuvan university central campus, kirtipur.

Literature Review

The meaning of training had been changed along with time and situations. In ancient time training had been defined only as transfer of knowledge and skills. As the civilization of human being invented tools, weapons, clothing, shelter and language, the need of training became an essential ingredient. Armstrong (2008) defines training as a planned and systematic modification of behaviour through learning events, programs and instructions, which enable individual to achieve the level of knowledge, skills, and competency needed to carry out their work effectively. Training provides knowledge, skills & positive attitude in short time. Training may not exist in isolation, it is a part of human development, and there are several relationships between training and personnel development component. The training cycle begins long before the training program is conducted and continues after the problem has been completed. The training cycle is circular it begins with the needs assessment. A need of training always results from the difference between an ideal expect for employee’s performance and actual performances. Training can also be provided for new employees to help them get familiar with the work environment and task etc. training process includes training need assessment, training objectives, course contents and training methods, training implementation, training evaluation, Training is an important part of HRD in organizations. It can be of many types depending upon the objectives and needs. Types of training are induction training, pre servicing training, in service training, Specialized training, special purpose training (Agrawal, 2007). and training methods includes on the job training methods and off the job training methods (Agrawal,2007). Training is one of the major mechanisms of personnel development. It directly contributes to organizational development and it can play a crucial role in personnel effect to the organization. Normally training perform the following roles in personnel development Agrawal (2007)**.** Training and development is indispensable strategic tool for enhancing employee`s performance and organizations keep increasing training budget on yearly basis with believe that it will earn them competitive edge. There is strong relationship between training and, employee`s performance and competitive advantage H. o. Falola (2014). Tribhuvan University is largest and oldest university of Nepal but the training is not sufficient and regular for any staff. As the training attended in other countries mainly in the developed countries they are not supposed to fit with the situation of Nepal. Effectiveness of training can be evaluated through observation method, test-retest method, pre-post-performance method, experimental-control group method, trainee surveys, cost effectiveness analysis. Training and development in the public sector organization has been approved by various researchers as a very important function in improving work performance of the employees and eventually to the organization as a whole. A study conducted in Scotland U.K. on 150 organizations to investigate the main issues of the current human resource performance, revealed that 89% of the organizations surveyed ranked employee training and development as the most important in the performance management Soltan et (2004). The study suggested that the HR personnel widely regarded the process of the performance appraisal as one of the main instruments for identifying training and development needs at the individual level. A study conducted by Fey et al. (2000) on the effect of training and development on the employee’s performance, suggested that, there is a strong positive relationship between both management development and employee training and development program, and organization performance. In Tanzania, a study was conducted by Sharma and Upneja (2005) to investigate the factors influencing financial performance in the small hotels at Arusha. The finding of this study suggested that inadequate employee training and development program was among the factors responsible for low profitability in the hotels thus providing evidence to HR professional on the importance of this component in the business sector.

Methodology

The research was conducted in employing descriptive research design. The sources of data for the research purpose were primary as well as secondary in nature. The primary data were collected from the survey using questionnaire. The secondary data were collected or obtained from related published or unpublished literature such as books, articles and thesis, reports etc. This study is mainly focused on employee’s perception on effectiveness of training provided to administrative staff of central campus T.U. As per the record of personnel administration division of Tribhuvan university, in central campus altogether there are 144 administrative staff. Out of the total administrative staffs 120 staffs from central campus have taken part in training program (coordination division, 2025). For the purpose of this research all 120 administrative staffs who have taken part in training were the population of the study. Out of the total trained staffs working at TU central campus 50%, i.e., 60 staffs were taken as sample. During research of this study researcher used primary sources and secondary sources followed the mixed research methods. data were presented in different tables. The tabulated data were analysed basically through percentage and a descriptive method was used for interpreting the result.

Results and Discussion

Awareness toward Training and Development Program

With regard to the knowledge of training and development respondents were asked to state their awareness toward training and development program. Table no. 2 shows the awareness of respondent toward training and development program.

Table 2

Awareness Toward Training and Development Program

Response	Officer		Non officer		Total	
	No	Percentage	No	Percentage	No	Percentage
Well designed	2	10	6	15	8	14
Not well designed	16	80	30	75	46	76
Not designed	2	10	4	10	6	10
Total	20	100	40	100	60	100

Source: survey, 2025

When officer and non-officer staffs of TU were asked about the awareness toward the training and development program the responses given by them are given in Table no 2. Among them 14% stated program is well designed among which 10% were officer and 15% were non officer staff. Out of 60 employees 46 employees i.e. 76% stated that training program is not well designed and remaining six employees i.e. 10% stated that training program in Tribhuvan university is not designed. The rate of non-officer who viewed that the existing training program were well designed was only 15% and that of officers' 10%. Similarly, the rate of non-officers who stated that the training program provided to employee of central campus is not well designed is 75% and that of officer 80. It can be concluded that the respondent by the university and the prevailing programs for training were not well designed.

Provision of Training

With regard to the knowledge of training respondents were asked to state their views about the provision of training. They were asked that the training provided by university is sufficient, need for the development or not sufficient. Table no 3. shows the views of employee regarding the provision of training

Table 3

Provision of Training

Response	Number	Percentage
Sufficient	0	0
Need for development	40	67
Not sufficient	20	33
Total	60	100

Source: survey, 2025

Among the respondents 67% of the respondents thought that there is not proper development in training and 33% of the respondents thought it is not sufficient to develop the administrative staff. It can be concluded that training of Tribhuvan university is not sufficient, university needs to reform training program.

Thought Toward the Need of Training

With regard to the knowledge of training, respondents were asked to state their thought toward need of training. They were asked to say about Training for the administrative staff is very necessary, necessary or not necessary. Table no 4 shows the views of employees regarding the need of the training.

Table 4

Thought Toward Need of Training

Response	Number	Percentage
Very necessary	42	70
Necessary	18	30
Not necessary	0	0
Total	60	100

Source: survey, 2025

When the staffs were asked to state their thought about need of training, among respondent 70% stated that training is very necessary, 30% replied necessary, and 0% responded that training is not necessary. On the basis of this response, it can be concluded that all of the TU staff have the positive thought toward the need of training.

Effectiveness of Training

With regard to the knowledge of training respondents were asked to state their perception on effectiveness of training. The responses given by the respondents is given below in the table no 5. Training is an important component of any organization. It helps employees to acquire new skills and knowledge, enhance their existing capabilities and increase their productivity. It also helps in promoting job satisfaction and improving job performance (kakade &karira,2023).

Table 5

Effectiveness of Training

Response	Number	Percentage
Improved working condition	25	42
Increased job security	10	16
Increased job satisfaction	20	34
Increased knowledge in the use of ICT	5	8
Total	60	100

Source: survey, 2025

As shown in the above table most of the employees i.e.42% replied that training improved their working condition. Among 60 respondents 16% stated that training increased their job security and eight% replied the training provided them became fruitful for increasing the knowledge about the use of ICT. Remained 34% employees stated that training increased job satisfaction. As per the finding by Sultana and Shrivastava (2024), training does, in fact, contribute to better performance on the part of employees. Different researchers found that there is positive role of training for effective performance and job satisfaction. In same way, in this research the researcher found that training has positive effect on employee performance and job satisfaction.

This research found that providing training to administrative staff effectively strengthens their work performance, increase their job satisfaction level, increase their job security, and enhance the knowledge. Analysis of the results found significant progress in reported performance after every type of training. Quantitative results were confirmed by qualitative data which explained about how and why training is effective (Emily,2025).

Conclusion

The research identifies the key role played by training in the performance of employees, job satisfaction, job security, and knowledge enhancement of the employees. Training not only boosts skills and knowledge retention but also improves work efficiency. However, some gaps occur in terms of resource availability and content appropriateness. According to the respondents training of university is not sufficient, and needs to reform training program, training program should be designed in scientific way. There is urgent need of training for the staff to develop new knowledge, new skills and new attitudes for achieving competence, improvement in the managerial performance. when research was done it is found that it`s training and development programs are not still well developed. There is no opportunity of foreign training, employees want to participate in training but there is no training related to their job, the duration of training program is short. there is not opportunity of long-term training, this is time of e-governance, different type of electronic device should be used while perform their task so training should focus on this function. Training programs are not regular and practically applied. The university lacks perspective building training due to which employees are not taking multiple perspectives into consideration while making decisions. The training and development program in TU central campus has been improving gradually. Employees are optimistic on the improvement on training programs. Hence training and development program should be fixed and fair. Equal opportunity should be given to every personnel in every respect like training programs.

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How theories of culture help us to understand and practice cross cultural management?

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Abstract

Theories of culture help us to identify and understand various problems related to cross culture management. In this assignment, various theories of culture are explained with some examples. A brief introduction of culture, language, religion, knowledge about the human characteristics and nature of the people and theories related to culture are explained. These theories help us to understand why there is cross cultural differences, what are the factors creating the conflict, how cross culture issued are addressed and how can we manage cross culture problems. Further these theories tell us about different beliefs and values of human shares and in what way management can address their problems related to cross culture, how management use these theories for their fruitful operation to obtain their desired goal.

Key words: culture, cross-culture, power distance, ethnocentrism, religion, beliefs

Introduction

Human beings are mobile, they move from one place to other for different purposes. They not only travel, they take their culture along with them while moving from one place to other. Cross culture is a concept in management in which different cultures from different nationals, their psychology, environment etc are accessed, review and gap between the differences between cultural issues is reduced. Different nation or people of different culture and religion have different way of living, thinking and doing work. Cross culture management is the study of different culture, environment and bridges the gap between different religions, culture etc.

Due to mobility of people from one place to other, organizations have different types of people from different countries with different cultures, values and religions. Even organizations have their culture in order to perform their work efficiently however due to cultural difference their might be collision in the culture and this collision will hamper organization goal. As per Hollinger & Wiesemann, Airbus had suffered US$ 20bn loss while making A380 superjumbo jet, due to cultural collision between French and German workers. (Hollinger, Weisemann 2008). There was severe conflict between German and French workers regarding ways of working, working environment, cultural issues etc. Theories cross culture will help managements to avoid these sort of collision as well ways to reduce these collisions.

'Cultures consist of shared constructions that emerge out of social interactions of sets of individuals who inhabit overlapping social and physical spaces.' (Ilesanmi, 2009). It defines as culture is shared with social interaction between individuals who come from different background and share with others. Further, Hofstede (1980) suggested "culture is mental program that control individual response to their environment". Different scholars have different views about culture and they have some limitation as well defining culture.

As per Thomas (2008), we can say that culture is shared, learned and is systematic and organized.

Culture is shared

According to Hofstede (1980), culture is mental program which describes human nature along with personality of people. He describes culture is shared on mind in three level of programming as per the environment as well as how people react on it. He describes in lowest level of programming people do the as per normal way means almost all people have same work, it depends with our biological functions like eating, sleeping etc however the level slightly above describes the level of learning and in top level, he describes how culture is learned and integrated on personal life.

Culture is learned

Culture is integrated in life not once; it is passed from generation to generations. Cultured is learned from person to person, one generation, and one culture to another by means of communication and interacting with environment. For example the usage of junk foods in developing countries like Nepal, India is growing as people from these countries who have interaction with westerners have learned and integrated in their life and similarly other people learned from them.

Culture is systematic and organized

All culture belongs to system, are organized and integrated to the system, have a base and have an organized value, beliefs towards environment (Thomas, 2008). It consist of thoughts and values which has been designed or desired to share by some social group as per the situation and need of people to opt various laws, political factors, financial.

There are various reason of survival and differ between different cultures. The main factors which cultures differ and persist are survival, language, religion, national culture etc

Survival

One of the main reasons of existence of culture is survival. Different groups, companies etc have different culture, their culture are different from others so that they can mark their existence and survival. Culture tends to influence people on decision making as well. In case of success of management, they tend to imply same culture to their different branches as well as they believe this culture will make their existence.

Language

Language plays vital role in the way of cultural transmission (Hall, 1966). Culture is shared and adopted due to use of languages. Various words are transmitted or copied from one language to other in order to specify particular words. Every country has their own language and some countries have more than one language, i.e. different indigenous groups or societies have their own language as well. These languages represent culture, environment, and society of that group. For example although Nepal is small country, it has around 36 different languages of different caste. Each language represents the people of that culture. "One long standing view is that because people encode things in memory in terms of particular language, language determines the way they view the world." (Whorf, 1956). It means language determines the society's mental representation, how they are influenced by the environment. For example, if an Asian guy stays Ireland for 10 years and later return to his home county, his way of speaking is somewhat influenced by English. Thus language plays vital role in cultural transmission and cultural representation.

Religion

Religion is beliefs, behaviour, and devotion toward god that people share. Different religions have different culture and beliefs. For example In Hindu relight cow is worshipped as god and Hindu people don't eat beef whereas people of other religion eat beefs. Religion represents cultural values such as tradition, language, social living etc. Religion is unevenly distributed and concentrated in specific parts of the world. Religion has a great influence on what the people perceives and behaves to another religion people. It resembles people, the way of their thinking, the society they belongs and culture they adopt. For example, in Muslim religion multi marriage are allowed to men.

Before moving towards to the theories of cross culture, we have to know the culture, language, religion of people, how they can adapt the changes in cross culture. Global managers have to understand that language, religion and typical cultures are factors that can cause collision between people.

Different aspects of culture and beliefs

In various cases, mangers face different types of cultural issues and different beliefs of people. Major aspects of culture and beliefs are as follows:-

In Group Bias and Prejudice

It is nature of human being that we are bias and wants to get along with the same culture group. We tend to favour the group which identifies ourselves, identifies our cultures, language, religion etc and make some discrimination about other. We feel comfortable in our group member and relate with negative characteristics with those of out group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Prejudice judgments then translates discrimination is taken into action against others. It depends mostly upon both cultural and personal factors. Group favoritism occurs in organization due to various factors like gender, age, nationality, religion etc (Wilder, 1986).

Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is the view that one's own culture is superior to any other way of living (Le Vine & Campbell, 1972). It means person or groups assume that their culture, society, groups, religion is superior to other. It can create conflict between different groups which may lead to violent acts as well as people are ethnocentric. Definition and character of ethnocentrism is defined by Traindis (1994) as follows:-

- What goes on in our culture is seen as "natural and correct," and what goes on in other cultures is perceived as "unnatural and incorrect."
- We perceive our own in-group customs as universally valid.
- We unquestionably think that in group norms, roles, and values are correct.
- We believe that it is natural to help and cooperate with members of our in- group, to favour our in-group, to feel proud of our in-group, and to be distrustful of and even hostile toward out-group members.

To elaborate what Ethnocentrism means we can take example of "Kome" – rice in Japan. Japanese people think rice are the symbol of their independence, they believe Japanese rice are the best rice in the world. Even in the time of scarcity of Japanese rice other imported rice were not more consumed in Japan. There were several debates in Japan about Japanese rice and other imported rice from USA about the taste however most of the consumers were unable to tell the difference. It means although there is not any taste difference in Japanese rice and imported rice; Japanese people still think their rice is superior to other. (Schlender, 1993).

If the company have good policy, they are doing well in one country than they will try to impose the same policy in other countries as well as they think their working style, their culture is superior that's why they are successful in business however people from other country have same problem as well, they think their culture is superior and they will not adapt the culture imported by foreign companies. We take a report of Song Jung-a (2006) published in financial times why big companies like Nokia, Wal-Mart, Mc-Donald, Google, Nokia , Coca-cola etc. are unable to compete to local companies in Korea? These multinationals companies put their cultures in Korean market however

Koreans rejected these culture as they believe their culture are superior than others. The main reason for failure of those multinational companies are they try own way ignoring local characteristics and failed to adapt local taste. In order to cope to with situation these multinational companies later realized their ethnocentric way of working is no more applicable in Korea and moved on with joint ventures in Korean companies, re launching new products as per Korean taste etc.

There are various theories of cross-culture management which help us to understand and practice cross culture which are as follows;-

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck Framework, 1961

They have described culture under the six dimensions where a society can be categorised under anthropology:

Relationship to nature: As per this dimension people are bounded by the nature. People need nature and they have to adopt or work together with nature and let the nature control them.

Beliefs about human nature: In this dimension, Kluckhohn & Strodbeack have described the behaviour or character of people mentioning that people might be good, evil or mixture of both

Relationship between people: People are concerned and take responsibility within them or attached with the family or group which they belong. Some people prefer to live alone and some of them like to be associated with groups.

Nature of human activity: People are goal oriented, thoughtful and focus on the time however it totally depends upon the nature of people. Some people like to do the things first as per the interest on time bound however some people don't.

Conception of space: Some people like to share their feelings or some people like to stay in private or some prefer both.

Orientation to time: Different people make decisions with respect to time. Some prefer to take decision in present with respect to their tradition in past or they even make decisions for future.

To elaborate this dimension, let us take report of Hollinger, Weismann of regarding delay in manufacturing airbus (Hollinger & Weisemann, 2008). In their report, we identify the nature of human activity dimension that French people like to kiss, talk and interact with each other before work however German people like to work first. Further there is frustration in French side as German were late on their work, they should have finished their work in Germany. We can apply and use the dimension of orientation of time for above illustration. Further different behavior of French and German workers is also shown which dimension of relationship between people indicates such as French like to work in team and German never had.

In a nutshell, these six dimensions show the relation between human with time, nature as well as culture where they belong to time. These dimensions can be used to identify, identify the problems related to cultural issue across the borders according to nature, thinking, and relationship between people.

Hofstede's study

Hofstede extracted four dimensions by conducting research based on attitude surveys of IBM in 1980. His dimensions are as follows:-

Individualism-Collectivism

Individualism is the tendency to view one rather than others and is more concerned with consequences of one. (Thomas, 2008). Individualism means one's core concept values and beliefs and his self identity with in a particular place where he prolonged with whereas collectivism is tendency to view group the rather than oneself. One can sacrifice his concepts or personal interest for good of his group. (Thomas, 2008). In collectivism same beliefs and value are shared among the certain people and prefer group interest to do work with each other.

The person depends upon whether he is an individualist or the collectivist to adopt with the organisation.

Power distance

According to Hofstede (1980), "Power distance is the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally." It means society selects groups or individual whom powers are delegated. Power distance also describe in what extent junior people accept that superiors have more power than they have. For example countries of low power distance employees are not afraid to express their doubts and disagreements with their bosses however countries of high power distance are afraid to express their doubts.

Uncertainty avoidance

In This dimension defines the extent in which societies focus on the ways of reducing uncertainty to create stability in the society. It is determined by the rules & regulations, religious views, social security measures etc. Emotional values are measured in uncertainty avoidance. It determines the stability of the person whether the person is comfortable or uncomfortable in the society.

Masculinity-femininity

Masculinity –femininity dimension measure the role of male or female plays in the society. This dimension measures the dominance over the female by male. "Masculinity- Femininity is the extent to which traditional male orientations of ambition and achievement are emphasized over traditional female orientation of nurturance and interpersonal harmony." (Thomas, 2008)

Cultural Distance

The main idea of cultural distance is to find relationship between two countries. If the countries are nearer to each other, they will have somewhat similar culture whereas if the countries are long distance gap than they have different culture. (Kogut & Singh, 1988). For example, cultures of Americans and Canadians are somewhat similar whereas cultures of American and Indians are different as Canada is near to America where as India is far from America. This cultural distance is meaningful on board comparison national level not on individual level. (Thomas, 2008)

Conclusion and recommendation

In this Morden business age, many companies are moving toward globalization and have to face with diverse culture, religion, language, ethnic groups. To cope with cross culture management issues, management have to know about different culture, how to imply new culture to new environment etc. Human nature, behaviours are dynamic and so with culture as well so management as well as people have to adopt the changes according to the time.

The theories of culture help the management help ease the gaps created in the cultural differences. Management should always be cautious towards cross cultural issue otherwise there will be collision between cultures which hinders management growth. They have to find the way using these theories to reduce the gaps of cross cultural issues. In a nutshell, management have to adapt the culture as per new environment, merger their culture to new environment to obtain their desired goal.

As we know world is dynamic and nature of human being as well, these changes create changes in culture as well. New technologies are emerging day by day, these changes in technologies also affects culture of people. Change in technology and its relationship between cultures is not defined in cultural theories which are the limitations of cross culture theories which we have described above. In a nutshell, both management and people have to adapt changes in culture, respect language & religion as well be acquaint with latest technology.

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Common Issues in Translation

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Abstract

The present article portrays conceptual understanding about translation in general and some referential issues in particular. In the light of my own experiences on translation, this paper depicts some specific issues and their ways to overcome them. Rationalizing the scope and role of translation, this paper represents the overall embodiment of the issue of translation and some ways out to eradicate the contemporary practices of translation. More importantly, this paper strengthens its theoretical construct based on some specific translation approaches and paves better ways to transfer information implicitly.

Keywords: translation, equivalence, lexical, information, culture

Introduction

We live in a global village and exchange information through various means. In this context, translation stands as a strong means of transferring information from one language or culture to another language. When we trace back the history and tradition of translation process, it has a long and influential history. Its history is accompanied by English literature, and English literature lives on translation, it is fed by translation; every new exuberance, every new heave is stimulated by translation, every allegedly great age is an age of translation (Pound, 1929) that begins from Chaucer. Snell-Horny (2006) believes that translation is the process of disentangling the complex reality about the linguistic arena into cultural connotations. It has been influenced by the literary, historical, and philosophical ground of the period. Similarly, Newmark (2003) believes that translation is a noble and truth-seeking profession in which from may not be considered. Thus, almost historical translation prevails the reality is always intricated to social and cultural assets. In the past, translation was used as transferring religious thoughts and beliefs. It played a crucial role in establishing world literature. It is believed that without translation we would have no religious books, e.g. Upanishad, Vedas, etc. Thus, translation these days has been a linguistic enterprise and many of us are surviving with translation.

Each language and culture has unique and diverse features. Despite various disparities in culture and language, we try to manifest our understanding via artistic representation, and the artistic endeavor lies in translation. Pertaining to the source of language information, every translator tries to preserve intelligibility. I am closer to the quote of Toury (1985) whose quotes translations are the facts of one system only: the target system' (p. 19, as cited in Snell-Hornby, 2006). Preserving the intelligibility of the source language into target system is always the core system of translation. Therefore, it is believed that translated texts must address the sense of target readership. Translators in the translation process stand as a mediator between two distinct languages. Moreover, it is a very complex process having several acts and subsidiary processes. I am closer to Catford (1965) who pertinently defines translation as the replacement of the textual material in another language. Replacing cultural and linguistic sense into textual materials requires depth knowledge of both texts. First and foremost, factor to consider while replacing information from one to another is to have depth knowledge and understanding about the various assets of translation. Without having knowledge of culture, translation remains almost impossible. Taking culture an inherent part of the language, we have to face a genuine question whether culture is translated or not. In this context, it is believed that culture cannot be translated but translation can be at least a means to bridge the gap between cultures. Therefore, it is believed that a good translator must not only be at least bilingual but also bicultural.

Background of the Study

Exploring the depth and the existing meaning requires a deeper level of translating experience. In doing so, each translator requires a different approach in translation. Transformation can be achieved through translation, however, there are some cultural, linguistic and social obstacles or challenges. The knowledge about translation enhances various ideas in solving the problem about language teaching and society. For Bassnett (2002) 'problems in translating are caused at least as much by discrepancies in conceptual and textual grids as by discrepancies in languages" (p.8). The actual knowledge about language and culture enhance the actual information about learning process and enhance better knowledge and understanding. Thus, we believe translation is like transferring the ideas from one cultural aspect to another. The cultural aspect of the text is the core phenomena because cultural embodiment is the beauty of translation. The aesthetic assets of the translation lie on both cultural as well pragmatic meaning. Moreover, the personal experience of the author and the nature of the content are always significant in transferring not only the language but also the culture.

Role of Translation in the Present-day World

The importance of translation is increasing everyday around the globe. Due to human civilization, every affair of human is being expanded. Expanding human understanding is due to evolving knowledge and ideas and those knowledge and skills are shaped by advancement in science and technology. Advanced development in science and technology have widened the sphere of translation. Thus, it is accepted that several information is preserved, shared, and communicated only by the means of translation. Newmark (2003) states that there can't be global communication without translation. He further mentions that translation opens the ways for the enhancement of various knowledge about language, culture and their practices. Translating cultural assets, linguistic varieties, geographical identities, lexico-grammatical units, and suprasegmental features, etc., are universally challenging. It is believed when we translators exchange our thoughts/opinions, feelings and ideas via translation, we merely translate language rather we profoundly translating social and cultural behavior.

Thus, translation comes across various internal processing into outer cultural assets. It tries to bridge the gap between geographical boundaries and universal tenets. Thereby; translation has created ample opportunities to interact between the two or more dialectical people and has made the globalized world narrow. Many the world's first-class masterpieces are translated texts. I agree Eagle and Eagle (1985) who state this is the age for the text-"translate or die" (as cited in Bhattarai (2000, p.13). Therefore, it is valued that translation is also a process of conceptualizing a discourse because nothing exists without translation. It is also believed that today's 21st century world is made alive through translation. Therefore, translation has paramount role in exchanging information around the globe via cultural and linguistic awareness.

Scope of Translation Studies

We know translation is one of the branches of applied linguistics. It has a wide scope because it connects varieties of other disciplines. Snell-Horny (2006) believes that it is creative transformation therefore it did not limit with a single discipline. Most of the linguistic enterprises are surviving with translation, thereby, it has wider space. Fundamentally, literature, language teaching, linguistics, history, religion, politics, and many other disciplines are implicitly interconnected with each other in translation.

We believe translation helps in expansion of literary work in the world. Different literary texts such as essays, dramas, poems and novels are made popular by translating them into several languages. Mukherjee's (1994) idea of translation as new writing shows that a translator does not only translate source text into another language but 'trans-creates' something new. It means translation is a creative process rather than a mere product. Moreover, translation has a solo connection with linguistic enterprises and cultural assets. Translation can be an instrument for studying different languages. It helps in linguistic studies, Contrastive Analysis (CA), and Error Analysis (EA) which is related to find out similarities and differences between two languages, sometimes make use of translation as an instrument. When we think, ink and link language teaching into translation we very often consider the several methods and approaches such

Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response, The Silent Way of Learning, and Task based Language Learning, etc.

Translation is more context-sensitive cultural activity. Newmark (2003) states that translation can also be taken as an imaginative literature in which translator's conceptual understanding is easily comprehended by the readers materializing into their own reality. Thus, it is the concept used in cultural studies to denote the process of transformation in each culture. Translation of culture is called transculturation. Translation is a cultural practice. It brings culture together often in the form of dominating one another. Besides it, translation plays an important role in transferring religious thoughts, ideas, and beliefs. Although translation of religious books in the past was to disseminate particular religious thought, and belief. Various books from different religion of the world are being translated in the present-day world. Translation is also used to transfer knowledge of history. Moreover, translation invites an appropriate space for globalization and marketing. The fact is that globalization has caused an exponential increase of translation. Similarly, diversified people around the world and their conceptual understanding have been influenced by science and technology. Without science and technology no world can exist today and so does translation.

Conceptualizing the Approaches in Translation

Translation is an emerging discipline. It has several approaches but the trends which are present today may not be in practice tomorrow. Nida and Taber (1969) believe that there is a three-step model of translation in which analysis, transfer and restructuring (as cited in Snell-Hornby, 2006) are interfaced with each step immediately after rejoicing the source language information into target culture. Moreover, there are three major approaches; the post-modernist approach, aesthetic approach and commercial approach. Postmodernism is a broad historical and philosophical spectrum. It generally rejects the conventional notion of centrality, the boundaries between high and low form of art. Moreover, it favors reflexivity and self-consciousness in trans-creativity. In nutshell, postmodernism in translation is a chaotic reality.

The commercial approach advocates specially on the part of market benefit. The translators on commercial approach just take care of the notion that the translated text should be comprehensible, loyal and easy. It is because they do not want to take any kinds of risks. Besides these, the commercial approach doesn't pay proper attention on the aesthetic part of the text.

The advocator of aesthetic approach believes in the originality. The beauty of the text is replicated via artistic representation. The translator in this approach rejects the unhealthy popularity and wants to reach a wider readership taking proper account of cultural and stylistic aspects along with the intelligibility of the source text, reader friendliness, preservation of the source language flavor and so on. Thus, having knowledge about several approaches in translation is worth than not knowing anything about the culture. The approaches lead the way forward to conceptualize the essence and effectiveness of translation.

Issues in Translation

We have experienced various debates in translation such as translation as a subject or a discipline, translation as a subjective notion or objective reality, and translation as a process or a product, etc. More specifically, the core issue in translation is to maintain semantic as well as pragmatic equivalence. There have been various studies and research in translation though none of the translators and their translation research have addressed the issues of translation because no two languages are sufficiently similar (Bassnett, 2002) to be considered representing the similar social reality. So does our belief. The textual equivalence tries to maintain the TL category like linguistic class or unit, but the focus is found to be in meaning.

There are several issues in translation. Translating written discourse is comparatively easier than translating oral discourse. Following the source language word order too closely can produce an unnatural word order in target language (Cahill & Benn, 2011) therefore, addressing issues in translation requires deeper level of grammatical and cultural understanding. The level of tone in the voice, intonation, stress, pauses, laughter, clearing throats, coughs, etc. create problems in translation. As a result, such features may not indicate the proper meaning to its speaker that they are trying to convey. The bodily features such as facial expression (smile, frown, and raise eyebrows), biting lips, shrugging shoulders, scratching head/face/neck, nodding the parts of body, etc. also matter in translation. Addressing these phenomena requires a great deal of transcultural characteristics of a translator.

More specifically, the translator must have the reading comprehension ability in a foreign language, requires knowledge of the subject, sensitivity of language, and competence to write the target language clearly (Newmark, 1995b). I am closer to Bassnett (2002) who clearly pinpoints that idioms are really difficult to translation because they are culturally bound. Moreover, there are legal, medical, scientific, financial, lexical-semantic, grammatical, syntactic, pragmatic, cultural and technical issues which are taken to be the core challenges for translators.

Lexical-semantic Issues: Sometimes source language may not have a lexical item in its vocabulary for the concept in target language, this is known as lexical gap. Adhikari (2004) explains, 'if a word has more than one meaning, it is lexically ambiguous. Lexical ambiguity may be due to polysemy and homonymy (p.41). The semantic layers such as actions (verbs), abstracts (adjectives, and adverbs), objects (pro/noun), and relation (propositions, conjunctions etc.) are paid conscious attention in translation. Moreover, translation of phonemes in one language may be absent in another language due to difference between two languages and these differences create gap in translation. For example, *bʌdel* refers to wild boar. There are some culture specific lexemes such as festival *(dʌshʌin, ti:z, chhʌth, jʌnʌipurnimā, zi:ti:yā, holi:, ʊdhoʊli:, ʊbhaʊli:*, etc.), materials (*dhi:ki, Jā:to, belʌʊti, nānglo, sʊ:po, kābeli, chʊ:lesi),* dialects, time locators, events and so on. Besides these, there are some other semantic issues having more than a single meaning. When we translate a particular word considering a single meaning, it can create an effectual problem in translation, for example Bank, it has more than two meanings. Moreover, sometimes, sentences create problems for example; 'flying planes are dangerous', 'the fish is ready to eat', It was not with me, but I was with it', etc. Therefore, these types of examples for Lonner (1981) are natural in each language and culture. Pertaining to sematic assets it is believed that there are still several lexical and sematic gaps in translation.

Grammatical Issues: When a translator gets exposed to two languages and cultures, obviously s/he deserves to have an understanding about the grammar of the two languages. Indeed, grammatical issue includes questions of temporality (time and space), aspctuality (aspect) and many other assets which are remarkably noticed whilst translating from one language to another. The fact is that grammatical assets are language specific and those assets are represented differently either by the verb or from the predicate point of view for its development, as opposed to time itself and whether to make explicit grammatical analysis. Due to lack of incomplete sentence structure, accuracy of words/phrases, nominalization, passivation, readability, etc. are paid off in grammatical arena. It is widely accepted that grammar structure varied from one to another. Moreover, pertaining to the concept of Andini (2014) it can be said that there are some nouns, verbs, person, tense, mood, voice, etc. are very difficult to address. Bhattarai and Adhikari (2008) state that grammar is like the science because every grammar has its own terminology and a special vocabulary and addressing those grammatical arenas requires terminological equivalence. Semantically, there appeared to be preposition in English and post-position in Nepali language. For example; *ye ye tʌ bʌtmās khānchhʌsh?* Metaphorically, they might have several meanings, but they may not be grammatically similar.

Syntactic Issues: Each language has its own structure and originates in linguistic richness. Due to distinct grammatical structure and structural differences, we happened to pinpoint speech, voice, tense and aspect, rhetorical figures of speech, idioms, proverbs and so on. Parallel sentence structure is difficult in translation. For example, Nepali sentence structure has a longer sequence than English language (*sʌhʌri: sāmʊ:dāyekā bi:shesʌtʌhʌrulāi mʌdhyʌnʌzʌr gʌri ʊ:ktʌ sʌmʊ:dāyele sāmʌnā gʌrekā rʌ bhʌbisyemā sāmʌna gʌrnʊpʌrne bʌhu:prʌkop jokhimhʌrʊko neʊnikʌrʌnka lāgi: esthāni:ye sʌmudāye bi:pʌd ʊ:tāthʌnsil kshʌyʌmʌā ʌbhibirdhi gʌrnʌ ābʌsek pʌrne jʌnsʌkti tʌyar pārnʌ, tāli:m, gosti:, bʌithʌk ādi jʌstā: kāryʌkrʌmhʌru sʌnāchālʌn gʌrnʌkā lāgi: nʌgʌrstʌr mā nʌi ābʌsek jʌnʌsʌkti: tʌyār gʌrne ʊdeseyle yes pʌrsikshyʌk prʌsikshyʌn āyojʌnā gʌrine chhʌ).*Translating such text is a very challenging phenomena because we can change the sense but we cannot change into similar structure to maintain literalness in translation.

Pragmatic Issues: Another most striking phenomena in translation is pragmatic assets. It appears to the difference in formal and informal modes. Maintaining pragmatic equivalence is another key issue of translation because idiomatic expressions (irony, humor, sayings), culture- specific proverbs and quotations are very difficult. Borjesson (2011) believes that contextual mapping is always important in pragmatic translation. More importantly, complex sentence structure, complex expression and interposing cultural assets constitute in one language inculcate pragmatic equivalent in translation. Translating personal pronoun 'you' is also challenging. The gap is invited due to the difference in the numbers of sound in two languages because English has 44 phonemes but Nepali language has 35 phonemes. Similarly, there are many words that the Nepali speakers practice basing upon their mother tongue influence such as in Nepali *'ʊs'təi:- 'ʊs'təi:', 'chhito:- chhito:', 'rā:mro-rā:mro', and 'ʧi'so:- ʧi'so', 'widhārthi-sidhārth', 'photo-photosoto', etc*. Same-same, fast-fast, good-good, and cold-cold, etc. are not possible to have exact translation.

Cultural Issues: Cultural issues may arise from differences between cultural references, such as names of food, festivals, cultural connotations, etc. Indeed, Toury (1985) inculcates referring to culture as a social context including norms, convention, ideology and values of society. Moreover, social practices, cultural values, honorific and standard phenomena, etc. also create problems in translation. Social norms; community specific cultural terms and ways of behaving / doing also matters in translation. Moreover, there are some phenomena in translation such as specific greetings, musical instruments, religious naming, historical heritages, hymen and folk songs, folk lore, cattle, farming, and celebration and so on.

Literary Issues: There are some serious concerns regarding literal translation. The Nepali term *Khanu* has many connotative uses in the context for example, *'bhā:t khā:nʊ', 'pāni khānʊ', 'mā:sʊ khā:nʊ', 'pitāi: khanʊ', 'pān khānʊ', 'aʊsʌdhi khānʊ', 'kʌsʌm khānʊ', 'chʊrot khānʊ', 'khʌini khānʊ', 'rʌksi khānʊ', 'dʌng khānʊ', 'bi:s khānʊ', etc.* Maintaining literal sense pertaining to culture is really embarking. The translator needs to have linguistic richness, cultural understanding and contextual knowledge of the source and target text. Rationalization of literal terms in translation is highly demanding and rarely satisfy phenomena. Sometimes, the continuation of using the same verb two times within same sentence is possible in Nepali language but it is not common in English and its translation. For example; *"āyo āyo tyo āyo", 'gʌyo gʌyo sʌbai mʌilo gʌyo', 'hernʊs hernʊs sʌbʌi kʊ:ra hernʊs', etc.* Thus, these types of Nepali sentence structures are genuine issues in literal translation.

Technical Issues: There are some more specific issues in translation about technical translation. According to Baker (1994) technical texts are characterized by 'objectivity, absence of expressiveness and emotion, precision, economy, conciseness, and formality (p.3). We believe translation can technically be sound only when we prior technicality of the texts. Here are some sample examples; *Yo rāhʌdāni bāhʌk nepāli* *nāgʌrik hʊnʊhʊnchhʌ, Kālo mʌsile chhopiyeko bhāg koriyeko khʌndamā kārd swikar nagarnuholā and hʌlʊkasanga kotaʊnʊhos* and they are translated as the bearer of this passport is a Nepali Citizen, do not accept if shaded area is tempered with and scratch gently respectively. Therefore, technical translation pertinently creates space in technical translation.

Literalness in literary translation: Literalness in translation is one of the most significant issues of translation. For Bastola (2015) literalness is one of the best approaches to bring syntactic and pragmatic equivalence in translation. This concept is closer to literal translation; however, a literal approach is easier since the translator doesn't have to consider the finer details of word meaning, syntax, discourse structure, implied information and meaning interference (Cahill & Benn, 2011) but it is seriously concerned in literalness in translation. More specifically, literalness in translation is an aesthetic approach of translation. There are certain principles and parameters which demand length, structure, culture and contextual/sensual meaning. Bastola (2018) states that maintaining literalness in translation requires length, parallelism in syntactic construction, and cultural concepts. Literal translation brings uniformity in both texts either from the vantages point of linguistic equivalence or from cultural preservation. For example, there are lots of translator who hardly believe in literalness in translation such as *pʌschimtirʌ* ***kālonilo*** *bhʌyʌrʌ āyo* which is translated as 'The West grew darker'.

Some Ways Out: After revisiting various relevant translation research and theoretical assets, it can be said that translation can be a medium, but it cannot be panacea. Eradicating such issues require depth knowledge on both source language and target language culture. There are lots of techniques and strategies in translation to preserve the intelligibility of the source text. The well-aware translator must come across naturalization, transliteration, paraphrase, addition, deletion, couplet and substitution, etc. to maintain maximum level of equivalence. The translator must be bilingual, bicultural and have deeper level of linguistic and cultural understanding. Moreover, translating a text technically requires having diverse linguistic attire, specific cultural background and pragmatic awareness.

Despite having several tenets in translation, the translator is expected to have constant choices in every sentence or in paragraph to decide which one is most appropriate to transfer the information in the text being translated. S/he is supposed to make immediate switch of the techniques rather than adopting a certain technique for ever. Addressing these issues requires consultation of dictionaries, glossaries, encyclopedia, terminology books and consultation of experts. Being theoretically strong doesn't entail that there are no serious concerns in translation. Moreover, borrowing, transposition, chunking, textual equivalence, awakening in translation are some specific concerns that the translator has to mark on his/her professionalism. Thus, it is believed that the translator should have a great understanding of the source language in written and verbal text.

Conclusion

Syntactically, one language may not be same to other languages. While translating the text from one language to another, the translator should be well known with the syntactic structures as well as pragmatic use of both languages that involve in translation. Some units used in the text may carry the culture of particular society or community. In such context, the translator has to search for the equivalent words to maintain literalness that gives sense to its readers in the TL. It requires rigorous attempt, tolerance, thinking, rethinking, editing and proofreading. Thus, it is not as creative as original. Therefore, translation process becomes an important part of translating culture, culturally and contextually congruent conceptualizations, instruments, and interpretations. However, some of the linguistic complexities and cultural diversification can be simplified by using specific skills and techniques. Some units used in the text may carry the culture of a particular society or community. In such a context, the translator must search for effective means to translate texts to overcome such issues.

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Women's Substantive Representation in Nepal after Adoption of Loktantra: A Review of Whether Numerical Representation Translates into Substantive Representation

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Abstract

The central justification for this review is that a growing numerical (descriptive) presence of women in Nepali politics does not, by itself, guarantee that women representatives effectively influence policies, legislation, and governance in favor of women's interests and gender equality; whether numerical representation has been translated into substantive representation is therefore the guiding question of this study. For the long time, underrepresentation of women, rather than quality of representativeness, was the central question in Nepali academia. Indeed, Nepal has achieved unprecedented progress in descriptive representation of women in politics. The issue of substantive representation, however, has not studied systematically so far. This study aims to examine the major debates in substantive representation in Nepal after adoption of Loktantra, Indeed, how the hindering factors have been identified also examined carefully. It finds that the idea of substantive representation is already in the center of debate. First, why the women representative in constituent assembly has been discussed widely. Second, the difficulties of women representative in local government of Nepal also is receiving wider attention. Third, it finds that only institutional approach has been discussed while the interaction approach remains almost silent. Fourth, the impact of populism in women's representation also a popular question among the scholar. However, a balanced theoretical debate is necessary in exploring, analyzing and examining the low level of substantive representations in contemporary Nepal.

Keywords: substantive representation, descriptive representation, gender quota, women's political participation, Loktantra, Nepal

Introduction: Women's Representation in Politics and Nepal

The theme running through this section is that Nepal's constitutional and legal reforms after the adoption of Loktantra have produced one of South Asia's highest rates of women's numerical representation, yet whether this numerical gain has been converted into substantive representation – women representatives shaping policy, legislation, and governance in line with women's interests – remains the unresolved question that this review addresses.

For the long time, underrepresentation of women, rather than quality of representativeness, was the central question in Nepali academia. By adopting mixed electoral system in the legislative election, "the country witnessed women's representation at the level of 'critical mass' for the first time in the 2008 election to the Constituent Assembly (CA) as a result of the interim constitution of 2007, which ensured 33 percent women's representation" (Kanel, 2014, p. 41). The guarantee of 33 representation of women in federal parliament and provincial assembly has become mandatory in Nepal's constitution of 2015 too. Ratio of women representatives in lower house and provincial assembly is 33.96% and 32.54% respectively (Election Commission, 2017). Nepal has made it to top position in South Asia in the representation of women in parliament.

This numerical achievement, however, is only justifiable as progress in substantive terms if it is read against the condition of women's representation after the amalgamation of local units under the new federal structure created by the constitution; that is, the practice of women's substantive representation in Nepal after Loktantra has to be assessed at the very level – local government – where the constituent units were newly amalgamated, rather than at the level of numbers alone.

The constitutional and legal provisions, moreover, mandate that 40.4 percent of all nominee seats be reserved for women in local government. According to the Local Level Election Act 2017, in both urban and rural municipalities, two among four ward members should be women, one of whom must be from the Dalit caste (socio-economically the lowest and most underprivileged under the hindu caste system). It moreover, mandates that political parties must field at least one woman candidate between chief/chairperson and deputy chief/chairperson in urban and rural municipalities. The proportion of women representation accelerated to 40.95% (14,325 women representative among total 35,041 total local representatives) in recent local election held in 2017 (Election Commission, 2017).

The paragraph that follows situates this numerical progress within the descriptive-versus-substantive distinction that organizes the rest of the review. The consequences of the gradual improvement in the representation of women in all level of legislative and executive bodies – often called as descriptive representation: "numerical presence of particular groups in elected office" (Mügge et al., 2019, p. 707) – of Nepal has not been systematically studied yet. Few studies have inquired whether the significant representation of women in CA resulted into the substantive representation – "where the representative seeks to advance a group's policy preferences and interests" (Campbell, Childs, & Lovenduski, 2009, p. 172) – or not. In short, descriptive gains are documented, but whether they have converted into substantive influence over policy and governance is precisely the gap this review sets out to map.

The results were mixed. They basically agrees that “a critical mass of women was present in the CA and they were able to raise some important women’s issues” (Kanel, 2014, p. 58). Still, they argue that existence of some old norms, values, institutions and practices has seriously hindered the effective participation of women CA member’s effective legislative actions. Falch (2010, pp. 23–25) has found four main causes for women’s CA members’ limited performances.

First, women’s effective participation in decision-making is hindered by a pervasive male domination inside political parties. Second, despite the existence of women’s wings in most political parties and also an Inter-Party Women’s Alliance, where women occasionally gather to discuss political issues, women politicians find it hard to raise issues of particular concern to women in the Constituent Assembly. Third, limited education and literacy capacity, along with a lack of political experience and knowledge about the political system, further impede many female politicians from participating effectively in the political process. A fourth issue that influences women’s roles and their ability to participate in politics is the perception that the increase in women’s representation was primarily a response to legal requirements, and not a result of the political parties’ determination to improve gender equality in political structures and decision-making.

This relevance to the central theme extends to local government as well: if numerical gains in the CA did not automatically secure substantive influence, the same question applies with even greater force to local bodies, where women now hold the majority of deputy-chief and chairperson positions. In regard of the women representatives in local governments, there are very few recent academic studies. The debate and discussion are mostly depended on the reports published by donor agencies, advocacy groups (see Asia Foundation, 2018; SFCG, 2018) and opinion in the newspapers (see Bhattarai, 2019). They have raised the qualitative dimensions of representation in all three tires of government. Why nearby ninety percent deputy chief and chairperson in local government are women? What will be consequences of this result in both democracy and women’s role as local executive is the one of the central question of these inquiries.

Indeed, there are numbers of recent academic inquiries which address the several questions related with women politics in Nepal. Ketola (2020) has explored why the women experiences of women who fought for the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) in Nepal focusing on why they are moving away from party activities and public sphere. Through a comparative observation of two post-conflict states, Bosnia and Nepal, Berry and Rana (2019) have identify five barriers – economic insecurity, competing truths, hierarchies of victimhood, continuums of violence, and spatial and temporal dislocation – that prevent women from feeling at peace in their daily lives.

Theoretical Debate

Gender Study in Sociology

Wharton (2005, p. 5) argued that "a related development in the sociology of gender is the field's increased concern with the relations between gender and other bases of distinction and stratification, such as age, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or social class". He, moreover, has identified three major approaches to inquiry gender in sociology:

Interactionalist Approach: Gender is created through social interaction and is inherently contextual in its impact. Interactionist approaches to gender focus less on individuals and more on the social context within which individuals interact.

Institutional Approach: gender is embedded in the structures and practices of organizations and social institutions, which appear on the surface to be gender-neutral (Wharton, 2005, p. 8).

Sandra (1986, p. 18) highlights that "in virtually every culture, gender difference is a pivotal way in which humans identify themselves as person, organize social relations and symbolize meaningful natural and social events and process." Kessler and McKenna (1978, p. 7) claims that "the term gender has traditionally been used to designate psychological, social, and cultural aspects of maleness and femaleness."

Gender Study in Comparative Studies

Rather than being quoted directly, the central claim of comparative gender scholarship can be paraphrased as follows: comparative politics has approached gender chiefly through its influence on political attitudes and behavior, through the part played by women's movements in transitions to democracy, through the gendered character of political and economic institutions and the way such institutions help or hinder political functioning, and through gender's broader effect on political representation (Schwidt-Bayer, 2010, p. 177).

Quota and Inclusion

In the comparative study of gender quotas and ethnic reservation, focusing on Latin American countries, Htun (2016, pp. 8–10) claims that excluded groups can achieve representation in two ways.

> First, they can be organized into constituencies, the building blocks of a system of representative in democracy. The second way excluded groups achieve representation is by organizing themselves into an informal constituency and relying on other modalities of representative behavior.

She, moreover, claims that the "quality of the representation should be evaluated by systemic criteria such as the character of deliberation in the polity, communication, mutual education, the accuracy of information, whether all relevant perspectives are present, and whether salient interests have a voice" (Htun, 2016, p. 10).

Krook (2008, p. 352) claims that "seven motivations for quota reform" are "principled stands, electoral considerations, empty gestures, promotion of other political ends, extension of representational guarantees, international pressure, and transnational learning."

Representation: Types, Patterns and Determinants

While discussing the types and patterns of representation, four patterns of representations are widely cited. Celis and Mazur (2012, p. 58) has summarized Pitkin's four types of representation as follows:

> Formal representation refers to the formal agreement between the representative and the represented, the process of authorization of the representative and accountability to the represented. Symbolic representation is established when people acknowledge the symbolic quality of an object or a person as constituting representation. Descriptive representation refers to what the representatives "look like"; who they are is what makes them representative. Substantive representation is established by what the representatives do, their acts for the issues, and interests of concern for the represented.

The large debate on this era is whether the "descriptive representation by gender improves substantive representation for women" (Mansbridge, 2005, p. 622). In "descriptive" representation, representatives are in their own persons and lives in some sense typical of the larger class of persons whom they represent. Black legislators represent Black constituents, women legislators represent women constituents, and so on (Mansbridge, 1999, p. 629).

Mansbridge (1999, p. 628) claimed that "descriptive representation promotes goods unrelated to substantive representation." It has four major functions: (1) adequate communication in context of mistrust; (2) innovative thinking in context of uncrystallized; (3) creating a social meaning of "ability to rule" for members of a group in historical contexts where that ability has been seriously questioned; and increasing the polity's de facto legitimacy in contexts of past discrimination.

There has been continuous claim for a "variety of enabling devices" (Phillips, 1995, p. 57) that fill the gap between descriptive and substantive representation. Mansbridge (1999, p. 628) claims that six enabling devices are particularly important in institutionalizing fluid forms of descriptive representation. They are:

> a. schools and funding for potential candidates; b. caps on nomination campaign expenses; c. public funding of nomination campaign expenses; d. establishing

formal search committees within each party to help identify and nominate potential candidates from disadvantaged groups; e. high-quality public day care for elected officials; f. scholarships to law schools and public policy schools for members of historically disadvantaged and proportionally underrepresented groups.

Kenworthy and Malami (1999) examined the determinants of variation in women's representation in national legislatures across 146 nations comparing political, socioeconomic, cultural factors. They found that "electoral system structure, left party government, the timing of women's suffrage, the share of women in professional occupations, and cultural attitudes toward the role of women in politics each play a role in accounting for variation in the degree of gender inequality in political representation around the world" (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999, p. 236). Paxton and Kunovich (2003, p. 102) reconfirmed that "ideology, when measured more precisely, matters more than political factors in predicting differences in women's political representation." Inglehart and Norris (2005, pp. 9–10) claimed that "cultural traditions are remarkably enduring in shaping men's and women's worldviews; nevertheless, glacial shifts are taking place that move systematically away from traditional values and toward more egalitarian sex roles. This shift is intimately related to the processes of societal modernization and to generational replacement."

Examining the role of political parties in national political representation, Kunovich and Paxton (2005) examine the 'multiple points of contact for women in the political system.' They found that "party characteristics have mixed effects on female candidates and legislators and ultimately depend on the type of electoral system being considered" (Kunovich & Paxton, 2005, p. 35).

Relationship Between Representatives and Represented

The major questions posed in the literature on women as public officeholders are (1) are women different from men; and (2) if so (or not) why (or why not) (Sapiro, 1981, p. 712)?

Campbell, Childs, and Lovenduski (2009, p. 174) argued that empirical research on the relationship between the attitudes of women voters and representatives must take account of four theoretical problems: (1) the nature of women's interests, (2) the attendant danger of essentialism, (3) the mechanisms that connect presence to advocacy, and (4) the related difficulties of describing elite behavior. Similarly, Childs and Krook (2009, p. 127) claimed that we need to observe five factors to examine the links between descriptive and substantive representation: (1) anticipated effects of increased proportions of women; (2) constraining and enabling legislative contexts; (3) legislators' identities and interests; (4) definitions of women's issues; and (5) policy-making processes. Williams (2000, p. 24) claims that three aspects of the mediative dynamics of representative government are (1) the nature of legislator-constituency relations; (2) the process of legislative decision-making; and (3) the criteria for defending constituencies, that is, for identifying politically relevant groups.

In the empirical observation of the impact of women on public policy in the Arizona legislature, Saint-Germain (1989, p. 963) found that women legislators not only "are more likely than men to propose feminist legislation but also have been more successful than men in enacting their proposals."

Sapiro (1981, p. 703), on the other hand, argued that "in order to discuss representation of women we must consider whether women as a group have unique politically relevant characteristics, whether they have special interests to which a representative could or should respond."

Several empirical and comparative studies has showed "women in elected office makes an important difference in encouraging women friendly policy" (Caiazza, 2004, p. 59).

Women Representative in Local Government

Historically, women were highly underrepresented in local government. Darcy, Welch, and Clark (1987, pp. 10–11) have found four reasons for the distinct history of women in local government.

First, until recently, local government at the village or commune level was considered to be part of the private rather than the public sphere. A second reason for the participation of women in local politics is related to the first. It concerns the functions and activities of local government. A third reason for the participation of women in local government, even while women were excluded from politics at other levels, was the proximity of local government and its manner of conducting business. Fourth, the style of local government differed from that other levels. It was voluntary, and decisions were typically reached through consensus rather than conflict.

The New Research Agenda

Recent academic inquiries on women and politics are basically focused on two major dimensions: spillover effect of descriptive representation of women and impact of the global rise of (radical right) populism in representation in both political parties and government. Few examples are: the linkage between the parliamentary presence of ethnic minority women and the extent to which 'their' issues are articulated (Mügge et al., 2019, p. 706); whether women officeholders continue to mobilize other women to greater political involvement (Wolak, 2020, p. 341); the role of gender in radical right politics and substantive representation of women in these parties (Rashkova, 2020, p. 3); and the relationship between populist movements and/or parties with feminist politics (Kantola & Lombardo, 2019, p. 1109), and so forth.

From the example of Netherlands, Mügge et al. (2019, p. 721) found that "ethnic minority parliamentarians – regardless of gender and party affiliation – are more likely to address issues related to the position of ethnic minority women than their ethnic majority colleagues." Wolak (2020, p. 359), on the other hand, however, found that "presence of women candidates or women officeholders do not uniquely inspire the interest or political participation of other women." In other words there are "little evidence that women are more likely to express interest in politics, engage in campaign participation, or turn out to vote when women are represented in office or on the ballot" (Wolak, 2020, p. 359).

The rise of (radical right) populism has mix effect in women politics. In case of Slovakia, Rashkova (2020, p. 17) found that "radical right parties are not distinctly different from any other parties in case of descriptive representation. In terms of representation of women, however, radical right parties' women in Slovakia show to be more active on women's issues than other Slovak female MPs." Similarly, Kantola and Lombardo (2019, p. 1124) found that "regardless of their ideology, populist parties reproduce the same informal patriarchal institutions that gender and politics literature has found in other parties."

Conclusion

This review returns to the problem statement with which it began: whether Nepal's rapid gains in the numerical representation of women have been translated into substantive representation – women representatives effectively shaping policy, legislation, and governance in favor of women's interests and gender equality. This study concludes that not only the descriptive representation but the substantive representation of women in Nepali politics needs sustained scholarly attention. The academic research in substantive representation of women in politics are mostly focused on reason behind the weak performances of women representative in national, federal parliament and local governments. Unlike huge interest in the institution, the relational variables are still have not received enough attention in contemporary Nepal. This study claims that a balanced theoretical debate is necessary in exploring, analyzing and examining the low level of substantive representations in contemporary Nepal, and that the condition of women's substantive representation after the amalgamation of local constituent units remains the most pressing gap for future research.

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Nature and Its Impact on Humans in Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation*

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Abstract

This article examines Kenneth Rexroth's poem Incarnation *through an ecocritical perspective, highlighting the profound relationship between human beings and the natural world. Nature is not only the source of life but also a powerful force that nurtures emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being. Ecocriticism explores the inter connectedness of literature and the environment, emphasizing how literary texts reflect humanity's dependence on nature. Through an analysis of Rexroth's* Incarnation *and Robert Frost's* After Apple-Picking*, this study demonstrates how nature enriches human experiences, strengthens emotional bonds, and inspires self-reflection. Both poems portray nature as a source of beauty, comfort, and meaning, reminding readers of their inseparable connection to the environment.*

Keywords: ecocriticism, nature, literature, environment, Kenneth Rexroth

Introduction

Nature has always been an essential part of human existence. It provides not only physical sustenance but also emotional and spiritual fulfillment. Throughout history, writers and poets have drawn inspiration from the natural world to express human feelings, relationships, and experiences. Kenneth Rexroth's poem *Incarnation* explores the deep connection between love and nature, suggesting that human emotions attain greater meaning when experienced within the natural environment. The poem presents a speaker who finds solace, beauty, and spiritual fulfillment in nature. His perception of love becomes more profound as it merges with the surrounding landscape. Nature transforms ordinary experiences into extraordinary ones, making love appear eternal and transcendent. Through an ecocritical reading of the poem, this article examines how nature shapes human consciousness and enriches emotional experiences. The objective of this study is to examine the representation of nature in Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation in* ecocritical perspective and it is mainly focused on the question is that How is nature represented in Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation in* ecocritical perspective?

Literature Review

Ecocriticism emerged as a significant literary theory during the late twentieth century in response to increasing environmental concerns around the world. It seeks to explore the ways literature represents nature and environmental issues while encouraging readers to reconsider humanity's relationship with the natural world. Unlike traditional literary theories that focus primarily on social, political, or economic issues, ecocriticism places the environment at the center of literary analysis. It examines how literary texts reflect ecological values and promote environmental awareness.

According to Glotfelty and Fromm (1996), ecocriticism investigates the connections between human culture and the physical environment, emphasizing that literature is not isolated from ecological realities. They argue that literary works can shape people's attitudes toward nature and encourage responsible environmental behavior. Through this perspective, literature becomes an important medium for understanding environmental challenges and fostering ecological consciousness. Rueckert (1996), one of the pioneering scholars in ecocriticism, views literature as a form of ecological energy that can influence human perceptions of nature. He suggests that literary texts function similarly to ecosystems because they involve complex interactions among various elements. Through literary imagination, readers become aware of the interconnectedness of all living beings and develop a greater appreciation for ecological balance.

Lawrence Buell (2005) further expands the scope of ecocriticism by arguing that environmental texts should portray the natural environment not merely as a backdrop for human action but as an active presence that influences human life. He maintains that literature can reveal the ethical responsibilities humans have toward the environment. Buell's perspective encourages scholars to analyze how literary works challenge anthropocentric attitudes and promote ecological sustainability.

Another important contribution to ecocritical studies comes from Greg Garrard (2012), who identifies key concepts such as pollution, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals, and the Earth. Garrard argues that these themes frequently appear in environmental literature and help readers understand the ecological crises facing contemporary society. His work demonstrates how literature can serve as a platform for environmental advocacy and ecological education. From an ecocritical perspective, nature is not simply a physical setting but a dynamic force that shapes human emotions, beliefs, and experiences. Literary representations of mountains, rivers, forests, and seasons often symbolize deeper psychological and spiritual realities. Therefore, ecocriticism encourages readers to recognize the intrinsic value of nature and to understand the interconnected relationship between humans and the environment.

Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation* can be effectively analyzed through this theoretical framework because the poem portrays nature as a source of emotional fulfillment, spiritual enlightenment, and romantic inspiration. The speaker's experiences in the natural world illustrate the ecocritical principle that human identity and consciousness are deeply influenced by environmental surroundings. Through vivid imagery and sensory descriptions, the poem emphasizes the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, making it a valuable text for ecocritical analysis.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the relationship between nature and human experience in Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation*. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for literary studies because it focuses on understanding meanings, emotions, and interpretations embedded within texts rather than relying on numerical data. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain, qualitative research seeks to understand how people make sense of their experiences and the world around them. In a similar way, this study examines how the poem represents nature and its influence on human emotions, love, and spiritual awareness.

The research is guided by the principles of ecocriticism, which provide a framework for understanding the interconnected relationship between literature and the natural environment. To support the analysis, the study draws on both primary and secondary sources, including poems, books, journal articles, and scholarly works related to ecocriticism and environmental literature.

Research Design

The study employs a descriptive and interpretive research design. The descriptive aspect focuses on identifying and explaining the ecological themes, images, and symbols presented in the selected poems. The interpretive aspect seeks to uncover the deeper meanings behind these representations and to understand how they contribute to the overall message of the texts. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative research often involves interpreting texts and developing an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon. Following this approach, the study closely examines Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation* and Robert Frost's *After Apple-Picking* to understand how nature is portrayed and how it shapes the speakers' thoughts, emotions, and experiences.

Sampling Method

This study uses purposive sampling, a widely used technique in qualitative research. Purposive sampling involves selecting texts that are most relevant to the objectives of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Rather than choosing texts randomly, the researcher intentionally selects literary works that contain rich ecological themes and strong representations of nature.

For this reason, Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation* was selected as the primary text because it vividly portrays the relationship between human emotions and the natural world. Robert Frost's *After Apple-Picking* was included as a comparative text because it also explores the connection between human life and nature. Both poems provide valuable insights into how nature influences human consciousness, emotions, and understanding of life.

Data Collection Method

The data for this study were collected through document analysis. The primary sources consist of the selected poems, while secondary sources include books, academic journals, and research articles related to ecocriticism and literary studies. Relevant passages, images, symbols, and themes associated with nature were carefully identified and recorded for analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were analyzed through close reading and thematic analysis. First, important ecological images, symbols, and references to nature were identified within the poems. Next, these elements were interpreted using the principles of ecocriticism. Finally, the findings were organized into themes to explain how nature shapes human emotions, relationships, and spiritual experiences. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggest, qualitative analysis involves interpreting textual data and identifying meaningful patterns that help answer the research questions.

Textual Analysis

Nature as a Source of Companionship

In *Incarnation*, Rexroth portrays nature as a comforting companion. Although the speaker is physically alone, he never feels isolated because he is surrounded by the beauty of the natural world. The imagery of snow-covered mountains, waterfalls, and green meadows creates a sense of peace and belonging.

Climbing alone all day long
In the blazing waste of spring snow,
I came down with the sunset's edge
To the highest meadow, green
In the cold mist of waterfalls. (Rexroth, 2011, lines 1–5)

These lines illustrate how the speaker finds emotional fulfillment in nature. The landscape becomes a source of companionship, replacing feelings of loneliness with tranquility and wonder.

Nature and the Beautification of Love

Nature also deepens the speaker's experience of love. As he stands amid the beauty of waterfalls and flowers, he envisions his beloved in a way that transcends ordinary reality.

And as I stood on the stones
In the midst of whirling water,
The whirling iris perfume
Caught me in a vision of you
More real than reality. (Rexroth, 2011, lines 12–16)

The beloved appears "more real than reality," suggesting that nature enhances the speaker's perception of love. The natural environment acts as a medium through which love acquires a spiritual and eternal quality. Rather than existing separately, love and nature merge into a single harmonious experience.

The Unity of Nature and Human Emotion

Throughout the poem, the speaker perceives his beloved as an extension of nature itself. The imagery of movement, light, water, and seasonal beauty reflects the seamless integration of human emotion with the natural world.

Your hips whirled in a tango,
Out and back in dim scented light;
Your cheeks snow-flushed, the zithers
Ringing, all the crowded ski lodge
Dancing and singing; your arms
White in the brown autumn water. (Rexroth, 2011, lines 19–24)

Here, the beloved becomes inseparable from the surrounding landscape. Nature not only enhances her beauty but also symbolizes the vitality and dynamism of human affection.

Nature and Spiritual Transcendence

The poem ultimately presents nature as a pathway to spiritual realization. The speaker experiences a moment in which physical reality and visionary insight become one.

This moment of fact and vision
Seizes immortality,
Becomes the person of this place. (Rexroth, 2011, lines 40–42)

This experience elevates both love and nature beyond the material world. Through immersion in nature, the speaker discovers a deeper understanding of beauty, responsibility, and human existence.

Comparison with Frost's *After Apple-Picking*

Robert Frost's *After Apple-Picking* similarly explores humanity's relationship with nature. The speaker is exhausted after a day of harvesting apples but remains deeply connected to the natural world. The poem reflects the cyclical rhythms of nature and the inevitability of change.

Unlike Rexroth's speaker, who finds spiritual fulfillment in nature, Frost's speaker contemplates fatigue, mortality, and the passage of time. Nevertheless, both poems emphasize nature's influence on human consciousness. Nature serves as a teacher, offering lessons about work, rest, love, and life itself.

Conclusion

Kenneth Rexroth's *Incarnation* demonstrates the profound connection between human beings and the natural world. Through vivid imagery and emotional reflection, the poem portrays nature as a source of companionship, beauty, inspiration, and spiritual fulfillment. The speaker's experience reveals that love becomes more meaningful when it is intertwined with nature. Similarly, Robert Frost's *After Apple-Picking* highlights the enduring influence of nature on human thought and experience.

An ecocritical reading of these poems underscores the importance of recognizing humanity's dependence on the environment. Nature is not merely a backdrop to human life; it is an active force that shapes emotions, relationships, and perceptions. By fostering a deeper appreciation of the natural world, literature encourages readers to develop a more respectful and sustainable relationship with the environment.

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Understanding Suicide Prevention in Nepal: A Situational Study

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Abstract

This study employs one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and five Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to examine the current status of suicide prevention in Nepal. The study emphasizes the complicated psychological, familial, and sociocultural elements that influence suicide in all age groups. The results show a lack of community knowledge, poor policy implementation, and a lack of coordinated mental health services. The necessity of multi-sectoral cooperation, culturally informed awareness campaigns, and grassroots preventative tactics was underlined by the participants. According to the study's findings, lowering Nepal's suicide rate requires both institutional accountability and community involvement, and gatekeeper training.

Keywords: Suicide prevention, community involvement, and grassroots

Background of the study

We learn about suicides on a regular basis from the media, including newspapers, television, the internet, and conversations with others. Such news frequently surprises us and makes us wonder about the circumstances and causes. Typical causes include financial difficulties, marital troubles, failure, family disputes, illness, abuse, demands from culture or religion, and mental health challenges.

Emotional suffering and feelings of helplessness, despair, and hopelessness are the foundations of the complicated problem of suicide. People who commit suicide frequently feel hopeless and have no other way out. Depression is a significant impact, but there are a variety of individual, psychological, social, cultural, and historical factors at play in every case.(Citation?)

Poisoning, hanging, and drowning are common techniques, and preference varies by gender. In Nepal, women commit suicide at a higher rate than males do. The current situation of suicide prevention in Nepal is examined in this article, along with the difficulties encountered and the pressing need for all-encompassing intervention techniques. The Vedas, which declare that individuals who commit suicide go to a dark abyss known as Asurya, criticize Maha Samadhi, a type of deliberate dying, as being comparable to suicide in Hinduism. Like the ups and downs in a film, we are urged to welcome both tranquility and adversity since life is a gift.

Unsatisfied social or personal expectations frequently cause people to take their own lives, which results in a loss of identity and self-worth. Biases that are cultural, societal, and economic can have a detrimental impact on self-esteem and cause people to feel guilty, excluded, and despairing. Suicidal thoughts are frequently the result of low self-esteem and a negative view of oneself.

Suicide is brought on by a variety of circumstances in Nepal and other nations, such as: Education, religion, and employment, Age, Ethnicity and caste, chronic illness, Mental Illness, Marital and parental status, previous suicide attempt and family history,

Social exclusion and inequality, Gender based violence, Cross-cultural, ethnicity, marriage, Trafficking, Migration, conflict, Modernization, and urbanization, Changes of society, Alcohol and substance abuse, Nepal's legal system, Microfinance, Social interaction with multiple factors, Academic failure, Retired from service, Pandemic

Road accidents are the primary cause of mortality in Nepal, followed by suicide. The rate is higher in underdeveloped nations. Prevention is a systematic approach to lowering risk factors and saving lives, including social support, mental health treatment, counseling, awareness campaigns, and self-care.

In Nepal, the number of suicides is constantly increasing. The Nepal Police report for fiscal year 2080–2021 states that 7,221 persons died by suicide, which is the greatest number ever recorded. This equates to an average of 20 deaths each day. Previously, 57% of victims were young people, and the average was 15 per day. (Police, 2081) After traffic accidents, suicide is the second most common cause of death for those aged 15 to 29 worldwide, according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2014).

Suicides have historically been associated with socioeconomic problems such state oppression or social exclusion, or with personal, family, or societal problems. Exam failure, breakups, and life discontent are examples of contemporary triggers that are frequently made worse by social media and technology.

Suicide rates are increasing. According to national police reports, 15 people commit suicide every day in Nepal; during a recent 16-month period, more than 7,000 people committed suicide. 57% of those suicides were youths. According to the World Health Organization, suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15 to 29-year-olds. The leading cause of death is road accidents. As the suicide rate continues to climb, it will become one of the major health problems in Nepal. According to the Fiscal year 2080-2081 Nepal police report, 7,221 individuals died by suicide, with an average of 20 deaths per day—the highest annual amount ever recorded.

Traditionally, people committed suicide for personal reasons or family problems or state problems like social hierarchy, exclusion from society, or state intervention on privacy. Today, the reasons for suicide are somewhat different. Now people commit because they fail an exam, break up a romantic relationship, or are simply not happy. Quite frequently, this is due to the effects of modern technology.

Merely 38 nations have put national suicide prevention programs into place, despite the World Health Organization's 2013 call to action. Plans are being adopted by more nations, but not enough is being done.

The issue grew worse as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Suicide rates increased by 20% at that time due to lockdowns, isolation, and terror; more than 1,600 such cases were recorded in Nepal alone. A major issue has been psychological anguish, especially in those who are more susceptible. The suicide rate in Nepal is lowest in Sudurpaschim and highest in Koshi Province. There is a pressing need for comprehensive and immediate preventative strategies since suicide is becoming a significant public health concern. (Police, 2081) This study's primary goal is to understand suicide prevention program implemented in Nepal. Thus, this sparks to ask several questions such as "What suicide prevention programs are government and non-governmental organizations putting in place?" and how social institutions promoting awareness to prevent suicide?"

Suicide is a worldwide problem that affects both industrialized and developing nations, and it happens to people of all ages. Individuals commit suicide for a variety of personal and external reasons. Emile Durkheim, a sociologist, stressed that suicide is not just an individual act but also a social phenomenon. (Emile, 1897)

The word "suicide" is derived from the Latin suicidium, which means "to kill oneself," and cultural perspectives on the subject are quite diverse. Suicide has historically been viewed as a taboo, criminal, a sin, or even an act of honor, as in the cases of suicide bombs and kamikaze attacks.

Suicide is a major concern in both developed and developing countries, affecting people of all ages due to internal and external factors. Emile Durkheim (1897) argued that suicide is a distinct social phenomenon, not just an individual act. Defined as the intentional taking of one's own life, the term comes from the Latin suicidium, meaning "to kill oneself." Cultural views on suicide vary widely—ranging from criminal offense and religious taboo to an act of honor. (e.g., kamikaze and suicide bombings).

Unauthorized suicide was prohibited in Athens, although it was permitted in Greece and Rome in certain situations, such as when a military defeat occurred. Suicide is forbidden in Islam, condemned in Christianity, and accepted as dharma in Hinduism. During the Rana era, widow self-immolation, a Sati practice, was permitted in Nepal.

One-third of suicides globally occur in India, which was placed 43rd in a 2009 survey. Suicide prevention initiatives are not adequately supported and are not given high priority in many developing nations, including India.

The current situation in suicide prevention

Only twenty-eight nations have national programs in place to prevent suicide. World Suicide Prevention Day is observed annually on September 10 by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (WHO, 2013). Of the 195 nations, just 13 are considered developed, and 48 are in Asia. Healthcare receives little attention in many emerging Asian countries due to tight funding and lax government regulations.

In remote parts of Nepal, many individuals do not have access to mental health services or medical care. Since one person dies by suicide every 20 seconds, suicide prevention was a key focus of the 2019 World Mental Health Day, underscoring the seriousness of the problem (WMHD, 2019).

Everyone has a responsibility to increase awareness and support preventative initiatives in light of the escalating suicide rates worldwide. To effectively combat suicide, comprehensive policies and initiatives that take into account social, psychological, and cultural aspects are necessary.

In low- and middle-income nations, 75% of suicides take place, causing loss and grief for millions of people. As a result, suicide rates are a crucial metric for monitoring the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goal related to health, which is to guarantee everyone, regardless of age, leads a healthy life. (WHO, 2014) Suicide prevention is an integral component of the WHO *Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2020*. The plan set a target of reducing the rate of suicide in Member States by 10% by 2020.

Although suicide is a preventable public health concern, government intervention is necessary for successful prevention. In order to create and carry out focused initiatives, health ministers must take the initiative and coordinate across sectors. A crucial first step in nations lacking preventative initiatives is to fortify surveillance systems. When there are measures in place, a scenario analysis can be used to evaluate ongoing initiatives and identify areas that require improvement.

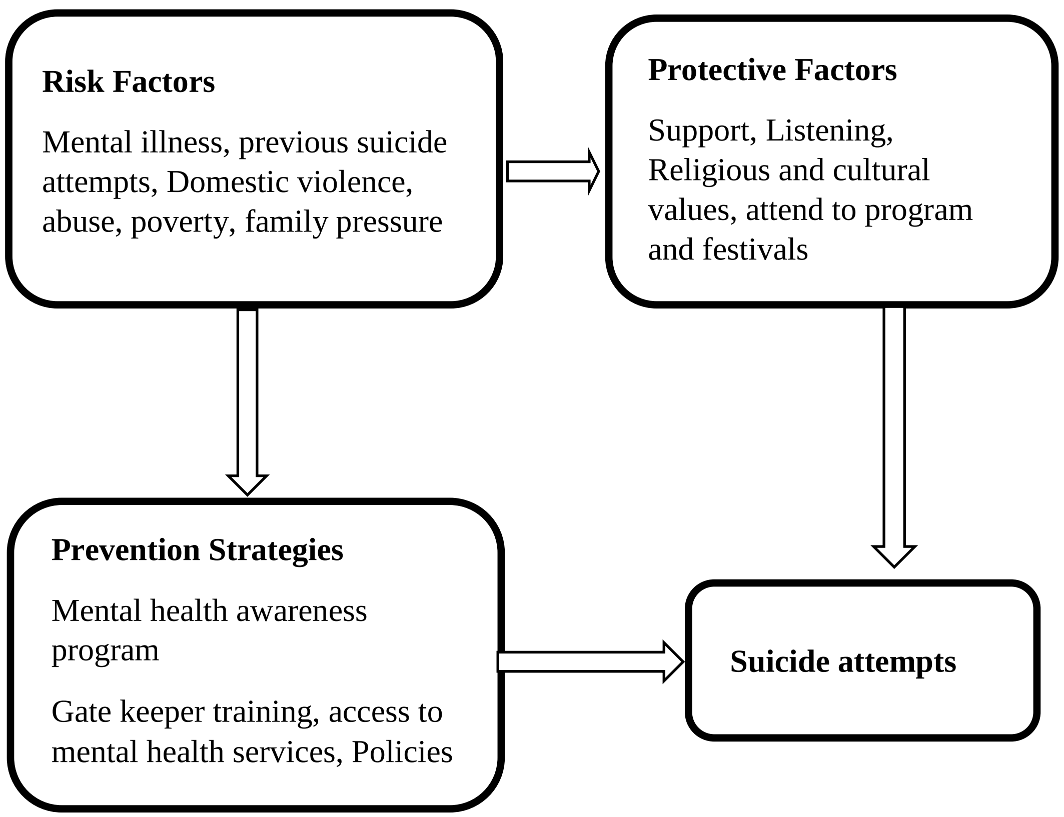
Data collecting and suicide prevention should begin at the same time. Even in the absence of a comprehensive national strategy, early stakeholder engagement can create the foundation for long-lasting change by increasing awareness, lowering stigma, identifying at-risk populations, establishing research objectives, and involving the public and media. (WHO, 2014)

Suicide has long been viewed as an honorable death in Japanese society, particularly in relation to samurai customs or kamikaze pilots during World War II. The high suicide rate in Japan is a result of this cultural perspective. Due to feelings of guilt and failure as caregivers, males are twice as likely as women to die by suicide, particularly following a divorce or loss of employment. Due to a high level of cultural tolerance for suicide, many older persons also commit suicide after retiring. Since Aokigahara Forest, close to Mount Fuji, is a recognized suicide site, frequent police patrols are conducted there to look for victims and stop additional losses (world population review, 2019)

In 2016, the Nippon Foundation Suicide Awareness Survey found that one in four Japanese people seriously considered suicide. Suicide claimed the lives of 24,000 individuals in 2015. In response, the Nippon Foundation started the Suicide Prevention Project in April 2016 to offer at-risk people all-encompassing support. (foundation, 2016)

At least 15 suicides occur in Nepal every day; 5,785 incidents were recorded during the 2018–19 fiscal year. Compared to 5,346 suicides the year before, this was an increase. Because instances are bundled together, the number of recorded deaths frequently deviates from the number of suicides.

Conceptual framework



Methodology

The study used cross sectional research design applying qualitative method with an inductive approach to cover all aspects of the study in short period of time and with limited sources.

Site Selection

Kathmandu, Nepal's capital city, was chosen as the study location for a situational analysis on suicide prevention due to its demographic diversity, metropolitan stressors, and growing public health concern about mental health and suicide.(Site selection must be specific)

Universe and Sampling Procedures

A focus group discussion and five interviews were conducted. Those with over two years of experience working in the mental health sector are among the study participants. Purposive sampling was used to select participants from TPO Nepal, Patan Mental Hospitals, and psychologists who are either directly or indirectly related to suicide or actively working to prevent suicide in the Kathmandu Metropolitan Area. This ensures that the data is rich and relevant.

Nature and Source of Data

This study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through face-to-face interviews using semi-structured questionnaires containing both open- and closed-ended questions, supplemented by direct observation. Secondary data were obtained from books, journals, project reports, internet sources, and full-text English-language articles, including original studies with quantitative findings.

Data Collection Method

Data was collected through Key informant interviews and FGD(Make it more clear)

Data Analysis

Meaningful insights into the current state of suicide prevention in Kathmandu, Nepal, were obtained through a thematic analysis of the data gathered from qualitative sources. QSR NVIVO 10 version.

Limitations

The study examined the attitudes of public organizations and mental health professionals toward awareness campaigns, as well as the suicide prevention initiatives implemented by various government agencies and institutions. The depth of data was constrained by respondents' frequent feelings of insecurity or reluctance to share their experiences. The study's conclusions may not accurately represent the mental health conditions in rural Nepal since it was confined to the Kathmandu Metropolitan City. Although the study has limitations, such as a short data collection period and limited time spent with each respondent, it remains valuable for developing suicide prevention policies and for regional planning.

Findings and Discussion

Understanding of Suicide in Nepal

(KII with Mental Health Professional, SOS Nepal – Mr. Sagar Paudel, Psychologist)

Suicide is more common in Nepal than is generally recognized because of cultural stigma. Increased incidences are reported among young people, migrant families, women who are victims of domestic abuse, and lonely elderly people, especially in rural and high-migration areas.

Gaps in Mental Health Infrastructure

(KII with Mental Health Professional –, Psychologist)

Mr. Lama highlighted that there is no separate budget for a suicide prevention program. I also believe that heredity influences suicide. Therefore, it has become increasingly common to ask whether a family member has committed suicide before deciding to marry. People are becoming aware of the hereditary nature of suicide. He noted, "*People struggle to access even basic counseling services.*" Additionally, Gatekeeper training must be implemented across all sectors—community, institutional, and organizational—along with ongoing follow-up to maintain its effectiveness. The training equips individuals to detect early signs of mental health concerns, offer basic support, and connect people to proper care. By preparing key members to respond early, it supports timely intervention, helps break stigma, and encourages a mentally healthy and supportive environment.

- *I believe the soul within the person is suffering. The soul is not at peace. This leads to great trouble in the community after people take their lives.*
- *I believe that heredity influences suicide, making it common for people to ask about a family history of suicide before marriage, reflecting growing awareness of its genetic link.*

Community Awareness and Attitudes

(KII with NGO Worker)

MS. Gurung, Still public is not openly sharing their thought on suicide and mental health. There is still stigma and negative thoughts about suicide and mental health. They believe People who have committed suicide are due to angering a deity.

(Emphasized that, particularly in rural areas, there is still a lack of awareness regarding mental health and suicide. The majority of individuals don't know enough about mental illness and its symptoms. She added that common myths include the belief that talking about suicide encourages it and that mental illness is a spiritual or moral failure.)

Policy and Government Involvement

(KII with Mental hospital (Patan)– Mr. Suman Gurung)

Through a partnership between the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), Transcultural Psychosocial Organization Nepal (TPO-Nepal), and the World Health Organization (WHO), the National Suicide Prevention Helpline was established in Nepal in 2020. This helpline was a major stride in giving those who are having suicidal thoughts or emotional distress instant crisis intervention.

"We recognize the problem, but suicide is still not prioritized as a standalone issue in our health policies," he admitted.

Role of Education and Youth Engagement

(KII with Coordinator of College – Mr. Rabi Shrestha)

Mr. Shrestha emphasized that a lack of mental health care in college is a major factor in the fact that many adolescents experience emotional suffering in silence. "*Teachers in our region receive little to no training on mental health, and the majority of college lack qualified counselors,*" he stated. Nearly 85% of children and adolescents with mental health disorders in low- and middle-income countries do not obtain treatment, despite the fact that mental health conditions frequently start around adolescence, according to UNICEF. "*Students' academic performance and general well-being are greatly impacted by this support gap. We're not prepared to react effectively, even when we see indications of suffering,*" he continued.

- *The education system is very weak and doesn't follow the concept Paulo Freire outlined in Pedagogy of the Oppressed. The relationship between students and teachers.*
- *To prevent suicide need to provide psychosocial counselling training to increase manpower.*
- *There is no proper place for counseling those who have tried to commit suicide*
- *I think the generation gap also plays a role. The new generation is more likely to commit suicide.*

Local Level of Community Resilience

(KII with Female Community Psychosocial counselor – Ms. Rupa Rai,)

Ms. Rai highlighted several community-based programs that promote mental health and well-being at the local level. These include setting up public education campaigns on mental health difficulties, promoting peer counseling sessions, and starting self-help groups that offer a secure setting for people to support and share their stories.

She said, "*We frequently have casual conversations with young people.*" We try to listen without passing judgment and, where possible, provide assistance, even if we may not be qualified professionals. Even simply being there for someone might have an impact at times. Additionally, she emphasized the importance of building trust and fostering a sense of belonging. "*Our approach is simple but sincere. By creating open and compassionate environments, we hope to reduce stigma and empower individuals to seek help when they need it.*"

What should be done for effective suicide prevention?

The respondents' common views on effective suicide prevention are:

- Increasing awareness through media and education to lessen the stigma associated with mental health.
- Increasing community awareness program and launching mobile counseling units in community-based settings by collaborating with schools, health posts, and local governments.
- Increasing the availability of mental health services through the establishment of community counseling facilities and professional training.
- Screening for at-risk individuals in communities, health facilities, and schools to identify them early.
- Enhancing support system from family and social networks to promote social interaction and emotional fortitude.
- Creating national policy and distributing funds for initiatives that promote mental health and prevent suicide.
- Encouraging ethical reporting in the media to steer clear of damaging or upsetting coverage.
- To ensure long-lasting effects and suicide prevention, screening is insufficient; instead, interventions should be expanded to include ongoing mental health assistance, community-based counseling, follow-up treatment, and awareness campaigns.
- Strengthening the cooperation of local institutions, NGOs, and government agencies.

Barriers and challenges

There is a severe scarcity of qualified mental health specialists in Nepal, and even the most basic services are inaccessible in the majority of regions. Early diagnosis, efficient treatment, and long-term assistance for individuals in need are hampered by a workforce that is overworked and without enough training.

- Stigma and Taboos: People view mental health and suicide as shameful, which discourages candid conversations and getting treatment.
- Professional Shortage: Trained psychiatrists and counselors are in extremely short supply, particularly in rural areas.
- Limited Service Access: Outside of large cities, mental health services are nearly impossible to find and also very expensive for the financially weak people.

- Poor Integration of Health: Primary healthcare systems do not adequately integrate mental health.
- Low Public Awareness: The majority of people don't know enough about mental health issues and the warning indications of suicide.
- Lack of Mental Health Education in Schools: Students lack knowledge about mental health issues because textbooks do not cover them.
- Weak Policy Framework: There are no defined implementation strategies or a national suicide prevention strategy in Nepal.
- Teachers and frontline staff lack the necessary training to deal with mental health concerns.
- Underreporting: Accurate data is limited since suicide cases are frequently concealed or incorrectly classified.
- Social and Economic Pressures: Mental discomfort is exacerbated by poverty, migration, and domestic abuse.
- Absence of Follow-Up Care: Following an attempt, survivors hardly ever receive ongoing mental health assistance.

Focus Group Discussion

Understanding Suicide Prevention in Nepal

Participants: mental health expertise, Teachers, community workers, psychologists, and counselors

Date: 2082/01/12

Objective: To explore the perceptions, knowledge, and suggestions from the experties regarding suicide prevention in the Nepali context as well as recent decisions made by Supreme Court

Mental health experts, teachers and other professionals participated in a focus group discussion (FGD), which highlighted serious concerns about the rising suicide rates in Nepal, especially among young people. Students cited a lack of knowledge about mental health, academic stress, familial pressure, and social stigma as major contributing causes. They emphasized the importance of early education, easily accessible counseling, and qualified experts in communities and schools.

The Supreme Court of Nepal's recent order requiring the establishment of a national mental health policy that includes integrated services, free treatment, and yearly reporting was warmly received by the participants. They believed that community-based prevention and systemic change were essential to lowering suicide rates.

The group's main recommendations are:

- Implement educational programs to increase awareness of mental health issues.
- Equip parents and educators to recognize the early warning signs of suicidal thoughts and behaviors.
- Provide counseling services at all universities and schools. Reduce the stigma associated with seeking psychological assistance.

- Involve young people in awareness campaigns and peer support groups.

Conclusion

In Nepal as well as other countries, suicide has grown to be a significant social problem that affects people of all ages, from 8 to 85. It is currently among the top causes of death for young people, teenagers, and the elderly.

Social peace and family unity are highly valued in Nepali society. People frequently feel alienated after experiencing social or relational breakdowns, which can trigger suicidal thoughts. This crisis can be exacerbated by elements like dysfunctional family dynamics, even in nurturing settings like schools.

In order to tackle this issue, civil society, government organizations, and community groups must advocate for life-affirming principles and mental health awareness. Plans for preventing suicide should be created and carried out in every community while holding all parties involved accountable.

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Buddhist Economics vs. Modern Economics: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

Growing environmental concerns, widening social inequalities, and questions about the sustainability of continuous economic growth have encouraged scholars to explore alternative approaches to economics and development. Conventional economic theories, particularly classical and neoclassical economics, have long emphasized economic growth, efficiency, and individual self-interest as the primary means of improving human welfare. Although these approaches have contributed significantly to industrialization, technological innovation, and increased material prosperity, they have also been criticized for neglecting ethical values, social well-being, and environmental sustainability. In response to these concerns, Buddhist economics has emerged as an alternative perspective that places greater emphasis on moral conduct, moderation, compassion, and harmony with nature.

Despite increasing academic interest in Buddhist economics, there is still a need for a comprehensive comparison between Buddhist and traditional economic perspectives, particularly regarding their assumptions about human behavior, the purpose of economic activity, and the meaning of prosperity. This study aims to examine and compare these two economic paradigms and assess their relevance in addressing contemporary social, economic, and environmental challenges.

A qualitative research approach was employed using a descriptive and comparative design. Data were collected from secondary sources, including academic books, journal articles, policy reports, and Buddhist philosophical literature. The collected information was analysed through thematic comparison to identify the key similarities and differences between the two approaches. The analysis highlights significant differences between traditional economics and Buddhist economics in their understanding of human nature,

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economic objectives, and the meaning of prosperity. While traditional economic thought generally emphasizes growth, production, and consumption, Buddhist economics places greater importance on ethical conduct, moderation, contentment, and holistic well-being. The reviewed literature suggests that Buddhist economics offers a valuable conceptual framework for addressing contemporary concerns related to sustainability, social justice, and human flourishing.

Keywords: Buddhist economics, traditional economics, sustainable development, well-being, economic philosophy, ethical economy

Introduction

Given that the quest for material wealth has defined economics for millennia, classical and neoclassical theories emphasising efficiency, growth, and rational self-interest have profoundly impacted contemporary economic thinking. This dominant theory, often referred to as traditional or modern economics, has significantly contributed to advancing globalization and industrialization, leading to unprecedented levels of material wealth and technological progress. However, its relentless focus on measurable growth metrics such as GDP, often at the expense of environmental health and social fairness, has resulted in heightened criticism regarding its long-term viability and ethical consequences (Daly, 1996; Sen, 1999). Buddhist economics, conversely, which gained prominence through E.F. Schumacher in his influential book Small Is Beautiful (1973), offers a drastically different perspective. This study adopts a conceptual and interpretative approach, drawing upon relevant literature in economics, Buddhist philosophy, and development studies. Through critical analysis and comparative interpretation of key theoretical perspectives, the paper examines the underlying assumptions, objectives, and implications of Buddhist and traditional economic thought. By asserting that genuine wealth lies in sufficiency, non-violence, and cultivating inner peace and wisdom instead of relentless consumption, it challenges the fundamental principles of modern economics (Payutto, 1994). This paper seeks to clarify the main differences between these two economic models and to argue that Buddhist economics offers a stronger and more appealing foundation for attaining sustainable human well-being in the 21st century. It will examine the differing perspectives on human nature, the goals of economic activity, the meaning of prosperity, and the consequences for policy and societal structure.

Objective

To study the differences between Buddhist economics and modern economics.

Literature review

The growing academic interest in Buddhist economics is reflected in international scholarly gatherings such as the conference Buddhist Values and Economics: Investing in a Sustainable Future, which brought together researchers and practitioners to discuss the relationship between Buddhist values, economic development, sustainability, and human well-being (Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong & European SPES Institute, 2019). Clair Brown and Laszlo Zsolnai have assembled a review of recent research on Buddhist economics (Brown and Zsolnai 2020). Buddhist economics argues that modern economic systems often fail to balance economic growth with human welfare and environmental protection, highlighting the importance of developing more sustainable and ethical alternatives. Indiaman's community of South Korea, Sarvodaya Shramdan movement of Sri Lanka, Global Happy Index of Bhutan and self-sufficiency model of Thailand are examples of Buddhist Economics framework that prioritises human well-being, spiritual development, and environmental sustainability over the relentless pursuit of material wealth and corporate profit

The Concept of Buddhist Economics

Taken together, these examples suggest that Buddhist economics extends beyond theoretical discussion and provides a valuable lens for understanding alternative approaches to development. Although these initiatives emerged in different cultural and historical contexts, they share a common emphasis on well-being, ethical responsibility, community participation, moderation, and environmental sustainability. The literature therefore indicates that Buddhist economics offers an important perspective for rethinking development in ways that go beyond purely material measures of progress and place greater value on human flourishing and social harmony (Brown & Zsolnai, 2018; Drechsler, 2019; Payutto, 1994; Schumacher, 1973).

The Concept of Buddhist Economics

Buddhist economics offers a different way of thinking about economic life by placing human well-being, ethical values, and environmental sustainability at the heart of development. Whereas conventional economic theories often associate progress with higher levels of production, consumption, and income, Buddhist economics argues that the true purpose of economic activity is to improve people's quality of life and reduce suffering. From this perspective, economic success cannot be measured solely by material wealth; it must also consider social harmony, personal fulfilment, and the overall well-being of individuals and communities (Payutto, 1994; Schumacher, 1973; Brown & Zsolnai, 2018).

A central idea in Buddhist economics is that lasting happiness does not arise simply from accumulating more goods and wealth. Although material resources are important for meeting basic human needs, the endless pursuit of consumption may lead to dissatisfaction, social inequality, and environmental degradation. As a result, Buddhist economics encourages moderation, contentment, responsible consumption, and ethical ways of earning a living. It emphasizes the importance of balancing material needs with moral and spiritual development while remaining mindful of the impact of economic activities on society and the natural environment (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1984; Kasser, 2002; Payutto, 1994).

Discussions

Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (Sri Lanka)

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, founded by A. T. Ariyaratne in Sri Lanka, is often cited in the literature as a practical expression of Buddhist values in community development. The movement is based on the principles of self-help, voluntary labor, compassion, and collective responsibility. Rather than emphasizing individual wealth accumulation, it encourages communities to work together to improve social welfare, education, healthcare, and local infrastructure. The philosophy of Sarvodaya reflects the Buddhist belief that genuine development should enhance human dignity, social harmony, and the well-being of all members of society. According to Ariyaratne (1999), development is most meaningful when it addresses both material needs and the moral and spiritual dimensions of human life.

Gross National Happiness (Bhutan)

Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) framework represents one of the most widely recognized alternatives to conventional growth-centered development models. Instead of measuring national progress solely through economic indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), GNH incorporates broader dimensions of well-being, including psychological health, cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and good governance. The framework reflects the idea that economic growth should serve human happiness and social well-being rather than become an end in itself. Ura et al. (2012) argue that sustainable development requires balancing economic advancement with cultural, social, and environmental considerations. Consequently, GNH is frequently discussed as an example of how Buddhist-inspired values can influence national development policy.

Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (Thailand)

Thailand's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, promoted by King Bhumibol Adulyadej, advocates moderation, prudence, and self-reliance in economic decision-making. The philosophy emerged as an important development framework following the Asian financial crisis, emphasizing resilience and balanced growth over excessive consumption and dependence on external resources. Rather than pursuing unlimited economic expansion, it encourages individuals, communities, and institutions to make decisions based on reasonableness and long-term sustainability. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (2017) describes the philosophy as a pathway toward sustainable development that combines economic stability with social responsibility and environmental awareness. Scholars often note its close affinity with the principles of Buddhist economics (Sivaraksa, 2009).

Buddhist Sustainability and Ecological Ethics

Environmental responsibility occupies an important place within Buddhist thought because of its emphasis on interdependence, compassion, and non-harming. Buddhist ecological ethics encourages individuals to recognise the interconnected nature of human life and the natural world. From this perspective, environmental degradation is not merely an economic problem but also a moral concern. Sivaraksa (2009) argues that sustainable development requires a shift away from consumerism and toward lifestyles grounded in moderation and mindfulness. Similarly, Loy (2019) maintains that contemporary ecological crises are closely linked to patterns of excessive consumption and separation from nature. Buddhist ethics therefore promotes a more sustainable relationship between human societies and the environment by emphasizing responsibility, restraint, and respect for all forms of life.

The relationship between Buddhist thought and environmental sustainability has also received increasing scholarly attention. Buddhist teachings emphasize interconnectedness and non-harming, encouraging a respectful relationship between human beings and the natural world. From this perspective, environmental problems are not only technical or economic challenges but also ethical concerns. Scholars such as Sivaraksa (2009) and Loy (2019) argue that Buddhist values can contribute to more sustainable patterns of living by promoting mindfulness, restraint, and responsibility toward future generations.

These examples are grounded in a broader framework of Buddhist economics, which challenges the assumption that economic success should be measured solely through production, consumption, and wealth accumulation. Schumacher (1973) was among the first scholars to articulate this perspective in modern economic discourse, arguing that economics should serve human well-being rather than treat individuals merely as consumers and producers. Building on this foundation, Payutto (1994) emphasized that economic activities should contribute to reducing suffering and fostering holistic well-being. More recently, Brown and Zsolnai (2018) have described Buddhist economics as an alternative paradigm that integrates ethical values, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability into economic decision-making. Together, these perspectives suggest that development should be evaluated not only by material prosperity but also by its contribution to human flourishing and social harmony.

The intellectual foundation of Buddhist economics was first articulated systematically by Schumacher (1973), who argued that economics should focus on human well-being rather than the endless pursuit of production and consumption. Building upon Buddhist teachings, Payutto (1994) emphasised that economic activity should contribute to the reduction of suffering and the cultivation of individual and collective well-being. In this view, wealth is valuable only when it supports a meaningful and balanced life. More recently, Brown and Zsolnai (2018) have described Buddhist economics as an alternative economic paradigm that prioritizes ethical conduct, moderation, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability. Together, these scholars present Buddhist economics as a framework that challenges purely material definitions of prosperity and advocates a more holistic understanding of development.

The practical relevance of Buddhist economics is frequently highlighted in the scholarly literature through various development initiatives and policy frameworks. The cases of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka, Gross National Happiness in Bhutan, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in Thailand, and the Indraman ecological movement in South Korea are often discussed as illustrations of principles associated with Buddhist economics. Although these initiatives emerged in different historical, cultural, and political contexts, scholars often cite them as examples of approaches that emphasise human well-being, community participation, ethical responsibility, and environmental sustainability alongside economic considerations.

Modern Economics

Several foundational principles characterize modern economics:

There are finite resources available in nature, while the number of humans consuming them is infinite, leading to the issue of scarcity. People are presumed to be "rational economic agents" striving to maximize their satisfaction through optimal allocation of these limited resources (Becker, 1976). Economic growth, often gauged by Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is regarded as the main objective. It is thought that growth can reduce poverty, enhance living conditions, and provide answers to various social problems. By integrating conventional economic knowledge with Buddhist ideas, Buddhist economics prioritizes sustainability, ethical living, and human welfare over profit maximization. This presents a noteworthy alternative to the prevailing growth-focused economic models. In a society where external (global) influences are increasingly perceived as more of a threat than a solution, interest in Buddhist economics has risen. The Buddhist economic model acknowledges the successes and lessons of industrial and post-industrial practices while also embodying the principles of agricultural production. It emphasizes environmental conservation, both individual and social development, and, most importantly, spiritual growth. The most viable method to achieve these aims seems to be through increasing agricultural productivity specifically. Currently, the world operates under free market policies characterised by unhealthy competition and driven by rivalry. The concept of the "invisible hand" is viewed as the most effective way for resources to be allocated and for wealth to be generated. Efficiency, frequently defined as Pareto optimality, remains a fundamental principle. The emphasis is primarily on individual actors and their choices, with societal welfare often perceived as the sum of individual satisfactions. Environmental damage and social inequality are frequently regarded as "externalities unintended consequences that can potentially be remedied through market forces or governmental action rather than being seen as intrinsic flaws within the system. The basic belief is that human well-being correlates directly with material wealth and consumption. The objective is to increase production and consumption, operating under the assumption that this will lead to higher happiness and societal advancement.

Buddhist Economics: Sufficiency, Non-Harm, and Well-being

Buddhist economics fundamentally differs by prioritizing ethical and spiritual values at its center: Sufficiency (*Appicchenta)*: Rather than pursuing infinite desires, Buddhist economics highlights the concept of "sufficiency" or "the middle path." It acknowledges that excessive material cravings can lead to suffering and promotes consuming only what is essential for a dignified existence, thus mitigating craving and attachment (Schumacher, 1973). This approach is not about austerity for its own sake, but rather a thoughtful method of consumption that frees up time and energy for more elevated pursuits.

Non-Harm (*Ahimsa*): The tenet of non-harmfulness applies to all living beings and the environment. Economic activities should not exploit nature or inflict suffering on others. This entails sustainable management of resources, ethical production methods, and equitable labor practices (Payutto, 1994). Interconnectedness (*Paticcasamuppada*): Buddhist philosophy acknowledges the deep interconnectedness of all things. Economic choices are not isolated instances; they create ripple effects throughout society and the ecosystem. This comprehensive viewpoint encourages policies that take into account the long-term effects on both the community and the environment. Right Livelihood (*Samma Ajiva*): A fundamental aspect of the Noble Eightfold Path, right livelihood means earning a living in a manner that does not cause harm to oneself or others. This excludes professions that involve weapons, slavery, poisons, or intoxicating substances, and encourages careers that are beneficial to society (Bodhi, 1984). Well-being (Sukha): The ultimate goal is not material riches but true well-being, which includes physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects. Economic activity serves as a means to attain this comprehensive well-being, rather than being an end in itself.

In summary, Buddhist economics aims to combine economic activities with ethical principles, striving for a system that promotes inner tranquillity, social cohesion, and ecological balance.

Buddhist Economics

The difference between modern economics and Buddhist economics is based on the core principles leading to vastly different implications for policy, societal structure, and the definition of progress. This section argues for the superiority of Buddhist economics in several critical areas.

Environmental Sustainability

The ceaseless quest for growth in contemporary economics and the view of nature as an external resource have led to extraordinary environmental harm, climate change, and a decline in biodiversity (Meadows et al., 1972; Stern, 2007). The assumption that technological advancements will invariably resolve resource limitations has frequently resulted in a diminished urgency in tackling environmental emergencies. Buddhist economics, on the other hand, is fundamentally ecological. The principle of avoiding harm and recognising interconnectedness naturally results in sustainable methods. If consumption is based on sufficiency and production on non-harm, then resource depletion and pollution are reduced. The planet is viewed not just as a set of resources to be used, but as a vibrant system deserving of respect and care (Macy, 1991). This intrinsic ecological principle positions Buddhist economics as fundamentally better suited to tackle the global environmental crisis compared to growth-focused modern economics. 3.2 Disparities in Income and Wealth Contemporary economics, especially its laissez-faire forms, frequently accepts considerable income and wealth disparities, claiming that it is a natural result of market dynamics and offers motivation for innovation and efficiency. Although certain theories indicate a trickle-down impact, growing evidence reveals escalating inequalities leading to harmful social effects (Piketty, 2014). Buddhist economics, prioritizing compassion and collective well-being, naturally dissuades vast wealth accumulation and poverty. The ideas of kindness and reciprocal assistance are fundamental. Though not directly endorsing complete equality, it supports initiatives and actions that alleviate pain and guarantee essential needs for everyone. This would probably entail a fairer allocation of resources and chances, standing in stark contrast to the frequently accepted inequalities in contemporary systems.

Genuine Human Well-being vs. Material Prosperity

The connection between increasing GDP and genuine human happiness noticeably diminishes after a particular point (Easterlin, 1974). Modern economics often associates material wealth with well-being, leading to a focus on consumption as a source of satisfaction. However, this often results in the "hedonic treadmill," where people continually chase more possessions without attaining lasting joy (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Buddhist economics expresses well-being in a broader, more inclusive way. It understands that true happiness arises from personal development, meaningful relationships, and supporting the welfare of others, rather than just from obtaining material goods. Encouraging sufficiency and ethical living inspires individuals to find contentment beyond endless accumulation, potentially leading to increased overall life satisfaction and reduced psychological stress associated with consumerism (Kasser, 2002).

Ethical Considerations: Responsibility

Furthermore, the ethical foundations of the two paradigms differ considerably. In mainstream economics, ethical considerations are often treated as separate from economic analysis, which focuses on efficiency, market behavior, and profit maximization. Buddhist economics integrates ethical values directly into economic decision-making. Principles such as compassion, non-violence, generosity, and responsibility guide production, consumption, and distribution processes. Economic actions are evaluated not only by their financial outcomes but also by their effects on human welfare and the environment (Guruge, 2008).

Modern economics, especially in its purely neoclassical form, often separates ethics from economic behaviors. Businesses are primarily seen as entities focused on boosting shareholder profits while adhering to legal constraints. When discussed, ethical issues are often viewed as less important or as a means to improve public image. Buddhist economics deeply links ethical values with economic behaviours. The concept of Right Livelihood pertains to businesses, indicating that companies should operate in ways that benefit society and the environment, rather than solely focusing on their shareholders. This structure would naturally foster improved corporate social responsibility, fair labor practices, ethical sourcing, and a greater emphasis on stakeholder welfare instead of just on profits (Laszlo & Krippner, 1998)

Understanding economic life and human well-being

Modern economics and Buddhist economics represent two fundamentally different approaches to understanding economic life and human well-being. Modern economics is largely based on the assumption that individuals act rationally to maximize their self-interest and material utility. Economic success is typically measured through indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), income growth, productivity, and consumption levels. According to scholars of mainstream economics, higher production and consumption are generally regarded as signs of progress and prosperity. As a result, economic growth becomes a central objective of policy and development efforts (Ertman, 2017).

In contrast, Buddhist economics places human well-being rather than material wealth at the center of economic activity. Drawing on Buddhist principles such as compassion, non-attachment, and the reduction of suffering, Buddhist economics argues that economic systems should serve the holistic development of individuals and communities. Rather than encouraging unlimited consumption, it promotes moderation and sufficiency. As Guruge (2008) explains, genuine happiness does not arise from the endless accumulation of material goods but from ethical conduct, contentment, and harmonious relationships with others and nature.

Consumption

Another important difference concerns the purpose of consumption. In modern economics, consumer spending is often viewed as a driver of economic growth, and increased consumption is generally considered beneficial. The assumption is that individuals become better off when they have access to more goods and services. Buddhist economics challenges this view by arguing that excessive consumption can generate dissatisfaction, environmental degradation, and social imbalance. Instead, it advocates mindful consumption that satisfies genuine needs while avoiding waste and unnecessary desires (Guruge, 2008). From this perspective, economic activities should contribute to long-term well-being rather than merely increasing material possessions.

Understanding of work

The two approaches also differ significantly in their understanding of work. Modern economics tends to regard labor primarily as a factor of production and a means of generating income. The value of work is often assessed according to its contribution to productivity and economic output. Buddhist economics, however, views work as an opportunity for personal development, creativity, and service to society. Schumacher argued that meaningful work enables individuals to cultivate their abilities, develop self-respect, and contribute positively to their communities (Schumacher, 5.81973). Thus, work should not merely produce goods but also foster human growth and dignity.

Sustainability

Environmental sustainability represents another major point of contrast. Modern economic systems have often prioritized industrial expansion and resource exploitation to achieve growth. Although environmental concerns have gained increasing attention in recent decades, they are frequently treated as external issues that can be addressed separately from economic objectives. Buddhist economics adopts a different perspective by emphasizing the interconnectedness of all forms of life. Natural resources are regarded as precious and finite, requiring careful and responsible use. The philosophy of sufficiency economy developed in Thailand similarly stresses moderation, resilience, and sustainable resource management as essential components of development (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2017).

Ultimately, modern economics and Buddhist economics pursue different visions of development. Modern economics seeks to maximize wealth, production, and economic efficiency, assuming that these will lead to improved living standards. Buddhist economics, on the other hand, seeks to maximize well-being while minimizing suffering. It encourages a balanced way of life based on contentment, social harmony, ethical conduct, and ecological sustainability. As scholars such as Zsolnai have argued, Buddhist economics offers an alternative paradigm that addresses many of the social and environmental challenges created by growth-oriented economic systems, making it increasingly relevant in the contemporary world (Zsolnai, 2011).

Challenges to Buddhist Economics

While presenting an interesting alternative, Buddhist economics faces significant challenges in a globalized, capitalist setting. How can the concepts of sufficiency and non-harm be implemented on a national or global scale, especially in diverse cultural contexts and competitive markets? GDP does not serve as the primary indicator of progress. What additional indicators of well-being and sustainability could be widely acknowledged and precisely assessed? (e.g., Gross National Happiness, Human Development Index, Genuine Progress Indicator). Transitioning from a growth-centered economy to one aimed at sufficiency would necessitate significant systemic adjustments, probably encountering resistance from entrenched interests. Critics might argue that a focus on sufficiency could impede innovation and economic progress, particularly in developing nations that are striving for essential material improvements. However, advocates would argue that innovation will shift towards sustainable technologies and social solutions rather than being exclusively centered on consumption. These challenges highlight the need for careful consideration and adaptable methods to integrate Buddhist economic principles into contemporary society. It’s not about rejecting all elements of modern economic activities but rather reorienting its goals and core principles.

Conclusion

This study has explored the key differences between traditional economics and Buddhist economics, focusing on their underlying assumptions, goals, and approaches to development. Traditional economic thought has played a major role in promoting industrialization, technological progress, and improvements in material living standards. However, growing concerns about environmental degradation, social inequality, and the limitations of growth-centred development have led scholars to question whether economic progress should be measured solely through increases in production, income, and consumption.

Buddhist economics offers an alternative perspective by placing human well-being, ethical responsibility, and environmental sustainability at the center of economic life. Rather than treating economic growth as an end in itself, it views the economy as a means of supporting a balanced and meaningful life. Concepts such as moderation, contentment, compassion, and interconnectedness encourage a broader understanding of prosperity that extends beyond material wealth.

The literature reviewed in this study suggests that these principles are reflected in several development initiatives and policy frameworks, including the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka, Gross National Happiness in Bhutan, and Thailand's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Although these examples emerged in different social and cultural contexts, they share a common emphasis on human welfare, community participation, ethical values, and sustainable development. They demonstrate that alternative ways of thinking about economic progress have been explored in both theory and practice.

As a qualitative and conceptual study based on the interpretation of existing literature, this research does not seek to determine whether Buddhist economics should replace conventional economic systems. Instead, it highlights the value of Buddhist economic thought as a framework for critically examining contemporary development challenges. In a world facing increasing environmental pressures, persistent inequalities, and concerns about the quality of human well-being, Buddhist economics provides important insights into how economic activities might be aligned more closely with social harmony, ecological balance, and the broader goal of human flourishing.

Ultimately, the significance of Buddhist economics lies not only in its critique of conventional economic assumptions but also in its contribution to ongoing discussions about creating a more sustainable, ethical, and human-centered approach to development in the twenty-first century.

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From Educators to Leaders: The Role of Association of Preschool Educators Nepal in Women's Leadership Empowerment

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Abstract

Empowerment of women and leadership is a burning issues emerged in this era. It is almost impossible to empower and develop their capacity with a casual effort. Association of Preschool Educators Nepal (APEN) has provided orgainized and systematic effort which APEN has carried out for seven yerars. This study explores the role played by the APEN to enhance the level of women empowerment, leadership development and promoting gender equality in the field of Earely Childhood Development (ECD). This paper explores the role of APEN in leadership development among women ECD educators and opportunity for professional growth among the Educators. This paper is based on the qualitative study among women school leader. Semi-structured interview, and observation is conducted among women leaders who are the founder and principals of Montessori based ECD schools under the umbrella organization of APEN in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur. Seven women principals of ECD centers are choosen to get rich information. This paper hightlights the intervention of APEN through leadership conferences, mentorship training, social interaction and networking, school management training, opportunity to participate in policy adocacy and collaboration with local government have empowered and transformed female preschools' educators into leaders. Its effort has strengthen women to challange the existing social barriers and develop as a prefessional personality. It promotes the inclusive education system, gender equality and fosters holistic development of all.

Keywords: social networking, leadership, skill development, women empowerment, women educators,

Introduction

Women empowerment and leadership skill development is the burning issue in the world in the middle of the 21st century. Women are determined for the best care provider for the children of early age sector. The empowerment of women lead to enhanced early child development outcomes. (Delbiso, 2024). Similarly, in context of Nepal, female are considered as the care providers, and facilitators as well. Due to global transforming of the social, political, and economic sphere participation of women has been increasing every year that results their empowerment (Gautam, 2020). Nowadays women are preforming a leading role in the field of early childhood education and development in Nepal. Their active involvement, dedication, and leadership have significantly contributed to improving the quality of education, nurturing environments, and overall child development at the foundational level. There are various organizations that are actively working to promote and support women's empowerment. Such institutions are performing great roles in the world to bring the changes in the working capability of women in every sector. According to (Kabeer, 1999) women empowerment is about to make able individual women to take the choices and convert the choices into desired outcomes (interested result) in their field. Professional organizations provide opportunities and platforms for advancement, networking, and capacity building for women educators (Stromquist, 2015). In this rigards, Association of Preschool Educators Nepal (APEN) is one of the leading organization which is working in the field of Early Childhood Development (ECD).

Association of Preschool Educators Nepal (APEN) is an established organization constituting of different Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers, Montessori Kindergarten, preschools etc. in Nepal since 2017 AD. APEN organizes various programs for children under age five years old where they share the common stage to perform their level of physical development, cultural development, social and emotional development through the act, paly, dance, music and games etc. side by side APEN has formed different municipal unit of organization which is known as APEN local committee of municipality in all the local levels in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and lalitpur districts. These committees are mostly led by women principals as a local committee president, who are the owner of Kindergarten and Montessori based preschools in the valley. APEN has provided opportunity to explore the women leadership skill for women entrepreneurs in ECD sectors through seminars, motivations trainings, leadership trainings and various interactions in intellectual level. APEN has significant role in leadership development of women and their empowerment in ECD sector in Nepal.

In the context of Nepal, still patriarchy play role in the society regarding leadership, decision making and nurturing of the children where gender disparities exist, in this condition education mostly plays a vital role for women empowerment (UNESCO, 2021). Organizations such as APEN plays crucial roles to develop the leadership skill for women principals in pre-schools enhance the ability to provide better nurturing of the early childhood, maintaining public relations and public leadership skills by addressing all kinds of barriers. According to (Shrestha et al., 2023) involvement of women in organizations enhance the leadership skills, pedagogical capacities and self-trust.

Leadership capacity among the women is major aspect of empowerment which enhances the capacity of women population to lead the institution, family and society and also that helps to strengthen the organization they are leading. Research of Lumby and Coleman (2007) explores that capacity enhancement of women leadership doesn't promote only their personal qualities; it strengthens their ability to operate the institutions they are leading. In this sense, APEN's women leaders are definitely promoting their institutions, ECD kindergartens, Preschools with the good quality of leadership. APEN contributes largely to foster the culture of leadership transformation through the various events and functions i.e. orientations, seminars, conferences, trainings etc. for its member principals of Preschools and aligning the international framework of sustainable development goals on gender equality, quality education and leadership empowerment etc.

Career advancement is another space where APEN plays vital role to impart the knowledge and skill among the leaders organizationally. APEN imagines the well sustained preschools in Nepal through the leadership of well-equipped leadership skill, knowledge through effective program intervention. Suitable workforce development programs, as written by Gusky (2002), are very important for educator's performance on effective service delivery for getting job satisfaction. APEN's orientation on Early Childhood Education And Development (ECED), trainings on Government's policy on ECD, Workshops on Autism Care, Conferences on quality childhood education and cultural development among the children, Leadership trainings and workshops, Early childhood classroom management, etc. to women educators to enhance their confidence which contributes their career advancement and supports to strengthen their institutions. According to Peiser et al., (2018) Mentorship supports clear pathway guidance for women to enhance their professional and individual career qualities. It also helps to understand their lifetime career challenges. APEN's mentorship is helping women leaders of preschools in Nepal for their personal and professional growth, understanding the challenges to operate their businesses, maintaining public relations, network expansion etc.

The role of APEN to promote the women leadership and professionalism recognition is highly appreciable. APEN organized first APEN dynamic leader award 2021 in order to honor all the female principals of preschools who are amazingly performing their best in the sector of child development in Nepal. More than 300 women educators were honored in the presence of former Education Minister Mr. Debendra Paudel. This was a historic initiation by APEN to maintain gender equity and providing the recognition of preschool educators in their sector. Such leadership practice brings the positive change in policy which helps to promote sustainable child development. Study by (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010) point out that leadership practice is very crucial aspects for upbringing education systems way forward to values and sustainable change. According to (Bipath et al., 2021) Leadership plays the most vibrant role in improving and bringing sustaining quality for Early Childhood Development (ECD) in the local context of South Africa.

Professional organizations all over the world have presented their capacity to strengthen the gender equality by the means of advocacy, policy lobbying, providing the opportunities for leadership, developing professional skills, enhancing working abilities of the women for society involvement. According to (Rao & Kelleher, 2003) focuses on the role of international organizations for breaking the traditional structures that creates barrier for gender equality providing the inclusive training, advocacy, and enhancing the leadership skill in women. Similarly, (Jung & O'Brien, 2019) explored that organizations that focus on gender equality able to change the norms and values of the society by providing sustained intervention in order to limit the biases through education campaign.

Self-Employed women Association (SEWA) in south Asia has played a deeper role in women mobilization to achieve sustainability in gaining full access to resources, getting financial independence and freedom and leadership opportunities (Benni & Barkataky, 2018). These kinds of efforts unfold the significance of grassroots level women involvement in upbringing gender equality. APEN provides opportunity for women leaders to negotiate on the policy formation, spaces for the advocacy, participation for the collaboration local government education departments etc. by this means they are able to handle challenges collectively.

The role of organization in promoting leadership skills in advocacy for policy reform that promotes gender equality cannot be overstated. The study of (Hunt et al., 2018) unfolds that the gender inclusion in policy report better outcomes for maintaining gender equality. In Nepal, APEN's advocacy efforts have played significant roles to recognize female education leaders and organizational leaders as ECD educators and leaders. This relates to the findings of (Gouws, 2017) who emphasized for the role of organization playing crucial roles in influencing policy formation and motivating women in patriarchal society. Another vital of aspect of APEN is collaboration between the APEN and local governments. According to (Bin et al., 2022), cooperation among local governments and organizations is a key to achieve the gender equality through the various child development and women empowerment programs.

Objectives of the Study

As general objectives this paper aims to assess the role of professional organization APEN that plays the role and provides opportunity for women educator in ECD sector to establish their leadership in organization. This paper helps to discover unlimited opportunity provided by organizations for the leadership and quality improvement in ECD practitioners in Nepal. This paper explores the Professionalism growth is another vital achievement for the ECD educators through APEN's initiations. However there are some specific objectives of this study.

a) To examine the role of APEN in leadership development among women ECD educators
b) To assess the opportunity for professional growth among the Educators in APEN.

Significance of the Study

The role of professional organizations like Association of preschool educators Nepal (APEN) for promoting gender equality and skill development among the females' principals, founders and teachers facilitators etc. are the targeted group of this study. APEN provides the through various intervention programs, interactions, advocacy with both online and physical presence. Women involvement as a leader in the organization itself has played the greater role in bringing gender equality in the Nepalese educated female society. This study explores the unlimited roles of organization in overall professionalism development among female educators in ECD sectors.

Delimitations of the study

The study can be limited in the certain geographical area that may bring the challenges for the generalizing globally. In this study as a respondents founder principal are planned who are actively participating in the origination as a leader. This number can be limited as I planned to engage more than 200 principals. Time limitations can be occurred, because there is very limited to visit all over Nepal so mostly study in the valley including Kathmandu Bhaktapur and lalitpur districts.

Research Methodology

Study Context

Women's empowerment is not possible with the efforts of anyone alone. It is not fulfilled only by someone's hidden desire or desire. Women empowerment requires organized and meaningful efforts or focus of responsiveness from researcher, governments and private instititions (Purnamawati & Utama, 2019). Ensuring equal rights and oppertunities to women led to empower them (Qaiser et al., 2023). This study was concentrated to explore how the Association of Preschool Educators Nepal (APEN) helps women educators interchange into leadership positions.This study was based on the qualitative study among women school leader.

Study area

Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur district of Nepal has been selected as the study area where APEN has been committed to strengthening the capacity and quality of the school leader of pre-schools since last seven years. These three districts are highly urban areas where more than 200 ECD preschools are in function for the early childhood development and education under the organizational structure of APEN. Most of the respondants were females.

Participation

This study was based on in-depth interviews with informants. To get rich information seven women school leaders running Montessori based preschools in study area were selected. Female founders or principals from APEN member preschools were included as participant for this study.

Sample Size and Sampling procedure

The sample consists of seven women leaders from Montessori-based preschools in the valley who are members of APEN and selected leaders in the organization. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, ensuring that they have direct involvement with APEN's initiatives and represent diverse leadership trajectories. These respondents were taken because they were involved directly in their ECD center as a leader principal and in Apen also as a leader. They were involved in the various leadership workshops and trainings initiated by APEN central committee and local bodies.

Data collection tools and analysis procedure

The open-ended semi-structured checklists were prepared before the interview. Some leading questions along with the probing questions were used to get thick qualitative information during the unstructured interview.

Individual semi-structured interviews and participant observation were taken as the main tools for data collection. In-depth-interviews were accompanied to gather detailed information of their professional journeys and role of APEN for empowerment and leadership. This method provides allow participant to explain their experiences, flexibility to investigation deeper into specific aspects of their experiences. (Knott et al., 2022). In addition to the interview, participant observations were carried out at their work place. This study process was ongoing since last three years where observer was involved for the participant observation where female leaders were collaborating with the local government, education bodies and organized collective sports program for ECD kids. Their public speaking and advocacy activities were observed continuously.

Ethical Considerations

We explicitly informed our research participants that their answers would be utilized solely for informational reasons in order to address ethical concerns. During the data gathering process, the respondents' freedom and personal rights were, also upheld. Pseudonyms such as Participant A, Participant B, Participant C, and Participant D and so on......... are used to protect respondents' confidentiality throughout the data processing process. An interview with a sample of respondents was used to cross-check the information supplied by the respondents and inform the member check. With their consent, the interviews were taped, transcribed, and re-interviewed to confirm their story prior to final writing. The coding and decoding process was conducted to analyze and interpret the data in order to qualify the audience for credibility. The researcher must take into account "transcription," "triangulation," "member checking," and "methodical coding" and "decoding" in order to conduct rigorous and trustworthy qualitative study (Gunawan, 2015)

Data Analysis Proccedures

The collected data through interview and observation were codded manually in order to analysis of data. To find frequent themes and patterns, the data were subjected to thematic analysis which generally covers rich descriptive information (Naeem et al., 2020).

Result and Discussion

After the transcription and analysis of data, following different themes have been emerged. Among the themes emerged such as leadership development, social networks, gender equality professional skill development were analyzed and discussed below.

Role of APEN in Leadership Development among Women Principals:

Providing capacity-building training tailored to women in leadership roles, enhancing confidence, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. Offering mentorship programs where experienced women leaders guide emerging principals. Organizing leadership conferences and Leadership is a highly important and impactful phenomenon, closely linked to the success of teams and organizations. Leadership enhances performance and improves quality of life. International workshops led by APEN exposed women principals to international best practices in preschool management. Encouraging participation in policy dialogues, empowering women to have a voice in educational reforms. APEN can generate a platform or opportunity to explore and enhance the skills. For example an institution can equip principals with the knowledge of using AI. One of the respondents A opines that,

> *APEN is a dynamic umbrella organization that plays a significant role not only in the holistic development of preschool children but also in fostering leadership among female principals. By uniting schools scattered across various locations.......... APEN regularly organizes training sessions, seminars, discussions, and workshops focused on empowering women in leadership. These efforts aim to encourage female principals to take on stronger and more effective leadership roles.*

Leadership is an extremely key and impactful phenomenon. It is closely related to the success of teamwork and organizations. A good leadership develops the capacity of participants, it transform performance and finally, improves the quality of life (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005).

Social Networks for Women Principals, Teachers, and Leaders:

Regular forums, meet-ups, and online groups where female principals and educators can share experiences, challenges, and resources. Collaborative initiatives and exchange programs among preschools, enhancing peer learning and mutual support. Annual summits and networking events that build bonds and open opportunities for collaboration. This social networking reduces isolation, especially for women working preschools. In this regards, respondent B express that,

> *Before I became involved with APEN, I was feeling lonely while operating my institution. We were all working in our own separate worlds facing similar challenges but with no support system in need. Joining APEN changed everything for me. Through this organization, I had the chance to meet and connect with fellow principals, teachers, and staff from other preschools. APEN brought us together people from different corners into a unified network where we could share ideas, discuss common issues, and support one another. I had low confident level in public speaking, and felt I was lack with the knowledge of government policy but when I joined to this circle I am well confidence to address the issues with parents, government bodies and other stake holders.*

Similarly Respondent E responds that "They regularly organized training programs, workshops, and seminars that didn't just focus on educational practices but also emphasized leadership development, especially for women like me. The environment they created was positive and cooperative". Whereas another respondent F urged that "after joining the APEN, I started to feel more confident, not just as a principal, but as a leader. My network grew, and my perspective widened. In fact, it provides opportunities to connect with local and national leaders".

Social networks are constructed process led by the forms of social network. It needs a significant social support (Rand et al., 2011). APEN as an umbrella can create a good profit generating platform of social media where principals can promote advertise and gain audience in a minimum cost. It has created a lot of exposure in and out of country if we can connect with experts throughout the world.

Gender Equality:

Advocating for equal representation of women in educational leadership and decision-making bodies. Highlighting women's achievements in preschool education to inspire others and challenge gender stereotypes. APEN has conducted gender-sensitization workshops to empower both men and women to challenge biases within the educational system. Respondent B opines that,

> *In a country like ours, where patriarchal mindsets still dominate, the success of women-led Montessori schools in Nepal stands as a strong example that women can lead with courage, resilience, and confidence. Currently, around 99% of*

> *investment and leadership in Nepal's Montessori education sector is held by women. As a member of APEN, I have personally experienced how the organization plays a vital role in enhancing women's leadership. The leadership development, gender rights, and capacity-building trainings regularly organized by APEN have significantly contributed to increasing women's access to gender equality. These opportunities have not only empowered female principals but have also enabled them to challenge traditional gender roles and lead effectively in their communities. As I elected as president of APEN local body, I got high value in my family. My family members started to support me when I join to various programs organized by APEN. My roles in decision making in the family increased because I am a leader of leaders.*

Gender equality is a very crucial matter. Women in Nepal are educating but within a very limited cities. We see a huge difference of social discrimination and inequality in the cities and villages (Gupta et al., 2021). APEN has reached to some such places where women needs their motivation as well as support to understand their rights, value and skills Which helped them to minimize the inequality of gender biasness in our country.

Professional Skill Development among Female Principals and Stakeholders:

Professional skill development is very significant for female school leader to lead school effectively. Duel career or of female, lack of support, gender bias and many more challenges may face female school leader (Webb & Macdonald, 2007).APEN helped to grow professional skills among in different ways. Such as skill development training, leadership training, training related to school management which really help to Empower Preschool Educators Another, respondent C noted that,

> *APEN, as an umbrella organization for preschools in Nepal, has played a pivotal role in enhancing women's leadership and professional development. Through its support for safe investment, APEN has helped women in the preschool sector develop greater confidence, fearlessness, and professional competence, enabling them to assume leadership roles more effectively.*

For professional development, APEN has conducted training on Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), child psychology, inclusive teaching, classroom management, and digital literacy. Further, it has linked educators with national and international experts for exposure to global trends and innovations. Similarly, offering certification courses and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities, increasing employability and performance standards. Promoting research, publication, and action-based learning, encouraging female leaders to become thought leaders in their field

Conclusion

Empowerment and leadership development of women educators is a cornerstone to bring institutional transformation, gender equality and leadership quality enhancement that helps to achieve the sustainable societal development. This article explores the role of APEN for the achievement of those objectives by fostering leadership skill training, workshops and providing leadership opportunities in the various organizational levels for women educators. APEN has secured a legend position for the quality development of ECD centers in Nepal.

The steps undertaken by APEN is not only enhancing the leadership skills but also bringing the changes in the holistic developmental activities in the ECD level children through sharing and caring activities among the preschools. It plays pivotal roles for the social networking of women principals and founders where they can share their institutional and personal problems. It provides equal opportunities for all genders to participate as a leader from marginalized community as well. Most of the founders are women in Nepalese ECD centers, so APEN provides leadership opportunities for women in all the levels of organization where they can easily enhance their leadership skills, public speaking, negotiation skills which help to maintain gender equality.

Every organizational function has high challenges in women society. Time limitations for the women in Nepalese society is higher than the male. Limitations in the sources, times and existed inequalities in the society hinders APEN's mission but also rather this problems APEN is driving its mission towards the success.

In conclusion, this study explores the APEN's major roles in driving the women educators to leaders through leadership empowerment that helps to bring the gender equality in society. Empowering educators, APEN initiates to promote the all-round development of Early-childhood in Nepal. It promotes the inclusive education system, gender equality and fosters holistic development of all.

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Understanding Saving Culture Among Youth: The Statistical approach

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Abstract

In present age of increasing financial activities in all dimension of daily life, saving becomes a vital component of financial well – being. This study is designed to examine the relationship between financial socialization, saving habits, and financial literacy among young people. Depending on important theories and past studies, it looks how peers, attitudes, and family status affect saving culture and early socialization affects financial decisions. To enhance the younger generation's habit of saving culture, they should get knowledge about all the dimension of financial area. By using certain statistical tools, we can understand the trend of the saving behavior of youth. This study also focusses on the impact of various financial factors on saving culture and trend of the people specially on educated youth.

Key words: financial activities, financial commitments, financial stability, pivotal role, Saving Culture.

Introduction

The increase in use of technology in financial transaction by the use of embedded technology, Saving has created a significant challenge in youth of modern society. Financial management and decision of people differ from one another, some individuals and families have little knowledge or skill to handle the financial decisions like purchasing the assets, short term saving, retirement savings, borrowing and consumption (Dangol & Maharjan, 2018). Financial literacy improves the significant impact on an individual's financial planning which cultivates the strong saving culture. Improving a saving culture allows individuals to make better financial commitments and decision regarding financial involvements and which intern secure their future. Knowledge about various dimension of financial activities improves saving culture and enables individuals to make correct and effective financial decisions. This knowledge helps young people to handle complex financial concepts and analyze financial data effectively. Financial knowledge, Parent’s socialization and Peer influences plays a significant role on saving culture of youth (Kadir et al., 2020).

Financial culture is strongly influenced by financial literacy, which includes practices such as personal budget planning in the early days of fiscal year, timely bill payments, monitoring expenses, and saving habits. Saving culture can be defined as the part of disposable income that is remained after consumption and is instead saved or invested for future (Blades and Sturm, 1982). Financial socialization is the process of acquiring financial skills, attitudes, knowledge, and cultures through intuition and interactions with vital socialization agents, such as workplaces, schools, and parents. Consumer socialization theory illustrates a key framework for recognizing financial socialization agents and impact of these agents on of today’s youth. This theory also emphases the role of financial socialization, which involves the initial development of financial values or attitudes and skills that may have limited immediate use but are vital in adulthood (Hess & Torney, 1967). Parents with financial knowledge are the initial agents of financial socialization during childhood. However, other factors such as peer groups and media, also play a significant role. Social context that includes family, marketing institutions, peers, and mass media plays a significant role for financial socialization. Parents financial practices plays a primary agent, while peers act as catalyst to financial practices to youth, and advertising and mass media contribute as a source of consumption and material values (John, 1999).

Familiar with financial activities generate the fusion of skills, attitudes and knowledge necessary for significant financial decision. Gender differences often observed in financial socialization with families adopting separate strategies for boys and girls. For example, girls may be kept dependent financially and excluded from financial matters, unlike boys who are more likely to interact in financial discussions. As a result, son and daughter may acquire distinct financial knowledges, shaping their financial activities differently (Newcomb & Rabow, 1999).

Statement of the problem

In Nepal, there is a lack of data on how the younger generation is increasingly adopting reckless spending habits. Compared to older generations, who tend to have a more conservative approach to money, the youth appear to place less value on financial resources. Due to significant increasing standard of living in Nepal, young people now practicing greater financial freedom to make their own consumption habits. This has resulted in remarkable lifestyle changes and shifting spending trends. Most of youth displays a short - term trend and are often unfamiliar from real world practices, raising questions about their ability to handle financial scenario effectively. There is limited research in Nepal exploring the financial hurdles faced by youth, particularly in relation to financial knowledge. Many students are compelled to take up part-time jobs to finance their education. Some even drop out of college because they cannot afford tuition fees and other costs. It is common for students to borrow money from friends for personal expenses or reduce their living costs to manage financial constraints. While an improved standard of living enables families to provide better opportunities for their children, young people with limited family financial support are more likely to experience financial hardships.

No studies have been conducted in Nepal to evaluate how families support their children during times of financial difficulty. A family's financial background greatly influences a youth's financial socialization experience and access to resources. Family income is a critical factor affecting students' financial cultures and decisions. Usually, youth from poor families often face significant financial crisis particularly in study period. Financial activities such as excessive spending, lack of proper planning, and insufficient savings are the leading activities to financial crisis in daily life.

Rigorous research work has been conducted internationally on youth saving habits; there is very few works in the context of Nepal. This gap emphasis the need of research to examine these issues and explore the significant determinants of youth saving habits.

i. What is the role of parental factors in shaping the saving culture of youth?
ii. How do peer factors influence the saving culture of youth?

Objectives of the study

The principal objective of this study is to explore the saving culture of youth in Nepal and to identify the main factors that influence it. More Specifically, this study seeks:

i. To assess the role of parental factors in shaping the saving culture of youth.
ii. To examine the influence of peer factors to the saving culture of youth.

Hypothesis

Based on the identified independent variables (Parental Income, Parental Knowledge, Peers' Financial Awareness, and Peers' Influence) and the dependent variable (Saving Culture of Youth), the hypotheses for this study are:

H_1: *Parental income has a significant impact on the saving culture of youth.*

H_2: *Parental Knowledge is significantly associated with the saving culture of youth.*

H_3: *Peers' financial awareness has significant relationship with the saving culture of youth.*

H_4: *Peers' influences significantly contribute to the saving culture of youth.*

Rationale of the study

This study is designed to measure the degree of significance of effect of various factors on saving habits among youth of Nepal and shows how prior preparedness on financial activities and budgeting can be helpful to them to navigate vital financial transitions in life. These transitions may include various milestones such as starting higher education, starting a business, starting a conjugal life, upgrading family standard, or overcoming personal loss, all of which have ultimate destination of financial stability. The process of cultivating young citizen with access to valid and reliable formal financial activities lead to their unique feature can play an important role in assessing them to handle all vital life events occurring in different stages of life. It is also essential to guarantee that these financial elements and services must prepared to overcome the specific requirements and challenges faced by youth people. In addition, fusioning of financial solutions with other non - financial activities can offer vital assistance during fundamental periods in run of lives.

Reinforcement for early saving culture commonly regarded as a planning to construct assets, elaborate better financial habits, and contribute to enhance the saving level of a nation. Saving culture creates potential assets better equipped for future endeavor such as financing higher education, starting a business or constructing infrastructure for the run of lives.

This study emphasis to create a workable solution to navigate all monetary thrust faced by today’s Nepalese youth. By highlighting the features of early financial literacy and saving cultures, this research seeks to licensed youth individuals to handle financial calamities effectively and obtain secular financial security.

Limitations of the study

The main limitations of this research are :-

The study is based on responses from educated youth only, which may not accept the generalization of the findings to other age groups.

(i) The sample was comprised of 392 respondents from inside and outside Kathmandu valley mostly from urban area collected using convenience sampling method.

(ii) The regional focus of the sample may limit the generalization of the results to youth of other geological region of the country with different cultural and socioeconomic conditions.

(iii) The validity of the study's findings relies heavily on the accuracy of the responses provided by the participants.

(iv) Since the data collection process involved self – reported information, there is a risk of response bias or inaccuracies, as participants may have difficulty recalling details, have biased perceptions, or may be unwilling to disclose certain information, potentially affecting the study's validity.

(v) The research was conducted within a restricted timeframe, which may have limited the depth of analysis.

(vi) This limited timeframe may not capture long term trends, seasonal changes, or shifts in youth culture and attitudes that could emerge over a more extended period of research.

Literature review

Browning and Lusardi (1996), stated that people save money to build up a reserve against unforeseen contingencies, to provide for an anticipated future relationship between the income and the needs of the individual and to enjoy interest and appreciation. The study further explained that saving occurs when income exceeds consumption over a period of time, with savings representing the difference between income and consumption. On the basis of psychological perspective, saving is the process of desist spending in the present to overcome future requirement (Warneryd, 1999). This concept of saving culture emphasis the concepts of future needs, decision-making, and saving activities. In addition, saving is commonly related with activities such as depositing, investing, or paying off the debts. Webley and Nyhus (2006), explained various aspects that organize an individual's ability of saving culture in early ages, such as self – control, income of family, the financial activities, the presence of bank accounts, and future perspective. The study found that irregular income, availability of money irregularly for particular, having easy access to a bank account, and following future financial goals lead to increase the saving culture. Financial management in early age creates an initial opportunity to either to save or spend and economic socialization and social activities which requires money during adolescence influence the saving cultures.

Theoretical review

The excess of available research has shown that youths who have little knowledge about financial activities generally express negative perspective on it and their saving habit is often affected by friends or peers, socialization agents, who can guide for better financial planning. In spite of having relatively high levels of financial knowledge, many studies have shown that youths of emerging economies explore moderate knowledge of issues about financial activities. This results emphasis new research which is targeted to study the various dimension of financial activities, more precisely in the area of saving culture.

Saving culture and financial activities of youth

Browning and Lusardi (1996), stated that saving is the result when one’s income exceeds expenditure in a specified time period representing the surplus of income over expenses. They explore that saving culture involves decision to save, anticipating future needs, and taking action to save. Warneryd (1999), approached saving from a psychological perspective, defining it as the process of refraining from spending in the present to meet future needs. In essence, saving culture combines future expectations, decision-making, and action. On the other hand, saving can be broadly understood as activities like investing, depositing money into a bank account, speculating, or paying off debt.

Webley and Nyhus (2006), suggested various factors that has significant effect on saving culture in early age, such as family income, self – control, easy access to bank accounts, and future orientation. Early experiences of managing money, including whether children have access to savings accounts or receive pocket money, play a critical role in shaping their financial cultures. They conducted studies in the Netherlands and Norway to investigate the economic socialization of young adults. Positive involvements of parent, such as providing knowledge about financial budgeting and encouraging to save, was found vital catalyst in saving habits of youth. Youth who had received positive knowledge and encouragement tended to exhibit better future planning, to save and develop a more scientific attitude towards saving. In contrast, Norwegian findings suggested that parental wealth or educational background did not significantly affect the financial socialization of children. Nevertheless, children with access to piggy banks and savings accounts were more likely to open bank accounts and manage their own finances.

Saving Culture in Emerging Countries

Chen and Volpe (2002), found that female students generally have less knowledge about personal financial problems. More precisely, they found that education and experience can have a significant impact on the financial literacy of both male and female students. Sundarasen et al. (2016), explored that financial literacy plays positively influencing role in money management skills and suggest that financial literacy is vital factor for implementing meaningful saving habits. The saving culture of students is often influenced by socialization agents like friends and peers, who can encourage better financial planning and practices. In addition, they suggested that students in emerging countries tend to show a moderate understanding of financial issues, even though they may possess relatively high levels of financial knowledge. Although studies have explored financial literacy among youth, very few have focused specifically on saving cultures.

Jamal et al. (2015), conducted research on saving behavior of students in higher learning institutions and found that family guidance, followed by peer influence and financial literacy plays a significant role in students' saving cultures. They also noted that students' involvement in spending activities, leisure pursuits, and discussions about financial management with friends had an impact on their saving culture. Furthermore, strong family bonds and parental influence were found to have positive effect on youth's future perception. Furthermore, the study introduced two additional elements self – control and financial stress to observe their effect on saving culture. The study confirmed that parental guidance and strong family connections positively influence saving culture of youth.

Financial Culture

Financial culture, including the way adults manage their finances, is largely shaped through socialization, as indicated by research. Children raised in different cultures experience varying forms of social learning and consumer socialization, which ultimately influences their financial attitudes and cultures. Moschis (1985), concluded that parents should play an active role in teaching both general and specific financial habits, emphasizing the importance of normative consumer skills. Previous studies have shown that parents influence both the economic and social motivations for consumption among adolescents. In addition, the rate of engaging in irregular purchasing cultures is higher in students compared to non – students (Hira, 1997). College students often struggle with managing their finances due to lack of budgeting skills and are gone to overspending (Archuleta et al., 2013). Sabri et al. (2012), explored that those students having a widowed mother, staying on campus, lower family income, attending public universities, and spending on more items tended to report better financial culture than students with parents who had higher family income, higher education level, and those who were singleton children were more likely to face financial difficulties, as they tended to save less and spend more.

Financial Management

Financial management also known as money management requires a wide range of knowledge to employ and practices to well management. Effective management of personal financing can be achieved through various actions such as tracking expenses, maintaining a bank account, practicing savings discipline, regularly paying bills, diversifying investments, owning property, using retirement plans, and understanding financial principles which play a vital role in overcoming financial challenges or determining financial success (Hilgert et al., 2003).

Financial management cultures, such as those related to cash handling, credit usage, and savings, help mitigate the risks of financial hardship. Effective management can improve financial well-being, while poor financial management may lead to significant long-term social and societal repercussions (Perry & Morris, 2005).

Studies on financial management among college students have revealed a lack of the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage their finances, often leading to financial stress and problems. Parents primarily teach financial management through observation and participation in financial activities, such as purchasing. Children gain knowledge by observing how their parents approach financial matters in this context. Additionally, participation in socialization processes, including peer groups and media, helps children develop money management cultures. Socializing and engaging with these agents contribute significantly to shaping children's financial attitudes, habits, and overall financial management skills (Danes & Haberman, 2007).

Parent Socialization and Influences

According to Ajzen (1991), people typically form intentions for specific actions, which then lead to the performance of corresponding cultures. In this study, attitudes toward culture, perceived cultural control, and subjective norms are used to explain how financial knowledge influences students' saving culture. It was identified that parental socialization as a main catalyst for youths' saving culture. Caruana and Vassallo (2003), explored that socialization of parent was more effective than financial knowledge, as children tend to follow their parents' cultures, socialization a key factor in shaping their financial habits.

Bucciol and Veronesi (2014), exhausted that most impactful parental teaching is particularly effective about saving behavior was during their childhood and adolescence which will boost their willingness in saving.

Peers Influences

Lusardi et al. (2010), revealed that secular trend of peer influences of high school on financial literacy, yields that students with a higher proportion of peers planning to attend college showed a better understanding of concepts like inflation and diversification of risk. Mangleburg et al. (2004), explored the definition of peer influence as it is the degree to which peers modify an individual's actions, mindset and thoughts. A study by Jamal et al. (2015), noted that peer influence significantly affects financial decisions and demonstrated that peer influence plays a significant role in modifying students' saving culture. Jamal et al. (2016), agreed that peer pressure, alongside parenting factors, can influence individuals' financial culture. According to the study, peer influence was a major contributing factor to financial mismanagement among young people in Malaysia.

Financial Literacy

Particularly among youth, financial literacy has a significant role in society. It influences an individual's actions, awareness, and social activities regarding financial matters, ultimately helping young people to make financial decisions. According to Remund (2010), financial literacy extends beyond awareness; it includes the competence to actively manage personal finances. It refers to the capacity to understand, track, and utilize financial resources effectively to improve the economic well-being of individuals, families, and businesses. The Organization for Economic co – operation and Development (OECD) define financial literacy as "A combination of awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and cultures necessary to make sound financial decisions and ultimately achieve individual financial well-being". Financial literacy primarily concerns financial planning, wealth accumulation, and making sound financial decisions. However, financial illiteracy often arises from personal challenges and a lack of awareness, resulting in inadequate financial knowledge among young people and poor decision making.

Mahdzan and Tabiani (2013), discovered that improving financial literacy and capability leads to better financial decision-making, thereby supporting life events such as education, housing, or retirement planning. This is particularly relevant for college students, as they assume more personal financial responsibilities.

Empirical Review

Despite the lack of clarity regarding its definition, most studies emphasize the growing importance of financial well – being across various sectors which rely on quantitative methods and recent reviews advocate for qualitative approaches to better understand its meaning and variation trend with age (Riitsalu et. al., 2025). Fiksenbaum et al. (2017) explored how personal financial problems can lead to emotional stress, noting that the accompanying stress and financial debt have detrimental effects on both physical and mental health. Study has shown that significant debt that arises that from credit and other expenses, is related with higher levels of anxiety, with most of the individuals reporting a negative impact on their overall well – being. The vital results of financial stress include poor academic performance, depression, health issues, anxiety, and difficulty in progressing toward all kind of projects completion. Increased financial anxiety has been linked in greater extent to emotional difficulties, as well as heightened physical pain, and reduced functioning in areas such as mental health, social interactions, and physical health.

In contrast, women who persist in their studies might be carrying substantial psychological and financial burdens. Gender appears to play a key role in understanding how financial stress affects mental health, though existing research on the gendered effects remains contradictory, suggesting the need for further investigation.

Tran et al. (2018), highlight that men and women are socialized differently, with contrasting roles, beliefs, and cultures. Research has indicated that financial concerns may be a more central part of male socialization, though there is no clear evidence that financial issues are more significant for men. Furthermore, men and women in college often face different financial experiences, which could contribute to gender-based differences in health outcomes, though it is not yet clear which group is more adversely affected by financial stress. For instance, female college students are more likely to take out loans and continue their education despite the burden of debt.

Research gap

The financial challenges and habits that youth are facing nowadays significantly impact their upcoming economic stability. Debt and poor financial planning can generate a long – lasting burden, affecting many dimensions of life style in coming days. Poor financial management often bound the employment availability and lead to difficulties in repayment of debts. Graduates with debt or with poor financial activities in past may unable to achieve stable employment. Due to all these financial inherent activities generally lead to increment of borrowing, provoking the cycle of financial instability (Archuleta et al., 2013).

Though having employment and income generation, mismanagement of financial activities in young age creates obstacles in other areas, such as obtaining mortgages and small business loans. For instance, poor credit histories often lead to disqualifying for various loans. Similarly, financial culture developed during the young ages will persist later into professional life and its related consequences continuing to affect one's mid – life and even old age (Jackson & Reynolds, 2013).

Despite these studies, there is lack of understanding that how parental and peer influences modify the saving habit of youth. This gap seeks an in – depth study of these influences and explore a cause – and – effect relationship between saving culture of youth and discussed independent variable. The target population for this study includes youth of age below 40 years as this age interval represents a critical stage for developing financial independence. By adopting a cultural framework which integrates socio – cultural and economic factors, examining how peer influence, parental guidance, and financial knowledge contribute to the development of saving cultures.

Research design

In this research we have implemented a causal – comparative research design to examine the cause – and – effect relationship between study variables. This approach is used to explore whether and how independent variables directly impact dependent variable, as well as causes of such effects. This method helps to form a statistical relationship between dependent and independent variables from which we can draw conclusions about the implications of the relationship. This research incorporates both explanatory and descriptive approach to observe the influence of parental and peer factors on the saving culture of Nepalese youth. The explanatory approach, explores the extent and impact of cause – and – effect relationship between the variables. On the other hand, the descriptive approach is used to outline the characteristics and analyze samples employing statistical tools. This combination of approaches ensures a comprehensive understanding of the issues and relationships under study.

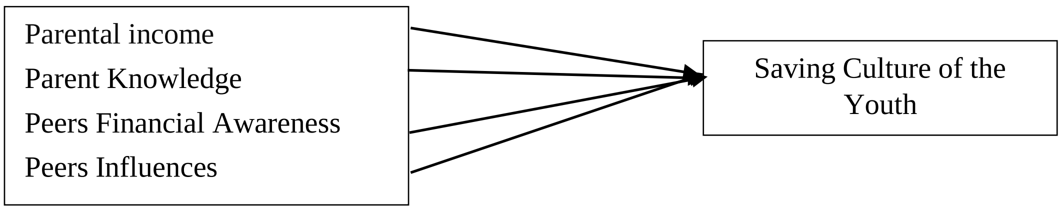
Methodology

The study targeted youth of age below 40 years who are employed and have completed or are pursuing bachelors or master's degrees, both inside and outside the Kathmandu Valley. The total population size for this study is unknown, as there is no comprehensive record of individuals within this age range. To address this, the research sampled primary data based on 392 participants determined by using Cochran's formula ($n \geq 384$). To analyze the data collected through surveys, study have used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Research framework

This framework examines how parental and peer factors contribute to the saving cultures of young individuals.

Independent Variable **Dependent Variable**



Source: Addis & Mahalik (2020)

Figure 1: Research Framework

Reliability of constructs

Following table represents the values of the Cronbach's Alpha used to test the Reliability of the Constructs used in the study.

Table 1

Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Parents Knowledge	5	.796
Parents Culture	5	.703
Peers Financial Awareness	5	.918
Peers Influence	5	.768
Saving Culture	5	.784

The results of the reliability test are shown in Table 1. Based on five items, all the variables are reliable as Cronbach's alpha for all constructs are greater than 0.7 and hence questionnaire items are considered satisfactory (Taber, 2018).

Results

The following results offer a comprehensive overview of respondents' personal characteristics such as gender, age, marital status, educational attainment, occupation, and parental income. These demographic factors play a vital role in understanding the saving cultures and financial habits of youth in Nepal.

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	240	61.2
Female	152	38.8
Total	392	100

Source: Field Survey in year 2025

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of respondents on the basis of gender, revealing that 61.2% are Male and 38.8% are Female. This indicates a slight majority being male representation of genders within the sample of 392 participants.

Table 3

Distribution of Respondents based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below 20	36	9.2
20 - 30	191	48.7
30 and above	165	42.1
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey in year 2025

Table 3 represents the age distribution of respondents, with the majority, 48.7%, falling within the 20 – 30 age group, making it the most prominent in the study. The 30 and above age group follows, comprising 42.1% of the respondents, while the below 20 age group has the smallest representation at 9.2%. This distribution shows the significant presence of younger adults in the study, offering valuable insights into age – related patterns in saving culture among Nepalese youth.

Table 4

Distribution of Respondents based on Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Married	294	75.0
unmarried	98	25.0
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey in year 2025

Table 4 provides an overview of respondents categorized by marital status, showing that a fair majority, 75%, are married, while 25% are married. This imbalance explores that the study primarily reflects the saving cultures married individuals.

Table 5

Distribution of Respondents Based on Educational level

Education Status	Frequency	Percent
up to Intermediate	44	11.2
Bachelor	168	42.9
Master	174	44.4
above Master	6	1.5
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey in year 2025

Table 5 represents the distribution of educational level attained by respondents, revealing that 44.4% hold a Master's degree, making it the most represented category in the sample. The second – largest group, comprising 42.9%, have a Bachelor's degree. Smaller proportions include 11.2% with education below a Bachelor's degree and 1.5% with education level beyond a Master's degree. This distribution reflects a dominance of highly educated sample, emphasizing individuals with advanced degrees. Such educational qualifications may significantly influence respondents' savin culture and offering valuable insights into the role of education in shaping financial decision – making.

Table 6

Distribution of Respondents based on Job Status

Job Status	Frequency	Percent
Employed	321	81.9
Unemployed	71	18.1
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey in year 2025

Table 6 displays the distribution of respondents by job status, revealing that 81.9% are employed, while 18.1% are unemployed. This indicates majority of the sample is currently working. This distribution is valuable for analyzing how job status may influence saving culture and financial decisions within the study's demographic.

Table 7

Distribution of Respondents based on Parental Income Level

Annual Income	Frequency	Percent
Up to 200000	67	17.1
2 lakhs to 5 lakhs	105	26.8
above 5 lakhs	220	56.1
Total	392	100.0

Source: Field Survey in year 2025

Table 7 presents the distribution of respondents based on their parental annual income levels. The largest proportion, 56.1%, comes from families with an income above Rs. 5 lakhs. The second largest group, 26.8%, has parental incomes ranging from Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 5 lakhs. Families with up to Rs. 2 lakhs incomes shades 17.1% of the sample. This distribution highlights the wide range of parental income levels among the respondents, offering valuable insights into how different income levels may shape saving culture and saving decisions among Nepalese youth. By examining this demographic, the research aims to understand how parental income affects financial practices among Nepalese youth.

Correlation Analysis

In this study, correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the dependent variable youth saving culture and several independent variables, including gender, age, marital status, job status, educational level, parental income level, parents' knowledge, parents' culture, parents' teaching, peers' financial awareness, peers' activities, and peers' influences. The objective was to determine how these factors interact and affect saving culture among youth in Nepal.

To evaluate these relationships, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was utilized. This statistical method quantifies the extent to which each independent variable is related to the dependent variable. The results offer valuable insights into the influence of parental and peer factors, as well as individual characteristics, on youth saving culture.

Table 8

Correlation Analysis

		Parents Knowledge	Parents Culture	Peers Financial Awareness	Peers Influences	Saving Culture
Parents Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	1	.278**	.317**	.258**	.299**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
Parents Culture	Pearson Correlation	.278**	1	.407**	.415**	.303**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
Peers Financial Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.317**	.407**	1	.746**	.633**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
Peers Influences	Pearson Correlation	.258**	.415**	.746**	1	.616**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
Saving Culture	Pearson Correlation	.299**	.303**	.633**	.616**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS 26

Table 8 presents the Karl Pearson's correlation coefficients between various factors influencing the saving culture of youth. All independent variables are positively related with dependent variables and are significant at the 0.01 level of significance. These findings suggest that improvements in any of the independent variables are linked to better saving culture among youth, emphasizing the interrelatedness of these factors in shaping saving cultures.

Regression Analysis

In this study, regression analysis was conducted to test the research hypothesis and evaluate the impact of various independent variables on the saving culture of youth.

Table 9

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.676[a]	.457	.451	.37437

a. Predictors: (Constant), Peers Influences, Parents Knowledge, Parents Culture, Peers Financial Awareness

Table 9 presents the Model Summary of factors influencing youth saving culture. Multiple Correlation coefficient is 0.676, indicating a positive correlation between the independent variables and saving culture. Furthermore, it shows that 45.7% of the total variation of saving culture is due to variation of independent variables included in the model.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

In this study, ANOVA was used to validate the overall performance of the regression model and ensure that the relationships between the variables are statistically significant or not.

Table 10

ANOVA Table

Model	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	45.625	4	11.406	81.386	.000[b]
Residual	54.239	387	.140		
Total	99.864	391			

a. Dependent Variable: Saving Culture

b. Predictors: (Constant), Peers Influences, Parents Knowledge,
Parents Culture, Peers Financial Awareness

Source: SPSS 26

Table 10 represents the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the regression model examining the factors influencing saving culture of youth. The results indicate that the model is statistically significant (P – value = 0.000) at 1% level of significance, and the predictors collectively have a meaningful influence on saving culture.

Regression Coefficient

Regression coefficient indicates the expected increment or decrement in the dependent variable when the independent variable increases by one unit. By examining these coefficients, we can determine the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable and evaluate their relative significance in the model.

Table 11

Regression Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	bi	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.521	.194		7.853	.000
Parents Knowledge	.063	.025	.102	2.554	.011
Parents Culture	-.008	.051	-.006	-.152	.879
Peers Financial Awareness	.313	.050	.363	6.283	.000
Peers Influences	.249	.044	.322	5.620	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Saving Culture

Source: SPSS 26

From the table 11, estimated linear regression equation is in the form

SC = 1.521 + 0.063PK – 0.008 PC + 0.313 PF + 0.249 PI

Furthermore, from table we can conclude that Parents Knowledge has significant positive impact (P – value < 0.05), Peers Financial Awareness has Significant positive impact (P – value < 0.01), Peers Influences has Significant positive impact (P – value < 0.01) but Parents Culture has negative impact on Saving culture of youth and is insignificant (P – value > 0.05).

Test of Hypothesis

In this study, correlation and regression analyses were used to calculate p-values, which help assess the validity of each hypothesis. Each hypothesis was tested individually using statistical software (SPSS) to ensure accuracy. To examine the relationships between the dependent and independent variables, four alternative hypotheses were proposed for each independent variable. If the significance level is set at 5%, and the p-value exceeds 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no significant relationship or effect, thus supporting the alternative hypothesis.

Table 12

Significance Value of Independent Variables

Independent - Dependent variables	Significance Value	Remarks
Parents Knowledge-Saving Culture of Youth	.011	Accepted
Parents Culture-Saving Culture of Youth	.879	Rejected
Peers Financial Awareness-Saving Culture of Youth	.000	Accepted
Peers Influences-Saving Culture of Youth	.000	Accepted

Discussion

The primary aim of this research was to identify and analyze the key factors influencing the saving culture of youth in Nepal. Through an extensive review of relevant literature and insights gained from the research process, several crucial variables were identified. The study focused on exploring the effects of various independent variables, including gender, age, marital status, job status, education level, parental income, parents' knowledge and culture, as well as peers' financial awareness, and influence on the saving culture of Nepalese youth. An interesting divergence in the current study was the lack of significant influence from traditional demographic factors such as gender, age, and marital status on saving culture. This contrasts with the findings of Addis and Mahalik (2020), who suggested that demographic factors, particularly age and gender, influence financial decision-making. The absence of a significant impact from these factors in the Nepalese context may reflect cultural or contextual differences, suggesting that factors like parental influence, peer culture, and education may have a more dominant role in this particular setting. Future research could benefit from using alternative statistical approaches to disentangle the combined effects of these variables and provide a clearer understanding of their individual impacts.

Conclusions

The findings from this study offer valuable insights into the factors that influence the saving culture of youth in Nepal, highlighting the importance of parental income, culture, peers’ financial knowledge and peer influence as key determinants. These factors underscore the critical role that both family and peers’ environments play in shaping financial habits among young individuals.

Parental knowledge, peers’ financial knowledge and peers’ influences are significant positive factors for saving culture of youth whereas parents culture is insignificant negative factor influencing saving culture. This finding is consistent with the research of Heckman et al. (2022), which emphasized the significant influence parents have on their children's saving practices.

Conflict of interest

There is no any conflict of interest.

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Contribution of Industrial Estate to Local Livelihood Sustainability: A Case of Hetauda Industrial Estate, Nepal

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the contribution of the industrial estate to local livelihood sustainability. The study relied on primary data collected from local respondents, focusing on the overall sustainability of the livelihoods of local people. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and field observations, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the socioeconomic conditions of the local population engaged in industrial activities. The study utilized descriptive analysis to interpret the collected data effectively. The findings highlight the significant contribution of the Hetauda Industrial Estate (HIE) in creating employment opportunities, enhancing household incomes, and supporting local economic sustainability. Different income groups, occupational roles, and demographic characteristics were analyzed to determine their association with employment benefits and livelihood improvements. The research concludes that the HIE plays a pivotal role in fostering socio-economic progress for the local community. By providing stable employment and influencing sustainable livelihood dimensions, the industrial estate has proven to be a cornerstone for local people's livelihood sustainability. The study offers valuable insights for policymakers, industrial stakeholders, and researchers, emphasizing the need for further expansion and policy support to maximize the estate's positive impacts on regional development.

Keywords: Livelihood sustainability, industrial contribution, local development, socioeconomic impact, livelihood sustainability

Introduction

Balanced regional growth has been a consistent goal of Nepal's economic planning throughout history (Sharma, 2021). Nepal's industrialization officially began in the 1950s, focusing on basic infrastructure like textiles and jute industries (Poudel, 2018). The establishment of Biratnagar Jute Mills in 1936 laid a strong foundation for industrial development (Adhikari, 2019). The initiation of Nepal's first five-year plan in the 1950s emphasized industrial development, setting the stage for the nation's industrial journey (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2020).

The adoption of globalization and liberalization policies in 1990 marked a turning point in Nepal's industrial sector, opening up opportunities for foreign direct investment (FDI) and technology transfer (World Bank, 2021). However, Nepal's industrial history dates back to 1926 with the establishment of early enterprises (Regmi, 2017). Economic development is vital for developing countries, including Nepal (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2020). Sustainable economic growth requires creating employment opportunities and improving livelihoods (Bhattarai, 2020).

Industrialization transforms disguised unemployment into productive employment and drives economic growth (Gautam, 2019). By utilizing unutilized labor, industrialization generates jobs and enhances socio-economic conditions (Thapa, 2020). The Hetauda Industrial Estate (HIE), established on Mangsir 20, 2020 B.S., with financial support from the U.S. government, is one of Nepal's key industrial estates. Located in Hetauda-8, Makwanpur, it covers an area of 3,228 ropanis (Hetauda Industrial Area Management Office [HIAMO], 2076). Currently, 103 industries operate within the estate, while several remain non-operational due to various challenges, such as the COVID-19 lockdown (HIAMO, 2076). The estate contributes approximately NPR 12 billion annually in government revenue, making it an essential pillar of the local and national economy (HIAMO, 2076).

While industrial estates like HIE have contributed significantly to employment generation, livelihood improvement, and revenue, studies evaluating their role in sustaining socioeconomic conditions at the community level remain limited. Such analyses are critical for understanding their effectiveness in achieving regional economic development (Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Supplies [MoICS], 2021).

Globally, industrial estates are acknowledged for their socio-economic contributions. Sharma (2021) noted that industrial estates in South Asia play a crucial role in enhancing employment and improving living standards. Similarly, Adhikari (2019) highlighted that these estates drive infrastructure development, create skilled labor, and facilitate technology transfer. Furthermore, industrialization is linked to reducing disguised unemployment by absorbing underutilized labor into productive activities (Gautam, 2019).

Despite these benefits, Nepalese industrial estates face unique challenges, such as limited research on their socio-economic impacts on local communities (World Bank, 2021). Existing studies focus primarily on national-level contributions but overlook community-specific outcomes, such as employment opportunities and livelihood sustainability (Bhattarai, 2020). Addressing these gaps is essential for understanding their broader impact on local populations and improving policy interventions.

Although industrial estates are critical for Nepal's economic growth, significant research gaps persist. Limited studies focus on assessing how these estates contribute to local employment generation and livelihood sustainability (World Bank, 2021). Specifically, the key gaps are insufficient analyses of the employment opportunities created specifically for local populations, a lack of evaluation of the role of industrial estates in sustaining the livelihoods of communities surrounding these facilities, and minimal exploration of the challenges faced by industries within estates, such as non-operational industries, resource constraints, and workforce management issues.

Several studies have explored the role of industrialization in Nepal's economic development. Regmi (2017) highlighted the potential of industrial estates in generating employment and fostering economic growth, emphasizing the need for supportive policies to sustain industrial development. Similarly, Bhattarai (2020) examined labor market dynamics, focusing on how industrialization shifts surplus labor from agriculture to industries, leading to improved income levels. The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Supplies (MoICS, 2021) underlined the contribution of industrial hubs like Hetauda Industrial Estate (HIE) in promoting regional economic stability through job creation and support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). However, these studies largely focus on macroeconomic contributions, with limited emphasis on the localized socio-economic impacts of industrial hubs.

Despite the valuable insights from these studies, critical gaps remain. Existing literature inadequately explores the direct impacts of industrial estates on the socio-economic conditions of local communities, including improvements in household income, access to education and healthcare, and gender dynamics in employment. Furthermore, challenges such as wage disparities, skill mismatches, and job insecurity faced by the local workforce remain under-addressed. These gaps necessitate a focused study to understand how industrialization influences the livelihoods and well-being of people living near industrial estates. Thus, this study attempts to answer the following research question:

RQ: In what ways does the HIE contribute to the sustainability of local people's livelihoods?

To address these gaps, this study aims to evaluate the contribution of the HIE to local livelihood sustainability. The findings have provided actionable insights for policymakers to address challenges like skill development and job insecurity while emphasizing the importance of inclusive and sustainable industrial growth.

Review of Literature

Theoretical Reviews

Many theories offer a valuable insight into the comprehensive understanding of the socioeconomic dynamics associated with industrialization and its impact on local people's livelihood sustainability. Human capital theory (Becker, 1964) underlined the importance of education and skill development in enhancing workforce productivity. Similarly, the dual sector model (Lewis, 1954) stated that economic transformation through the shift of labor from a subsistence agricultural sector to a more productive industrial sector leads to higher wages and improved living standards.

Moreover, the sustainable livelihood framework (Scoones, 1998) focused on improving livelihood sustainability through income generation, education, and skill development. Additionally, growth pole theory (Perroux, 1955) suggested that industrial estates act as growth poles, stimulating economic activity in surrounding areas. Further, Hatch and Clinton (2000) argued that industrial development, such as industrial estates, can drive demand for labor, fulfilling the employment equilibrium as predicted by Say's Law.

Mishkin (2019) discussed how shifts in aggregate demand—due to investments in industrial estates—can lead to increased employment. Krugman and Wells (2009) argued that industrial growth, through increased production and demand, leads to job creation. Thus, Keynesian economics emphasizes the role of government intervention in managing demand to stabilize employment levels during economic fluctuations. Harrison and Cavanaugh (2008) noted that industrial development driven by government incentives can increase aggregate demand, improving local employment opportunities. Considering multiplier effect theory, Stewart (1993) illustrated how industrial estates have a ripple effect, creating employment opportunities not just within the estate, but also in the surrounding economy through increased consumption.

Together, these theories underpin the study, enabling a deeper exploration of how HIE contributes to local people's livelihoods sustainability.

Empirical Reviews

Industrial estates have consistently demonstrated their capacity to foster regional economic growth and employment. For instance, Gunasekera (2020) emphasized that Sri Lankan industrial zones generated significant job opportunities in rural areas, particularly by attracting labor-intensive industries. Winardi et al. (2021) found that the industrial estate development policy through investment has an impact on the rise of creating broad employment opportunities or creating greater employment opportunities in both the industry itself and in other production sectors. Similarly, Thapa et al. (2021) noted that

Vietnam's industrial zones have integrated domestic and foreign investments to create employment and reduce poverty. These findings suggest that properly managed industrial estates contribute significantly to regional economic development. Rodrik (2018) highlighted the role of industrialization in facilitating a shift from agriculture to industry, which is critical for employment growth in developing countries. However, such transformations require skill enhancement and workforce readiness to address potential mismatches.

This aligns with Lavopa and Szirmai's (2012) analysis, which emphasized manufacturing's centrality in labor absorption but cautioned about productivity gains limiting long-term employment. Research from India and South Korea underscores that industrial estates enhance livelihoods by providing stable jobs, better income opportunities, and access to infrastructure (Lee, 2016). The spillover effects of industrialization—such as improved transportation, health facilities, and education—further contribute to improving the quality of life for workers and nearby communities. Kabeer and Mahmud's (2004) study in Bangladesh illustrated that industrial estates provide significant employment opportunities for women, empowering them economically and socially.

However, concerns such as wage inequality and precarious working conditions persist. Modern studies continue to advocate for inclusive policies to bridge gender disparities in industrial employment. Technological advancements in industrial estates contribute to productivity and economic growth, but may lead to job displacement if workers lack adequate skills (Romer, 1990).

Nepal's industrial policies have aimed to boost employment through industrial estates. Dhakal (2022) highlighted how government initiatives have gradually expanded the sector's contribution to employment, with industrial employment increasing from 2.76% in 1991 to 15.14% in 2019 (Bastola, 2020). Cu, Thanh and Nguyen, Tuan (2021) showed that the livelihood resources, such as financial resources, physical resources, social resources, and natural resources, have a positive relationship with people's livelihoods after industrial park construction and development; though, the degree of influence of these resources is different; whereas human resources have a positive effect (through the item – additional jobs created by the industrial park).

However, the sector still faces challenges in absorbing unskilled labor and creating high-quality jobs. Studies by Karki and Sharma (2020) noted that industrial estates like Hetauda have positively influenced local economies by attracting investment, creating jobs, and improving infrastructure. However, they also identified barriers such as political instability and inadequate infrastructure, which limit the full realization of their potential. Poudel (2021) observed that the HIE contributes to improving livelihoods by providing steady jobs and enhancing access to services like healthcare and education.

Despite these benefits, disparities in income levels and employment quality persist, particularly among marginalized groups.

Shrestha et al. (2019) emphasized the role of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within industrial estates in employing semi-skilled and unskilled workers. These enterprises account for a significant share of jobs in estates like Hetauda. However, issues such as limited access to technology and financing remain significant barriers to sustainable employment generation. Astola (2020) highlighted the need for cohesive policies that address labor rights, promote gender inclusivity, and invest in skill development. While industrial estates have contributed to economic growth, gaps in policy implementation hinder their ability to maximize socioeconomic benefits.

In summary, evidence from global markets suggests that aligning industrial strategies with workforce training can mitigate these risks, ensuring that technology adoption complements employment growth. While prior studies recognize the contributions of industrial estates to economic growth and employment, they often lack a comprehensive analysis of livelihood sustainability, particularly in the Nepalese context. Existing research primarily focuses on economic outcomes, neglecting the broader social and environmental dimensions of industrialization. This study addresses this gap by examining the socioeconomic impacts of HIE, with a specific focus on livelihood sustainability and local employment contributions. By building on existing empirical studies, this research seeks to provide a holistic understanding of the contributions and challenges associated with HIE. It aims to offer actionable recommendations for enhancing its socioeconomic impact.

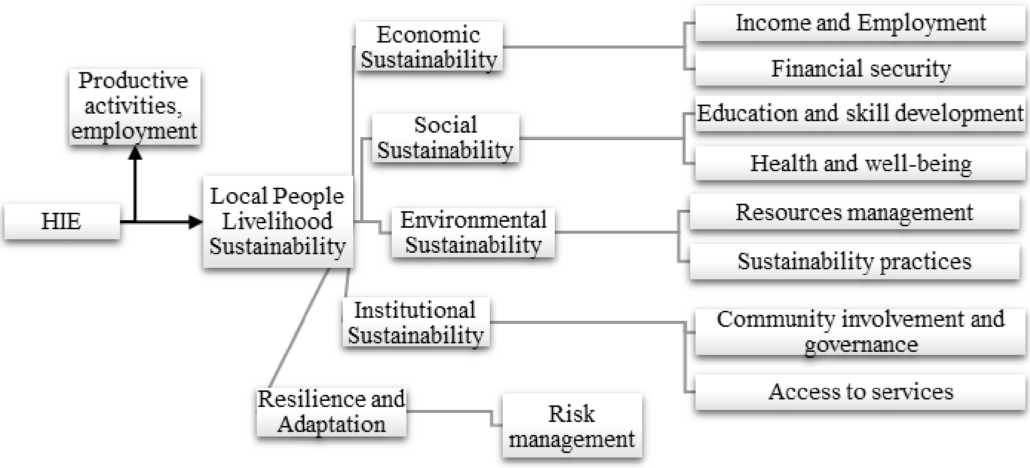
Materials and Methods

Conceptual Framework and Research Design

Research on industrialization and its impacts on livelihoods and performance has highlighted the multifaceted effects of economic development. Paul, Saumik, and Sarma (2013) studied how industrialization in the Falta Special Economic Zone in West Bengal influenced the livelihoods of displaced households, demonstrating the challenges and benefits that arise for communities affected by industrial growth. Similarly, Sahoo et al. (2022) focused on the rural dimensions of industrialization, showing that it not only provides employment opportunities but can also contribute to long-term sustainability, particularly when integrated with local livelihoods. On the other hand, Hoang and Ngoc (2019) explored how the innovation capabilities of firms, specifically in the electronics sector in Vietnam, impact their performance, underscoring the importance of innovation as a driving force for company growth and competitiveness, especially in emerging markets. Considering these studies, the conceptual framework of this study is demonstrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



HEI performs productive activities and offers more jobs to local people, which helps to achieve local people's sustainable livelihoods in many ways, including economic sustainability, social sustainability, environmental sustainability, institutional sustainability, and resilience and adaptation to prospective life risks. This research is quantitative in nature. The descriptive and analytical research designs were utilized to facilitate fact-finding and provide adequate information about the impact of the HIE on local employment. This research design is useful for establishing relationships between dependent and independent variables. It also helps understand the relationship between industrialization and local employment (Rugg & Petre, 2006).

Population and Sample

To obtain a representative sample, a stratified random sampling method was employed. This approach ensured representation from different groups within the population, such as factory workers, business owners, and non-industrial employees, providing a comprehensive view of the HIE's impact. From a population of 315,589 working-age residents (15–64years), HIE currently has approximately 4,400 workers, of which around 900 are local residents. For this study, a sample of 108 individual workers was selected, which represents more than 10% of the local worker population. The sample was carefully chosen to ensure proportional representation of each group within the local workforce, providing a balanced and accurate reflection of the population. This sample size allowed for statistical analysis while remaining manageable for data collection and analysis.

Data Source and Methods of Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

The research relied exclusively on primary data to examine the socioeconomic contributions of the HIE to local employment and livelihood sustainability. Field-based primary data collection methods were used to gather insights directly from the local community. Primary data were obtained through structured questionnaire surveys. Structured questionnaires facilitated the collection of quantitative data, while in-depth interviews captured rich qualitative insights. These questions were administered to one hundred and eight industrial workers of the HIE to understand the socioeconomic impact of employment generation on the local population.

The analysis for this study was based entirely on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 40 questions. The collected data were analyzed by using the descriptive analysis technique. Therefore, frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, and percentage analyses were used to summarize and present the findings. This paper is part of the dissertation of the first author; therefore, the questionnaire and interview schedule were approved by the Department of Economics, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Finally, this study used ChatGPT to correct English grammar and sentence structure.

Results and Discussion

Respondents' Attributes

This study represented a diverse group of individuals from the Makwanpur district, all of whom have varying degrees of connection to the HIE of Nepal. Table 1 summarizes the basic features of respondents considered in the study.

Table 1

Respondents' Attributes

Attributes	Categories	Number	Per cent
Age	25-30	8	7.4
	30-35	19	17.6
	35-40	46	42.6
	40-45	22	20.4
	45-50	11	10.2
	50-55	2	1.9
Gender	Female	17	15.7
	Male	91	84.3
Education Level	Primary	5	4.6
	SLC	21	19.4

	Plus, two (+2)	51	47.2
	Bachelor	21	19.4
	Master	10	9.3
Monthly income	Less than Rs. 15,000	10	9.3
	Rs. 15,000 -Rs. 30,000	42	38.9
	Rs. 30,000- Rs. 45,000	21	19.4
	Rs. 45,000- Rs. 60,000	21	19.4
	More than Rs. 60,000	14	13.0
Marital Status	Unmarried	7	6.5
	Married	101	93.5
Duration of employment	Less than 1 year	11	10.2
	1 to 3 years	17	15.7
	4 to 6 years	25	23.1
	7 to 10 years	38	35.2
	More than 10 years	17	15.7

Age Distribution. The age distribution of employees at the HIE indicates a workforce predominantly composed of mid-career individuals. Approximately 63% of respondents fall within the 35–45 age range, suggesting a concentration of employees who balance energy with professional experience. The limited presence of younger (25–30) and older (50–55) workers implies high entry experience requirements and possible retirement or role transitions among senior employees. This demographic pattern highlights the need for strategies to attract and train younger workers while retaining experienced staff to ensure long-term workforce sustainability. Comparable findings by Kumar and Saini (2019) in Indian industrial zones revealed similar dominance of middle-aged workers and emphasized the importance of youth training programs to prevent future workforce stagnation

Gender Distribution. The gender distribution at the HIE reveals a pronounced male dominance, with 84.3% male and only 15.7% female respondents. This indicates that industrial employment in the region is largely male-oriented, likely influenced by socio-cultural norms, traditional gender roles, and limited opportunities for women's participation. The underrepresentation of women highlights the need for gender-inclusive policies, such as equal training access, supportive work environments, and initiatives promoting diversity. Similar findings by Desai et al. (2016) in South Asian industrial sectors attribute such disparities to cultural constraints, while Ali and Nawaz (2020) observed gradual improvement in gender balance in industries promoting female recruitment, particularly in administrative roles.

Education Background. The educational background of respondents at the HIE reveals a workforce with moderate educational attainment and limited progression to higher studies. Among 108 respondents, 4.6% had only primary education, 19.4% completed SLC, and 47.2% attained a Plus Two qualification, making it the most common level. Additionally, 19.4% held a bachelor's degree, while only 9.3% possessed a master's degree. This distribution indicates a workforce with foundational and intermediate skills but a shortage of advanced qualifications. The predominance of secondary-level education suggests socio-economic and institutional barriers to higher education, reflecting similar trends identified by Bhattacharya and Roy (2018) in the Indian industrial workforce.

Income Distribution. The income distribution of employees at the HIE demonstrates a concentration in mid-range earnings, with 38.9% earning between Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 30,000. Smaller proportions earn below Rs. 15,000 (9.3%) or above Rs. 60,000 (13%), indicating a moderately balanced wage structure dominated by middle-income earners. This pattern reflects the standardized nature of industrial wage practices, where most employees occupy operational or mid-level positions, while only a few holds high-paying managerial or specialized roles. Comparable findings by Dhungana and Sharma (2020) in other industrial zones also observed similar mid-income concentration, whereas Poudel (2018) reported lower income dominance in rural sectors, highlighting the advantage of formal industrial employment. Overall, the data suggest that the HIE maintains a stable and structured income distribution, characteristic of formal industrial labor markets.

Employment Status. The duration of employment at the Hetauda Industrial Estate reveals a stable and experienced workforce, with 35.2% of employees serving between 7 to 10 years. This indicates strong job retention, suggesting a sense of stability, satisfaction, and long-term commitment among workers. The prevalence of long-term employment reflects the estate's structured environment and possible investment in skill development and employee welfare. These findings are consistent with Giri and Sharma (2021), who observed that extended tenure in industrial sectors often correlates with job security, performance, and professional growth. Conversely, Khatri and Shrestha (2019) noted higher turnover in rapidly evolving industries, such as technology, where employment duration tends to be shorter. Overall, the data imply that the HIE fosters a stable labor environment conducive to sustained workforce engagement.

Marital Status. The marital status of respondents at the HIE reveals that a vast majority (93.5%) are married, while only 6.5% are unmarried. This indicates that the workforce is predominantly composed of married individuals, reflecting the influence of traditional family structures and social stability within industrial employment. The predominance of married workers suggests that familial responsibilities may contribute to greater job commitment and retention. These findings align with Thapa and Shrestha (2022), who observed similar trends among industrial workers in Nepal, attributing long-term employment to family obligations. In contrast, Regmi and Bhatta (2020) noted that unmarried individuals dominate more dynamic urban sectors such as technology, where flexibility and mobility are valued. Overall, the data underscores the strong presence of married employees in industrial labor, reflecting both cultural norms and economic stability factors.

Contribution of Hetauda Industrial Estate on Local Livelihood Sustainability

The establishment of the HIE has significantly influenced the livelihood sustainability of local people by creating diverse employment opportunities and fostering economic growth. It has contributed to improved income levels, skill development, and access to resources, which are crucial for enhancing their overall quality of life.

Economic Sustainability. The Hetauda Industrial Estate has played a crucial role in promoting economic sustainability among the local population by generating stable employment opportunities and boosting household incomes. It has facilitated the growth of local businesses and industries, ensuring a consistent economic flow in the community. It highlights key indicators of economic sustainability, reflecting the estate's contribution to enhancing the financial resilience of local people.

The Hetauda Industrial Estate has significantly contributed to improving income and employment opportunities for the local population. By creating a wide range of jobs, it has not only reduced unemployment but also enhanced the earning potential of individuals and households. The following table provides an overview of the estate's impact on income levels and employment generation among the local community.

Table 2

Income and Employment

Income and Employment	Change in income		Employment gained		Change in job opportunities	
	N	N %	N	N %	N	N %
Significantly increased	47	43.5	70	64.8	28	25.9
Moderately increased	59	54.6	6	5.6	47	43.5
No Change	2	1.9	29	26.9	32	29.6
Moderately Decreased	0	0.0	2	1.9	1	0.9
Significantly Decreased	0	0.0	1	0.9	0	0.0
Total	108	100	108	100	108	100

Note. Field survey, 2024, N = Number of respondents, N% = Column % of responses

Table 2 indicates varying levels of change across three variables among 108 participants. A majority reported a moderate increase (54.6%) or significant increase (43.5%), with minimal reports of no change or decreases. For another variable, the majority (64.8%) observed a significant increase, while 26.9% noted no change, and reports of decreases were negligible. In the third variable, 43.5% reported a moderate increase, 29.6% saw no change, and 25.9% observed a significant increase, with reports of decreases remaining rare across all variables. Overall, the data reflects a trend of positive change, with significant or moderate increases dominating participant responses.

The findings demonstrate that a significant portion of respondents reported improvements in household income and employment due to the establishment of the HIE. Specifically, 43.5% of respondents observed a significant increase in household income, while a majority (64.8%) reported a significant increase in employment opportunities. This aligns with findings from other industrial estate studies, where the creation of industrial parks has often led to improvements in local employment and income levels. For example, a study by Abednego & Sayer (2016) on industrial zones in Nigeria found that the establishment of such zones significantly reduced unemployment and boosted local wages.

However, the findings also indicate that a small number of respondents (26.9%) in employment gained did not experience any change in their employment status. This suggests that while many households benefited, some may not have had direct access to the new job opportunities, potentially due to skill mismatches or the nature of employment contracts offered. This is consistent with research by Gorib and Mahmud (2020), who found that while industrial estates improved employment in general, some groups, particularly those with lower skills or education, faced challenges accessing these opportunities.

The HIE has positively impacted the financial security of local people by providing stable employment opportunities and steady income sources. This has enabled households to meet their financial needs, save for the future, and reduce vulnerability to economic uncertainties. Table 3 outlines the key aspects of financial security influenced by the industrial estate.

Table 3

Financial Security

Financial security	Ability to save money		Access to any financial services	
	N	N %	N	N %
Significantly increased	17	15.7	52	48.1
Moderately increased	55	50.9	0	0.0
No Change	35	32.4	2	1.9
Moderately Decreased	1	0.9	19	17.6
Significantly Decreased	0	0.0	35	32.4
Total	108	100	108	100

Note. Field survey, 2024, N = Number of respondents, N% = Column % of responses

Table 3 reveals contrasting patterns between respondents' ability to save money and access to financial services. For the ability to save money, the majority (50.9%) reported a moderate increase, while 32.4% noted no change, and 15.7% observed a significant increase, with very few (0.9%) experiencing a moderate decrease. In contrast, access to financial services exhibited a more polarized response. While 48.1% reported a significant increase, a notable 32.4% observed a significant decrease, and 17.6% indicated a moderate decrease, leaving only 1.9% with no change. Overall, the data suggests a general trend of moderate improvement in saving ability, whereas financial service access is marked by starkly opposing experiences among respondents.

While the overall findings from the HIE are positive, there are contrasting results within the same dataset. For example, in ability to save money, a significant number of respondents (32.4%) reported no change in their ability to save money. This suggests that some individuals may not have experienced the anticipated improvements in financial security. Access to any financial services. Further highlights a division between those who gained access to financial services and those who did not. These contrasting findings are not uncommon in studies on industrial estates, where benefits may not be equally distributed across the community. Research by Okunlola and Adewuyi (2015) found that industrial estates in certain regions led to income disparities, with higher-skilled workers benefiting more from economic growth while lower-skilled workers experienced fewer positive outcomes.

In contrast to the findings, other studies have found a more uniform improvement in financial security due to industrialization. For example, Yen & Shu (2017) observed that industrial estates in Taiwan significantly enhanced local financial security across all sectors of the population, regardless of skill level or income group.

Social Sustainability. The HIE has played a significant role in fostering social sustainability by promoting community development and enhancing the social well-being of local residents. This has been primarily achieved through employment generation, skill enhancement, and improving access to essential services like education and healthcare. The data gathered from the respondents reveal varying impacts on social sustainability indicators such as education and skill development, health and well-being.

Table 4

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability	Education and skill development				Health and well-being			
	N	N%	N	N %	N	N %	N	N %
Significantly increased	5	4.6	3	2.8	32	29.6	10	9.3
Moderately increased	31	28.7	29	26.9	50	46.3	71	65.7
No Change	65	60.2	70	64.8	25	23.1	25	23.1
Moderately Decreased	6	5.6	6	5.6	1	0.9	2	1.9
Significantly Decreased	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	108	100	108	100	108	100	108	100

Note. Field survey, 2024, N = Number of respondents, N% = Column % of responses

According to Table 4, a majority (60.2%) reported no change in education and skill development, while 28.7% noted a moderate increase. Only a small portion (4.6%) observed a significant increase, with minimal reports of decreases. Similarly, 64.8% reported no change, and 26.9% noted a moderate increase, while significant improvements (2.8%) and decreases (5.6%) were rare. The data show mixed responses regarding education and skill development opportunities provided by the HIE. A majority of respondents (60.2% for Education and skill development and 64.8% for Health and well-being) reported no change in educational and skill development, indicating that despite the establishment of the HIE, many individuals did not experience a noticeable improvement in these areas. However, a significant portion observed moderate increases in both training opportunities and access to education, reflecting a modest but positive trend. These findings are consistent with other studies that highlight the limited reach of industrial zones in directly enhancing educational opportunities, as local industries often focus more on job creation rather than educational improvements (Adebayo & Falola, 2019).

On the other hand, most respondents (46.3%) reported a moderate increase in health and well-being, and 29.6% noted significant improvements, while 23.1% experienced no change. Decreases were negligible. The majority (65.7%) experienced a moderate increase, while 23.1% reported no change. A smaller proportion (9.3%) observed significant improvements, with very few reporting decreases. In contrast, the data regarding health and well-being show stronger positive impacts. A large portion of respondents (65.7% for health and well-being and 46.3% for Education and skill development) reported moderate improvements in health and well-being, while a smaller group noted significant increases. The improvements in healthcare access can be attributed to the industrial estate's influence on local infrastructure and public services, aligning with findings from other studies that industrial developments often improve healthcare services and quality of life in surrounding areas (Yen & Shu, 2017). This trend suggests that industrial zones may have a more direct impact on physical well-being compared to educational or skill-based development.

Environmental Sustainability. The HIE has made efforts to balance industrial growth with environmental sustainability by adopting eco-friendly practices and promoting resource efficiency. Initiatives such as waste management, pollution control, and green infrastructure have contributed to minimizing the estate's environmental impact. Table 5 highlights key aspects of environmental sustainability influenced by the estate's operations.

Table 5

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability	Resource management				Sustainability practices	
	N	N %	N	N %	N	N %
Significantly increased	12	11.1	10	9.3	41	38.0
Moderately increased	52	48.1	45	41.7	55	50.9
No Change	38	35.2	47	43.5	1	0.9
Moderately Decreased	5	4.6	6	5.6	11	10.2
Significantly Decreased	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	108	100	108	100	108	100

Note. Field survey, 2024; N = Number of respondents, N% = Column % of responses

The HIE has also contributed to environmental sustainability through resource management and sustainability practices. The data indicate positive trends, particularly in sustainability practices. A notable portion of respondents reported improvements in resource management (48.1%) and environmental practices (50.9%), with some seeing significant increases in both areas. This is consistent with global trends where industrial estates, particularly those integrating sustainable practices, show measurable improvements in local environmental quality (Gorib & Mahmud, 2020). The significant involvement of the industrial estate in promoting environmental conservation practices further enhances local awareness and engagement with sustainability issues.

Institutional Sustainability. The HIE has supported institutional sustainability by fostering strong partnerships between industries, local authorities, and the community. It has facilitated capacity-building initiatives, improved governance, and ensured the effective implementation of policies to sustain industrial growth. Table 6 presents key indicators of institutional sustainability influenced by the estate.

Table 6

Institutional Sustainability

Institutional sustainability	Support by local government		Access to public services	
	N	N %	N	N %
Significantly increased	4	3.7	14	13.0
Moderately increased	58	53.7	55	50.9
No Change	36	33.3	39	36.1
Moderately Decreased	10	9.3	0	0.0
Significantly Decreased	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	108	100	108	100

Note. Field survey, 2024, N = Number of respondents, N% = Column % of responses

Institutional sustainability, as measured by support by local government and access to public services, reflects the role of local government and other institutions in supporting the industrial estate. The data reveals that a majority of respondents (53.7% for support by local government and 50.9% for access to public services reported moderate increases in institutional support and public services. This is indicative of the positive institutional collaborations fostered by the industrial estate, where the local government and industrial entities work together to improve services and infrastructure. These findings resonate with research by Abednego and Sayer (2016), which emphasizes the importance of institutional partnerships in sustaining industrial estates' growth and ensuring long-term benefits for the community.

On the other hand, the HIE has enhanced the resilience and adaptation capacity of the local community by providing stable livelihoods and opportunities to cope with economic and social changes. Its support for skill development and diverse income sources has empowered individuals to adapt to evolving circumstances. Table 7 outlines key aspects of reliance and adaptation influenced by the estate.

Table 7

Resilience and Adaptation

Resilience and adaptation	Financial or environmental shocks		Community responds to crises	
	N	N %	N	N %
Significantly increased	25	23.1	10	9.3
Moderately increased	72	66.7	51	47.2
No Change	9	8.3	46	42.6
Moderately Decreased	2	1.9	1	0.9
Significantly Decreased	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	108	100	108	100

Note. Field survey, 2024, N = Number of respondents, N% = Column % of responses

A significant majority of respondents (66.7%) reported a moderate increase, while 23.1% observed a significant increase. Only 8.3% saw no change, and a small number (1.9%) experienced a moderate decrease. There were no reports of a significant decrease. A majority of respondents (47.2%) reported a moderate increase, while 42.6% observed no change. 9.3% noted a significant increase, and only a few respondents (0.9%) experienced a moderate decrease, with no reports of a significant decrease. For the ability to cope with financial or environmental shocks, there was a clear positive trend, with most respondents reporting moderate increases. The community responds to crises shows a more balanced distribution, with many respondents observing no change, but still a substantial proportion reporting moderate increases.

The results from this study are consistent with similar studies that examine the impacts of industrialization on local resilience. A study by Eriksen et al. (2015) found that industrial estates contribute to improving individual and community resilience by providing stable livelihoods and access to new opportunities, thus reducing vulnerability to economic and environmental shocks. Similarly, Adger (2000) highlights that access to diversified income sources and enhanced skill sets can greatly improve a community’s adaptive capacity in the face of external shocks such as economic downturns or natural disasters. However, contrasting studies have shown mixed results, with some indicating that industrialization can create dependency on specific industries, making local communities vulnerable to disruptions in that industry. Scoones (1998) noted that communities that heavily rely on industrial growth may struggle to adapt when those industries face economic or environmental challenges. This is in contrast to the findings of this study, where respondents did not report significant decreases in resilience, indicating that the industrial estate may offer sufficient diversification in terms of income and skill development.

Conclusion and Implications

The socioeconomic impact of the HIE on local employment, focusing on how the estate influences the lives and livelihoods of the industrial workers. By gathering primary data, it explores the social and economic backgrounds, aiming to understand the broader benefits of the industrial estate for the Makwanpur district of Nepal. The study not only examines job opportunities created by the estate but also assesses how these jobs contribute to improving people's living standards and sustaining their livelihoods over time. Using primary data collected from 108 respondents, the analysis was conducted across key dimensions of sustainability: social, economic, environmental, institutional, and adaptive capacities.

This study underscores the significant socioeconomic impact of the HIE on the local community, emphasizing its contributions to employment, income generation, and overall livelihood sustainability. The findings reveal that HIE has played a pivotal role in creating stable employment opportunities, enabling many individuals and families to transition from precarious financial situations to a more secure and sustainable livelihood. This shift has been particularly noticeable among households previously earning below NPR 15,000, as they have experienced upward economic mobility through better-paying jobs and access to consistent income streams. In addition to financial improvements, HIE has facilitated skill development and capacity-building programs that have enhanced the employability of the local workforce. This has not only provided individuals with immediate job opportunities but has also equipped them with the skills needed for long-term professional growth. The industrial estate has also empowered underrepresented and marginalized groups, including women and disadvantaged communities, fostering greater social equity and reducing systemic inequalities. By integrating these groups into the local economy, HIE has contributed to building a more inclusive society.

The research also highlights HIE's role in improving various dimensions of livelihood sustainability. Financial capital has grown significantly, as evidenced by increased savings, access to credit, and reduced financial vulnerability among respondents. Social capital has strengthened through the development of community networks and collaborations that promote mutual support and collective growth. Improvements in human capital, driven by skill enhancement and education programs, have bolstered the local labor force's capabilities, while physical capital—such as housing, roads, and basic infrastructure—has shown moderate progress.

Despite these challenges, the estate's achievements are undeniable. The findings suggest that targeted interventions are essential for addressing existing gaps and unlocking HIE's full potential. Investments in infrastructure development, such as transportation and utility services, are critical for supporting industrial growth. Additionally, integrating advanced technologies and fostering stronger partnerships between public and private sectors can enhance productivity and sustainability. Policymakers must prioritize these efforts to maximize the estate's impact on both the local and regional economy.

The study highlights that the Hetauda Industrial Estate has significantly contributed to the socioeconomic development of the local population. It has created substantial employment opportunities, particularly for residents of the Makwanpur district, improving their living standards. Moreover, the estate has supported livelihood sustainability by enhancing access to financial stability, skill development, and social well-being. However, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and limited female participation in the workforce remain areas for improvement. Thus, HIE should prioritize improving working conditions by promoting fair wages, employee benefits, and workplace safety standards. Encouraging industries to adopt environmentally sustainable practices is equally essential to minimize the ecological impact on surrounding communities. To achieve long-term progress, regular monitoring and evaluation of HIE's socioeconomic contributions are vital, enabling continuous refinement of its strategies.

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Banking Service Quality and Customer Retention in Nepali Banking Sector

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of banking service quality on customer retention within Nepali commercial banks, focusing on five key dimensions of the SERVQUAL model: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility. A quantitative research design with descriptive and causal comparative research design was employed to analyze data collected from 321 customers of Nepal Investment Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, NMB Bank, and Mega Bank through a structured questionnaire adapted from Grönroos (2007). Data were analyzed using SPSS (v26) through descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression to determine the strength and direction of relationships among variables. The findings reveal that all dimensions of service quality have a positive and significant impact on customer retention, with empathy emerging as the most influential factor, followed by assurance and responsiveness. The results highlight that personalized service, staff competence, and prompt responses are crucial for building customer loyalty, while reliability and tangibility play supportive roles in shaping satisfaction. The study concludes that strengthening both functional and relational aspects of service delivery is essential for sustaining long-term customer relationships in Nepal's competitive banking sector.

Keywords: service quality, customer retention, Nepali commercial banks, empathy, SERVQUAL model

Introduction

The banking industry has undergone a profound transformation with the integration of digital technologies, reshaping how financial services are delivered and experienced by customers. Advances in internet connectivity, mobile applications, and automation have introduced new service delivery channels such as ATMs, mobile banking, and internet banking that have revolutionized customer interaction and engagement (Al-Smadi, 2012; Gupta, 2015). Internet banking, in particular, enables customers to perform financial transactions conveniently and securely without spatial or temporal limitations, offering a platform that enhances efficiency, accessibility, and service innovation (Pikkarainen et al., 2004; Yoon & Steege, 2013). As financial institutions increasingly rely on digital service models, service quality has become a central determinant of competitive advantage, customer satisfaction, and long-term retention (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Jun & Cai, 2001).

Service quality in banking refers to customers' overall assessment of a bank's service excellence and its ability to meet or exceed expectations (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2018). High-quality service delivery enhances trust, satisfaction, and loyalty are the key drivers of customer retention and profitability (Amin, 2016; Ladhari, 2009). Conversely, poor service quality results in customer dissatisfaction, switching behavior, and reputational damage (Kumar, Kee, & Charles, 2010). In the digital era, e-service quality is the perceived quality of electronic interactions and transactions plays an even more vital role, as customers expect seamless, responsive, and reliable experiences online (Santos, 2003; Fassnacht & Koese, 2006). Elements such as website design, usability, privacy, reliability, and responsiveness are widely acknowledged as essential dimensions of e-banking service quality influencing customer retention (Jun & Palacios, 2016; Khan & Fasih, 2014).

In Nepal, the introduction of digital banking began in the mid-1990s with the establishment of ATM services by Himalayan Bank Limited and later expanded to mobile and internet banking in the early 2000s (Mishra, 2008; Nepal Rastra Bank, 2023). Despite the growing adoption of online banking channels, customer retention remains a persistent challenge for Nepali commercial banks. Many customers continue to prefer traditional banking modes due to perceived risks, lack of awareness, and concerns about online service reliability and security (Adhikari & Sapkota, 2020; Shrestha, 2022). Moreover, the gap between customers' expectations and their actual experience of e-banking services such as delayed transactions, limited responsiveness, and system errors has constrained the full realization of digital transformation benefits (Bhattarai & Poudel, 2021).

Given the increasing digitalization of the financial sector, understanding how banking service quality influences customer retention is both timely and essential. This study examines the dimensions of internet banking service quality and their impact on customer retention in the Nepali banking sector. Specifically, it explores how factors such as reliability, responsiveness, security, and website usability shape customers' continued usage and loyalty intentions. By focusing on Nepal's developing banking environment, this study contributes to the growing body of service quality literature in South Asia and provides insights for banks to design customer-centric digital strategies that foster trust, satisfaction, and long-term retention.

Literature Review

Service quality has long been recognized as a central determinant of customer satisfaction and retention in the banking industry. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry's (1988) SERVQUAL model remains the most widely accepted framework, identifying five key dimensions—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy that collectively shape customers' perceptions of service performance. In traditional banking contexts, these dimensions determine how effectively banks meet customer expectations through personal interaction and trust-building (Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2018). However, with the evolution of digital banking, researchers have emphasized the importance of e-service quality as a construct that extends traditional service quality to online platforms and focuses on efficiency, system reliability, responsiveness, and privacy (Santos, 2003; Jun & Cai, 2001).

E-service quality is defined as the extent to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing, and delivery of services (Zeithaml et al., 2002). In the banking context, it encompasses elements such as website usability, security, design, accessibility, and transactional reliability (Fassnacht & Koese, 2006). Scholars have argued that e-service quality directly influences customer trust, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions (Khan & Fasih, 2014; Amin, 2016). The ability of digital banking systems to ensure smooth transactions and protect sensitive customer information is particularly critical in retaining customers (Yoon & Steege, 2013). Furthermore, maintaining prompt responsiveness to customer inquiries and complaints enhances perceived reliability and emotional satisfaction (Ladhari, 2009).

Customer retention is the continued use of a bank's products and services over time that is closely linked to perceived service quality (Reichheld & Schefter, 2000). In service-dominant industries, retaining existing customers is more cost-effective than acquiring new ones (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Studies indicate that high service quality fosters loyalty and positive word-of-mouth behavior, which ultimately improves profitability (Amin, 2016; Kumar, Kee, & Charles, 2010). In electronic banking, retention depends not only on service efficiency but also on user experience and trust in technological reliability (Jun & Palacios, 2016). The integration of user-friendly design, transparent processes, and secure systems has been found to significantly improve satisfaction and repeat usage (Gupta, 2015).

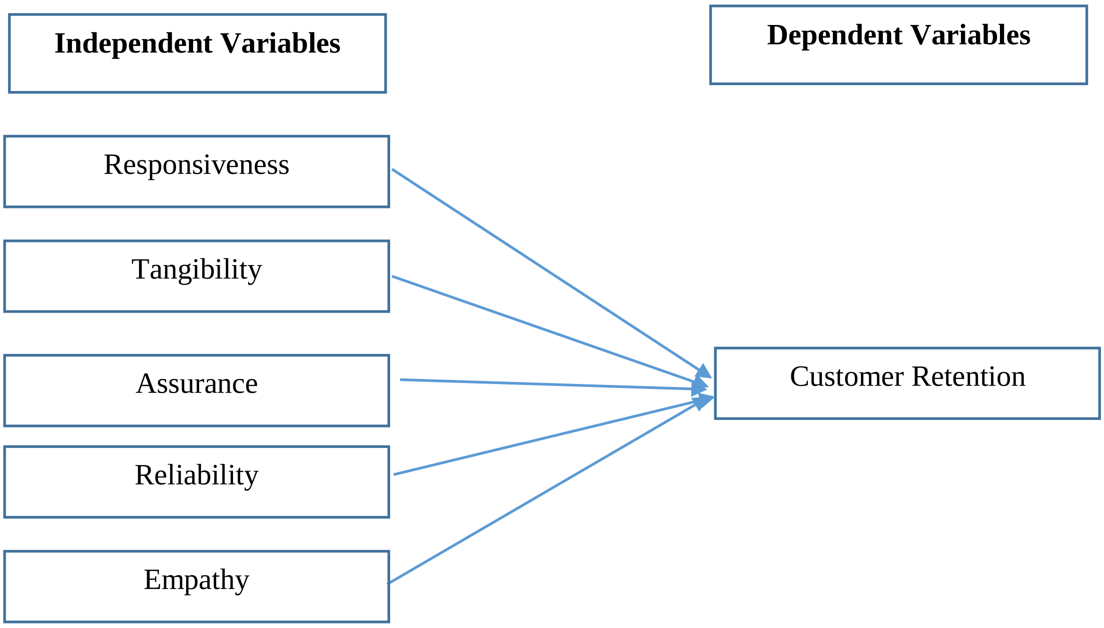
In the South Asian context, researchers have observed that banks' success increasingly depends on the alignment of service innovation with customer expectations (Kumar et al., 2022). Service failures such as transaction delays, poor communication, and system errors can erode customer confidence and lead to attrition (Bhattarai & Poudel, 2021). Therefore, the quality of digital banking services both in technological and relational terms serves, as a key strategic factor for achieving customer loyalty and long-term retention in the competitive financial landscape of Nepal.

Empirical studies worldwide confirm that superior banking service quality strongly enhances customer satisfaction and retention. Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Malhotra (2002) found that online service reliability and responsiveness were the most critical predictors of customer loyalty in electronic banking. Similarly, Jun and Palacios (2016) observed that ease of use, trust, and information quality had significant effects on customer retention among internet banking users. In Malaysia, Amin (2016) revealed that service quality dimensions such as reliability, assurance, and website design directly affected e-customer satisfaction and loyalty intentions. Khan and Fasih (2014) also confirmed a strong relationship between banking service quality and customer loyalty, highlighting that personalized attention and responsiveness are particularly valued by online customers.

Research in developing economies similarly demonstrates that technology-driven service quality can determine customer trust and retention. For instance, Gupta (2015) found that e-banking adoption and service excellence positively influenced perceived value and customer loyalty in Indian banks. In Sri Lanka, Wijayarathne (2015) reported that the reliability and accessibility of online platforms significantly impacted customer satisfaction and intention to reuse. In contrast, studies by Hanafizadeh, Keating, and Khedmatgozar (2014) revealed that security concerns and lack of awareness often constrained adoption and retention in emerging markets.

In the Nepali context, empirical evidence suggests that service quality remains a major factor shaping customer loyalty. Adhikari and Sapkota (2020) found that assurance, responsiveness, and reliability significantly affected customer satisfaction in online banking services. Similarly, Shrestha (2022) identified that trust and system efficiency were key determinants of continued usage intention among digital banking users in Kathmandu Valley. Bhattarai and Poudel (2021) emphasized that perceived service failures, such as delayed responses or poor system integration, directly reduced satisfaction and increased customer switching tendencies. Collectively, these studies affirm that service quality dimensions including security, convenience, responsiveness, and website design which plays a crucial role in sustaining customer retention in Nepal's evolving banking sector.

Research Framework



Source: Adapted from Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Kumar et al., 2010

Methodology

The quantitative method with descriptive and causal comparative design to examine describes data and characteristics of the population or phenomena and to assess the impact of internet banking service quality dimensions on customer's retention and to access the relationship of demographic variables on customer retention being studied in Nepali commercial banks. Data were collected from 321 employees working in Nepal Investment Mega Bank Nepal, Standard Chartered Bank Nepal, NMB Bank Nepal, Mega Bank, selected through purposive sampling. A structured questionnaire, adapted from Grönroos (2007), measured five independent variables Responsiveness, Tangibility, Assurance, Reliability and Empathy and the dependent variable, Customer Retention, using a five-point Likert scale.

The survey was distributed online to ensure anonymity and voluntary participation. Data were analyzed using SPSS (v26) for descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression to determine the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Reliability was tested through Cronbach's alpha, ensuring internal consistency ($\alpha \geq 0.60$). The methodology provided a sound empirical framework to assess how various forms of Service Quality influence customer retention in the context of Nepalese commercial banks.

Data Analysis and Discussions

The reliability analysis shows that all the variables used in the study demonstrated high internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the scales used in this study is considered adequate if it exceeds 0.60, acceptable for the analysis purpose (Sekaran, 2003). The findings of this study present a clear understanding of the relationship between service quality and customer retention.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics

Category	Variables	F	%
Age	20-25	132	35.5
	26-30	106	48.4
	31-35	39	11.8
	Above 35	44	4.3
Gender	Female	183	57.01
	Male	138	42.99
Bank Name	NIMB Bank	65	20.25
	NMB Bank	81	25.24
	SCB	93	28.97
	EBL	82	25.54
Education Qualification	Below Bachelors	109	33.95
	Bachelor’s Degree	120	37.38
	Master’s Degree	92	28.67
Marital Status	Unmarried	204	63.55
	Married	117	36.45

n=321

Note: Field Survey, 2024

The demographic profile of respondent’s shows that the majority of participants are **between 26–30 years old (48.4%)**, indicating that most customers of Nepali commercial banks belong to a young, economically active age group. **Female respondents (57.01%)** slightly outnumber males (42.99%), suggesting increasing female engagement in banking services. In terms of institutional representation, **Standard Chartered Bank (28.97%)** had the highest number of participants, followed by **Everest Bank Limited (25.54%)**, **NMB Bank (25.24%)**, and **Nepal Investment Mega Bank**

(20.25%). Regarding education, most respondents hold a **bachelor's degree (37.38%)**, with 28.67% possessing a master's degree. The data also reveal that **63.55% of respondents are unmarried**, indicating a relatively younger and career-oriented customer base.

Table 2

Descriptive Analysis

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Reliability	4.26	1.23	Customers perceive banking services as reliable and consistent.
Responsiveness	4.15	1.26	Banks are viewed as prompt and willing to assist customers.
Assurance	4.50	1.22	Customers feel highly confident and secure in their transactions.
Empathy	4.06	1.32	Customers perceive moderate personalized attention from employees.
Tangibility	4.49	1.18	Physical facilities and technological infrastructure are well maintained.
Customer Retention	4.24	1.13	Customers express strong satisfaction and loyalty toward their banks.

Note: Field Survey, 2024

The descriptive statistics indicate that customers hold favorable perceptions of service quality across all five dimensions in Nepali commercial banks. Assurance (M = 4.50, SD = 1.22) and tangibility (M = 4.49, SD = 1.18) received the highest mean scores, suggesting that customers feel confident in their bank's competence and appreciate its modern facilities. Reliability (M = 4.26) and responsiveness (M = 4.15) also scored high, reflecting timely service delivery and staff willingness to help. Although empathy (M = 4.06) recorded the lowest mean among the five, it still indicates moderate satisfaction with personalized attention. Overall, customer retention (M = 4.24) shows that customers are largely satisfied and demonstrate strong loyalty toward their banks.

Table 3

Correlation Matrix

	CS	RE	RES	ASS	EMP	TAN
CR	1					
RE	.750**	1				
RES	.831**	.771**	1			
ASS	.838**	.789**	.804**	1		
EMP	.876**	.753**	.777**	.796**	1	
TAN	.673**	.645**	.674**	.712**	.682**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: Field Survey, 2024

The correlation analysis reveals strong positive relationships among all variables, indicating that improvements in service quality dimensions are closely associated with higher customer retention. Empathy (r = 0.876**) shows the strongest correlation with customer retention, followed by assurance (r = 0.838**) and responsiveness (r = 0.831**), suggesting that personalized attention, trust, and prompt service play major roles in retaining customers. Tangibility (r = 0.673**) exhibits a relatively weaker but still significant relationship, implying that while physical facilities matter, relational and emotional aspects of service quality more strongly influence customer loyalty in Nepali commercial banks.

Table 4

Model summary of regression analysis

Model Summary				
R	0.875			
R Square	0.734			
F Value	173.63			
P-Value	0.001			
Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	P-Value
Constant	1.8		16.9	0.01
RE	0.02	0.04	2.35	0.03
RES	0.16	0.27	4.81	0.01
ASS	0.11	0.16	2.66	0.01
EMP	0.3	0.48	8.99	0.01
TAN	0.02	0.05	2.24	0.04

Note: Field Survey, 2024

The regression analysis shows that the overall model is statistically significant ($R = 0.875$, $R^2 = 0.734$, $F = 173.63$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that approximately 73.4% of the variation in customer retention is explained by the combined dimensions of banking service quality. Among the predictors, empathy ($\beta = 0.48$, $p = 0.01$) exerts the strongest positive influence on customer retention, followed by responsiveness ($\beta = 0.27$) and assurance ($\beta = 0.16$). Reliability and tangibility also have significant but weaker effects. This suggests that personalized care, prompt service, and customer confidence are key drivers of loyalty in Nepali commercial banks.

Discussions

The findings of this study reveal that all five dimensions of banking service quality reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility—have a positive and significant influence on customer retention among Nepali commercial banks. These results align with previous research emphasizing that service quality is a critical determinant of long-term customer relationships (Fornell et al., 1996; Ishaq, 2012; Khalid et al., 2011). Customers perceive reliability as banks' ability to deliver services as promised, enhancing trust and satisfaction (Zim et al., 2010). Responsiveness the willingness to assist and provide prompt service encourages loyalty through positive service encounters (Mengi, 2009). Assurance, linked to staff competence and professionalism, builds confidence and reinforces trust (Kumar, Kee, & Charles, 2010; Lai, 2004). Empathy emerged as the strongest predictor, reflecting customers' appreciation for personalized attention and understanding (Ladhari, 2009). Finally, tangibility, encompassing physical facilities and staff appearance, contributes to positive perceptions of service quality (Lai, 2004). Overall, the study confirms that customer retention in the Nepali banking sector depends on both functional reliability and relational dimensions of service quality, underscoring the importance of consistent service delivery, employee training, and customer-centric strategies to enhance loyalty.

Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that all five dimensions of service quality—reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility exert a positive and significant influence on customer retention within Nepali commercial banks. This suggests that enhancing these dimensions collectively can substantially strengthen customer loyalty and long-term relationships. Reliability reflects the degree to which services are delivered accurately, consistently, and in alignment with customer expectations. When banks fulfill their service promises and maintain dependable operations, customers perceive higher value and trust, leading to stronger retention. Responsiveness captures the willingness and ability of bank employees to address customer needs promptly and adapt to their evolving preferences.

A proactive and customer-oriented approach fosters satisfaction and loyalty among clients. Assurance pertains to the confidence and trust customers place in the bank's competence, professionalism, and ethical standards; when customers feel secure in their financial interactions, their commitment to the institution deepens. Finally, tangibility refers to the physical and aesthetic aspects of banking facilities, technological infrastructure, and staff appearance. Well-maintained premises and modern service environments create positive impressions that enhance the perceived quality of service. Collectively, these findings highlight that improving both the functional and experiential aspects of service delivery is crucial for sustaining customer retention in Nepal's competitive banking sector.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared having no conflict of interest associated with this study.

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Impact of Behavioral Biases on Investor Reactions: Evidence From the Nepal Stock Exchange

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of key behavioral biases overconfidence, herd behavior, loss aversion, and mental accounting on stock market reactions among individual investors in the Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE). Contrary to the assumptions of traditional finance, which posit rational decision-making, behavioral finance emphasizes the influence of psychological factors on investor behavior. Using a quantitative research design, primary data were collected from 250 active investors through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire. Multiple linear regression analysis indicates that the model explains 44.2% of the variation in stock market reactions (Adjusted $R^2 = .442$, $p < .001$). Herd behavior ($\beta = .388$, $p < .001$) and overconfidence ($\beta = .275$, $p = .002$) were found to be statistically significant positive predictors. However, loss aversion and mental accounting did not show significant effects. The findings highlight the dominance of social and cognitive influences in shaping investor decisions in Nepal, suggesting the need for improved financial literacy and regulatory oversight.

Keywords: Behavioral Finance, Herd Behavior, Overconfidence, NEPSE, Investor Psychology, Nepal

Introduction

The traditional view of financial markets, grounded in the Efficient Market Hypothesis (EMH), assumes that investors act rationally and that market prices fully reflect all available information. However, persistent market anomalies, such as speculative bubbles and abrupt price crashes, challenge this assumption. Behavioral finance provides an alternative perspective by incorporating psychological insights into financial decision-making.

In emerging markets like Nepal, where the Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE) is characterized by volatility and increasing retail participation, understanding investor psychology is particularly important. Despite growing interest in behavioral finance globally, empirical studies in the Nepalese context remain limited. This study aims to address this gap by analyzing how behavioral biases influence stock market reactions among Nepalese investors.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Behavioral finance literature suggests that individuals often deviate from rational decision-making due to cognitive biases and emotional influences.

Overconfidence Bias

Investors tend to overestimate their knowledge and predictive abilities, leading to excessive trading and risk-taking (Barber & Odean, 2001).

Herd Behavior

Investors often mimic the actions of others, disregarding their own information, especially during uncertain market conditions (Hirshleifer & Teoh, 2003).

Loss Aversion

According to Prospect Theory, individuals experience losses more intensely than gains, influencing their investment choices (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979).

Mental Accounting

Investors categorize financial decisions into separate accounts, often leading to irrational portfolio allocation (Thaler, 1985).

Based on these theoretical insights, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- **H1:** Herd behavior significantly influences stock market reactions.
- **H2:** Loss aversion significantly influences stock market reactions.
- **H3:** Mental accounting significantly influences stock market reactions.
- **H4:** Overconfidence significantly influences stock market reactions.

Methodology

Research Design and Sampling

This study adopts a descriptive and causal-comparative research design. Primary data were collected from 250 individual investors in Kathmandu using convenience sampling. The sample mainly comprised young and educated participants, with a majority aged between 26 and 35 years.

Instrumentation and Reliability

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of 19 items measured on a five-point Likert scale. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha indicated strong internal consistency (α = .861), with individual constructs ranging from .754 to .842.

Model Specification

The following multiple linear regression model was employed:

$SMR = \alpha + \beta_1 HB + \beta_2 LA + \beta_3 MA + \beta_4 OC + e$

Where:

- SMR = Stock Market Reaction
- HB = Herd Behavior
- LA = Loss Aversion
- MA = Mental Accounting
- OC = Overconfidence

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis reveals that overconfidence is the most dominant bias (Mean = 4.12, SD = 0.68), followed by herd behavior (Mean = 3.85, SD = 0.85). Mental accounting shows the lowest mean score, indicating relatively weaker influence among investors.

Correlation Analysis

All variables exhibited positive correlations. The strongest relationship was observed between overconfidence and herd behavior ($r = .521$, $p < .01$), suggesting that these biases may jointly influence investor decisions.

Regression Analysis

The regression model is statistically significant ($F(4,245) = 51.24$, $p < .001$) and explains 44.2% of the variance in stock market reactions.

Variable	Coefficient (B)	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	0.531	2.150	0.032	—
Herd Behavior	0.388	4.621	0.000	Accepted
Loss Aversion	0.095	1.130	0.260	Rejected
Mental Accounting	-0.112	-1.450	0.148	Rejected
Overconfidence	0.275	3.185	0.002	Accepted

Discussion

The findings indicate that behavioral biases significantly shape investor reactions in NEPSE, with herd behavior emerging as the most influential factor. This suggests that investors are highly responsive to collective market sentiment, often driven by rumors and social influence.

Overconfidence also plays a significant role, particularly among younger investors who may overestimate their market knowledge and trading abilities. In contrast, loss aversion and mental accounting were not statistically significant, implying that these biases may operate at an individual level rather than influencing overall market trends.

Conclusion and Implications

This study concludes that investor behavior in NEPSE is strongly influenced by psychological biases, particularly herd behavior and overconfidence. These findings challenge the assumptions of market rationality and highlight the importance of behavioral considerations in financial decision-making.

Practical Implications:

- **Regulators (SEBON/NEPSE):** Should develop mechanisms to monitor investor sentiment and control speculative behavior.
- **Investors:** Should enhance financial literacy and adopt disciplined investment strategies.
- **Financial Advisors:** Should incorporate behavioral coaching to help clients manage emotional biases.

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उच्च शिक्षामा नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिको उपयोगिता

राम कृष्ण सिंखडा

क्याम्पस प्रमुख

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लेखसार

प्रस्तुत लेख उच्च शिक्षामा उपयोगमा आएका शिक्षण पद्धतिको अध्ययनमा केन्द्रित छ । यस अध्ययनको मुख्य उद्देश्य उच्च शिक्षामा प्रयोग भइरहेका शिक्षण पद्धतिहरूको स्वरूप, ती पद्धतिले कक्षा शिक्षणमा पारेको प्रभाव र तिनप्रति शिक्षकका अनुभवहरू पत्ता लगाउनु हो । अध्ययनअनुसार शिक्षण पद्धतिको नवीन प्रयोगले विद्यार्थीको सिकाइ, सहभागिता र सोच्ने क्षमतामा आएको परिवर्तनलाई मुख्य प्राथमिकता दिएको छ । यसका लागि काठमाडौँ जिल्लाका निजी तथा सामुदायिक कलेजमा स्नातक तहमा अध्यापन गर्ने चारजना शिक्षकलाई उद्देश्यपूर्ण नमुना छनोटद्वारा सहभागी गराइएको छ । तथ्य सङ्कलनका लागि अर्ध–संरचित अन्तर्वार्ता र कक्षा अवलोकन विधि अपनाइएको छ भने सङ्कलित तथ्यलाई विषयगत (थिमेटिक) ढाँचामा विश्लेषण गरी शिक्षकका अनुभव र शिक्षण व्यवहारको सार निकालिएको छ । अध्ययनबाट प्राप्त निष्कर्षअनुसार उच्च शिक्षामा सहकार्यात्मक, छलफलमुखी, परियोजनामा आधारित र सूचना प्रविधिसँग सम्बन्धित शिक्षण पद्धति तीव्र गतिमा प्रयोगमा आएको पाइएको छ । यी पद्धतिले विद्यार्थीलाई सिकाइमा सक्रिय र उत्तरदायी बनाउने, शिक्षणलाई प्रभावकारी बनाउने तथा शिक्षण–सिकाइ सम्बन्धलाई सजीव बनाउने भूमिका निर्वाह गरेका देखिएको छ । साथै नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिहरू नै शिक्षण गुणस्तर सुधारको प्रमुख माध्यम बन्न सक्ने निर्देश गरिएको छ । त्यसका लागि शिक्षकले तिनलाई सन्दर्भअनुकूल, योजनाबद्ध र आत्मानुभूत गरी प्रयोग गर्न सक्नुपर्छ । तसर्थ कक्षाकोठाको सिकाइलाई प्रभावकारी बनाउने उद्देश्य प्राप्तिमा सक्रिय जोसुकैलाई पनि यस लेखको औचित्य रहेको देखिन्छ ।

शब्दकुञ्जीः उच्च शिक्षा, शिक्षण पद्धति, कक्षा शिक्षण, अनुभवात्मक अध्ययन, विषयगत विश्लेषण

विषयपरिचय

शिक्षालाई समाजको आत्मा मानिन्छ । उच्च शिक्षा राष्ट्रका लागि आवश्यक पर्ने दक्ष जनशक्ति उत्पादन, अनुसन्धान संस्कृति विकास र ज्ञान सृजनाको मार्ग प्रशस्त गर्ने मुख्य साधनका रूपमा स्थापित छ (

चन्क, सन् २०१२) । उच्च शिक्षाले मात्र ज्ञानको सञ्चार गर्नु हुँदैन । बरु विद्यार्थीमा विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता, समस्या समाधान क्षमता र सहकार्य गर्ने सीप विकास गर्नमा केन्द्रित हुनुपर्छ (भिगोत्स्की, सन् १९७८) । शिक्षणको गुणस्तर मुख्यतः शिक्षण पद्धतिमा निर्भर रहन्छ । शिक्षण पद्धतिहरू स्थिर हुँदैनन् । समय, प्रविधि र समाजका आवश्यकताअनुसार तिनमा निरन्तर परिवर्तन भइरहन्छ (ग्यारिसन र भौगन, सन् २००८) । पछिल्ला वर्षहरूमा उच्च शिक्षामा प्रयोग भइरहेका नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिहरूले परम्परागत व्याख्यानमा आधारित शिक्षणलाई चुनौती दिएका छन् । तिनले विद्यार्थी–शिक्षक अन्तरक्रिया, सहकार्य र सिकाइ वातावरणमा गहिरो प्रभाव पारेका छन् (थोमस, सन् २०००) ।

शिक्षण पद्धतिमा आएको नवीनता केवल प्रविधिको प्रयोगमा मात्र सीमित छैन । यसले शिक्षण–सङ्कल्प, शिक्षक र विद्यार्थी बिचको अन्तरक्रिया, सिकाइको सक्रियता र विद्यार्थीको आत्मनिर्भरता विकास गर्न महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान पुऱ्याउँछ (किम र ली, सन् २०२०) । विशेषगरी Flipped Classroom र Blended Learning जस्ता पद्धतिहरूले विद्यार्थीलाई कक्षामा निष्क्रिय श्रोता नभई सक्रिय ज्ञान–सिर्जनाकर्ता बनाउने अवसर प्रदान गर्छन् (ब्राउन र क्लार्क, सन् २००६) ।

नेपालका उच्च शिक्षण संस्थाहरूमा अझै पनि पारम्परिक व्याख्यानमुखी शिक्षण पद्धति प्रचलित छ (श्रेष्ठ, सन् २०१९) । यस्ता पद्धतिहरूले विद्यार्थीलाई निष्क्रिय बनाउँछ, आलोचनात्मक विचार निर्माणमा अवरोध पुऱ्याएको गुनासा सुनिन्छन् र सिकाइको गुणस्तरमा गिरावट ल्याएका चर्चा भइरहेका छन् । यस सन्दर्भमा उच्च शिक्षामा प्रयोग भइरहेका शिक्षण पद्धतिहरू कस्ता छन् र ती पद्धतिले कक्षा शिक्षणमा कस्तो प्रभाव पारेका छन् ? (ग्यारिसन र भौगन, सन् २००८) । सोही समस्यामा आधारित रही उच्च शिक्षामा प्रयोग भइरहेका शिक्षण पद्धतिहरू पत्ता लगाउने, ती पद्धतिले कक्षा शिक्षणमा पारेको प्रभाव मूल्याङ्कन गर्ने र शिक्षकका अनुभवमार्फत शिक्षणका नयाँ सम्भावनाहरू पहिचान गर्ने उद्देश्य निर्धारण गरिएका छन् । शिक्षकको अनुभव र कक्षा अभ्यास नै शिक्षण सुधारको आधार मानिन्छ । यस अध्ययनले शिक्षकले अपनाएका पद्धतिहरू, तिनको प्रभाव र प्रयोगका चुनौती उजागर गर्दै भावी शिक्षण सुधारका लागि प्रमाण–आधारित सन्दर्भ सामग्री प्रदान गर्ने भएकाले अन्य अध्येतालाई पनि औचित्य रहने देखिएको छ

पूर्वकार्यको समीक्षा

उच्च शिक्षामा नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिको उपयोगिता र प्रभावकारितामा महत्त्वपूर्ण दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत गरिएका पाइन्छन् । भिगोत्स्की (सन् (१९७८) ले सामाजिक संरचनावादको सिद्धान्तमार्फत विद्यार्थीको ज्ञान निर्माणमा सहकार्य र अन्तरक्रियाको भूमिका अत्यन्त महत्त्वपूर्ण हुने देखाएका छन् । यसै सिद्धान्तमा आधारित Flipped Classroom र Blended Learning जस्ता पद्धतिहरूले विद्यार्थीलाई कक्षाबाहिर ज्ञानको अधिग्रहण गर्न र कक्षामा अन्तरक्रियात्मक गतिविधिमा सहभागी हुन उत्प्रेरित गर्छन् (गरिसन र भौगन, सन् २००८) । थोमस (सन् २०००) को परियोजनामा आधारित सिकाइ अध्ययनले वास्तविक समस्या–आधारित सिकाइले विद्यार्थीको आलोचनात्मक सोच, समस्या समाधान क्षमता र संचार सीपमा वृद्धि गर्ने देखाएको छ । त्यसैगरी किम र ली (सन् २०२०) ले Blended Learning को प्रयोगले विद्यार्थीको सन्तुष्टि र सिकाइ परिणाम दुवैमा सकारात्मक प्रभाव पार्ने पुष्टि गरेको पाइन्छ । ब्राउन र क्लार्क (सन् २००६) ले गुणात्मक तथ्याङ्क विश्लेषण

विधिको माध्यमबाट शिक्षकको अनुभव र चुनौतीहरूको प्रभावकारी मूल्याङ्कन सम्भव हुने देखाएका छन् । यद्यपि, नेपालमा यस्ता पद्धतिको कार्यान्वयन, स्थानीय सन्दर्भअनुसार अनुकूलन, प्राविधिक पूर्वाधार र विभागीय क्षमता विकासमा सीमित अनुसन्धान भएको देखिन्छ (श्रेष्ठ, सन् २०१९) ।

आजको उच्च शिक्षा प्रणालीमा प्रविधिको समावेशले शिक्षा र अनुसन्धानका क्षेत्रमा दक्षता र पहुँचलाई व्यापक बनाएको छ । डिजिटल लर्निङ प्लेटफर्म, वेबिनार, अनलाइन कोर्स र भर्चुअल क्लासरूमजस्ता उपकरणहरूले विद्यार्थीलाई थप लचिलो र अवसरपूर्ण शिक्षा प्राप्त गर्न सक्षम बनाएका छन् । शिक्षकहरूले पनि शिक्षण सामग्री तयार पार्न, कक्षा व्यवस्थापन गर्न र विद्यार्थीहरूको प्रगति विवरण सङ्कलन गर्न प्रविधिको उपयोग गरिरहेका छन् (जोशी, २०२१) । प्रविधिको प्रयोगमा सबै क्षेत्रमा समानता छैन । विशेष गरी विकासशील देशहरूमा प्रविधि र इन्टरनेट पहुँचको असमानता, डिजिटल साक्षरताको कमी र संसाधनको अभाव जस्ता चुनौतीहरूले शिक्षा प्रणालीमा प्रविधिको प्रभावकारी प्रयोगमा अवरोध पुऱ्याएका छन् । यद्यपि, प्रविधिको प्रभाव र यसको तीव्र वृद्धिले युगको आवश्यकता र भविष्यको शिक्षा प्रणालीमा महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान पुऱ्याएको देखिन्छ । शैक्षिक संस्थाहरूमा रहेको प्रविधि पूर्वाधार र यसलाई उपयोग गर्न सक्ने मानवीय तथा संस्थागत क्षमताको सीमितताले प्रविधिको साधनहरूको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी महत्त्वाकाङ्क्षाहरू पुरा गर्न कठिन र चुनौतीपूर्ण बनाएको छ (आचार्य, २०७५) ।यस परिप्रेक्ष्यमा, उच्च शिक्षा शिक्षणमा प्रविधिको प्रयोगबाट उत्पन्न अवसर र चुनौतीहरूको सामना गर्नु अत्यन्त महत्त्वपूर्ण छ । यसले विद्यार्थीलाई गुणस्तरीय शिक्षा प्रदान गर्न र तिनको उज्ज्वल भविष्य निर्माण गर्न मार्गदर्शन गर्न सक्नेछ ।उच्च शिक्षा शिक्षणमा प्रविधिको अवस्था नेपालमा विश्व विद्यालय शिक्षाको इतिहास नियाल्दा, वि.सं. १९७५ भाऽ २७ मा त्रिचन्द्र कलेज (पहिले त्रिभुवन चन्ऽ कलेज भनेर चिनिने) उच्च शिक्षा प्रदायक संस्थाका रूपमा स्थापना भएको पाइन्छ । वि.सं. २०१६ मा स्थापना भएको त्रिभुवन विश्व विद्यालयलाई नेपालको सबैभन्दा पुरानो र ठुलो विश्व विद्यालयको रूपमा मान्यता दिइएको छ (कान्तिपुर राष्ट्रिय दैनिक, २०८०) । सन् २०२३ मा प्रकाशित क्ष्ऋत ऋयक्उभतभलअथ ँचक्भधयचप ायच त्भबअजभचक का अनुसार शिक्षक प्रशिक्षणका लागि डिजिटल प्रविधिहरूको प्रयोगले शिक्षा नीति, पाठ्यक्रम डिजाइन र सेवापूर्व प्रशिक्षणमा क्ष्ऋत को उपयोगलाई निर्देशित गर्दै शिक्षकहरूको क्षमता विकासमा योगदान पुऱ्याएको छ । यसले शिक्षण

शैक्षिक प्रविधिले विज्ञान, समाजशास्त्र र सञ्चारका सिद्धान्तहरूलाई आधार मान्दै शिक्षण प्रक्रियामा सुधार ल्याउन मद्दत पुऱ्याउँछ । यसले विद्यार्थीकेन्द्रित, व्यावहारिक र नवीन पद्धतिहरूको प्रयोगमार्फत् शिक्षण सिकाइलाई सहज र प्रभावकारी बनाउँछ (अधिकारी, सन् २०२३) । आर्टिफिसियल इन्टेलिजेन्स (AI) को बढ्दो प्रभावले कुन विषयगत समूहहरूको रोजगारी घट्दैछ र कुन क्षेत्रमा नयाँ रोजगारी सिर्जना हुँदैछ भन्ने विषयमा सरकारले व्यवस्थित अध्ययन गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकता छ (मकालु खबर, २०८०) । प्रविधिको प्रयोगले शिक्षण प्रक्रियालाई सहज र सिकाइलाई दिगो बनाउँदै प्रभावकारी बनाएको छ । स्मार्ट बोर्ड, एलइडी टिभी, ओएचपी, ल्यापटप र स्मार्ट फोन जस्ता उपकरणहरूको प्रयोगले शिक्षणलाई प्रभावकारी, व्यावहारिक र समसामयिक बनाउँछ । यी उपकरणहरूले विद्यार्थीलाई आधुनिक ज्ञान, सिप र धारणा विकास गर्न सहयोग पुऱ्याउँछन् । तिनले शिक्षाका उद्देश्य हासिल गर्न सघाउँछन् (पाण्डे, २०७६) । यद्यपि सूचना प्रविधिले कक्षा

कोठामा आमूल परिवर्तन ल्याए पनि यसको वैज्ञानिक र सुलभ प्रयोग सीमित छ । मुख्यतया यसको प्रभावकारी उपयोग निजी र प्रविधि पूर्वाधार सम्पन्न शैक्षिक संस्थाहरूमा व्यापक देखिन्छ । आधुनिक शिक्षणलाई प्रभावकारी बनाउन शिक्षकहरूलाई सूचना प्रविधिमा अद्यावधिक, प्राविधिक सिपयुक्त र उत्साही बनाउन तालिम र स्रोत साधनहरू उपलब्ध गराउनु जरुरी छ । पोखरेल (सन् २०२४) ले क्याम्पसमा बढ्दो सूचना प्रविधिको प्रयोग, डिजिटल पूर्वाधारमा भएको लगानी, स्मार्ट बोर्ड र भर्चुअल शिक्षण विधिको प्रयोगले शिक्षण क्रियाकलापमा सहजता ल्याएको देखाएकी छन् । उनको अध्ययनले शिक्षण विधिमा प्रविधिको सन्तुलित संयोजनले उच्च शिक्षालाई प्रविधिसँग जोड्न, शिक्षालाई सिपसँग जोड्न, विद्यार्थीको दक्षता अभिवृद्धि गर्न तथा रोजगारमूलक बनाउन मद्दत पुग्ने देखिन्छ । उनले उद्देश्यपूर्ण नमूना सङ्कलन विधिबाट नमुना छनोट गरी गुणात्मक विधिको उपयोग गरेर तथ्याङ्क सङ्कलन तथा विश्लेषण गरेको देखिन्छ । साथै गहन अन्तरवार्ता र द्वितीय स्रोतहरूको माध्यमबाट आवश्यक तथ्याङ्क सङ्कलन गरी तार्किक र वर्णनात्मक विश्लेषण गरिएको छ । यस लेखले उच्च शिक्षामा सूचनाप्रविधिमा आधारित शिक्षण विधिलाई बढी जोड दिएको देखिन्छ ।

समस्या–आधारित शिक्षण (एद्यी) एक विद्यार्थीकेन्द्रित शिक्षण पद्धति हो । यसमा सिक्नेहरूले वास्तविक जीवनका समस्यामा संलग्न हुँदै आवश्यक ज्ञान र सिप प्राप्त गर्छन् । व्याख्यानमार्फत सामग्री पहिले नदिई, विद्यार्थीहरूले प्रामाणिक समस्यालाई अन्वेषण, विश्लेषण र समाधान गर्दै जान्छन् । त्यसले उनीहरूलाई अपेक्षित सिकाइको उपलब्धितर्फ उत्प्रेरित गर्छ । यसको प्रारम्भ सन् १९६० को दशकमा क्यानाडाको म्याकमास्टर विश्वविद्यालयबाट चिकित्सा शिक्षामा भएको हो । वर्तमानमा उच्च शिक्षाका विविध अनुशासनहरूमा यसको व्यापक प्रयोग भइरहेको छ । यसैगरी आचार्य (२०८०) ले सुशासन र व्यवस्थापनलाई सुदृढीकरण गर्ने, कोष तथा पूर्वाधार वृद्धि गर्ने, पाठ्यक्रमको अद्यावधिक र विविधीकरण गर्ने, शिक्षण सिकाइ र मूल्याङ्कन अभ्यासमा सुधार गर्ने, अनुसन्धानको उत्पादन र प्रभाव बढाउनेजस्ता विभिन्न उपाय र पहलकदमी गरी नेपालमा उच्च शिक्षाको गुणस्तर सुधार गर्न अत्यावश्यक रहेको बताएका छन् । यी उपाय र पहलकदमीका लागि सरकार, विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग, विश्वविद्यालय, कलेज, शिक्षक, विद्यार्थी, रोजगारदाता, पूर्वविद्यार्थी र नागरिक समाज लगायतका सम्पूर्ण सरोकारवालाको प्रतिबद्धता र सहकार्य आवश्यक रहेको देखाएका छन् ।

प्रस्तुत पूर्वकार्यले विश्वव्यापी रूपमा नवीन पद्धतिहरू प्रभावकारी भए पनि स्थानीय शैक्षिक सन्दर्भमा तिनको कार्यान्वयन र प्रभावको अध्ययन अपूर्ण रहेको देखाएका छन् । त्यसले यस अध्ययनको आवश्यकता र औचित्यलाई पुष्टि गर्छ । त्यसले नेपालका उच्च शिक्षण संस्थाहरूमा अपनाइएका नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिहरूको प्रभावकारिता र चुनौती उजागर गर्ने लक्ष्यलाई देखाउँछ ।

अध्ययन विधि

अध्ययनमा उच्च शिक्षामा प्रयोग भइरहेका नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिहरूको प्रभावकारिता र प्रयोग अनुभवको गहिरो मूल्याङ्कन गर्न मिश्रित विधि अनुसन्धान विधिलाई अपनाइएको छ । यसले गुणात्मक र परिमाणात्मक तथ्याङ्कलाई सँगै सङ्कलन गरी विश्लेषण गर्ने अवसर प्रदान गर्छ । गुणात्मक तथ्याङ्क

शिक्षकको अनुभव, चुनौती र अवसर पहिचान गर्न केन्द्रित छ परिमाणात्मक तथ्याङ्कलाई विद्यार्थीको सिकाइ संलग्नता र शिक्षण पद्धतिको प्रभाव मापन गर्न प्रयोग गरिएको छ ।

काठमाडौँका चार उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानका स्नातक तहमा अध्यापन गर्ने चार शिक्षक (दुई निजी कलेज र दुई सामुदायिक कलेज) र तिनीहरूको कक्षामा अध्ययनरत विद्यार्थीहरूबाट नमुना छनोट गरिएको थियो । उद्देश्यमूलक नमुना छनोट अपनाएर ती शिक्षकहरूलाई छनोट गरिएको थियो । उनीहरूले ँष्ङिउभम ऋबिककचयक, द्यभिलमभम ोभबचलष्लन र परियोजनामा आधारित सिकाइ (एद्यी) जस्ता नवीन पद्धति प्रयोग गरिरहेका थिए । फ्याकल्टी सदस्य (शिक्षक) सँग अर्धसंरचित अन्तर्वार्ता सञ्चालन गरी प्रत्येक शिक्षकको अनुभव, पद्धति प्रयोगका चुनौती र मूल्याङ्कनको दृष्टिकोण सङ्कलन गरियो । कक्षाको प्रत्यक्ष अवलोकनमार्फत शिक्षण क्रियाकलाप, विद्यार्थीको संलग्नता र अन्तरक्रियाको स्तर मूल्याङ्कन गरिएको थियो ।

परिमाणात्मक तथ्याङ्कका लागि शिक्षक र विद्यार्थीहरूका लागि मापन स्केल तयार गरिएको थियो । शिक्षकका लागि नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिको उपयोगिता मापन स्केल र विद्यार्थीका लागि सिकाइ संलग्नता मापन स्केल प्रयोग गरियो । तथ्याङ्क विश्लेषणमा क्एक्क्ष प्रयोग गरी सहसम्बन्ध र t–test को उपयोग गरिएको थियो ।

गुणात्मक तथ्याङ्कलाई थिमेटिक विश्लेषणका माध्यमबाट कोडिङ गरियो र मुख्य विषयवस्तुहरूको पहिचान गरी सैद्धान्तिक दृष्टिकोणसँग तुलना गरियो । अनुसन्धानमा सैद्धान्तिक र प्रायोगिक सैद्धान्तिकता कायम राख्न विशेषज्ञ आपसी परामर्श र सदस्य जाँच (Member Checking) प्रक्रिया अपनाइएको छ ।

नतिजा तथा छलफल

उच्च शिक्षामा प्रयोग भइरहेका नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिहरूको मूल्याङ्कन गर्दा यस अध्ययनले शिक्षक र विद्यार्थी दुवै पक्षबाट तथ्याङ्क सङ्कलन गरी तिनका प्रभावको गहिरो विश्लेषण गरेको छ । शिक्षकहरूले विद्यार्थीको विभिन्न सिकाइ शैली र गतिअनुसार सामग्री उपलब्ध गराउन सक्ने भएकाले यस पद्धतिले विद्यार्थीको संलग्नता र सृजनशीलता विकासमा योगदान पुऱ्याएको पाइन्छ । तथ्याङ्कअनुसार Blended Learning प्रयोग गर्ने विद्यार्थीहरूको सिकाइ संलग्नता स्तर उच्च रहेको देखिन्छ (r = ०.५८, p < ०.०५) । त्यसले नवीन पद्धतिले विद्यार्थीलाई सक्रिय सिकाइकर्ता बन्न उत्प्रेरित गर्ने दाबीलाई समर्थन गर्दछ ।

त्यसैगरी Flipped Classroom पद्धतिले परम्परागत व्याख्यानमुखी शिक्षणसँग तुलना गर्दा आलोचनात्मक सोचको विकासमा उच्च प्रभाव देखाएको छ । परिमाणात्मक परीक्षण (t–test) अनुसार Flipped Classroom प्रयोग गरिएका विद्यार्थी समूह र परम्परागत समूह बिच आलोचनात्मक विश्लेषण क्षमतामा महत्त्वपूर्ण भिन्नता पाइयो (२४८) = ४.२१, p < ०.००१) । यसले कक्षा समयलाई पारम्परिक ज्ञान प्रस्तुतीकरणको सट्टा अन्तरक्रियात्मक गतिविधि र समस्या समाधानमा केन्द्रित गर्दा विद्यार्थीले गहिरो र सक्रिय सिकाइ अनुभव गर्नेछन् भन्ने देखाउँछ ।

गुणात्मक विश्लेषणले कार्यान्वयनमा देखा परेका तीन प्रमुख चुनौती र अवसरहरू प्रस्ट पारेको छ । ती विषयलाई यहाँ थिमका आधारमा व्याख्या गरिएको छ :

संस्थागत पूर्वाधारको अपर्याप्तता

अधिकांश शिक्षकले उच्चगतिको इन्टरनेट, गुणस्तरीय अनलाइन सामग्री र LMS प्रणालीको अभावले Flipped Classroom र Blended Learning कार्यान्वयनमा अवरोध पुऱ्याएको बताएका छन् । शिक्षक 'क' ले बताए–"सैद्धान्तिक रूपमा हामी नवीन पद्धति लागू गर्न चाहन्छौं, तर संस्थागत पूर्वाधारका अभावले प्रयासलाई कमजोर बनाउँछ" । उनको यस प्रतिक्रियाअनुसार प्रविधि र पूर्वाधारको पर्याप्तताबिना नवीन शिक्षण पद्धति दिगो रूपमा कार्यान्वयन गर्न कठिन हुन्छ ।

सङ्कायका सदस्यहरूको प्रतिरोध र शिक्षण तत्परता

केही शिक्षकहरू पुराना अभ्यास र समयको अभावका कारण नवीन पद्धति अपनाउन विरोध गरिरहेका थिए । उनीहरूले थप तालिम र निरन्तर व्यावसायिक विकास आवश्यक भएको बताएका छन् । यो प्रतिरोध मुख्यतः दक्षता र आत्मविश्वासको कमीबाट उत्पन्न भएको देखिन्छ । चन्क (सन् २०१२) का अनुसार शिक्षकको स्व–प्रभावकारिता (Self–Efficacy) को अभावले नवीन पद्धति अपनाउन कठिन बनाउँछ ।

व्यवस्थापन सङ्कायमा परियोजनामा आधारित शिक्षण (PBL)

समस्या वा परियोजनामा आधारित शिक्षण (Problem–Based Learning—PBL) एक परिवर्तनकारी शैक्षिक दृष्टिकोण बनेको देखिन्छ । यसले उच्च शिक्षामा ध्यानकेन्द्रित गर्ने तरिका बदल्ने र विद्यार्थीलाई निष्क्रिय ज्ञान ग्रहणबाट सक्रिय समस्या समाधान, व्यवहारिक अन्वेषण र विद्यार्थीकेन्द्रित सिकाइतर्फ उन्मुख बनाउने देखाएको छ । शिक्षक–४ का अनुसार त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालयको व्यवस्थापन सङ्कायमा व्याख्यान प्रधान शिक्षणको प्रचलन छ । एट्ठी को अवलम्बनले विद्यार्थी संलग्नता, संज्ञानात्मक विकास र व्यावसायिक दक्षतामा महत्त्वपूर्ण प्रभाव पार्छ ।

प्रस्तुत तथ्यअनुसार नेपाली उच्च शिक्षामा विद्यार्थीहरूमा सक्रिय, आत्म–नियन्त्रित र सहकार्यात्मक संलग्नता उल्लेखनीय रूपमा रहेको देखिन्छ । परियोजनामा आधारित व्यवस्थापन कक्षामा करिब ८०–९०% विद्यार्थी व्यापारिक केसहरूको संरचित समूह चर्चामा सक्रिय रूपमा संलग्न हुन्छन् भने ६०–७०% विद्यार्थी व्यवस्थापनसम्बन्धी समस्याहरूमा परिकल्पना निर्माण र सूचनाको आलोचनात्मक मूल्याङ्कनमा संलग्न भएका देखिन्छन् । साथै करिब ७५–८२% विद्यार्थीले एट्ठी ले सैद्धान्तिक अवधारणालाई वास्तविक व्यापारिक वा सङ्गठनात्मक परिदृश्यसँग लागू गर्न सहज बनाएको अनुभव गरेका छन् भने त्यसले परम्परागत व्याख्यान विधिमा आधारित कक्षामा सीमित रहेको उच्च स्तरीय संज्ञानात्मक संलग्नतालाई स्पष्ट रूपले प्रतिविम्बित गरेको देखिन्छ ।

संज्ञानात्मक पक्षबाहेक एट्ठी ले व्यवस्थापन सङ्कायका विद्यार्थीहरूमा महत्त्वपूर्ण व्यावसायिक तथा Soft Skills विकास गर्न पनि भूमिका खेल्दछ । एट्ठी गतिविधिमा संलग्न हुँदा करिब ८५–९२% विद्यार्थीले प्रस्तुति, विचार–प्रस्ताव र व्यवस्थापकीय संवादमा आफ्नो सञ्चार क्षमतामा सुधार अनुभव गरेको देखिएको छ

। त्यसैगरी ८०–९०% विद्यार्थीले समूह कार्य र परियोजना व्यवस्थापनमा सहकार्य र टीमवर्कमा वृद्धि देखाएका छन् भने ७०–८५% विद्यार्थीले नेतृत्व क्षमतामा वृद्धि पाएका छन् । समय व्यवस्थापन र आत्मनियन्त्रणका सिपहरूमा करिब ७५–८८% विद्यार्थी सुधार देखाउँछन् । जटिल सङ्गठनात्मक चुनौतीहरू समाधान गर्न ७८–९०% विद्यार्थीको सहकार्यात्मक समस्यासमाधान क्षमता बढेको देखिन्छ । केही BBA र MBA कार्यक्रमहरूमा विद्यार्थीहरूलाई peer facilitator वा case leader का रूपमा भूमिका दिइएको छ । त्यसमा करिब ६०–७०% विद्यार्थीले आत्मविश्वास, दायित्वबोध र व्यावसायिक परिपक्वता बढेको अनुभव गरेका छन् । यी सबै परिणामहरूले एद्यी लाई मात्र सिकाइ विधि नभई व्यापक विद्यार्थी विकासको माध्यम पनि बनाएका छन् । त्यसले आधुनिक व्यवस्थापन अभ्याससँग मिल्दोजुल्दो दक्षता प्रदान गर्छ ।

PBL को अवलम्बनले त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालयको व्यवस्थापन पाठ्यक्रममा बहुआयामी शैक्षिक निहितार्थ उत्पन्न गर्छ । यसले पाठ्यक्रम पुनर्संरचना आवश्यक बनाउँछ । त्यसले समस्यामा आधारित कार्य, वास्तविक–परिदृश्य समस्या र अन्वेषणकेन्द्रित परियोजना कार्यलाई समावेश गर्ने गरी ज्ञानको व्यवहारिक प्रयोगलाई प्रोत्साहन गर्दछ । साथै शिक्षकहरूको भूमिका परम्परागत ज्ञान–प्रदायकभन्दा मार्गदर्शक र सहयोगी बन्न आवश्यक छ । एद्यी को प्रभावकारी कार्यान्वयनका लागि केस सामग्री, डिजिटल स्रोत र साना–समूह सिकाइ स्थान जस्ता पूर्वाधारको पर्याप्त व्यवस्था पनि अपरिहार्य हुन्छ । यसले विद्यार्थी सिकाइ संस्कृतिमा पनि रूपान्तरण ल्याउँछ । त्यसले रट्ने सिकाइबाट आत्मनिर्देशित, विचारशील र व्यवहारिक सिकाइतर्फ स्थानान्तरण गर्दछ । एद्यी मार्फत सिकेका विद्यार्थीहरू व्यवस्थापन निर्णय क्षमता, रणनीतिक सोच र अन्तरवैयक्तिक क्षमता विकासमा सक्षम हुन्छन् । त्यसले उनीहरूको रोजगारीयोग्यता बढाउँछ र आधुनिक सङ्गठनात्मक वातावरणमा व्यवहारिक दक्षता सुनिश्चित गर्छ । यी सबै लाभको पूर्ण उपयोग गर्नका लागि त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालयले समूहप्रतिवेदन, प्रस्तुति, सहकर्मी मूल्याङ्कन र आत्म–प्रतिविम्बन (Reflective journals) जस्ता प्रक्रियाकेन्द्रित मूल्याङ्कन अपनाउन आवश्यक छ । उक्त पक्ष एद्यी को मूल मर्मसँग सम्बन्धित छ ।

त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालयको व्यवस्थापन सङ्कायमा क्याम्पसमा एद्यी को एकीकृत कार्यान्वयनले परिवर्तनकारी प्रभाव पुऱ्याउन सक्छ । यसले विद्यार्थी संलग्नता, व्यवहारिक सिकाइ र व्यावसायिक दक्षताको विकासमा महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान पुऱ्याउँछ । एद्यी ले परम्परागत व्याख्यान विधिका शिक्षणका सीमितताहरूलाई सम्बोधन गर्दै सैद्धान्तिक शिक्षा र वास्तविक व्यवस्थापन अभ्यास बिचको अन्तर घटाउँछ । यसले शैक्षिक रूपले दक्ष र व्यावसायिक रूपमा सक्षम स्नातक उत्पादन गर्न मदत गर्दछ ।

मूल्याङ्कन प्रणालीको विसङ्गतपूर्ण अभ्यास

पारम्परिक लिखित परीक्षा एद्यी वा परियोजनामा आधारित गतिविधिले प्राप्त सिप र क्षमताको पूर्ण मूल्याङ्कन गर्न सक्दैन । शिक्षक ‘क’, ‘ख’ र ‘घ’ ले “शिक्षकहरूले पोर्टफोलियो र प्रदर्शनमा आधारित मूल्याङ्कन लागू गर्न आवश्यक भएको” बताएका छन् । यसले मूल्याङ्कन प्रणाली सुधार नगरी नवीन पद्धति प्रभावकारी रूपमा प्रयोग गर्न सकिँदैन भन्ने पुष्टि गर्दछ ।

अध्ययनमा निर्धारण गरिएको सैद्धान्तिक आधारअनुसार हेर्दा विश्वव्यापी रूपमा अभ्यासमा आएका Flipped Classroom र Blended Learning जस्ता शिक्षण पद्धतिले विद्यार्थीको संलग्नता, आलोचनात्मक सोच र सहकार्य क्षमता विकासमा योगदान पुऱ्याउने देखाइएको छ (ग्यारिसन र भौगन, सन् २००८, थोमस, सन् २०००) । यस अध्ययनले पनि ती निष्कर्षलाई स्थानीय सन्दर्भमा पुष्टि गरेको छ । तथापि नेपालमा प्राविधिक पूर्वाधारको सीमितता, शिक्षकको तालिम अभाव र मूल्याङ्कन प्रणालीको असङ्गति मुख्य अवरोधको रूपमा देखिएको छ ।

निष्कर्ष

नवीन शिक्षण पद्धति केवल प्रविधि प्रयोग मात्र नभई शिक्षण–अन्तरक्रिया, विद्यार्थीको सक्रियता र शिक्षण वातावरणमा सुधार ल्याउने माध्यम हो । Blended Learning र Flipped Classroom ले विद्यार्थीलाई ज्ञानको निष्क्रिय ग्रहणकर्ता होइन, सक्रिय ज्ञान निर्माता बन्न उत्प्रेरित गरेको छ । एद्यी मार्फत विद्यार्थीले समस्या समाधान, सहकार्य र आत्मनिर्भरता जस्ता उच्च तहका सिपको विकास गरेका छन् ।

माथिको तथ्याङ्कअनुसार शिक्षकको अनुभव शिक्षण विधिको चुनौतीका पक्षसँग बढी सम्बन्धित देखिन्छ । साथै नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिहरूको कार्यान्वयनमा संस्थागत समर्थन, शिक्षकको तालिम र मूल्याङ्कन प्रणालीको सुधार अनिवार्य देखिन्छ । ती पक्षहरूमा सुधार गरिएमा तिनीहरूले उच्च शिक्षामा मात्र होइन विद्यार्थीको जीवनपर्यन्त सिकाइ क्षमता र सृजनात्मक चिन्तनमा पनि दीर्घकालीन प्रभाव पार्ने देखिन्छ ।

यस लेखले Blended Learning र Flipped Classroom जस्ता पद्धतिहरूले विद्यार्थीको संलग्नता, आलोचनात्मक सोच र समस्या समाधान क्षमतामा सकारात्मक प्रभाव पारेको देखिएको छ । परिमाणात्मक तथ्याङ्कले विद्यार्थीहरूको सिकाइ संलग्नता र आलोचनात्मक विश्लेषण क्षमतामा महत्त्वपूर्ण वृद्धि भएको देखाएको छ । त्यसले परम्परागत व्याख्यानमुखी शिक्षणले दिन सक्ने सीमित उपलब्धिभन्दा बढी सृजनात्मक र सक्रिय सिकाइ वातावरण सिर्जना गरेको पुष्टि गर्छ । गुणात्मक विश्लेषणले यस प्रकृतिका विधिको कार्यान्वयनका चुनौतीलाई स्पष्ट पारेको छ । त्यसअन्तर्गत संस्थागत पूर्वाधारको कमीले प्राविधिक रूपमा नवीन पद्धति प्रयोग गर्न कठिनाइ उत्पन्न गरेको छ । शिक्षकहरूको निरासा, उदासीनता, विरोध र तालिमको अभावले यस्ता शिक्षण पद्धति पूर्ण रूपमा कार्यान्वयन हुन नसक्ने अवस्था सिर्जना गरेको छ । मूल्याङ्कन प्रणालीको विसङ्गत पक्षले विद्यार्थीको परियोजना, सहकार्य र आत्मनिर्भरता जस्ता उच्च तहका सिपको सही मूल्याङ्कन गर्ने समस्या पर्ने देखाएको छ ।

नवीन शिक्षण पद्धति केवल प्रविधिको प्रयोगमा सीमित नभई शिक्षण अन्तरक्रिया, विद्यार्थी शिक्षक सहकार्य र कक्षाको शिक्षण वातावरणमा गहिरो सुधार ल्याउने माध्यमका रूपले परिचित छ । यसले विद्यार्थीलाई निष्क्रिय ज्ञान ग्रहणकर्ताबाट सक्रिय ज्ञान निर्माता बन्न उत्प्रेरित गर्दछ । विशेष गरी परियोजनामा आधारित सिकाइ (PBL) र Flipped Classroom पद्धतिले विद्यार्थीलाई समस्या केन्द्रित सिकाइमा सहभागी गराउँछ । त्यसले दीर्घकालीन सृजनात्मक र आलोचनात्मक क्षमता विकासमा योगदान पुऱ्याउँछ ।

अन्ततः यस लेखले उच्च शिक्षामा नवीन पद्धतिहरूलाई दिगो रूपमा कार्यान्वयन गर्नका लागि केही नीतिगत र संस्थागत सुधार आवश्यक भएको निष्कर्ष निकालेको छ । यसमा प्राविधिक पूर्वाधार सुधार, शिक्षकहरूको निरन्तर व्यावसायिक विकास, मूल्याङ्कन प्रणालीमा परिमार्जन र नीति–निर्माणमा नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिको समावेशिता आवश्यक रहेको देखिन्छ । यी पक्षहरू सुधार गरिएमा केवल कक्षा शिक्षामा मात्रै होइन विद्यार्थीको दीर्घकालीन सृजनशीलता, स्वायत्तता र जीवनपर्यन्त सिकाइमा पनि सकारात्मक प्रभाव पार्न सकिन्छ । अतः यस लेखले उच्च शिक्षामा नवीन शिक्षण पद्धतिको प्रभावकारिता, उपयोगिता, चुनौती र अवसरलाई स्पष्ट र प्रमाणमा आधारित शिक्षण प्रक्रियाका रूपले प्रकट गरेको छ ।

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Linguistic Oppression Experienced by Female Researchers Engaged in Academic Writing

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Abstract

Female researchers are increasingly active in academic writing at Tribhuvan University; however, they continue to encounter various forms of linguistic oppression that negatively affect their self-esteem, motivation, and research productivity. This study aimed to identify the types, levels, and impacts of linguistic oppression experienced by female master's students within the university. From a population of 1,000 master's students, 21 female participants were selected using a stratified sampling technique to ensure representation across diverse social, educational, and political backgrounds. Participants assessed their experiences across seven dimensions: linguistic, social, academic, sexual-linguistic, gender, political, and collective. Data were presented using tables and pie charts, and analyzed through Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) to determine the intensity and patterns of oppression. Findings revealed that collective and gender-based oppression were most pronounced, while sexual-linguistic oppression exhibited variability depending on contextual factors. Social and academic dimensions showed moderate levels of oppression, reflecting institutional and cultural dynamics. The study underscores the need for policy reforms, awareness initiatives, and faculty and peer training at Tribhuvan University to create safe, equitable, and supportive academic environments that foster female researchers' participation and productivity.

Keywords: female researchers, linguistic oppression, academic environment, gender equality, academic writing

Introduction

Female researchers play a pivotal role in the advancement of knowledge and the production of scholarly work across disciplines worldwide. Their participation in universities and research institutions has steadily increased over the past decades, contributing significantly to academic writing, research output, and knowledge dissemination (Hyland, 2016). Despite this progress, female researchers often face linguistic oppression, gender-based discrimination, and social inequalities, which can undermine their professional growth, reduce their visibility in academic communities, and negatively affect collaborative endeavors (Kasper & Rose, 2017). Linguistic oppression, defined as the use of language in ways that demean, marginalize, or disempower individuals based on their identity, has been identified as a significant barrier that not only affects personal dignity but also compromises research quality and engagement in scholarly communities (Hyland, 2016).

Previous studies indicate that female researchers frequently encounter critical or dismissive feedback, sarcasm, jokes, and even sexualized comments in academic settings, including classrooms, conferences, and research workplaces (Singh, 2018). These experiences, however, are often reported anecdotally, lacking systematic investigation with robust empirical evidence. While international research has addressed gender disparities in academic publishing and professional communication, the Nepali context remains underexplored, particularly regarding the experiences of female researchers in higher education. Social and cultural structures in Nepal, where patriarchal norms are still deeply entrenched, may exacerbate the impact of linguistic oppression and limit women's opportunities for meaningful participation in academic writing (Thapa, 2020).

This study aims to address these gaps by examining the types and levels of linguistic oppression experienced by female researchers engaged in academic writing. It investigates multiple dimensions, including linguistic, social, academic, sexual-linguistic, gender, political, and collective aspects, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. By analyzing participants' experiences across these dimensions, the study seeks to illuminate the systemic and situational factors contributing to oppression and highlight areas requiring institutional intervention.

The objectives of this research are threefold: first, to identify the specific forms and intensity of linguistic oppression encountered by female researchers; second, to examine how these experiences vary across social, academic, and political contexts; and third, to provide evidence that can inform policy reforms, awareness programs, and gender-sensitive practices in academic institutions. Addressing these objectives is particularly relevant in Nepal, where existing literature predominantly focuses on gender disparities in general education rather than on the experiences of women researchers in academic writing (Thapa, 2020; Singh, 2018).

By filling this research gap, the study offers practical implications for policymakers, institutional leaders, educators, and peers. It provides empirical data that can support the development of inclusive policies, awareness campaigns, and professional training programs aimed at reducing linguistic oppression and fostering gender equality in academic environments. Ultimately, this research contributes to creating a safer, more equitable, and productive academic ecosystem, in which female researchers can engage fully and confidently in scholarly work.

Literature Review

International and local scholarship has consistently highlighted that female researchers encounter multiple forms of linguistic oppression in academic settings, often embedded within the broader sociocultural and institutional structures that govern higher education. Linguistic oppression, in this context, refers not only to overt discriminatory language but also to the subtle and implicit ways through which women's voices and contributions are marginalized. These oppressive practices may manifest through dismissive comments, excessively harsh or biased feedback, sarcasm, gendered assumptions, or sexualized remarks, all of which work collectively to undermine women's academic agency. Hyland (2016) underscores that women in academic publishing face heightened scrutiny and pressure during the peer review process, where critique, evaluative comments, and at times subtle neglect contribute to feelings of inadequacy, reduced confidence, and diminished professional participation. Such experiences can accumulate over time, creating psychological barriers that impede career advancement and limit opportunities for scholarly recognition.

Similarly, Kasper and Rose (2017) argue that linguistic practices are deeply shaped by prevailing social, cultural, and political contexts. They contend that women in academic environments often receive disproportionately more criticism compared to their male colleagues, not necessarily because of the quality of their work, but because entrenched gendered power relations influence how their academic contributions are evaluated. Their research suggests that language becomes a tool through which existing hierarchies are maintained, reinforcing the idea that women must prove their competence more consistently and more rigorously than men in similar positions. This asymmetry reflects broader global patterns of inequality across academic institutions, where gender bias subtly influences everyday communication, evaluative practices, and interpersonal dynamics.

In the Nepali context, these global patterns take on distinct forms shaped by local traditions, social norms, and institutional hierarchies. Thapa (2020) documents that linguistic behavior within Nepali academic institutions varies significantly according to gender identity, with both formal and informal communication channels serving as potential vehicles of oppression. The study highlights that seniority, power distance, and hierarchical structures play a crucial role in shaping how female researchers perceive and respond to critical or dismissive language. Women often internalize such linguistic experiences due to deep-rooted cultural expectations regarding respect, obedience, and silence in the presence of authority figures. Singh (2018) adds that sexualized language—including jokes, comments on appearance, suggestive remarks, or inappropriate humor—can severely harm female researchers' self-esteem and psychological well-being. Such experiences may affect their participation in academic discussions, presentations, or research collaborations, ultimately influencing their academic performance and long-term career prospects.

Likewise, Lama (2019) emphasizes that linguistic microaggressions small, often normalized comments or behaviors that subtly demean or marginalize women—are pervasive within institutional culture. Though seemingly minor in isolation, these microaggressions can accumulate, resulting in long-term professional marginalization, diminished motivation, and withdrawal from academic leadership roles. They create an environment where women must navigate linguistic hostility while simultaneously striving to demonstrate academic excellence.

Building on this robust body of literature, the present study investigates linguistic oppression among female master’s students in Nepal using a proportionate stratified sampling approach. By integrating quantitative measures such as mean and standard deviation with qualitative observations and narrative reflections, the study examines oppression across linguistic, social, academic, sexual-linguistic, gender, political, and collective dimensions. This multidimensional analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of how systemic and contextual factors shape the experiences of women in higher education. Through its findings, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on gender equity in academia and offers empirical insights that support the need for institutional reforms and inclusive language practices within Nepali universities (Jansen, 2021, Mukherjee, 2018).

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a survey research design to examine the types, levels, and impacts of linguistic oppression experienced by female researchers engaged in academic writing at Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Survey research was deemed appropriate as it allows systematic collection and analysis of participants’ perceptions across multiple dimensions (Creswell, 2014).

Population and Sampling

The population comprised 1,000 master’s students enrolled in various faculties and departments of Tribhuvan University. From this population, 21 female participants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation across social background, academic discipline, and political affiliation. Stratification ensured the inclusion of diverse experiences, improving the generalizability and validity of the findings (Fink, 2013).

Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed based on previous research and expert consultation (Hyland, 2016; Kasper & Rose, 2017). The instrument captured experiences of linguistic oppression across seven dimensions: Linguistic, Social, Academic, Sexual-linguistic, Gender, Political and Collective.

Responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree), providing a quantitative measure of perceived oppression. The questionnaire also included open-ended questions to capture contextual and personal experiences.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, to assess the intensity of oppression across each dimension. Data were presented in tables and pie charts for clarity. Qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to contextualize and interpret quantitative findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were rigorously upheld throughout the study. Participants' identities were kept strictly confidential, and participation was entirely voluntary. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants, and the data collected were used exclusively for research purposes. Language editing of the manuscript were assisted using ChatGPT (version 0.5). Ethical clearance for the study was sought and obtained in accordance with Tribhuvan University's research guidelines (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Results and Discussion

Participants' Responses

The study collected data from 21 female master's students at Tribhuvan University, representing a range of social, academic, and political backgrounds. Analysis focused on seven dimensions of linguistic oppression: linguistic, social, academic, sexual-linguistic, gender, political, and collective. Both descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and qualitative thematic analysis were employed to interpret experiences.

The findings are summarized in Table 1:-

Table 1

Mean and SD of Linguistic Oppression Dimensions

DIMENSION	MEAN	SD
LINGUISTIC	4.0	0.5
SOCIAL	3.7	0.6
ACADEMIC	4.2	0.4
SEXUAL-LINGUISTIC	3.3	0.8
GENDER	4.1	0.5
POLITICAL	3.8	0.6
COLLECTIVE	4.5	0.3

Linguistic Dimension

Participants consistently reported high levels of linguistic oppression (Mean = 4.0, SD= 0.5), encompassing critical remarks, sarcastic comments, and informal or colloquial language that was perceived as demeaning. These behaviors were observed both in classrooms and workplace settings, reflecting institutionalized communication norms that disadvantage female researchers. Linguistic oppression can undermine self-esteem, confidence, and research motivation, echoing Hyland's (2016) findings that peer reviews and evaluative feedback disproportionately affect female academics.

In the Nepali cultural context, subtle nuances in language, including indirect criticism or honorific misusage, may amplify the perception of linguistic oppression. For instance, participants noted that phrases considered casual or humorous in general discourse were sometimes interpreted as dismissive or disrespectful, particularly when communicated by senior male colleagues. This aligns with literature suggesting that cultural and contextual factors mediate the perception of oppression, emphasizing the need to consider local norms in policy interventions (Thapa, 2020).

Social Dimension

The social dimension revealed moderate oppression (Mean = 3.7, SD = 0.6), indicating that social hierarchies, background, and interpersonal relationships contribute to linguistic marginalization. Participants highlighted that peer and senior interactions, both offline and on social media platforms, occasionally reflected implicit biases and microaggressions. This observation corroborates Thapa (2020), who found that social stratification and gender identity within Nepali academic institutions influence the nature and perception of linguistic behavior.

Social oppression often manifested in differential treatment, exclusion from discussions, and dismissive comments, which cumulatively affect professional confidence. The data suggest that social awareness programs and mentorship opportunities may mitigate these subtle yet pervasive forms of oppression.

Academic Dimension

Academic oppression was reported at a high level (Mean=4.2, SD=0.4), primarily due to unequal participation opportunities, critical feedback, and hierarchical power dynamics. Female researchers described scenarios where their contributions were undervalued compared to male peers, or where critique was framed in a gendered manner. Singh (2018) similarly highlighted that institutional norms and critical evaluation in academic settings disproportionately affect women's academic confidence and performance.

These findings reflect the intersection of linguistic, gendered, and hierarchical dimensions within academic institutions. The data underscore the importance of developing transparent review processes, equitable participation opportunities, and gender-sensitive feedback mechanisms to create a more supportive academic environment.

Sexual-Linguistic Dimension

The sexual-linguistic dimension yielded a mean of 3.3 (SD = 0.8), demonstrating high variability in experiences. While some participants reported discomfort due to sexualized jokes, comments, or gestures, others perceived such interactions as minor or culturally normalized. This aligns with Singh's (2018) findings that sexualized language can be experienced as distressing even when framed as humor, and highlights the context-dependent nature of sexual-linguistic oppression.

The variability also points to institutional and individual factors shaping perception, including organizational culture, peer support, and individual resilience. This suggests that interventions need to be tailored, context-sensitive, and accompanied by policy enforcement to address sexual-linguistic harassment effectively.

Gender Dimension

Gender-based oppression was notably high (Mean = 4.1, SD = 0.5), reflecting unequal treatment based on gender identity. Participants reported receiving differential evaluations, dismissive remarks, and increased scrutiny compared to male colleagues. Kasper & Rose (2017) note that gendered linguistic behaviors in academic communication contribute to structural inequalities, limiting women's opportunities for recognition and advancement.

In the Nepali context, cultural norms around hierarchy and gender roles further exacerbate inequities in academic settings. Female researchers often encounter double standards in expressing opinions or asserting authority, leading to additional stress and reduced motivation.

Political Dimension

Political affiliation and institutional hierarchies influenced linguistic oppression (Mean = 3.8, SD = 0.6). Participants reported instances where language was used to assert dominance or exclude dissenting views, reflecting the broader power dynamics within academic institutions. This finding is consistent with Kasper & Rose (2017), who highlighted that political contexts shape interpersonal communication and linguistic behaviors in professional settings.

Collective Dimension

The collective dimension exhibited the highest reported oppression (Mean = 4.5, SD = 0.3), indicating that group norms, peer commentary, and collective behavior significantly influence female researchers' experiences. Participants noted that group jokes, critiques, and informal peer interactions could negatively impact self-confidence, research engagement, and collaborative potential.

Hyland (2016) also emphasizes that collective behaviors can create a reinforcing cycle of linguistic marginalization, where social approval or disapproval within the peer group regulates behavior, often disadvantaging women. In Nepali universities, hierarchical and gendered peer dynamics magnify these effects, emphasizing the need for peer training and awareness programs.

Overall Interpretation

The analysis indicates that gender and collective dimensions are the most significant barriers to equitable academic participation, while social and academic dimensions reflect systemic but less overt oppression. Linguistic and sexual-linguistic dimensions demonstrate both high mean scores and variability, underscoring contextual influences and subjective experiences. Collectively, these results suggest that interventions must address institutional structures, peer culture, gender norms, and individual awareness to mitigate linguistic oppression.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Policy Reform

Academic institutions should establish clear anti-oppression policies, including monitoring and reporting mechanisms for linguistic and gendered harassment.

Awareness Programs

Implement training and workshops for faculty and students to promote respectful communication and gender sensitivity.

Faculty and Peer Training

Structured programs to educate senior researchers and peer groups about the impact of linguistic behaviors on female researchers' self-efficacy.

Future Research

Extend sample sizes and integrate qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups) for a deeper understanding of context-specific experiences and coping strategies.

Conclusion

This study examined the types, levels, and dimensions of linguistic oppression experienced by female researchers engaged in academic writing at the master's level in Nepal. Using a stratified sample of 21 participants, the research explored linguistic, social, academic, sexual-linguistic, gender, political, and collective dimensions of oppression, employing descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) for analysis. The findings indicate that collective and gender-based oppression are the most pronounced, while sexual-linguistic oppression exhibits considerable variability depending on context. Social and academic dimensions reflected moderate levels of oppression, suggesting that institutional structures and social hierarchies shape these experiences, but less overtly than collective or gendered dynamics.

The study confirms that linguistic oppression negatively affects female researchers' self-esteem, motivation, and academic performance, consistent with prior research by Hyland (2016), Kasper & Rose (2017), and Singh (2018). High mean scores in the linguistic, academic, and gender dimensions demonstrate that female researchers are disproportionately affected in interactions involving critique, peer feedback, and hierarchical communication, while variability in sexual-linguistic experiences highlights the context-dependent nature of oppression. Collective behaviors further exacerbate the impact, as peer group norms, jokes, and informal remarks significantly influence participants' confidence and participation in academic writing.

In line with the study objectives, the research identifies the need for evidence-based policy interventions to address linguistic oppression in academic institutions. Specifically, results underscore the necessity of gender-sensitive institutional policies, awareness programs, and faculty/peer training to foster an equitable, safe, and supportive academic environment. Moreover, the findings highlight the importance of further research using larger samples and qualitative approaches to capture nuanced experiences and coping strategies.

Overall, this study provides a systematic and empirical understanding of linguistic oppression among female researchers in Nepal, contributing to scholarship on gender equity in academia and offering practical guidance for policymakers, educators, and institutions to reduce oppression, promote gender equality, and ensure a conducive environment for scholarly participation.

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Saṅgha Pariṇāma for Gāma: A Case Study of the Royal Thai Monastery in Lumbinī, Nepal

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Abstract

This study examines Saṅgha Pariṇāma (monastic transformation) as a doctrinally grounded institutional process shaping Gāma (community) development within the UNESCO World Heritage landscape of Lumbinī, Nepal. Drawing on interpretive ethnography and Buddhist doctrinal analysis, the research investigates how the Royal Thai Monastery (RTM) negotiates global heritage tourism, state governance structures, and local socio-economic marginality. The central argument proposes that monastic transformation is not a secular adaptation to modernity but an ontologically embedded Buddhist process grounded in aniccatā (impermanence), Saṅgha Pariṇāma (dependent origination), and upāya (skilful means). The study demonstrates that RTM functions as a hybrid institution, simultaneously a spiritual centre, humanitarian service provider, and socio-economic actor embedded within the local moral economy. Findings reveal that RTM has undergone institutional professionalisation, expanded community welfare interventions, and reconfigured its operational identity during the COVID-19 crisis. The paper introduces the Saṅgha–Society Interaction Model (SSIM) as a theoretical framework for post-secular heritage governance. The study contributes to decolonizing tourism theory by integrating Buddhist ontology with development sociology.

Keywords: Buddhist heritage tourism, Community-oriented development (Gāma), Dhamma-Vinaya, Lumbinī, Saṅgha Pariṇāma (monastic transformation).

Introduction

The globalization of religious heritage sites has fundamentally reshaped the sociology of sacred space, transforming them from locally embedded spiritual geographies into globally networked cultural, economic, and political arenas. In contemporary tourism studies, sacred sites are increasingly understood not only as places of worship but also as “multi-layered heritage spaces” shaped by intersecting forces of pilgrimage, state diplomacy, global tourism markets, and heritage governance regimes (Timothy & Olsen, 2006, pp. 11–13; Shackley, 2012, pp. 3–5). This shift reflects a broader transition from purely religious landscapes to what Coleman and Eade (2004, pp.

1–4) describe as "global pilgrimage economies," where sacred meaning is continuously negotiated between spiritual authenticity and commercial circulation.

Within this global context, Lumbinī, the birthplace of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, occupies a uniquely significant position. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997, Lumbinī functions simultaneously as a pilgrimage destination, archaeological heritage zone, and a geopolitical Buddhist landscape shaped by transnational monastic investments from Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, China, Japan, and other Buddhist nations (UNESCO, 2019; Tilson, 2005, pp. 27–30). This multiplicity of actors has transformed Lumbinī into what Reader (2014, pp. 102–105) terms a "contested sacred space," where religious authority, tourism development, and state governance intersect in complex and often competing ways.

From a sociological perspective, this transformation raises important questions about the role of monastic institutions in mediating between doctrinal authenticity and global economic flows. As Cohen (1988, pp. 372–375) argues, modern tourism often produces "staged authenticity," where sacred traditions are reconfigured for external consumption. However, in Buddhist contexts, this dynamic is more complex, as monastic institutions are not merely passive recipients of tourism but active agents of adaptation, negotiation, and reinterpretation of Dharma within contemporary socio-economic structures (Sharf, 1998, pp. 94–97).

In Nepal, this dynamic is particularly visible in Lumbinī's monastic landscape. Nepali Buddhist scholarship emphasizes that sacred heritage sites are not static relics of the past but living cultural systems embedded in local socio-religious practices and community life worlds (Gellner, 2001, pp. 204–207; Michaels, 2008, pp. 311–315). Nepali scholars such as Khatry (2016, pp. 45–48) and Tuladhar-Douglas (2013, pp. 119–122) further argue that Buddhist heritage in Nepal must be understood through the lens of lived religion (jīvit dharma), where ritual, economy, and social relations are deeply interwoven.

Against this backdrop, Lumbinī becomes a critical site for examining how monastic institutions respond to post-globalisation pressures through adaptive transformation. The proliferation of international monasteries has not only expanded religious pluralism but has also introduced new models of monastic engagement, ranging from ritual-centred pilgrimage services to community-based development initiatives (Ramble, 2012, pp. 88–91). These developments highlight the need to understand monastic adaptation not as institutional decline but as a doctrinally grounded process of transformation.

It is within this analytical framework that the concept of *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* (monastic transformation) becomes central. Rather than viewing change as external disruption, *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* conceptualizes monastic adaptation as an internally grounded process informed by Buddhist doctrinal principles such as *aniccatā* (impermanence), *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* (dependent origination), and *upāya* (skilful means). This perspective aligns with contemporary Buddhist studies that emphasize the dynamic and contextual interpretation of Dhamma-Vinaya in response to changing socio-historical conditions (Gombrich, 2006, pp. 56–59; Harvey, 2013, pp. 78–81).

Therefore, this study focuses on the Royal Thai Monastery in Lumbinī as a case through which to examine how *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* operates as a doctrinally grounded mechanism of transformation that shapes community-oriented development (*Gāma).* It investigates how monastic institutions negotiate their dual role as spiritual custodians and development actors within a global heritage tourism economy. In doing so, it contributes to broader debates in religious tourism studies, particularly regarding the relationship between sacred authenticity, institutional adaptation, and community sustainability (Timothy & Boyd, 2015, pp. 133–136; Shackley, 2012, pp. 42–44).

Ultimately, this research situates Lumbinī not merely as a heritage site but as a dynamic "living Buddhist landscape" where doctrinal continuity and socio-economic transformation coexist. It argues that monastic institutions, through processes such as *Saṅgha Pariṇāma,* actively mediate the tension between global tourism flows and local community development, thereby reshaping the meaning and function of sacred space in the contemporary world.

Problem Statement

Despite its global significance, Lumbinī exhibits a structural contradiction between its international monastic zone and surrounding Nepali villages (*Gāma*). Since the implementation of the Kenzo Tange Master Plan (1978), spatial segmentation has produced a dualistic landscape: a highly resourced sacred enclave and underdeveloped local communities.

This spatial segregation reflects broader theoretical assumptions in classical sociology, particularly Weber's (1958) thesis that Buddhism is inherently world-renouncing and socially disengaged. Such frameworks inadequately explain contemporary monastic engagement in social development activities. The research problem is therefore defined that how do Buddhist monastic institutions reconcile doctrinal authenticity with socio-economic engagement in a global heritage tourism context?

Research questions

1. How does the Buddhist monastic community (*Saṅgha*) evolve from the inside out? Instead of just reacting to outside world pressures, how do internal Buddhist teachings and rules inherently allow the institution to adapt and transform over time?
2. What actually happens on the ground when the Right to Manifestation (RTM) is put into practice? How does it ripple through a village (*Gāma*), changing the local economy and reshaping everyday community life?

3. How do modern Buddhists navigate the tricky balance of buying and selling their practices without losing their spiritual soul? In a world where mindfulness and meditation are commercialised, how do Buddhist ethics help draw the line between honest livelihood and selling out?

Research Objectives

This study is guided by three interconnected objectives:

1. To theorise *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* as an internally grounded doctrinal process of institutional transformation.
2. To examine the socio-economic mechanisms through which RTM contributes to *Gāma* development.
3. To analyse how Buddhist ethical principles mediate tensions between commodification and spiritual authenticity.

Significance of the Study

This research contributes to three academic domains:

Buddhist Studies: Reinterpreting monasticism as socially engaged doctrinal practice

Tourism Sociology: Reframing commodification debates through ethical ontology

Development Studies: Introducing religious institutions as non-state development actors

Limitation

This study is subject to several limitations that frame the scope of its findings. As a qualitative single-case study of the Royal Thai Monastery, the results are context-specific and not intended for statistical generalization across Buddhist institutions. The cross-sectional nature of the fieldwork captures a particular moment in monastic life and may not fully reflect seasonal or long-term transformations associated with pilgrimage cycles and ritual calendars. Linguistic and interpretive challenges also arise from working across *Pāli*, Thai, Nepali, and English, where key doctrinal terms may carry nuanced meanings that are difficult to fully translate. Although access to monastic life was substantial, certain administrative and financial records remained restricted, limiting detailed analysis of economic dimensions. Finally, the researcher's positionality required ongoing reflexivity to balance cultural familiarity with analytical distance, minimizing potential bias in data interpretation. These limitations, however, do not undermine the study's analytical contribution but rather contextualize its findings.

Literature Review

Early sociological interpretations of Buddhism, particularly Weber (1958, pp. 204–208), framed monasticism as a "world-renouncing ascetic order," structurally separated from local society. This interpretation positioned the *Saṅgha* as socially detached, emphasizing withdrawal (*nekkhamma*) as the defining institutional principle.However, canonical *Pāli* sources challenge this binary separation. In the *Vinaya Piṭaka* (*Mahāvagga* I.30–33, pp. 92–95 in Horner's translation), monastic survival is explicitly dependent on alms-giving (*piṇḍapāta*), establishing a structurally reciprocal relationship between monks and householders. This indicates that the *Saṅgha* is not isolated but embedded within a relational economy of interdependence. Similarly, the *Dīgha Nikāya* (DN 26, *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta*, pp. 398–402) links moral governance with societal prosperity, suggesting that ethical institutions and social harmony are co-constitutive. The Buddha's discourse here implies that social order (*Gāma-samādhi*) is a condition for spiritual flourishing rather than an obstacle.

Harvey (2013, pp. 98–103) extends this interpretation by arguing that Buddhist ethics operate as a "context-sensitive moral system," where social engagement is not contradictory to liberation but part of its conditioned expression. Gombrich (1988, pp. 72–76) similarly demonstrates that *Theravāda* monasticism has historically functioned through patronage networks, embedding the *Saṅgha* within village economies and political structures.Gellner (2001, pp. 204–207) shows that Newar Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley reflects deeply integrated monastic-lay relationships, where ritual, economy, and social identity are inseparable. Michaels (2008) further argues that Nepalese religious systems operate through "lived religiosity" (pp. 311–315), were institutional boundaries are more fluid than rigid .These sources collectively demonstrate that the *Saṅgha* is structurally dependent on social connection (*sangha-sambandha*), supporting the idea that community-oriented development (*Gāma*) is doctrinally consistent rather than externally imposed.

The doctrine of *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* (dependent origination) forms the philosophical foundation for understanding interdependent systems in Buddhism. In the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (SN 12.1, Bhikkhu Bodhi trans., pp. 533–534), the Buddha states that all phenomena arise in dependence on causes and conditions, rejecting any notion of independent existence.

This ontological principle has significant implications for tourism systems. Rather than viewing tourism, religion, and economy as separate domains, dependent origination suggests that they arise co-dependently within a single relational field. Harvey (2013, pp. 112–115) interprets dependent origination as a "universal relational ontology," where social systems are dynamically co-produced. Gethin (1998, pp. 63–66) similarly emphasizes that Buddhist causality is non-linear and network-based, making it suitable for analyzing complex socio-cultural systems such as heritage tourism.

In tourism literature, Timothy and Olsen (2006, pp. 11–13) describe sacred sites as "multi-layered cultural landscapes" shaped by overlapping religious, political, and economic forces. Shackley (2012, pp. 3–5) further notes that pilgrimage destinations function as hybrid spaces where sacred and secular systems intersect.

Nepali scholars extend this understanding within the Himalayan context. Bidari (2019, pp. 61–64) argues that Lumbinī operates as a “plural monastic ecosystem,” where different Buddhist traditions coexist under conditions of institutional interdependence. Manik (2021, pp. 73–76) observes that tourism development in Lumbinī emerges through interconnected relationships between international donors, monastic missions, and local communities.

Dependent origination provides a doctrinal model to explain why different patterns of interaction emerge between monks, tourists, and local communities, supporting the relational logic of *Gāma* development. The concept of Dharma (*Dhamma*) in Buddhist tradition refers not only to teachings but also to the normative structure of reality. In the *Dhammapada* (verse 183, p. 52, Narada trans.), ethical life is summarized as avoiding harm, cultivating virtue, and purifying the mind. This establishes Dharma as both epistemological and practical guidance.

A key interpretive mechanism within *Mahāyāna* Buddhism is *Upāya* (skilful means). In the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra* (Lotus Sūtra, Chapter 2, pp. 56–60 in Kern trans.), the Buddha explicitly states that teachings must be adapted according to the capacities of beings. This introduces doctrinal flexibility as a legitimate method of spiritual communication.Pye (2003, pp. 55–59) interprets *upāya* as a theological justification for adaptive engagement with worldly systems, including governance, economy, and communication. This supports the idea that Buddhist institutions can participate in tourism development without compromising doctrinal integrity.

The *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra (Chapter 3, pp. 74–77)* further strengthens this argument by presenting a lay practitioner who actively engages in worldly life while maintaining deep realization, thereby dissolving rigid distinctions between sacred and secular domains.

From a Nepalese perspective, Tuladhar-Douglas (2013, pp. 119–122) highlights that Himalayan Buddhist practice is inherently adaptive, where ritual and ethical frameworks evolve in response to social transformation. Ramble (2012, pp. 88–91) similarly notes that Buddhist institutions in Nepal operate through pragmatic engagement with local economies and pilgrimage networks. *Dharma* and *Upāya* provide a doctrinal basis for bridging understanding gaps between tourists and monastic institutions, enhancing meaningful engagement at Buddhist heritage sites.

Lumbinī, identified in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* (DN 16, pp. 264–266) as the birthplace of the Buddha, has evolved into a globally significant heritage site governed by UNESCO frameworks and national institutions (UNESCO, 2019). Giri (2020, pp. 44–47) identifies structural fragmentation in governance between the Lumbini Development Trust and international monastic missions, leading to fragmented decision-making. Bidari (2019, pp. 61–64) further notes that monastic institutions operate in parallel rather than integrated systems.Shrestha (2022, pp. 118–121) argues that while tourism generates macroeconomic visibility, local village communities (*Gāma*) often remain excluded from decision-making and benefit-sharing mechanisms. This creates uneven development outcomes within the Lumbinī corridor.

However, Buddhist doctrinal frameworks suggest an alternative interpretation. The *Itivuttaka* (22–23, pp. 34–36) emphasizes that generosity (*dāna*) and ethical action generate merit (*puñña*), reinforcing reciprocal economic ethics. This suggests that community development can be understood as a merit-based relational system rather than purely economic redistribution. Lumbini demonstrates how doctrinal ethics and governance structures interact, revealing gaps between institutional practice and Buddhist moral economy.

The existing literature reveals a highly fragmented analytical landscape that leaves critical gaps across disciplines. While sociology extensively emphasizes the institutional embeddedness of religious traditions, it frequently ignores the underlying core doctrine that drives them. Conversely, tourism studies place heavy emphasis on the commodification and economic optimization of heritage sites, yet consistently overlook the vital ethical dimensions inherent to sacred spaces. Furthermore, contemporary Nepali studies focus intensely on institutional governance, administration, and policy frameworks, but largely ignore the foundational epistemology that shapes indigenous religious worldviews. To address this multi-faceted literature gap, this study proposes *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* as a doctrinally grounded transformation framework, offering a holistic lens that bridges institutional, ethical, and epistemological dimensions. It integrates:

- *Aniccatā* (SN 22.59, pp. 872–874) → legitimizing institutional change
- *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* (SN 12.1, pp. 533–534) → explaining interdependence
- *Upāya (Lotus Sūtra*, pp. 56–60) → adaptive institutional engagement
- *Cetanā* (AN 6.63, pp. 291–293) → ethical intentionality in action
- *Puñña* economy (*Itivuttaka* 22–23, pp. 34–36) → moral circulation systems

Thus, *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* conceptualizes monastic transformation not as disruption but as doctrinally legitimate adaptive evolution within a relational socio-spiritual system.

Conceptual Framework

SANGHA PARIṆĀMA FRAMEWORK

EXTERNAL DRIVERS

- TOURISM / Tourism
- UNESCO / UNESCO
- COVID-19
- Local Poverty
- GLOBAL CRISES / Global Crises

DRIVES $\rightarrow$ CHANGE | DRIVES $\rightarrow$ ADAPTATION

THE "FILTER": SANGHA PARIṆĀMA

- MINDFULNESS
- COMPASSION
- WISDOM
- ADAPTATION
- ADOPTATION *(sic)*
- ETHICS
- INTERCONNECTION
- INTERCONNECTION

Guided by Doctrine:

INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

- **PROFESSIONALIZATION**
- **DIGITALIZATION**
- **HUMANITARIAN REORIENTATION**

GĀMA DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

- HEALTHCARE
- EDUCATION
- INFRASTRUCTURE
- SOCIAL COHESION
- RECIPROCAL ECONOMY

FEEDBACK LOOPS

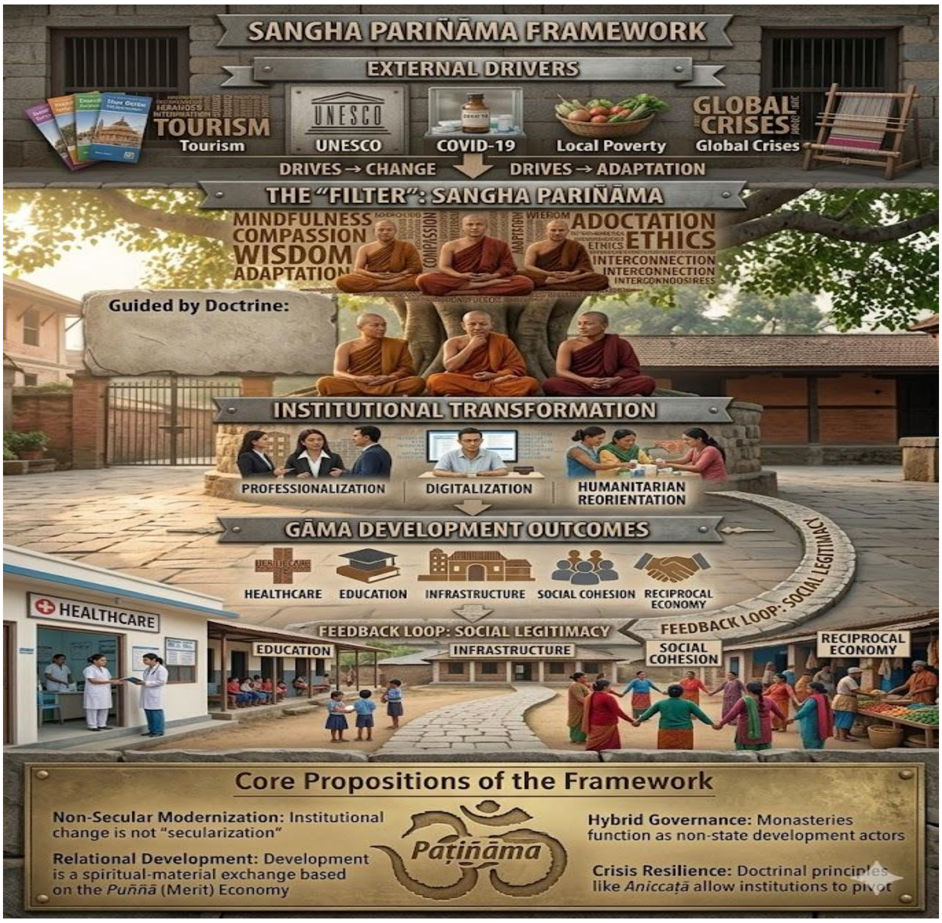
- FEEDBACK LOOP: SOCIAL LEGITIMACY
- FEEDBACK LOOP: SOCIAL LEGITIMACY
- HEALTHCARE
- EDUCATION
- INFRASTRUCTURE
- SOCIAL COHESION
- RECIPROCAL ECONOMY

Core Propositions of the Framework

*(Centered around the **Pariṇāma** Om symbol)*

- **Non-Secular Modernization:** Institutional change is not "secularization"

- **Relational Development:** Development is a spiritual-material exchange based on the *Puñña* (Merit) Economy
- **Hybrid Governance:** Monasteries function as non-state development actors
- **Crisis Resilience:** Doctrinal principles like *Aniccaṭā* allow institutions to pivot



This framework presents the dynamic flow of Buddhist-based institutional transformation. It shows how external drivers (tourism, UNESCO influence, COVID-19, and local poverty) are filtered through Buddhist doctrinal principles *Aniccatā* (impermanence), *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* (interdependence), and *Upāya* (skillful adaptation). This "filter" guides monasteries toward institutional transformation, including professionalization, digitalization, and humanitarian orientation. These changes then lead to *Gāma* (community) development outcomes such as improved healthcare, education, infrastructure, social cohesion, and a reciprocal economy. A feedback loop of social legitimacy strengthens the monastery–community relationship, reinforcing continuous transformation. Overall, it explains how Buddhist doctrine legitimizes modern development roles of monasteries in a post-COVID, globalized context.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative case study design to examine how *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* operates as a doctrinally grounded process of monastic transformation in shaping community-oriented development (*Gāma*) at the Royal Thai Monastery in Lumbinī, Nepal. Guided by an interpretivist epistemology, the research understands institutional change as a meaning-driven and relational process embedded in *Dhamma–Vinaya* practices (Yin, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The monastery, situated within the UNESCO World Heritage landscape of Lumbinī, is selected as a critical case due to its transnational *Theravāda* identity and active engagement with local communities and pilgrimage tourism. Data were collected through purposive and theoretical sampling involving 35–40 participants, including monks, community members, pilgrims, and heritage stakeholders, with sampling continuing until theoretical saturation was achieved (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). A triangulated approach was used, combining semi-structured interviews, participant observation of rituals and daily practices, and document analysis of monastic, policy, and canonical sources (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Bowen, 2009). Data analysis followed a hybrid thematic–doctrinal framework, where inductively generated themes such as monastic adaptation, ethical engagement, and community integration were further interpreted through Buddhist concepts including *aniccatā* (impermanence), *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* (interdependence), and *upāya* (skilful means) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Methodological rigour was ensured through triangulation, thick description, reflexivity, and selective member checking, aligning with credibility and trustworthiness criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Ethical standards were maintained through informed consent, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity, alongside adherence to Buddhist ethical principles such as non-harm and right conduct. The researcher adopts a reflexive insider–outsider positionality, enabling both contextual understanding and critical analysis. Overall, this approach integrates qualitative inquiry with doctrinal interpretation, advancing *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* as an analytical lens for understanding adaptive monastic institutions within heritage tourism contexts.

Discussion and Findings

The findings indicate that RTM has transformed from a ritual-centred monastic institution into a hybrid governance ecology combining religious authority, digital administration, and community development functions. This transformation reflects *Saṅgha Pariṇāma*, understood as doctrinally grounded adaptation based on *aniccatā (impermanence)* and *Saṅgha Pariṇāma (dependent origination)*.

A senior monk explained this transformation as follows: "*The monastery is no longer only for chanting or rituals. It must respond to people's suffering in modern ways. Dhamma is alive when it adapts*. "This statement reflects institutional recognition that monastic identity is processual rather than fixed, aligning with interpretive Buddhist sociology (Harvey, 2013). Three key dimensions define this transformation:

First, digital administrative systems now support donor coordination, communication, and visitor management. A monastic administrator noted: "Digital systems help us manage offerings and services more transparently. It is part of *upāya*, not modernisation for its own sake.

Second, lay–monastic integration has expanded significantly. A volunteer stated: "We are not just visitors anymore. We work together with monks in organizing service activities for the community."

Third, the monastery has developed professional service structures, particularly in education and welfare coordination, indicating a shift toward administrative-spiritual hybridity. Overall, these findings demonstrate that institutional transformation is not secularization but doctrinally justified adaptation through *upāya*. The study finds that RTM has expanded its *Gāma*-oriented welfare systems, translating Buddhist ethics into structured development interventions.

Healthcare Infrastructure

Eye-care programs supported by the monastery have restored vision for thousands of residents. A local beneficiary stated: "Before, I could not see clearly, but the monastery helped me receive treatment. This is real *karuṇā* in action. "This reflects the operationalization of *karuṇā* (compassion) as institutional healthcare practice.

Water and Infrastructure Support

RTM has contributed to rural water systems in surrounding villages.

Interviewee (Community Elder): "Water access changed our daily life. The monastery helped where government support was limited."

Educational Support

Scholarship programs support more than 300 students annually. Interviewee (Student Beneficiary): "Without the monastery scholarship, I would not be able to continue my studies. "These findings show that *dāna (giving)* is institutionalized into a structured moral economy of welfare, linking monastic ethics with community development. The COVID-19 pandemic emerged as a critical rupture that transformed RTM into a humanitarian relief institution. During this period, tourism collapsed, forcing a redefinition of monastic function. A monastic leader explained: "*When visitors stopped coming, we realized the monastery must survive through service, not tourism*. "The monastery distributed food and essential supplies to local households. A community member noted: "During COVID, the monastery was our support system. It felt like family. "These statements illustrate that monastic legitimacy became grounded in relational embeddedness within the *Gāma* rather than tourism flows. The pandemic therefore accelerated *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* by revealing the monastery's latent capacity for humanitarian governance. The findings indicate that RTM operates through a governance logic grounded in Buddhist ontology rather than bureaucratic rationality. A senior monk explained: "*Everything changes. Even institutions must change. This is the teaching of anicca.*" This reflects governance based on *aniccatā*, where change is not disruption but doctrinal necessity. A coordinator added: "*We plan things, but we also accept change as natural. The monastery teaches us this flexibility*."

Thus, governance is shaped by ontological acceptance of impermanence, aligning institutional behavior with Buddhist metaphysics. The study finds that RTM's development practices are guided by *upāya (skilful means)*, integrating spirituality and social action.A monastic teacher stated: "*Helping people is part of teaching Dhamma. If people suffer less, they can understand Dhamma better*. "Healthcare, education, and infrastructure initiatives are therefore understood as spiritual enabling conditions. A healthcare volunteer noted: "We see our work as service, not charity. It is part of spiritual practice. "This demonstrates that development is framed as ethical pragmatism rooted in Buddhist epistemology, not secular intervention.

The findings reveal a circular moral economy structured as:

Dāna* → *Karuṇā* → *Sevā* → Social stability → Renewed *Dāna

A donor participant explained: "*When I give, I feel it returns in many forms—peace, blessings, and community support.* "A monastic administrator added: "*Donations are not just money. They continue the cycle of service and compassion*. "This system reflects *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* as a socio-economic process, where ethical intention governs resource circulation.

While tourism literature often critiques commodification, findings suggest a different interpretation in RTM.A monastery official stated: "*Offerings and donations are not commercialization. They sustain our ability to serve people*. "A visitor added: "*I did not feel commercial pressure here. I felt participation in something meaningful.*"

The findings indicate that material exchange within the Royal Thai Monastery (RTM) is not merely an economic activity but is reframed as a form of Dharma-architecture in which ritual practices generate devotion, devotion sustains a moral economy, and the moral economy, in turn, supports social welfare and community services. In this context, material resources function as ethical infrastructure rather than as instruments of commodification alone, demonstrating the integration of spiritual values with institutional sustainability. Across all dimensions of the study, *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* emerges as a multidimensional doctrinal process that combines ontology, ethics, and institutional adaptation. This process operates through the ontological principle of impermanence (*aniccatā*), the ethical principles of compassion and skilful means (karuṇā and upāya), and the relational principle of dependent origination (*Saṅgha Pariṇāma*). As one senior monk explained, "The monastery changes, but the Dhamma guides that change. Nothing is outside the Dhamma." This perspective highlights RTM as a hybrid institution in which Buddhism is not preserved as a static tradition but is dynamically enacted through continuous transformation. The study therefore demonstrates that the

Royal Thai Monastery in Lumbinī represents a doctrinally grounded adaptive institution where monastic transformation is shaped by Buddhist ontology and ethical frameworks. Through the process of *Saṅgha Pariṇāma*, the monastery successfully integrates spiritual practice, community development (*Gāma*), humanitarian governance, and heritage tourism dynamics, positioning RTM as a living example of Buddhist institutional evolution within the post-COVID global heritage landscape.

Conclusion

This study examined how *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* functions as a doctrinally grounded process of monastic transformation in shaping community-oriented development (*Gāma*) at the Royal Thai Monastery (RTM) in Lumbinī, Nepal. The findings demonstrate that monastic transformation in Lumbinī is not a process of secularization or institutional decline, but rather an ontologically grounded adaptation within Buddhist doctrinal principles, particularly *aniccatā (impermanence)*, *Saṅgha Pariṇāma (dependent origination)*, and *upāya (skillful means)*. Empirical evidence shows that RTM has evolved into a hybrid socio-religious institution integrating ritual practice, digital governance, humanitarian service, and community development. This transformation is conceptualized as *Saṅgha Pariṇāma*, where monastic identity is continuously reshaped through relational engagement with local communities, pilgrims, and global heritage systems.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Royal Thai Monastery has undergone a significant transformation in its institutional role and social engagement. Rather than functioning solely as a center for religious practice, the monastery has evolved into a multidimensional institution that combines spiritual leadership with community service, social welfare, and local development activities. One of the most notable findings is the emergence of a hybrid governance model in which monastic responsibilities extend beyond ritual and meditation to include healthcare support, educational assistance, water supply initiatives, and humanitarian services for local communities. The study further reveals that the COVID-19 pandemic acted as an important turning point, accelerating the monastery's involvement in social welfare and strengthening its commitment to compassionate action. During and after the pandemic, Buddhist principles were increasingly translated into practical responses to human suffering, highlighting the relevance of monastic institutions in times of social crisis.

Another important finding concerns the way institutional change is understood and justified within the monastery. Adaptation is not viewed as a departure from Buddhist teachings but as a natural expression of them. The principles of impermanence (*aniccatā*), dependent origination (*Saṅgha Pariṇāma*), and compassion (*karuṇā*) provide a doctrinal foundation for responding to changing social conditions. As a result, institutional transformation is perceived as part of an ongoing process of maintaining the relevance of the Dhamma in contemporary society. The study also identifies the development of a moral economy based on the interconnected values of generosity (dāna), compassion (*karuṇā*), and service (*sevā*). Donations and material resources are not accumulated for institutional gain; rather, they are redistributed through welfare activities that benefit both local communities and visiting pilgrims. This creates a continuous cycle in which religious faith generates support, support enables social service, and social service strengthens communal trust and spiritual commitment.

The theoretical contributions of the study are equally significant. The findings challenge conventional sociological assumptions that Buddhist monasteries are primarily inward-looking or socially detached institutions. Instead, they demonstrate that monastic communities can play an active role in social development while remaining firmly grounded in religious doctrine. The study proposes the concept of Dharma-architecture to explain how religious values shape institutional structures, resource management, and community engagement. It also develops the idea of ontological governance, suggesting that Buddhist metaphysical principles can influence organizational decision-making and institutional adaptation. Furthermore, the research contributes to moral economy theory by illustrating how the Buddhist principle of dependent origination operates in practice through networks of reciprocity, responsibility, and mutual support. Taken together, these findings position Buddhist monastic institutions not simply as custodians of religious heritage but as dynamic actors that contribute to ethical governance, community well-being, and sustainable social development. The Royal Thai Monastery therefore represents a contemporary example of how Buddhist institutions can adapt to changing circumstances while preserving their doctrinal foundations and spiritual mission.

Policy Implications

The findings of this study carry significant implications for heritage governance, tourism management, community development, and monastic administration in Lumbinī and other Buddhist heritage destinations. First, existing policy frameworks should formally recognize Buddhist monasteries as key stakeholders within heritage governance systems. Rather than positioning monasteries solely as religious institutions, policymakers need to acknowledge their multifaceted roles in social welfare provision, cultural preservation, ethical leadership, and community development. Their systematic inclusion in planning, consultation, and decision-making processes would enable more participatory, inclusive, and culturally grounded models of heritage management.

Second, tourism policy needs to shift beyond narrowly economic and commodification-oriented approaches toward ethically grounded governance models. The study demonstrates that core Buddhist values such as compassion (*karuṇā*), generosity (*dāna*), mindfulness, and social responsibility can serve as meaningful foundations for tourism interpretation and visitor management. Embedding these values into tourism planning can foster respectful tourist behavior, enhance intercultural understanding, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of sacred heritage sites.

Third, monastic governance structures should further strengthen institutional mechanisms that support community engagement, digital administration, welfare delivery, and public service functions. These developments should not be interpreted as deviations from traditional monastic responsibilities but as contemporary expressions of Buddhist ethical practice when grounded in Dhamma and Vinaya principles. Such integration ensures that modernization efforts remain consistent with doctrinal authenticity.

Finally, government agencies, local authorities, and development organizations should build stronger collaborative partnerships with monasteries in areas such as healthcare, education, environmental conservation, and rural development. The findings indicate that monasteries possess substantial social capital, deep community trust, and strong organizational capacity, making them effective partners in grassroots development initiatives.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis, the study proposes the following recommendations for policy, practice, and institutional strengthening.

Monastery–State–Community Platform: Create a formal coordination body in Lumbinī to connect monasteries, government, and locals for better communication and resource sharing.

Ethical Tourism Guidelines: Establish clear rules for visitor conduct to protect the spiritual and cultural integrity of sacred spaces from over-commercialisation.

Monastic Governance Training: Provide monks and administrators with training in digital systems, project management, and community planning while respecting Buddhist monastic law (*Vinaya*).

Community Welfare Expansion: Expand local programs focused on healthcare, scholarships for disadvantaged groups, and water/sanitation infrastructure.

Knowledge Archive: Set up a digital archive to preserve monastic history, community service records, and institutional knowledge for future research.

Crisis Resilience Framework: Develop emergency response plans so monasteries can efficiently serve as humanitarian hubs during public health crises or natural disasters.

Limitations and Future Research

This study is based on a single-case analysis of the Royal Thai Monastery in Lumbinī. While this case provides rich qualitative insights and strong theoretical contributions, the findings cannot be generalized uncritically across all Buddhist monastic contexts. The primary strength of the study lies in its depth of interpretation and its capacity to generate theoretical understanding rather than statistical generalization.

Future research should adopt comparative and longitudinal designs to broaden the analytical scope. Promising areas for further investigation include cross-cultural comparisons of Buddhist monasteries across South and Southeast Asia, quantitative assessments of the socio-economic impacts of monastic welfare programs, long-term post-pandemic transformations in Buddhist heritage governance, and the application of Dhamma–Vinaya-based frameworks to broader theories of tourism, governance, and institutional change.

Concluding Remarks

This study demonstrates that *Saṅgha Pariṇāma* represents a doctrinally grounded process of institutional transformation through which Buddhist monastic institutions adapt to changing social, economic, and cultural conditions while remaining rooted in their ethical and philosophical foundations. The findings reveal that the Royal Thai Monastery in Lumbinī functions not only as a center of spiritual practice but also as an active institution engaged in community development, humanitarian service, heritage stewardship, and ethical governance. By integrating Buddhist values with contemporary institutional responsibilities, the monastery illustrates how religious organizations can respond to modern challenges without compromising doctrinal integrity. In this sense, the Royal Thai Monastery serves as a significant example of Buddhist institutional evolution and highlights the continuing relevance of Buddhist principles in contemporary heritage landscapes.

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Reimagining Education in Nepal: An Examination of Online, Blended, and Hybrid Learning Modes

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Abstract

This study attempts to compare the various modes of teaching-learning among the online, blended and hybrid modes and recommend the appropriate modes in the context of Nepal. Numerous modes of teaching-learning are emerging and practiced all over the world to deliver courses by universities and schools to their learners especially after and during the pandemic of COVID-19. But there is still debate to declare the most effective modes of teaching-learning mode in worldwide. The effectiveness of teaching-learning is certainly not only relying on the mode of instruction but also the significant role of other various factors such as geographical locations, learners' socio-cultural circumstances, learners' economic situations and learners' backgrounds. Considering this fact, this study examines the strengths and weaknesses of various teaching-learning modes and an attempt has been made to contextualize them in Nepal. In addition, it also explores the practical suggestions and recommendations to implement online education in Nepal. This is a review paper and the focus was given to use the more authentic and scientific publication in terms of its publishers as well as contents. After reviewed these papers, the online teaching and learning process becomes effective and successful when the teachers and learners engage meaningfully. Similarly, among the face-to-face, online, hybrid and blended teaching-learning methods, most of the researchers suggest that the blended mode of learning is more effective than others.

Keywords: Teaching-learning, COVID-19, alternative learning, students engagement, pedagogy, quality education.

Introduction

Nepal is navigating multiple approaches to improve its educational landscape in the rapidly evolving environment of global education, where tradition and innovation meet at a crossroads. Nepal's educational system is gradually transforming its approach to education by integrating traditional classroom teaching with modern online, blended, and hybrid methods. In Nepal, various universities and disciplines have been implementing various kinds of learning modes. Teaching-learning through the online education is increasing rapidly higher education in Nepal. For instance, Basnet et al. (2025) listed out the various 26 programs of higher education currently running through blended model of learning from Tribhuvan University (TU), Kathmandu University (KU) and Nepal Open University (NOU). They further claimed that the blended online mode of learning was first introduced by KU since 2012 in its Masters of Education (M.Ed.) program and 2011 respectively. Following the KU, NOU started blended learning since 2017 (2074 B.S). Then, TU started blended mode of learning since 2023. These academic institutions using blended mode of learning however, there seems lack of sufficient studies why blended mode is adopted. Certainly, all modes do have not the same level of effectiveness and each mode has its strengths as well as weaknesses. Considering this fact, the academicians as well as academic institutions must know about the level of effectiveness of each model before implementing the academic programs for better results. Hence, this article carefully examines the complexities of each model, evaluating their effectiveness, hurdles, and potential influence on the nation's education system. From the traditional face-to-face classrooms to the virtual realms of online learning and the innovative integration of blended and hybrid approaches, this paper scrutinizes the adaptability and integration of these models within the unique socio-cultural context of Nepal. In the face of the need to adjust to modern educational approaches in the 21st century, this article not only illuminates the present educational landscape but also suggests guidance for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to cultivate a comprehensive and efficient learning atmosphere that suits the unique requirements of Nepal. There are plenty of study have been conducted regarding on face to face, online education and blended education however there are only limited studies that compared the various modes of learning. Moreover, the various modes of teaching-learning are newly introduced especially after the COVID-19, hence, comparative study among the various teaching-learning mode is unexplored issues. Through a careful examination of these diverse models, the study aims to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing global discourse on educational innovation and adaptation. Moreover, it also attempts to explore the practical suggestions and feedback to effectively implement these learning models in the context of Nepal. The teaching-learning by online education is increasing however, there is lack of assess its effectiveness. This study will helpful the policy makers and planners of Nepal to the choose the appropriate methods of teaching-learning mode in Nepal because some of the academic institutions are already started various modes of learning in Nepal, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, this study also benefits to concerned universities and academic institutions in order to compares the best modes of learning.

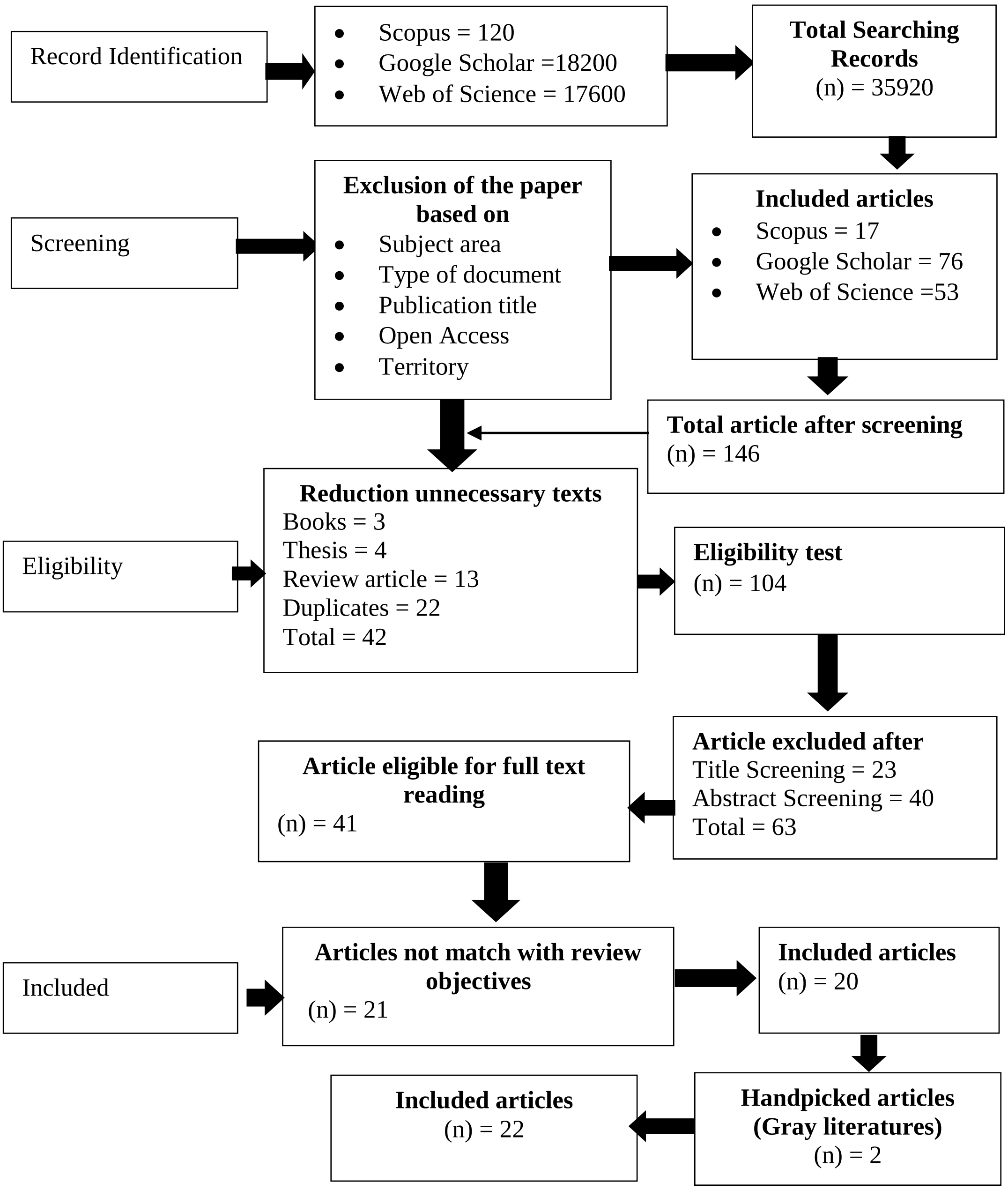
Methods and Materials

This paper is prepared by a systematic review focusing mainly on the teching-learning modes and analyze its appropriateness in the context of Nepal. This study is descriptive in nature and it is based on secondary source of information. Required scientific paper is collected from various journals. Numerous studies on online, hybrid and blended learning modalities were carefully examined in order to meet the goals. Keywords like 'effective pedagogy' 'face to face' 'online' 'hybrid' 'blended modes' were used in a variety of search engines to find relevant literature. After acquiring the required articles, each paper was assessed comprehensively in terms of teaching-learning methods and their effectiveness.

As the most comprehensive databases of academic papers, Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar are used to conduct a systematic research process. These search engines are particularly useful for finding relevant evidence as they contain large scholarly literature databases. Authors conducted the screening with a core concern about the teaching-learning techniques especially online, blended and hybrid modes. The inclusion/exclusion strategy was established based on subject area, type of document, open access, the publication year of the article, territory and language. This review included empirical peer-reviewed studies published between 2005 and 2025 in English. A total of 35920 studies were identified through electronic databases. This was based on subject, year, document type, publication title, open access, territory and language. After inclusion and exclusion criteria, 146 articles were selected. Other texts like books, thesis, review articles and duplicate articles from the full-text proficiency test are eliminated, resulting in 104 eligible articles for review. The titles of the articles were matched and verified with the review’s objective. Next, 23 articles were removed after title screening and 40 articles after abstract screening, yielding 41 articles for full-text reading. Each publication’s abstract was carefully read to ensure that the research objective was relevant to the study before the article was deemed eligible. After reading the full paper, 21 unmatched articles were again reduced to 20 articles for final analysis and 2 relevant articles from external sources were added because these two documents were major government laws relevant to online education in Nepal. Finally, 22 articles were selected for critical appraisal. The systematic search and processing strategy has been depicted in the flowchart (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Systematic search and processing strategy



Results and Discussions

It deals with the various perspective given by scholars upon the different types of teaching-learning methods. Moreover, it also highlights the claims and arguments made by researchers in their study. Finally, attempt has been made to contextualize the various methods of teaching learning in Nepal.

Defining the various learning modes

Learning modes are different ways that the learners learn new things and abilities, such as by watching, working with others, or studying on their own. Traditionally, the teaching-learning mode was only face-to-face mode, but due to rapid development of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), there are emergence of online, hybrid and blended mode of learning to address the diverse educational landscape. In this context, this section discuss the some mode of teaching learning in brief.

Face-to-face teaching means the traditional, classroom-based method of teaching in which in-person instructor-led sessions are carried out. It means the traditional in-person classroom teaching where students are involved in classes and have discussions with instructors and peers physically (Nikolopoulou, 2023). Similarly, learning activity that is carried out through and with the help of the internet is regarded as online learning, which is also widely named e-learning. Similarly, the teaching-learning process that is carried out online is termed online education. This term is frequently used in distance education (Kunwar et al., 2020). In addition, now, there is also a trend of blended learning, so, it is the integration of both face-to-face learning and online learning together that allows learners to benefit from both methods of learning. Scholars generally believe that the blending mode is a learning environment that combines technology-mediated instruction with face-to-face instruction (Graham & Dziuban, 2008) or in this model a blend of face-to-face and online instruction. The next concept of learning which is known as hybrid learning refers to a kind of learning that combines online educational materials with traditional face-to-face learning methods. The hybrid model of learning requires the physical presence of both teacher and learner while providing the learner with some control over time and pace. It is a type of learning that merges the computer-mediated and face-to-face instruction (Linder, 2017)

Online education evolved from early distance learning models like correspondence courses, gaining catalyzed with internet technologies in the 1990s and 2000s, while blended learning emerged as a hybrid combining face-to-face (f2f) learning with online elements. Blended learning (BL) addresses limitations of traditional f2f classes, which require physical presence, and pure distance education (DE), often seen as less interactive. Advances in learning management systems (LMS), Web 2.0 tools, and communication tech fueled its rise, making it a staple in higher education (Niaz et al., 2021).

Best Method: Blended mode of learning

The findings of various studies have no common views among the different modes of teaching-learning. Some scholars on the favor of blended and some favors hybrid and some scholars don`t have the clear decision. Bains et al. (2011) measures the most effective method of learning by statistically through one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson`s chi-square test. They concluded that the blended learning is the best methods and face to face learning was the least effective modes of learning on the basis on one-way ANOVA. On the contrary, there is no significant differences between face-to-face, blended learning and e-learning through Pearson`s chi-square. This results were drawn on the basis of the comparison of experimental research of various eight groups of undergraduate students.

Similarly, Helms (2012) claimed that blended mode improved the learners` grades, retention of knowledge, it helps to increased communication skills and helpful for collaborative learning. Furthermore, he also gives suggestions to improve the learning mode such as scheduling the classroom, need to increased effective communication in the classroom and collaboration skills to the students.

Some scholars are not in the favor of blended mode of learning. For instance, Raes et al. (2019) advocated the hybrid mode of learning and they claimed that the hybrid mode is effective than others. They further argue that hybrid learning mode seemed more adaptable and can create an interesting learning environment. Still there are some problems in hybrid learning regarding on technology and pedagogy. But these difficulties can reduce through the invention by academic institutions and instructors.

Singh et al. (2021) conducted comprehensive study on the hybrid/blended mode of learning and also did the SWOT of it. According to them, the strength of this learning are enables students for self-efficacy, self-awareness, self-pace learning, creating a flexible learning environment and suitable for physically and mental disabilities. In addition, there are also some weakness such as difficult to observe learners' perceptions and behavior, lack of effective interaction and lack of full attention of students. concentration. Beside it, the authors also suggest to the users for enhancing the knowledge about technology and its proper use before join in the online classroom.

Every mode of teaching-learning has its own advantages and disadvantages. For example, immediate interaction and responses are the positive aspects of face to face learning mode whereas lack of time flexibility and classroom engagement are the negative aspects. Moreover, the online education enhances the learners` engagement in classroom, flexible learning and learners get opportunity to look Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (AR/VR) are the example of online education. On the contrary, the lack of live interactions, possibility of distractions and learners` monitoring are demerits. In this context, Nikolopoulou (2022) analyzed the benefits and drawbacks of face to face, online and hybrid learning. He found that immediate contact with teachers, socializing, interaction, and student participation are the benefits of face-to-face learning. In addition, flexible time and location is the benefit of online learning. Similarly, the positive aspects of hybrid mode associated with blending the advantages of face-to-face and virtual learning.

McCutcheon et al. (2014) argue that online learning is a more effective way to teach clinical skills than traditional in-person methods. In order to improve clinical skill getting while bridging the gap between theory and practice, they suggested that more people use online learning for clinical skills. Because the authors only included 19 scientific papers, the findings of this study could not be indicative of the larger problem. In addition, 14 out of 19 quantitative publications were assessed by the authors. Therefore, this study's primary weakness is that it only includes quantitative publications.

Online education in Nepal: Both opportunity and threats

To contextualize the various modes of education in Nepal, some of the previous research were also reviewed. Among these, Shakya et al. (2017) explained that, the online education supports to fulfill the gaps between the rural and urban education in Nepal, however, they pointed out the issues of digital divide. Moreover, they suggested that the online education should make affordable and accessible to all over the country to reduce the gaps between the rural and urban education in Nepal. They claimed that the urban areas the learners got lots of facilities and opportunities than rural areas.

In Nepal, basically, there are frequently interruptions of internet services and electricity that caused the disturb to take online education. Moreover, Kunwar et al. (2020) highlighted the problems and obstacles in online education in Nepal. They described that the various issues regarding online education from students, teachers and parents in Nepal. They found the absence of instruction to the learners in online education which caused the emergence of obstacles in the classroom. Moreover, they also pointed out the other difficulties such as unstable internet service and frequently interruptions of electricity during the online education. Besides it, they found that device related problems (smart phones, laptops, computers) that caused increasing the number of absence learners in online education. They suggested to overcome these problem, the awareness raising program is necessary to enable appropriate use of ICT and educational technology in online education.

There are both advantages and disadvantages of the online education in the context of Nepal. Academicians got new chances to do online research and access to participate in worldwide capacity building program are the example of the benefits of online education. On the contrary, digital divide, lack of concentration in class activities and learners' engagement in multi tasks are the demerits of the online education. Poudel (2021) carried out an online survey in order to know how instructors and students in Nepal's higher education perceived online learning in terms of its advantages, difficulties and recovery plans during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. He identified the benefits of online learning consists of promoting online research, bringing practitioners into interactions with the international community, giving them access to huge and authentic resources of knowledge needed for academic and professional pursuits, and helping them develop self-discipline. On the other hand, increased student autonomy in terms of time and location, social isolation, delayed feedback and plagiarism are the examples of demerits of it. Finally, he concluded that among the various mode of teaching-learning, blended mode will be appropriate mode of learning in Nepal.

Baral (2022) analyzes the online teaching-learning experience of university teachers and students during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal. This study attempts to explore the challenges faced by Nepalese students in online teaching-learning activities. He pointed to the lack of ICT infrastructure, technological skills and management for online classes by the higher education institutions as challenges. However, online teaching begins some new ways to the teachers and learners and further fostered the collaborative learning, digital literacy and self-exploring skills to the learners as the positive aspects. He mentioned that online education creates the digital divide in Nepalese context and this view is similar with Shakya et al. (2017). He suggested that the government and universities need to formulate new policies to develop basic ICT infrastructures and strong connectivity, creating a conducive online teaching environment and also point out the ICT-based curriculum to meet the present demand.

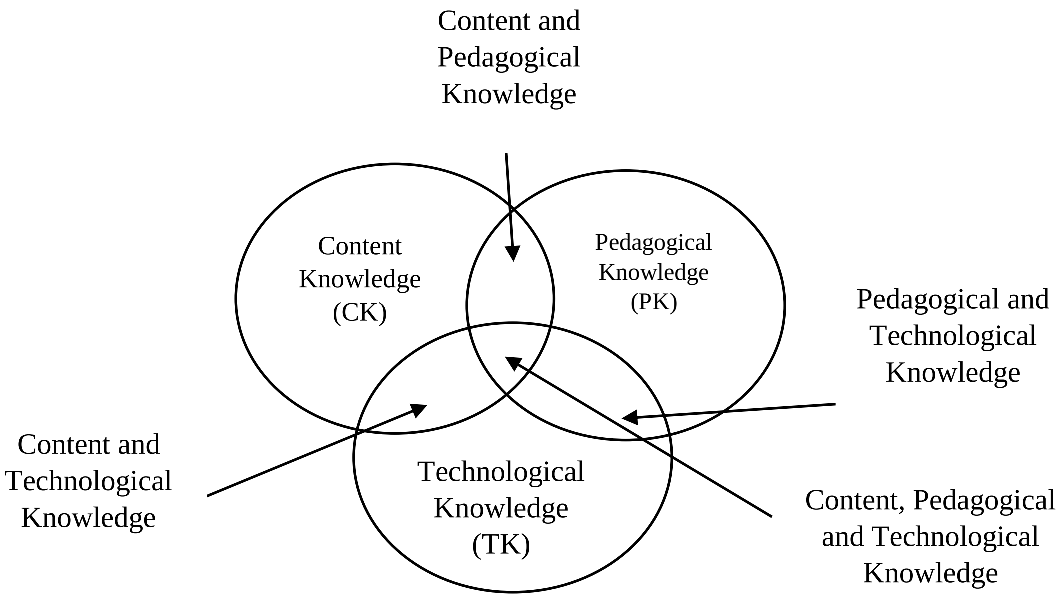
Dahal et al. (2023) aimed to analyze the e-learning strategies at KUSOED as a blend of instructional techniques and resources. This study examines potential e-learning methods to enhance teaching by promoting improved learning results. Similarly, they claimed that in recent years, the focus has shifted from conventional teaching and learning to online and/or alternative digital methods. This study provides alternatives for University departments to present material in an e-learning format.

T-PACK framework proposed by Mishra and Koehler

Mishra & Koehler developed a technological, pedagogical and content knowledge (T-PACK) model in 2006 that was based on the earlier work of Shulman 1986 (Mishra & Koheler, 2006). It offers a comprehensive model that theorizes the relationship between the importance of curriculum-focused technology use and the contributions of technological, pedagogical and content knowledge. Every component of T-PACK is combined into a single and cohesive that combines a strong conceptual understanding of the subject matter with an awareness of how technology may be used to improve teaching while taking into account the requirements and prior knowledge of the students. Mishra and Koehler (2006), proposed the framework of T-PACK as follows;

Figure 2

T-PACK model by Mishra & Koehler, 2006



Teachers have to initially think about how design thinking techniques might be used to apply technological pedagogical content knowledge (T-PACK) in order to help students` develop 21st Century competencies. In order to support design thinking while creating ICT-integrated lessons aimed at 21st Century learning, it offers a conceptual framework that explains specific T-PACK considerations and how these different kinds of T-PACK can be used as scientific resources. This approach addresses an important gap in the body of existing TPACK research by offering a preliminary vocabulary for explaining how teachers generate TPACK through design. Future research directions and implications for instructors designing ICT-integrated lessons are highlighted.

From the above figure, every individual teacher need to know about the above mentioned three types of skills for effective teaching such as pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and technological knowledge. Without merging these skills, the teaching-learning activities couldn`t be an effective. Content knowledge encompassing facts, concepts, theories, and principles that represents the body of knowledge that both teachers and students are required to acquire in their subject areas. Moreover, knowledge of and implementation of teaching techniques, learning theories and classroom management techniques that teachers employ to promote successful learning is referred to as pedagogical knowledge. Finally, a key element of the T-PACK framework, which emphasizes the integration of technology with pedagogy and content knowledge, is technological knowledge in teaching-learning. It involves understanding the different digital tools and resources that are available for use in the classroom, realizing how these tools might enhance learning, and knowing how to use them efficiently. In order to employ technology to improve student learning and make sure that it is appropriate for the subject matter and learning objectives, educators must possess this understanding.

Technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge are three of the primary types for knowledge that are combined in the TPACK (Technological, Pedagogical and Content Knowledge) model, an educational framework that assists educators in successfully incorporating technology into their instruction. It highlights how essential it is to know how integrating technology with pedagogy and understanding of the subject may improve teaching and learning. A Venn diagram of the model shows how these three knowledge domains interconnected.

Contextualization in Nepal

Technology has changed the face of higher education in all over the world and the Nepal is not an exception. Through F2F (face-to-face), blended, hybrid, and online teacher teaching methods and, consequently, student learning, ICT innovation has changed the educational governance environment. Nowadays, learners have access to home, school, and other locations for anytime, anywhere learning opportunities as needed because of online, hybrid, and blended learning environments.

Initially, traditional face-to-face learning was the only form of instruction where both instructor and students meets physically in the classroom. However, only conventional method of teaching is not sufficient in Nepal, in this context, Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED) was the first to introduce e-learning in Nepal. The initial move towards creating an e-learning platform occurred in 2012 for students registered in a One Year M Ed program in Leadership and Management (Dahal et. al., 2023). They claimed that the KUSOED established the first e-learning center in 2005 to promote technology's role in education. The center started training to professors and students on utilizing digital resources for education, including learning management systems, multimedia applications, and online tools.

In the context of Nepal, to provide access to disadvantaged group, e-learning and blended learning may be the better solution for inclusive education in Nepal. On focusing this statement, the government of Nepal formulated the Non-Formal Education Policy in 2007 and committed to ensuring the inclusion and access to marginalized groups through non-formal education. This policy emphasized to develop relevant strategies to provide the equivalence to the formal education system and also aims to prepare the different digital resources for distance learning (Non-formal Education Policy, 2007). Moreover, the government of Nepal established the Open University in 2016 in Nepal and implemented different academic programs under the three faculties; the Faculty of Management and Law, the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education and the Faculty of

Science and technology (Nepal Open University, 2024). To make e-learning effective, there is the necessity to provide ICT skills to the teachers and students. So, Laudari and Maher (2019) also argued that special training about ICT is required to implement successful and better performance for e-learning and blended learning in Nepal.

Only the content and pedagogical knowledge are not sufficient in 21st century learning skills because now, most of the Nepalese learners are highly engaging in various ICT devices. So, to effective deliver of any content, the instructors need to have technological knowledge (Mishra & Koheler, 2006). To considering this fact, the Digital Nepal Framework (2019) includes digital integration as its fundamental development approach for educational progress. It focuses on three main priorities which include smart classrooms and online learning platforms and educational management information systems (EMIS) and mobile learning centers for rural areas.

Various Universities in Nepal including Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu Unviersity, National Open University have also started dual modes of education (face-to-face mode and blended mode). However, the teaching modalities are different in terms of its disciplines, Universities and instructors. Due to obstacles in traditional classroom settings, it is important for educational institutions to implement online learning. Following that, Tribhuwan University quickly embraced online learning and ICT. Universities started offering regular classes online during the COVID-19 pandemic in certain programs-like the GSE MPhil in Education—have online exams. However, it was highly affected by the unstable interne, digital devices and infrastructure. The lack of electronic devices, internet access, and ICT proficiency makes students uncomfortable. Even so, these challenges provide plenty of opportunities to maintain and grow blended learning and e-learning as alternatives to classroom teaching, improving inclusiveness and expanding access to those who are marginalized (Acharya et al., 2020). According to the aforementioned articles, e-learning and blended learning are more important in Nepal since they make higher education more accessible to students and promote their professional and personal growth.

Practical Guidelines for Implementation

Blended learning, characterized by the integration of traditional face-to-face and technological teaching methods, emerges as a modern educational approach all over the world at present. The interactive content in blended learning enhances the interest of students and allows instructors to tailor content to diverse audience needs with different socio-economic and geographical backgrounds. Implementing the online and blended learning, the developing countries face obstacles due to lack of technological tools and technical expertise. In this line, Islam and Akter (2023) highlighted that teachers need to adequate competency and technological devices. Still, most of the instructors have lack of well experienced and sufficient competency regarding on digital skills in the classroom. The advent of technological innovations like blended learning is swiftly transforming higher education, combining face-to-face teaching with online learning. With the increasing focus on blended policies, there is a need to delve into the theoretical basis of blended learning studies and understand how it is adopted and implemented concerning students, lecturers, and administration in the local context (Anthony et al. 2022). To cope with the challenges of blended learning, the teachers should also have proper knowledge and competency with necessary digital devices regarding the Learning Management System (LMS) through special training on digital pedagogy.

The adoption of blended learning in the education sector is essential for leveraging technological resources with a focus on preparing students for global educational development and competitiveness as well as making education accessible to all. To overcome these potential challenges, academic institutions must enhance electronic laboratories with good internet access so that learners can also have opportunity to learn effectively.

With numerous universities in Nepal providing distance education through internet technologies, students now have increased opportunities for flexible learning options. It can ensure equal access to educational resources and opportunities (Shakya et al., 2017). The Government and Universities must establish novel policies, build essential ICT infrastructures with robust connectivity, foster a supportive online teaching environment, and design a curriculum based on ICT to align with the current educational needs (Baral, 2022). E-learning through MOODLE significantly influences education, seamlessly integrating various teaching modes. It encourages University faculties and teachers to enhance student engagement across subjects. University faculty should have the flexibility to choose e-learning modes aligned with their teaching styles, requiring a shift in perspectives to effectively employ techniques that promote pedagogy, learning, and learner empowerment (Dahal et al., 2023).

Additionally, the current face-to-face course needs to be reframed to make it compatible with blended mode. It can help increase the number of students in the University classes. For this, there must be an orientation for students and teachers containing and applying the T-PACK framework. Financial and technological support systems for the students to increase access to education through hybrid/blended mode to meet the barriers regarding geographical location and socioeconomic status. Collaboration with local levels and other institutions as ‘industry/institution academia collaboration’ for attracting students for career opportunities and supporting their continuity of education using online/blended mode.

Conclusion

Nepal is at a turning point in its educational journey, balancing traditional face-to-face (F2F) instruction with more contemporary approaches including online, blended and hybrid learning. In Nepal's sociocultural setting, blended learning and hybrid approaches from traditional classrooms to online platforms must be flexible. The study explores numerous research studies and reviews the body of existing literature to provide a detailed understanding of various educational concepts. The research presents a varied pictures based on comparisons between blended learning, face-to-face and e-learning. Notably, online learning presents both potential and challenges in the Nepalese context, highlighting the necessity of ICT skills, infrastructure and appropriate laws to facilitate the transition to e-learning.

The contextualization in Nepal emphasizes how important blended learning and e-learning are becoming, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The government's commitment to non-formal education policies, the establishment of the Open University, and the necessity of ICT skills for teachers and students underscore the evolving educational landscape. Although issues like the digital divide, infrastructural development, digital competency of both learners and teachers are still exist. So, promoting the establishment of electronic laboratories in the educational institutions, specialized training to learners on digital tools and teacher competency in digital pedagogy are genuine demand in Nepal. Furthermore, the importance of flexible learning options, equal access to educational resources, and the role of MOODLE in enhancing student engagement are underscored.

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