Year 22, No. 20, September 2020

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Participation

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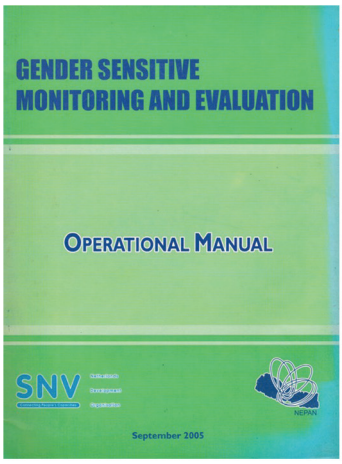
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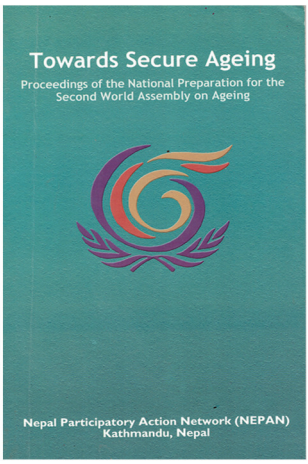
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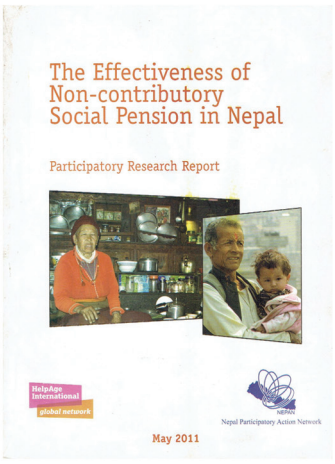
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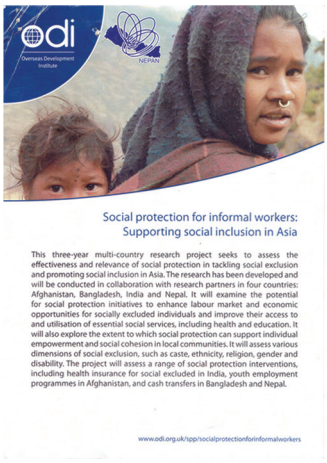
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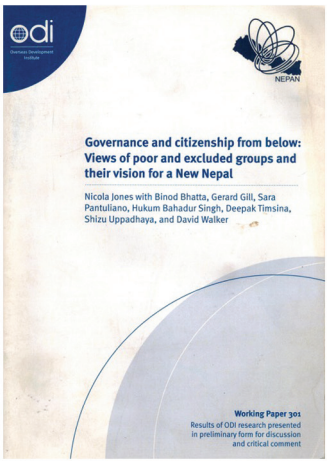
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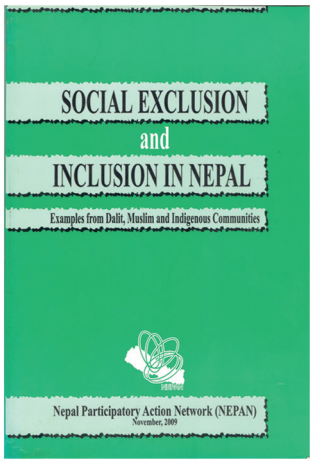
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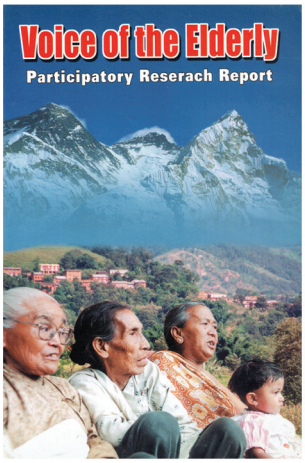
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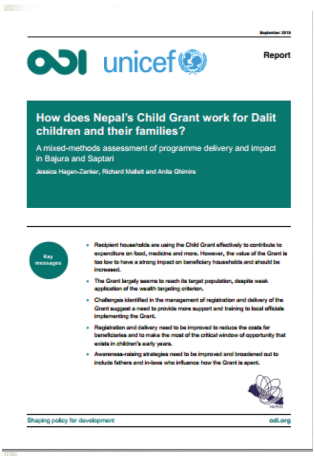
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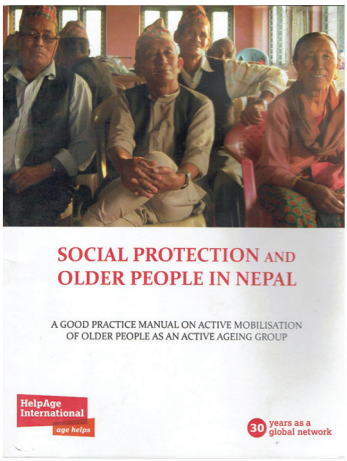
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CONTENTS

Editorial 4

Articles

1. Post-COVID Revival of Homestay Tourism and Stakeholders' Capacity Development Issues: Some Reflexive Perspectives from the Fields
CHET NATH KANEL 5

2. Challenges to Participatory Research and Development in the New Normal Created by COVID-19
EARL JAMES GOODYEAR, PhD 15

3. Future Transformation: The Era of New Normal Fear of Further Marginalisation of People Due to Digital Divide
ANOJ CHHETRI, PhD 22

4. Integrated Health Information System Architecture: Towards Digital Health Governance
JHABINDRA BHANDARI.....32

5. Challenges of Participatory Research and Development in New Normal Situation: Practitioners' Perspective
UTTAM UPRETY.....40

6. Strategies for Participatory Evaluation in New Normal created by COVID-19 in Nepal
RAM CHANDRA KHANAL, PhD 57

7. Changing Political Culture and its Impact on Nepalese Society
Prof. PREM SHARMA, PhD.....65

8. Ethical Dilemmas in Researching Children in Developing Countries: An Ethnographer's Response
MEENAKSHI DAHAL, PhD.....73

9. Barriers of Rural Women's Representation and Participation in Local Governance in ***Sudur Pachhim*** Province of Nepal
JAMUNA SAUD 85

10. Exploring Food-Related Barriers and Impact on Preschool-Aged Children in Pokhara, Nepal: A Qualitative Review
JIB ACHARYA, EDWIN VAN TEIJLINGEN, JANE MURPHY, MARTIN HIND, BASMA ELLAHI AND AMRITA JOSHI 98

11. Food and Nutritional Security in Karnali Province of Nepal
Prof. NARBIKRAM THAPA, PhD 111

12. Community Based Early Warning System In Flood Resilience Context At Nawalparasi District, Nepal
N. GYAWALI, D. DEVKOTA, P. CHAUDHARY, A. CHHETRI, AND N.R. DEVKOTA, AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY UNIVERSITY, RAMPUR, CHITWAN, NEPAL 128

13. Sustainability of Irrigation Systems from Community Participation in Institutions
NARAYAN PRASAD BHATTA, PhD 138

Short Communication

14. New Normal: Building our Behaviour in new Virtureal World
SARAH BLIN 147

15. Restarting Nepalese Tourism Industry in Post-COVID Situation: Some Suggestive Thoughts
RABI JUNG PANDEY 149

Book Reviews

16. Value Inculcation through Self-Observation
MAHENDRA SHAKYA 151

17. Editorial Policy 154

18. Guidelines for the authors of Participation 154

19. BIBLIOGRAPHY of Participation Issues 1 to 19 159

EDITORIAL NOTE

It is a great pleasure for NEPAN to present the 20th volume of PARTICIPATION to you on the occasion of the 26th NEPAN Annual General Meeting. The Journal is now in your hand amid despair, hope and optimism triggered by the irreparable loss in lives and economy due to the brutal impact of COVID-19 and also by hopes rekindled by opportunities lying in the New Normal. Before launching the Journal, the death toll to this pandemic has exceeded 908,000 and infection has attacked 28 million people from around the world.

In light of the situation generated by COVID-19, the Journal aims to provide its audience with thoughts, perspective and research products particularly focused on participatory research and development. While the whole world was brought to its knees by the scale and magnitude of this pandemic, people are surviving.

The virus has changed our lives reflecting on socio-economic transformation, particularly in relation to people's behaviour towards business-as-usual and economic models. The reflection of these changes in our behaviour in the contemporary world affairs is called the New Normal.

In the New Normal, NEPAN intends to emerge as a key knowledge platform for think-tanks, researchers, professionals and policy-makers and present ideas as to how to navigate the trajectory of changed behaviour. As such, we will help people recover from economic and social loss through innovative policy measures and business actions. The research products apart from individual thoughts and perspective are believed to be pragmatically calibrated for planner, policy-makers and community-workers while maneuvering through the current turbulent economic waves facing mankind.

With a view to provoke further research and discussions in the New Normal, the Journal has published scholarly articles contributed by prominent authors who represent a cross-section of society. The articles focused in the COVID context have articulated a roadmap for policy-makers and researchers to build on further and act immediately without any further delay in the enactment of policy actions.

The Journal has also accorded space for articles focused on women's participation, food security and nutrition, disaster management, contemporary political leadership, and water management. These research products are believed to inspire students, researchers, planners and policy-makers to dwell further in these thematic fields and take action appropriately.

Last, but not least, NEPAN extends its heart-felt gratitude to all authors who have seamlessly contributed their valuable time in writing articles with expression of solidarity to NEPAN's ethos, deeply entrenched in participatory research and development. We trust that the articles presented to you will find themselves in the national and international policy arena generating further interests from politicians, researchers, academicians, students, community workers and professionals.

Let's follow comprehensive COVID-19 safety measures and stay safe and well !

Post-COVID Revival of Homestay Tourism and Stakeholders' Capacity Development Issues: Some Reflexive Perspectives from the Fields

CHET NATH KANEL

Abstract

In Nepal, tourism is one of the vibrant sectors to contribute to overall economic growth and employment creations. However, due to the global pandemic COVID-19, like other sectors, tourism has been seriously devastated; and post-COVID revival has been a challenge due to several factors, including capacity development of the concerned stakeholders. This article has made an effort to explore key concerns and issues associated with the capacity development of homestay owners and other stakeholders in the 'new normal' situations. Qualitative approach has been applied in this exploration; and, the findings have suggested that local stakeholders are optimistic towards speedy recovery of homestay tourism once the spread of COVID-19 is stopped; however, to provide quality services to the tourists--both domestic and international-- a number of ways for enhancing stakeholders' capacities are required before expecting full swing of the industry. Among others, developing local resource persons (LRPs) for homestay tourism appears as a viable option for sustaining the capacity efforts, especially in rural and remote homestay sites of Nepal.

Keywords: Tourism, Homestay, COVID-19, Capacity Development, Nepal

1. Introduction

Globally, tourism is considered as one of the prime sectors for earning foreign currencies and thereby boosting the national and local economy, along with national image building (Pandey, 2014). Nepal is also considering tourism as a major source of such incomes, although direct contribution in the national gross domestic product (GDP) is still below 3 percent (Kanel, 2016; NPC, 2019). Despite the fact, tourism in the last 4-5 years (post-

quake period) was increasing by raising lots of hopes among the tourism entrepreneurs and also among the government and non-governmental officials (Kanel, 2019a). However, due to the global pandemic Coronavirus (COVID-19), as in other more than 215 countries, Nepal is also facing serious problems in order to sustain the tourism-based economy, both in urban and rural areas. Homestay tourism, being one of the major activities in Nepal's tourism sector, has also been seriously affected (GoN, 2020).

According to Taragaon Development Board (TGDB) and Homestay Operators' Association- Nepal (HOSAN), multiple contributions have been made by homestay tourism in Nepal (TGDB, 2016). Those include: economic, social, environmental, cultural, educational, political leadership, psychological, inclusive development and so on. Several studies have revealed that homestay operators, including agro-eco-tourism entrepreneurs (Dangol, 2007) make a good income from it, ranging from 30 to 70 percent of the total annual household incomes (e.g. NRB, 2015; Sedai, 2018).

Throughout the country, there are about 1,200 to 1,500 households directly engaged in operating homestays, which are spreading from Taplejung in East Nepal to Darchula in the Far West. Such homestays either belong to 'private' or to 'community', as per the "Homestay Operation Guidelines, BS 2065" developed by the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA, 2010). In these homestays, there are at present a total of some 3,000 to 3,500 beds (Kanel, 2019b). Local peoples' interests in establishing homestays in recent years have soared rapidly (TGDB, 2016, MoCTCA, 2020). Community-to-community influence and inspirations have played great roles in such increase (Kanel, 2019b). However, homestay owners' capacities in effectively managing their business have always been the matter of critics (TGDB, 2016; Sharma, 2019; Majhi, 2019). There have been some efforts in enhancing the knowledge and skills of homestay owners through Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NATHM), HOSAN, Village Tourism Forum- Nepal (VITOF) and some other governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); however, they have not been adequate to cover all the homestay sites (Kanel, 2019b). Why have they been inadequate? A detailed exploration is the need of the present hour.

Thus, in this paper, I have made an effort to dig out key issues related to homestay operators' capacity in managing those homestays effectively in the post-COVID situations. Additionally, I have also reflected/articulated the suggestions received from my research-participants as 'conclusions' and 'implications' in this article.

2. Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to explore and explain capacity-related pertinent issues encountered by the homestay operators in Nepal, particularly focusing on rural areas. Other specific objectives include: i) to discuss the contributing factors linked with each of the issues connected to the capacity enhancement in homestay operation; and ii) to depict a picture of remedial solutions for boosting up homestay owners' capacities in order to revitalize tourism in post-COVID 'New Normal' situation.

3. Methodology & Approaches

In this paper, I have used the qualitative approach of inquiry. I administered mainly four sub-approaches to gather required information including: desk/literature review ("content search/analysis"), "telephonic interviews" with homestay operators; and, "virtual meetings" with some purposely selected tourism and socio-economic experts. To some extent, where possible, "in-person talks" were also held on some occasions.

This study, epistemologically, covered some 20 persons (both male and female 'research participants'; youths and older persons) as "research participants". Experts represented from both Kathmandu valley and outside the valley. Meeting the people with comparatively better experience in the fields and at the centre was my major strategy during the course of the study. This was primarily done in July and August 2020. Both 'structured' and 'unstructured' questions were used while taking interviews and formal and informal conversations (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

While discussing the findings and drawing the conclusions, I have also used my own experiences/reflections and knowledge gained through first-hand experience of homestay sites and their close observations for a long period (Pre-COVID situations). In brief, all the approaches, methods and strategies adopted for information collections have been focused mainly on the following three thematic questions:

- What are the main concerns and issues associated with the capacity development of homestay owners in Nepal?
- How have the homestay owners realized the effects of COVID-19 in their homestay businesses and capacity development processes?
- How can we revitalize homestay tourism with enhanced capacities in the post-COVID 'New Normal' situation?

4. Key Findings and Discussions

In this study, I have tried to summarize the findings mainly focusing on the three key questions as depicted above. While discussing, however, I have also made an effort to trigger some of the untold stories/ themes realized while experiencing and observing the fields of homestay-arena. Due to the limit of words in this paper, I have tried to present findings as briefly as possible.

4.1 Major issues associated with homestay capacity enhancement/ training & learning process

4.1.1 Theory vs Practical

Education and training experts always claim that theoretical knowledge is not sufficient to run any enterprises or businesses. Being homestay technical & vocational education and training (TVET) matter, it demands high quality technical backup through formal or non-formal education/ training. It is a well known fact that good TVET initiative benefits individuals, societies and industry. Developing concerned stakeholders' capacities through an enhanced knowledge, skills and attitudes is thus very important. Homestay development, being relatively a new phenomenon, requires lots of training and capacity development activities (TGDB, 2016).

Homestay owners in Nepal generally get non-formal education through various short-term courses and exposure trips to already-developed homestay sites. *"I went to Sirubari of Syangja district to observe homestay and I learnt a lot from there;*

then tried to replicate those learning in my homestay", said a female participant from Chepang Hills Trek, Chitwan. Her exposure-based preliminary training was subsequently backstopped by local social mobilizers deployed by a tourism project. Further, she got another opportunity for an on-the-spot coaching by homestay professionals. Another male respondent from the same vicinity lamented, *"My wife took part in a homestay training program; and from her I have also learnt a lot about homestay management".* According to the training participants, homestay training mainly included the topics such as: basics of homestay, tourism and its positive and negative impacts, roles of homestay-owners, housekeeping techniques, welcoming guests, cooking of local as well as some new food items, preparing and serving soups & drinks/ snacks and main food items, etc. In addition, participants learn how to interact with guests, showing cultural performances, local guiding, developing and practicing 'local code of conducts', sanitation and waste management, simple billing and book-keeping, etc.

An official at the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) stated, *"The training package is basically of one week long, which was developed based on the experiences from different parts of the country and abroad; and, NATHM led the document formulation process."* However, a freelance expert commented that the course was still not adequate to address the basic training needs of the homestay-operators; and equally it lacked practical aspects of the homestay management. A homestay-owner Gurung lady from Bhadaure Tamangi, Kaski shared her experiences saying: *"We discussed a lot during the homestay training, but time allocated for practical parts was too short. We need more practical ('khaas kaam garne tarika') exercise than theory ('kura')."*

To summarize, it is clear that local stakeholders are in need of more practical training on cooking, serving, communicating, guiding and book-keeping skills. In some homestay groups, I also observed those problems while monitoring, facilitating and being engaged in capacity development activities in the homestay sites.

4.1.2 Learning vs Earning

The research participants strongly opined that learning from the training was not enough to continue capacity development endeavours in running homestays. Furthermore, some participants expressed that they did not get chances to apply the learnt skills immediately due to lack of tourists in the area. This was against the background that tourist flow, either domestic or international, has not been as expected in many homestay places thereby reducing the likelihood of utilizing such skills and knowledge and limiting the earning from homestay-based tourism activities. A male homestay-owner who also guides tourists in the local area (Chitwan) shared his experience:

"In our village we have 12 homestays, and tourist arrival in this village is extremely low. Owing to this, we have not got chances to fully utilize our learning into practice. We took first training and exposure in 2004, second training in 2011, and we were much encouraged to welcome more and more tourists in our village; but the earthquake of 2015 hit hard in our homestay tourism, due to which tourist arrival was dramatically reduced. We were hopeless, our homestays

almost closed; and we also forgot some of the learning due to a long gap [...] as no practice, no further learning goes on, and now, this Corona has further added woes on us, what to do next?"

Over a telephonic conversation, another female participant from the same area expressed her views like this: *"After the devastating earthquake of BS 2072 (2015 AD), Coronavirus brought another problem in our homestay; and for many months we have not seen even a single tourist in this area; due to which we are further discouraged and frustrated...".*

The complete 'lockdown' of the country for almost four months (March- July 2020) has pushed the homestay/tourism entrepreneurs in a great trouble. Mr. Prem Ghale, political leader and famous homestay operator in Lamjung district stated, *"The COVID-19 has seriously hampered homestay businesses in many areas, including Ghalegaun/ Ghanpokhara/Bhujung. People are in trouble losing their potential incomes from this regular business. They have to learn again how to run this business in the post-COVID situation. Everyone is hopeless and upset now."*

These statements reveal that homestay owners, for a long time, have not got a chance to utilize their skills in practice or in 'earning' purposes. *"This demands a refresher action (visit, training, workshop) for reviving and revitalizing homestay tourism throughout the country in the post-COVID situation",* added an expert/lecturer in a tourism college in Kaski.

4.1.3 Facilitation vs Manipulation

Training is rightly used when there is good facilitation during and after the training event(s). Regular follow-up and backstopping activities reinforce the participants to fully utilize the learned things into practice/work-situation. However, when the trained participants, particularly in remote rural parts are left alone, they become inactive in many respects. A case from Rasuwa depicts the fact more succinctly:

*"Previously we had a tourism project (called 'TRPAP': Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program), and we were trained, supported and followed-up regularly for many years. In those days we had a very good experience in running homestays. Later, the project was terminated; and, after a few years we faced a massive earthquake (BS 2072) in our area, and lost many things, including some neighbours and community members. Our homestay tourism almost came to zero; and now (after building new houses) we are trying to revive, but due to lack of a good facilitating organization we have not been able to get mobilized, to get new training or visits. Sometimes 'visiting organizations' come here in the name of survey or other short developmental events, but they do not facilitate, rather they just manipulate. These manipulations do not help us go ahead, to take new initiations for reviving our homestay-glory." (*A female entrepreneur/development worker, Tamang Heritage Trail, Rasuwa)

Above voices clearly indicate that post-training supports and facilitations are also vital for proper application of training and learning by the participants; no matter whether they had taken formal or non-formal or informal training. In the absence of timely follow-up and facilitation by external organization(s) the adoption process could have low pace or total absence (Kanel, 2019b). In such

cases, one respondent from Dallagaun Homestay, Bardiya (Mr. Chaudhary)'s own experiences are worth quoting here:

"For the last one decade, we have been getting good support and backstopping from various organizations such as: WWF, Bardiya National Park, Buffer Zone Management Committee, etc., and we are always active to run our homestays. Although we have been affected by Coronavirus at this moment, we were very optimistic for a successful homestay tourism year at Dallagaun due to 'Visit Nepal Year (VNY)- 2020'. Now our dreams have faded away due to this devastating Coronavirus. But still, we are not fully discouraged. We are ready to serve our tourists any time when businesses open without any fear of Coronavirus. We have been continuously learning and doing and, doing and learning."

In such ways, where continued facilitations are available, people always feel secured and pride of being with some facilitating organizations. A report published by GIZ (Sedai, 2018), also indicated that where post-training regular backstopping exists, training participants are more active in applying things that they have learnt. One trained lady at Dallagaun adds, *"When we practice, we also get comments and feedback from neighbours, peers and tourists as well, which help us greatly improve our skills, attitudes and knowledge."* She was giving emphasis on peer-learning and service-receivers' (tourist) feedback as crucial learning processes.

4.1.4 Local vs 'Global'

Local curriculum plays significant roles in boosting local knowledge and enhancing required skills in performing any task/ business. In homestay too, localizing global or national curricula is of paramount importance. One tourism expert illustrated, *"Until our homestay-owners are equipped with local traditions, foods, cultures and resource-base KSAs (knowledge, skills and attitudes), they never use such international or 'outer' things. They should be simply taught about tourism matters relating to local contexts and resources, and as far as possible in the local vernacular language. But our curricula have knowingly or unknowingly given emphasis on modern and foreign matters, which reduce adoption rates in real sense."*

An official (homestay trainer) at NATHM claimed, *"Homestay training packages and manuals are relatively new for Nepal, and we have been continuously trying to incorporate local contexts in our manuals and packages based on field training, visits and periodical studies".* However, he was of the opinion that utilizing local trainers with vernacular languages in all contexts could not be feasible since developing local resource persons (LRPs) have not been as part of our homestay development process in Nepal. *"It should be thought from municipal level to province and national levels to develop LRPs in each district with good proficiency and capacity in their local language"*, he added.

A homestay-owner (female) from Tanahunsur of Tanahun district stated, *"The homestay training packages should give high priority to utilize local agricultural and forest products as soup items, snacks, drinks and main dishes as well. Only advanced sites/practitioners could take ideas about international foods; but they should also give priority to local products."*

In this line, agreeing with the voices of the above lady, one tourism expert lady added, *"And, those packages should focus matters related to gender issues as well. Every training package and content should deal with men's and women's issues associated with homestay management. These gender issues should be mainstreamed in every aspect of local tourism systems from products development, infrastructures improvement, promotion, marketing to local benefits sharing."*

These multiple perspectives clearly signify that localizing homestay training and education packages with adequate attention towards gender mainstreaming is very important to develop local capacities sustainably. The LRPs (as discussed in 1.3 above) could play significant roles in visioning, claiming, shaping and promoting local flavours in all capacity-development initiatives/packages.

4.2 Impacts of COVID-19 in homestay tourism from economic and capacity perspectives

Nationally, Nepal's tourism system is badly affected by COVID-19. A latest estimate from MoCTCA and NTB reveals that some 40 to 50 billion rupees (equiv. around 400-500 million USD) have been lost from the tourism sector in the last four-five months (March-July) or during the 'lockdown' period only. Further economic damages; along with other social, cultural, humanitarian, psychological and environmental losses; are also expected from this 'endless' pandemic disease since increasing cases have shown that reality. Trillions of dollars have been reportedly lost by global tourism.

Nepal's homestay tourism, which is mainly expanded in rural parts of the country, has been no exception. Hundreds of entrepreneurs involved in homestay business, reportedly, have experienced unprecedented economic losses. Their self-employment and income-generating activities have unbelievably dwindled. In this context, a homestay entrepreneur at Nagarkot, Bhaktapur district mentioned that they had not received even a single guest during the pandemic lock-down times. *"Our guest-rooms are totally closed for more than 100 days. We are still uncertain about the continuity of our homestay businesses", he added.*

Like in Nagarkot, homestay owners in Kathmandu, Kavre, Chitwan, Nawalparasi, Lamjung, Palpa, Bardiya and so many other districts have similar experiences; and local, national as well as online media have been frequently reporting on such issues. For example, Bhadrabas Community Homestay in Sindhuli district, which was just opened from last year (2019), has a bitter experience of not having any visitor in the village since the COVID-19 related "lockdown" started in mid- March 2020 (*Kantipur* National Daily news, 12 August 2020). There are dozens of such news and cases about negative impacts on homestay tourism due to COVID-19.

"Due to losses in homestay businesses, the homestay-owners have given more priorities to additional farming (vegetable, livestock etc.) hours to compensate losses", lamented a homestay leader at Patlekhet, Kavre district. This was further evidenced by a tourism expert in Kathmandu saying, *"Farmers are compelled to shift their homestay activities to farming activities due to uncertainty in COVID-19 pandemic control. It is a regular phenomena that*

when one business shows less hope, then another business crop-up as a new ray of hope."

Loss in exact monetary quantification in this study was very difficult, since no entrepreneur wanted to mention speculated monthly income from homestay tourism. In this regard, showing the examples from West Nepal (Banke, Bardiya, Surkhet, etc.), GIZ Project's study (Sedai, 2018) indicated that an earning of 30 to 75 thousand rupees per month is possible where tourism started flourishing. *"It, however, depends on the locality of the homestay site and trends of tourism development in the region. In some parts, even earnings of 5 thousand rupees (equivalent to approximately USD 450.) annually from homestay business alone is also an impossible",* added a tourism economist in Kathmandu.

Due to these economic uncertainties, homestay-owners and other stakeholders have deprived of capacity enhancement opportunities. *"There have been no training, workshop and exposure events for the last many months in our area. If such is the case, we will forget our skills soon",* expressed a female homestay-owner in Chitwan. *"We had expected lots of training, visits and exhibition opportunities in VNY 2020, however, the cancellation of the long-awaited VNY-2020 campaign has deprived us of those opportunities"*, complained unequivocally by two homestay operators in Palpa.

These are just a few views depicting the examples of how the homestay stakeholders' aspirations and expectations have been hurt. No doubt, as other sectors, tourism is facing hard during these COVID-19 times. Activities have narrowed down, and shrunk. Hampering in one sector obviously affects another sector as well. Tourism, being a multifaceted sector, is influenced more quickly and seriously.

4.3 Revitalizing homestay tourism in post-COVID 'new normal' situation

In my exploration, it was very clear that, saying absolutely "what would happen next?" was almost impossible for every research participant. The tourism experts showed some optimistic paths in the tourism development processes in the post-COVID situations. Nonetheless, local residents owning homestays most often seemed uncertain about the future of homestay. They were primarily concerned with two questions: "When will we be able to open our homestays?"; and, "How to handle tourists visiting homestays in the Post-COVID situation?"

Tourism experts' views in this respect could be summarized as follows:

- It will take a long time for recovery in the tourism sector; however, upon revival of rural areas could take faster and more benefits from "domestic tourism";
- In new situation, domestic tourism should be promoted at first instance; then, gradually international tourists could be expected winning their confidence for an effective management of post-COVID tourism with an enhanced energy and capacity;
- Special discounts on services could be expected from the tourists, and bearing this fact in mind, tourism businesses/entrepreneurs should be facilitated with special grants, long-term loans, re-loan packages, discounted interest rates, tax exemptions, and so on by the Federal, Provincial and Local governments;
- "Tourism Protocol" developed by the MoCTCA and NTB should be implemented in all Provinces and local levels through a well coordinated approach;
- Nepal's 10-year Tourism Development Strategic Plan (2016- 2025) should also be reviewed;

and, new perspectives should be incorporated making it a national document owned by all province and local governments as well;

- In the next 2-3 years, instead of developing new destinations/ or new homestay tourism sites, the existing products should be re-branded, re-packaged and re-promoted in selected source markets where COVID-19 has left less impacts, e.g. China, Singapore, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, Finland, Denmark, etc.
- Digital promotion and marketing should be adopted by all homestay operators by using multiple techniques and tools, including "social media" (Majhi, 2019). Concerned authorities should facilitate them with new technologies and ideas to tackle the challenges emerged after the COVID-19; and, grasp new opportunities arising around.
- A way of increasing domestic tourists in homestay destinations is to encourage school/ college/university students, scholars and teachers. Thus, extensive awareness campaigns and promotional packages should be promoted in such institutions.

5. Conclusions & Implications

Despite Covid-19's devastating impact on Nepal's tourism sector, tourism/homestay entrepreneurs and experts expressed optimism for tourism promotion in Nepal. The interviews with the entrepreneurs and experts reveal that capacity development efforts should be paid more attention first to revitalize the tourism sector, along with other associated economic sectors. Capacity development activities need to be geared towards conducting refresher training on homestay management, cooking, guiding, local products, promotion and marketing. Equally new promotional strategies should be developed and implemented with the participation of local stakeholders. The key strategies may include: starting the 'new normal' tourism/homestay from domestic tourists and gradually focus on international tourisms; giving high priority to nearby source markets where COVID-effects are comparatively less; and, fully utilize the 'Tourism Protocol' developed by MoCTCA/NTB to revitalize Nepal's overall tourism system.

For these all, developing multiple capacities of the concerned owners and related stakeholders is very important. And, most importantly, as mentioned by many respondents, developing and deploying LRPs should be a common priority of all local and provincial governments. Developing wider connectivity with the purpose of enhancing digital/ICT-based marketing is also a crucial capacity-related need of all homestay tourism stakeholders in Nepal. Local governments, HoSAN, VITOF, NTB, NATHM, Taragaon Development Board and MoCTCA's Tourism Department's enhanced coordination will be very important on this frontier.

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Challenges to Participatory Research and Development in the New Normal Created by COVID-19

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Abstract

The global pandemic, known as COVID-19 has presented the world with the latest human challenge to create an effective vaccine, manufacture and distribute it to the world's population and restart failing economies and sustainable development strategies. The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and COVID-19 have caused the collapse of social, economic, and environmental policies of global institutions and, conversely their nation options for transformative changes. The current pandemic highlights the critical imperative for the creation of advanced knowledge in the science and technology fields for the world to advance while finding solutions to old problems. The challenges to participatory research and development shall be to develop a multilateral approach of coping with the immediate impacts of the coronavirus crisis on the lives of the people while also directly targeting actions towards the strategic development goals of the nation. In doing so, a priority for research and development planners should include the development of options to create and implement a transformative policy for innovation.

Keywords: COVID-19, Research & Development, Transformation, Science, Technology & Innovation Policy, Transparency, Participation & Accountability

1. Introduction

The global pandemic that has spread to virtually every country in the world, severe acute respiratory coronavirus 2 (SARS-Cov-2) was identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019. Wuhan is the largest city in Central China with a population of over eleven million. The Government of China attempted to contain the spread of the virus by shutting down transport links, placing Wuhan in lockdown along with other nearby cities to isolate a total population of eighteen million people. The World Health Organization (WHO) acknowledged

China's action as "unprecedented in public health history"[1] and praised China for its commitment to isolate the virus and minimize its spread to other countries.

In spite of China's containment actions, the human-to human transmission has been recorded in 213 countries and territories and aboard two seagoing passenger conveyances. As of 18 July 2020 the COVID-19 has recorded 14,673,689 cases and 609,603 fatalities.[2] The United States confirmed its first case on 30 January and now is the leading country for this infection with 4.91 million reported cases and 160,003 deaths.[3] The USA has the highest caseload in the world, caused in part by lingering problems in making rapid testing widely available and resistance in some areas to wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) and social distancing measures. On a per-capita basis, the United States ranks 10th highest in the world for both cases and deaths.[4] The global response to the virus has varied in the adoption of social containment measures by government and health institutions while also reorganizing to address the priority needs of acutely ill patients.

As a consequence, the coronavirus has prompted members of the world's scientific, technical, environmental and social institutions to create new and innovative methodologies to replace systems and procedures that have been hindered by virtue of quarantines, social distancing, and disruption to economic and social activities. Examples are presented herewith to demonstrate how activities in the fields of research and development are being adapted through innovative approaches to conditions emanating from the current global public health emergency.

2. Reversing the Culture of Scientific Research

In January 2020 scientists at the Wisconsin National Primate Research Centre in the United States learned of a new disease emerging from China and correctly identified a research need for a primate model to answer important questions about its biology. The scientists began recruiting investigators to coordinate research efforts and ensure that results gained were comparable, thus began one example of how the COVID-19 pandemic has transformed a communication platform about this fast-moving global health crisis. Today, a plethora of research data is being released by "preprint" servers that did not exist a decade ago, then carried on platforms such as Slack and Twitter, and in the media, before formal peer reviews begin. The prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM) has posted one COVID-19 paper within 48 hours of submission. The urgency to find a cure for this virus has catalysed considerable collaboration among the science community that, combined with scientific advancements, has enabled research to move faster than during any previous outbreak.

A recurrent problem in past crises was that researchers often sat on crucial data until a paper was accepted by a high-profile,

[1]Coronavirus News Update, February 2020
[2]Coronavirus Update Live-World meter
[3]Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia
[4]Our Standards: The Thompson Reuters Trust Principles. Ellis, Aurora, Caspani, Maria. New York. 7-7-2020.

peer-reviewed journal. Even if researchers were prepared to share their findings, there was not a natural platform to achieve this form of expeditious data sharing. The COVID-19 has broken this trend as demonstrated by the hundreds of papers being submitted to preprint repositories on some aspect of the novel coronavirus. Dr. Anthony Fauci, Head of the United States National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, remarked that he's so busy that he often reads preprints late at night when he is free of these things to read. Fauci commented, "You can't ignore them". "But sometimes, "It gets a little confusing what you can really believe".[5]

While it remains to be seen whether this new collaboration of scientific research will help to mitigate the impact of the latest pandemic, many scientists are lauding the change to a new culture to communication research breakthroughs.

3. Coronavirus Impact on Wildlife Conservation and Management

The virus has affected the work of many conservationists around the world as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries have been forced into a lockdown mode. The problem is global. Across North America, Africa, and elsewhere, conservation efforts that keep delicate ecosystems in check are struggling as the COVID-19 pandemic keeps many people confined to their homes. There are no tourists, who help fund a range of projects. Volunteers and employees aren't able to plant trees or remove invasive species, while wildlife rehabilitation centres struggle to keep their doors open. That includes the "Bear Whisperer" Steve Searles of Mammoth Lakes, California As a former wildlife officer, Searles used nonlethal tactics to adjust bear behaviour, inspiring other communities to adopt similar approaches. "I never met a bear that couldn't learn," he said and adding that "I mean, I don't try to teach bears geometry or how to ride a unicycle."[6] He left his position after the pandemic led to cuts in his municipal budget.

Some programs require large crews that can't practice social distancing on the job, while many others rely on the money brought in from tourism or activity fees to function. In parts of Africa, money from safaris and trophy hunting funds conservation almost entirely. Without this money, countries like Botswana are seeing upticks in poaching as they struggle to fund anti-poaching units and to monitor areas where tourists once roamed.

Conservation efforts have long had to contend with occasional booms and busts in the industry, but unlike any other event before it, the pandemic has laid bare the weaknesses of the economic machine that support certain ecosystems. "We've kind of got a perfect storm,"[7] said Catherine Semcer, a research fellow for both the U.S.-based Property and Environmental Research Centre and the African Wildlife Economy Institute. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Semcer has followed the ways that the global shut down has affected conservation, particularly in Africa.

Prachanda Maharjan, Field Officer assigned to Parsa National Park in Nepal prepared

[5]Kai Kupferschmidt. Science Magazine. 26-02-2020
[6]New York Times. The Morning. 19-07-2020
[7]Lindsay Fendt, UNDARK. 13-05-2020

this update on wildlife conservation during the pandemic.[8]

"Parsa National Park (PNP) has suspended non-essential services since the government announced lockdown across the nation to prevent the possible spread of novel coronavirus in the country. However, this is also the time that poachers and smugglers become more active to take advantage of the situation. So, the park's frontline staff and protection unit are working very hard to combat the crime and poaching these days. The Park has alerted its staff and the security unit deployed in the park to intensify regular monitoring and patrolling from each post. The Rapid Response Command Centre in the headquarter of the park is kept on high alert to tackle the possibility of illegal activities inside the core area of the park and to take quick action if needed.

PNP staff employ spy cameras in different strategic locations for biological monitoring and its deployment in the hotspot areas of wildlife, data analysis of extracted data from both spy and biological monitoring cameras. Of course, the coronavirus pandemic is disrupting some of our supported project activities due to the lockdown. These activities mostly include working with local communities, and representatives such as social surveys, awareness raising programs and other activities requiring large gatherings."

4. Research in a Time of Social Distancing

In a time when most of the world may be wary of leaving their homes to participate in a large focus group discussion, many research groups are raising questions about employing an online methodology for a data collection process. This dilemma suggests several options - from postpone any data collection activities, to conduct interviews and focus groups online, or use different data collection methods since interviews from a home brings in issues of privacy and confidentiality.

Sharon M. Ravich, Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education, offered the following recommendations to qualitative researchers in this "strange and scary time of distancing in the world".[9]

- Moving data collection wholly online creates specific validity and ethical issues that need to be identified and addressed as part of the research design. Be intentional in planning for and rehearsing online data collection situations (interviews and focus groups) so the research experience is generative, positive, engaged and enriching.
- Read about trauma-informed interviewing and chronic illness methodology. Build a working understanding of strategies for developing data collection instruments and techniques for approaching participants with care given the uniquely of trauma due to the coronavirus.
- Approach study participants with respect, humility and appreciation of their time. Make every effort to schedule appointments around their needs (i.e. childcare, work schedules). Let them know that an ideal interview scenario will provide them a confidential space.
- Develop a brief script to begin interviews and focus groups that 1) addresses, with compassion, the current difficult moment of Coronavirus as well as changes in the interview format/process caused by the pandemic. Do this before the general framing of interviews and focus groups. (Welcome, informed consent, etc.)

[8]Wildcats Conservation Alliance. 07-04-2020
[9]Social Science Space. March 2020. The Best Laid Plans.

5. Science, Technology and Innovation

Investment in science, technology and innovation (STI), particularly research and development is a key driver of economic growth. Such initiatives are assisting in the immediate challenge of the COVID-19 global health crisis and in the economic recovery once the virus has been contained. Measure to contain the pandemic spread are threatening to create the worst world economic recession in recorded history.[10] Chinese gross domestic product (GDP) plummeted between 10-20% in January-February 2020. Several countries in Europe and North America have recorded a shutdown in manufacturing activity in the first quarter of 2020 while output dynamism has plunged in annual terms, relative to 2019.

Multiple research institutions are creating alliances at the global level to derive a vaccine and to ensure fair access to this breakthrough to it for the world. [11] Other researchers are seeking innovative solutions to the challenges associated with COVID-19. Governments have offered special incentives to manufacturers into repurposing their production facilities to address the shortages of critical medical supplies for both developed and developing nations. Thus, STI initiatives shall contribute in the medium-to-long term to global economic restructuring, productive manufacturing diversification and insertion in a changed landscape of global value chains.

Policymakers should insist that research and innovation policies are maintained during this crisis period to ensure that economic activities are not disrupted. Policies combining direct and indirect financing and guarantees to support both small and large industries are necessary as well as support to organizational restructuring to minimize the impact of liquidity constraints and shortfalls in consumer demand. A positive step forward suggests that dedicated funding for research leading to strategies for managing a post-COVID-19 recovery is an imperative.

6. How to Restore the Planet … and Seed the Next Generation

In the United States more than 10 million people have lost their livelihood since the coronavirus pandemic began earlier this year. Nearly one in three people in the age category 16 to 29 years of age are now unemployed. Typically in a recession the workers first released and last rehired from work are younger employees, which is especially true for youth of color. To address this crisis, the National Wildlife Federation has suggested a solution to a multifaceted problem by reflecting on earlier national programs to redress unemployment while contributing to the nation's natural resources.

In 1933 the Civilian Conservation Corps was enacted by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to put more than three million unemployed men to work restoring America's forests, soil conservation initiatives and the creation of nation recreation areas. "Roosevelt's Tree Army" managed to plant 3 billion trees, build more than 700 parks and wildlife refuges and completed thousands

[10]The Economist. (2020) How to prevent a covid-19 slump, and protect the recovery. 19-03-2020.
[11]WHO. (2020) Global leaders unite to ensure everyone everywhere can access new vaccines, tests and treatment for Covid-19. 24 April 2020.

of miles of trails and roads by 1942. [12] The CCC was the most ambitious restoration initiative in US history and helped create the Greater Generation that fought and won world peace in World War II.

Not only COVID-19, but the US is facing a staggering backlog of restoration needs for habitats vulnerable to fires, floods and drought and the effect of climate change on coastal communities and nature reserves. Conservationist estimates that 80 million acres of national forest need restoration and 12,000 species are in need of conservation work. National parks, refuges and other public land projects have rolled over on 20 billion US dollars in deferred maintenance work. Additionally, there are also thousands of abandoned mines, oil and gas wells that need reclamation.

The ability to provide jobs for millions of unemployed Americans would solve a current crisis in areas and regions affected by COVID-19. This initiative has the ability to improve public health by reducing pollution as well as store carbon, expand recreation facilities, strengthen community resilience to extreme weather and provide educational and apprenticeship opportunities to prepare young workers for private-sector employment. If done correctly, this strategy will enable the next generations' workforce with a positive work/learning experience and contribute to restoring the nation's natural treasures.

7. The Pandemic Effect on National Institutions

Clearly, national institutions have been adversely impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the disruption to the regular functioning of state institutions and key government functions and processes, which has undermined the effectiveness of government action. The pandemic has caused both governments and civil society to create new means to ensure that transparency, accountability and responsive and equitable mechanisms continue to govern the functions of key institutions and governments. The imprecation to limit the spread of this pandemic has affected the capacities of global institutions to deliver on developmental objectives, ie. the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 [13] by limiting access and transparency to information, eroding safeguards to accountability and restricting participation and engagement.

In many countries where transparency is critical for accountability and public trust, websites are providing real-time and localized information on the spread of the epidemic, In the Republic of South Korea twice daily briefings offered explanations of the epidemic and the government's response. Online resources were created in Bulgaria, Indonesia, Mongolia and South Africa to enhance transparency by providing a single entry point for information and resources on COVID-19. The Government of Mexico created a microsite to provide information to people with disabilities and other countries offering legal information to vulnerable populations.[14]

Strong government is crucial in an emergency period like the COVID-19 to ensure that power and oversight represents the needs

[12]National Wildlife. August-September 2020. Collin O'Mara. Bold Plan to Restore America - and Save Youth
[13]UN/DESA Policy Brief #74. 15 May 2020.
[14]The Civic Association for Equality and Justice. Argentina.

and demands of people. Legislatures in Albania, Columbia, the Maldives and Mongolia have amended their plenary procedures to allow virtual discussions. Globally, civil society has also been active to share information and provide essential services such as food and health care.

Fundamental safeguards for accountability and anti-corruption are a concern in national crises where basic rules may be overlooked in procurement of emergency goods and services. The Parliament of Kenya requested and received specific information from the Ministry of Health on the misallocation and misuse in the distribution of medical supplies and procurement of goods and services. In Uganda, legislators were required to pay back 2.4 million Euros found in the personal accounts that were intended to fight the epidemic. The experiences from past health and humanitarian emergencies (i.e. the Ebola outbreak, Hurricane Katherine) shows the importance of addressing corruption risks in the mismanagement of funds targeted to global health sectors.

8. Conclusion

The coronavirus COVID-19 has created series of unique challenges to the nations of the world responsible for addressing the massive impact this crisis has laid on health care providers, the scientific community seeking a vaccine, and the social and economic foundations rocked by actions taken to slow and reverse the infection rate of this pandemic. In the coming era of the New Modern, when global transformation sees a shift from an immediate response to the crisis to long-term recovery phase, it will be an imperative to see the dimension of changes undertaken to create a new world. A world with increased wisdom and resilience to mitigate the consequences of external shocks in the future.

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Future Transformation: The Era of New Normal

Fear of Further Marginalisation of People Due to Digital Divide

ANOJ CHHETRI, PhD

Abstract

This article presents some economic facts and figures along with perspective and thoughts on fear of marginalisation of people in the COVID-19 context, called New Normal. The desk review was undertaken in July 2020, apart from holding conversations with professionals who engaged in the development field and closely observing the impacts of COVID-19 in the contexts of livelihood, education, health and cultures. The article focuses on the people already marginalised in society, and also intends to articulate 'New Normal' and its potential impacts on people who are already marginalised due to entrenched social norms, values and practices. It underpins potential transformation in the era of New Normal fearing that if factors promoting digital divide are not properly addressed now by informed policy measures, instruments and investment, the potential role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in ensuring equality and equity as committed by sustainable development goal nine in society can push people further in the marginalised territory. Hence, it calls upon the policy-makers and researchers to further invest time and resources and take timely actions in the current context.

Keywords: Digital Divide, Marginalised People, ICT, New Normal, COVID-19

1. Introduction

There are over **28 million** confirmed cases of COVID-19 (coronavirus) across the globe as of 10 September 2020. According to the official reports, the largest numbers of confirmed cases are in the United States, Brazil and India. However, even the countries that COVID has hit less aggressively are still under considerable strain due to the economic downward spiral effect. Dealing with the unforeseen challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a significant toll on people all across the world. Many European countries have put in place less stringent

measures and Britain has put a far less rigid approach to the lockdown compared to other European countries. The U.S. strategy in dealing with the pandemic has been the target of an increased amount of criticism since different states have adopted wildly different measures. There is a lack of consensus between the authorities and various public health organizations (Cohut, 2020).

At present, the entire world is buzzing with uncertainty and questions: How long will the pandemic last? What will people's lives look like once the pandemic is over?

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has recently said the coronavirus pandemic had instigated a global economic downturn, the impact of which the world has not experienced since the Great Depression (Hutt, 2020). The news comes after the US Commerce Department reported a rapid decline in the gross domestic product (GDP) in the first three months of the year (Hutt, 2020): GDP dropped by 4.8% in the first quarter of 2020 - the sharpest contraction since the global financial crisis of 2007-2009 - bringing to an end the longest economic expansion in the US history (Hutt, 2020). The European Commission suggests that the GDP of EU countries will contract by 7.5% in 2020. The Chinese economy is likely to be hit further by reduced global demand for its products due to the effect of the outbreak on economies around the world (Hutt, 2020). Reports suggest that China's factory production plunged at the sharpest pace in three decades in the first two months of the year. For 2020, the Chinese economic growth is expected to fall to 2.5%, according to a Reuters poll - its slowest in almost 50 years (Hutt, 2020). The India's GDP growth rate forecast for 2020 can range from 5.5% to 2.5% (Puri, 2020). In this context, Nepal's GDP growth rate originally expected to increase by 8% in the fiscal year will drop many folds to around 2.3% (ADB report). Hence, the World Bank and IMF warned that the virus is pushing the world economy into a recession worse than that after the 2008 financial crisis.

Hence, the lockdown imposed by governments on people has not only saved lives of millions of people but also has incurred huge economic loss resulting unemployment, financial insecurity, thereby psychological impact particularly with marginalised and poor people. It includes people with disabilities, women, children, old age people, people living in the remote region. It has put physical and mental health in jeopardy. Many reports confirm that people have been dealing with an increased amount of stress and physical discomfort (Cohut, 2020). Some people raised questions on how are we going to reinvent ourselves as a human species? Will the pandemic virus eventually burn itself out or become part of the annual, seasonal soup of respiratory infections? "We will not go back to what life was like before January of this year," clearly hinting to arrive at the new normal (Kirkey, 2020 and Marahatta, 2020).

"The world as we know is dissolving," an influential German futurist Matthias Horx wrote on his blog in early March. "But behind it comes a new world, the formation of which we can at least imagine." […] No apocalypse, only a "new beginning." (Kirkey, 2020). With good strategy and strong execution, we will be able to return to a safer, more united world with better

health care (Frieden, 2020). In the contrary to the essence of this note, the people who are traditionally discriminated based on caste, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, migration, etc appeared most vulnerable to be further marginalised in the COVID context.

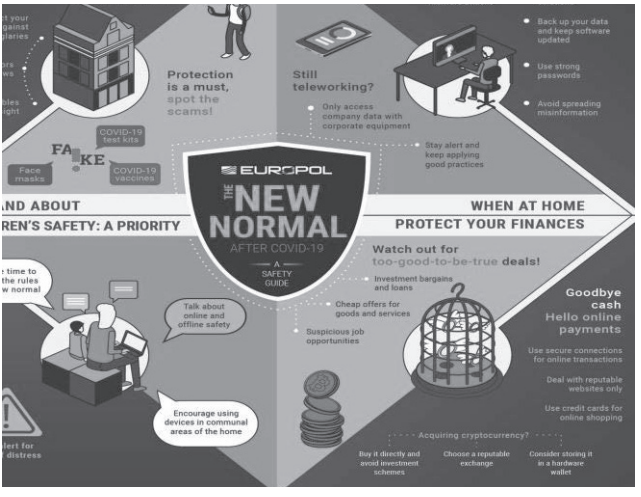
The vulnerability of people by measures of their socio-economic background has been further compounded due to deprivation of fundamental human rights: right to education, right to food, right to health and income, right to free movement, etc. People, however, have survived by whatever means available in the COVID context showing a greater amount of resilience, tolerance and perseverance. The adaptation measures applied to cope with the situation implying to the New Normal worked to some extent, but the effectiveness of adaptation measures is determined by the economic, social and cultural factors of people.

While many of these countries have already eased the adaptation measures now, others have already decided to lift the lockdown with special measures in place. People hope that with the end of the lockdown, there will be a sort of wave of creative energy that will allow people globally to rethink the whole concept of people's existence […] that what follows the crisis will be an extremely creative and experimental phase that will allow us to put in place digitisation, equality and equity through ICT which is one of the United Nations targets through its Sustainable Development Goals. Pandemic will provide an opportunity to promote virtual world avoiding travel, meeting, etc rather using digital means setting a tone of New Normal.

While navigating through the New Normal in the contemporary world, there is apprehension with poor and marginalised people for fear of further marginalisation due to digital divide. The fear particularly in the developing countries is a real-time expression for people already oppressed and suppressed by deeply entrenched socio-cultural and economic context. Economic marginalisation of people will create negative consequences, from despair to pressures on public-health budgets, which is crucial for social protection of vulnerable people (Marahatta, 2020 and Puri, 2020).

2. Era of New Normal

With the landfall of COVID-19 in January 2020, the World had already started trending towards working at home, shopping at home, DoorDash and UberEats, Netflix instead of Cineplex, says a University of British Columbia professor and clinical psychologist Steven Taylor. "There has been a pre-COVID trend to make one's home



self-sufficient." The coronavirus could accelerate those trends, but Taylor worries that it could lead to more recluses, more shut-ins, […] (Kirkey, 2020). People may adopt new ways of meeting with colleagues and mingling with friends (Frieden, 2020). The sophisticated capabilities of today's emerging Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are underpinning the formation of new human-machine partnerships, which will have significant impact on both individuals and organizations (Ian Bork, 2017). The New Normal features continuous to use or adopt cloud-based technology, creating new office policies, purchasing health and safety equipment, creating new business offerings, etc. In addition, the COVID-19 crisis has disrupted the strategic decision-making framework for organizations and try to build a new one to look beyond the immediate crisis (Albani, 2020). The application of ICTs and emerging cloud technologies have potential impact on the livelihood of marginalised people, including health, education, socio-culture which are trending towards holistic transformation.

2.1 Livelihood

The COVID-19 pandemic has rapidly changed how we live, work and learn (HODES, 2020). Gradually, people are accustomed to the current lifestyle of physical distancing which makes them feel much less stress than before. Mask culture is being promoted in every nook and corner as it gives a sense of security, even though it does not do much in controlling virus spread. By and large, people have complied with the mask rules imposed by the government, wearing a mask and glove (Cohut, 2020).

Consequently, the social distance has become rule of the game but paradoxically, it makes us e-social animals if we cannot shake hands, worship together, eat together, the very core of humanity (Kirkey, 2020) albeit the fact that how physical distancing can "flatten the curve," curbing the explosive spread of corona virus and preventing our health systems from becoming overwhelmed (Frieden, 2020). As a testimony, the Pure Profile[1] survey shows that about 40% people will avoid handshakes, hugs and kiss, 31% limit time spent in meeting and 29% plan to work more from home. As a result, the culture of self-isolation has been a norm even in conscious Nepali society. However, it is feared that it can impact much on people in lower ladder of the economy.

2.1.1 Business and Entrepreneurship

Businesses are coping with lost revenue and disrupted supply chains as factory shutdowns and quarantine measures spread across the globe, restricting movement and commercial activities. Unemployment is skyrocketing, while policymakers across countries race to implement fiscal and monetary measures to alleviate the financial burden on citizens and shore up economies under severe strain (Hutt, 2020). Now with the ease of lockdown in general, shopkeepers (let alone shopping mall and super-markets) are promoting

[1] Pureprofile is a survey panel that is interested in your unique thoughts and opinions https://www.pureprofile.com/

social distancing measures at the tills with spaced markers, and transparent plastic screens to protect the cashiers. It speaks a lot about changed people's behaviour. The pure profile survey reveals that 30% people do more online shopping and 29% limit in public places. Is it possible for people with low digital literacy, to adopt online shopping?

2.1.2 Entrepreneurship, Travel and Tourism

The research shows that a majority of people (42%) are not likely to use international travel and 25% are not sure about it. Similarly, 20% of people are not likely to use domestic travel while 23% are not sure of it (Pure Profile survey, 20 April 2020). In return, the travel and tourism are exposed to a global crisis of confidence, thereby bound to lose assets. It needs planning for a new business model. Now enterprises should leverage new-age technologies in a much better way to deal with scenarios like employee management, visitor management, and infrastructure management. Eventually, it can hit hard to people already marginalised by losing jobs. Are porters, employees in the tourism sector ready to catch up trending new-age cloud technologies? Will they have enough ability to match with the digital demand placed upon them in New Normal? These are some pertinent questions ticking mind of researchers in the COVID-19 context.

2.2 Education

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the closure of schools in 188 countries, affecting more than 1.5 billion students and 63 million primary and secondary teachers worldwide. The interference in the education system due to the COVID-19 is a reminder that there is a need for educational transformation. For years, we've been talking about digital transformation. The way world is changing in the COVID context, it is also changing perspective of educators and learners forever (Rana, 2020).

In order to cope with the New Normal, many governments have taken special measures and strategies. Based on the conversations with some professionals, it was learnt that many government have prepared Alternative Learning Implementation Strategy, to ensure continued learning during the COVID crisis. For instance, some countries have demonstrated proactive approach in addressing situation triggered by the COVID-19 lockdown. Responding to the situation of the pandemic, distance learning programmes were launched. There are examples of tele-lessons for pre-school, primary and secondary education students. In some countries, these lessons have used sign-language interpretations and some lessons for alternative classes have been conducted via facebook mage, youtube, internet, google classroom, TV and radio broadcasting.

Despite the fact that many governments have introduced innovative measures to mitigate the impact of COVID in education, there are also reports of shortfall due to slow internet connection and lack of digital infrastructure in the rural areas. For instance, in a fragile country like Afghanistan, where most of the people live in rural areas, have no access to power supply, internet and even TVs which have left a negative impact on equality and quality education. Hence, distance learning programmes were mostly limited

to urban areas. The student in remote mountainous areas, with special needs and poor background do not get benefited from the available programmes.

2.3 Public Health

In many countries around the world, COVID-19 tackled lack of adequate diagnostics at the hospitals, coupled with limited facilities to confirm COVID-19. For instance, the hospitals in Nepal are largely unprepared due to lack of resources (availability of ICU facilities, isolation wards and human resources) for the management of an expected wave of infections due to lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) (Marahatta, 2020). As a result, it has triggered some adverse impacts on the existing health systems as it requires more human resources, infrastructure, and test kits. The existing human resources in the health sector are overwhelmed with mounting pressure to provide timely diagnostic and treatment services. And, in most developing countries, this is critical to ensure consistently accurate information about the pandemic situation and generate new evidence for rapid response to most vulnerable and marginalized populations.

The "New Normal" of this public health emergency coupled with the guidance around physical distancing also makes this a trying time for clinicians, researchers and others (HODES, 2020). Above all, this is a time for resilience and perseverance as many studies and trials have put enrolment and follow-up on hold as universities and labs have switched to remote work (Albani, 2020).

Now with changing world in public health as about 67% people will keep washing hand frequently (Pure profile survey), the water-borne diseases if not an air-borne and non-communicable disease will certainly go away to a greater extent in the developing countries. The mask culture, social distance, wider hygiene and sanitation practices, well informed people due to information exchange in the virtual world can potentially change health behaviour of marginalised people, but how can they cope with the health expenses? Does it not further push them in the economic hardship?

2.4 Socio-culture

While there is fear of a stigma contributed by the spread of infection as it can undermine social cohesion and prompt possible social isolation of groups, it can drive people to hide their illness for fear of discrimination, which can come as a barrier for seeking health care immediately and limit the adoption of healthy behaviours, worsening the situation. Hence, the whole society needs restructuring and re-modelling to best cater to the demands created by COVID-19. How the marginalized people will cope with and move forward in this extraordinary situation determines their overall well-being. It is a critical time for researchers and policy-makers to think about how these group of people navigate in New Normal and avoid further fear and stigma (Marahatta, 2020).

3. Fear of Marginalisation due to Digital Divide

The term 'digital divide' refers to the differences in resources and capabilities to access and effectively utilize ICT for development that exist within and between countries, regions, sectors and socio-economic groups. The digital divide is often characterized by low levels of access

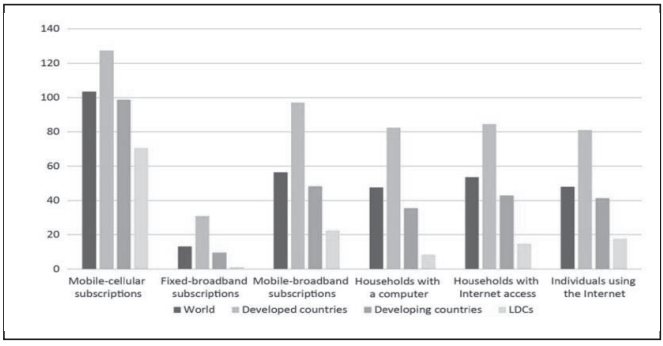
to technologies (Singh, 2010: p. 51).

Broadly defined, the digital divide refers to inequalities between the advanced economies and the rest of the world in terms of access and use of information and ICT. The digital divide refers to "situations in which there is a marked gap in access to or use of ICT devices" (Campbell 2001, p.1and OECD, 2007: p.24).

The relevance of this definition in the light of New Normal is grounded on the accessibility, usability and affordability to digital technologies by marginalised group of people who, in general, do not have ability to meet the expense of computer equipment and Internet usage (Franklyn and Tukur, 2012: p. 40).

The internet world statistics show that the internet penetration in Asia is 58.8% whereas it is 90.3% in North America and 42.2% in Africa (Statistic, 2020). A new report by the UN International Telecommunication Union (ITU) shows "great strides" in mobile phone penetration in least-developed countries. However, those countries are well behind developed countries when it comes to internet usage. The ITU thematic report on achieving universal and affordable internet in least-developed countries (LDCs) found that more than four out of five people in LDCs have access to a mobile-cellular network. The report indicates that LDCs have "made great progress towards achieving universal access and affordability of the Internet. However, it is not enough at current growth rates, because less than one-quarter of the population in LDCs is believed to have online resources by 2020. Most LDCs "face great challenges in making broadband Internet access available and affordable for all. The lack of high-speed connectivity in LDCs remains an obstacle to some of the most promising broadband applications for sectors such as education and health. As hinted earlier, lack of skills needed to use the internet is the key barrier to bringing LDC populations online (Saez, 2018)

There is, however, great variations between LDCs in terms of estimated internet use, from less than 2% to over 40%, according to the ITU report. Competition in the internet provision market has allowed some Asian countries, such as Myanmar, to forge ahead, as mobile broadband prices have been driven down.



Considering the ground reality that marginalised and poor people are often in the greatest need of information, they are

often the ones with least access to internet. They also tend to have slower adoption of ICTs based on a positive correlation between income levels and mobile telephone adoption. Therefore, The ICT-enabled services are often limited by problems with usability, searchability, language, etc (Bertot, et al 2010: p.267).

Chhetri (2015) cites that individuals with higher levels of education are typically more open to using ICT such as online interactions (Ebbers, Pieterson, & Noordman, 2008; Streib & Navarro, 2006 cited by Bertot, et al 2010: p.267 and Bertot, 2003). Even more than a decade ago in the Philippines, students in private schools have owned cell phone for a longer time compared to their public-school counterparts. Since cost is not as big an issue with private school students, who also tend to be richer, they were also more frequent users of the cost-incurring features of the technology. Hence, it is expected that fewer people with low incomes than higher incomes use and access ICTs. It has been found that the functions that poorer individuals use are influenced by cost-related considerations (Alampay, 2006: p. 13 and Harkin, n.d.).

Furthermore, women in LDC do not benefit much from these new technologies, which reflects existing unequal power relations in societies. ICTs can be used to either exacerbate digital divide or transform unequal power relations because ICTs cannot create gender equality, or end poverty, but they can be tools for social action and positive social change (Singh, 2010: p. 51). The digital divide therefore can further marginalise people due to gender, sex, age, ethnicity, etc in accessing, using and affording technologies.

The digital divide however is not the problem in itself, but it is low income, under-development of the socio-economic conditions and the lack of literacy that divides the rich from the poor. The factors that contribute to and widen this divide include the following: ICT infrastructure, difficult terrain, long distances, and inadequate infrastructure; lack of skills to participate in the economy; inequalities of access and participation and long-term investment versus short-term political cycle, small markets; inadequate financial resources, which make ICTs less affordable, and lower levels of ICT literacy and low awareness of opportunities and benefits that ICTs can provide (Franklyn, and Tukur, 2012: p. 43 and Hosseini and Niknami 2009: p.422).

4. Conclusion

Today, much more than 70 % of the world's citizens live in societies that have already begun their digitization journeys through the application of ICTs based on ITU and above cited reports. As the individuals and enterprises in these societies continue to progress in developing their digitization capabilities, they will only increase

and accelerate these economic and social benefits. As a result, people gain confidence in the power and potential of ICT to help solve the economic and societal challenges of tomorrow.

Over the last six months, the catastrophe/ havoc created by COVID-19 has further implied power and potential of ICTs. While the potential of ICT for stimulating transformative economic opportunity to "Build Back Better" is well recognized, the benefits of ICT have been unevenly distributed in societies plagued by deeply entrenched norms and values despite the fact that ICTs have potential to transform all section of society.

Hence, the timely and due attention from policymakers should focus on the factors of digital divide mentioned above amongst individuals, organizations and countries. The policymakers in particular should address broader socioeconomic and cultural challenges for marginalised people by bridging the digital gap with equal educational and economic opportunities and gender equality. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 9 is equally relevant herein because it recognises the importance of ICTs, which seeks to increase access to information and communications technology and universal and affordable access to the internet in LDCs by 2020.

If it goes unaddressed, the fear of furtherance of marginalisation due to digital divide is promoted which can be only addressed by a set of informed policies on digital infrastructures targeting marginalised group of people. Such policies should consider digitised ICT solutions that are technically and economically viable, feasible and sustainable in the LDC context.

The government should invest more money and utilise the potential of ICTs to implement right policy measures at the right time for comprehensive socio-economic transformation of marginalised group of people through digital literacy, equity and equality. The researchers engaged in the ICT policy framework should dwell further in digging out facts and figures on how the digital divide can be abridged in the COVID context particularly in the LDC context.

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Integrated Health Information System Architecture: Towards Digital Health Governance

JHABINDRA BHANDARI

Abstract

Information and communication technology (ICT) in the health system, also known as digital health, can accelerate health system reforms, leading to better-quality, efficient, and accessible patient-centred care. Digital health has been acknowledged by WHO as a key building block for universal health coverage and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals. However, countries lack a holistic approach to digital health, which requires good governance for successful implementation and sustainability throughout the health system. Good digital health governance is the foundation, required to coordinate stakeholders and policies that enable effective ICT for a well-functioning health system which aims to maximize the achievement of health outcomes.

Keywords: Health system, Digital Health Governance, Integrated e-health Architecture, Sustainability

1. Introduction

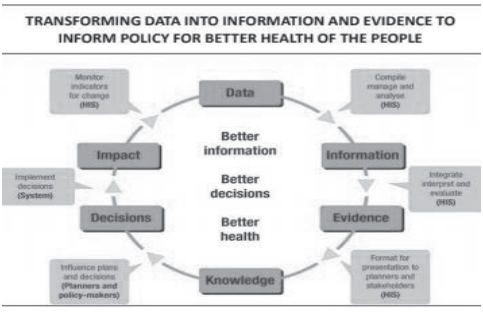
Health information is one of the six building blocks of strengthened health systems as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2007). The WHO framework that describes health systems in terms of six core components or "building blocks": service delivery, health workforce, health information systems, access to essential medicines, financing, leadership, and governance. These blocks contribute to the strengthening of health systems in different ways. Some cross-cutting components, such as leadership/ governance and health information systems, provide the basis for the overall policy and regulation of all the other health system blocks.

Information is needed to track how health systems respond to increased inputs and

improved processes, and the impact they have on improved health indicators. This implies the need to define core indicators of health system performance while developing and implementing appropriate sustainable measurement strategies to generate the required data. However, on the supply side, there are major gaps in data availability and quality. Few developing countries are able to produce data of sufficient quality that can be adequately analyse, interpreted and used for effective policy, planning and to permit regular tracking of progress in scaling-up health interventions and strengthening health systems and delivery of essential services.

Sound, complete, timely and reliable information is the foundation of evidence-based decision-making across all dimensions of health system strengthening. The health information system has four key essential functions: data generation, compilation, analysis and synthesis, and communication and use. The system aims to collect data from health and other relevant sectors, analyse data and ensures their overall quality, relevance and timeliness, and converts data into information for health-related decision-making (Fig. 1).

Figure 1: Transforming data into information and evidence to inform policy for better health of the people



Source: Health Metrics Network , WHO: 2012

Review of health information systems practices in most of the developing countries reveals that there are critical needs of improved coordination for integrated health system across other sectoral departments, ministries, private sectors and partners supporting a range of public health programs at policy and implementation levels to optimize the effective use of health information for decision making. Therefore, integration and interoperability which refers to the potential to share data within different departments in a given institution, as well as an attribute of software that allows the information to flow across the health care system. Therefore, many countries have started e-health planning and implementation of integrated health information management systems (IHIMS) as an integral part of health programme management.

Data collection, management, analysis and use within an IHIMS under the federalism in Nepal require clear direction and a roadmap to optimize investments and maximize health impacts. Many issues and needs in IHIMS strengthening have been identified by many stakeholders, and will next require prioritization and appropriate sequencing to form basis for an integrated and comprehensive IHIMS roadmap to be developed and implemented effectively.

Therefore, IHIMS section of Management Division intends to develop a detailed and costed roadmap for IHIMS because there are critical needs of strengthening IHIMS as an overarching framework and architecture in the context of federalized health structure. In this approach, existing health information systems need to be better coordinated and aligned with IHIMS.

Moreover, in the context of new structures in the federalized health system, there are emerging needs of scaling up of District Health Information System (DHIS) 2 as well as promotion of digital technology in tracking the progress and monitoring of universal health coverage (UHC) and the health-related SDGs.

2. Methodology

The methodological approach for assessment of the health information systems included desk review of business processes, work and data flows, and exiting national health policy, strategy, and guidelines related to health information systems and practices at the national, regional and global levels. Key informant interviews with government's focal points and managers, development partners, academia and research institutions involved in health information systems were conducted. In addition, participatory consultation meetings were held with technical working groups on IHIMS, senior officials of the government and development partners at federal and province level.

3. Results and Discussions

In Nepal, health policies have underscored the needs and priorities for investments in health information system. There are a variety of information systems in health sector. These mainly include health management, logistics, financial, health infrastructure, human resources, training, drug, etc.

In this context, Ministry of Health and Population with the support from UNFPA and USAID first ever developed integrated health management information system (IHMIS) in 1993 which is functional across all districts. This system seeks to collect health information from public and private sector. And the system aims to improve access to and use of quality health services, enhance evidence-based planning and management, monitor and improve the performance of health sector at large.

In 2007, health sector information system strategy was developed to support health policy, millennium development goals, long-term health plan, national poverty reduction strategy, and health sector plan and programmes. Since then, there has been remarkable progress in terms of concerted efforts to strengthen health information management system. The quality of the health-related data and information has greatly improved, and more specifically, all the relevant data are readily available in local health facilities.

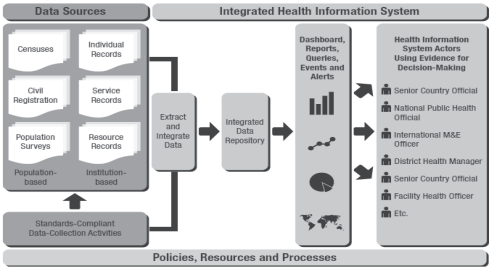
Due to increasing access to internet and use of information technology, web-based data entry system has been effective for online reporting. More importantly, efforts are in place to scale up the District Health Information System (DHIS-2) since 2017. The DHIS -2 is a free and open source and health management data platform used by multiple organisations for aggregating statistical data collection, validation, analysis, management and presentation. This is crucially important for health monitoring, improving disease surveillance and access to a range of health-- related data.

However, there are still some practical challenges to improve the capacity of health workers and managers in data analysis and use of data for evidence-based planning and management of health services at both province and local levels. In remote health facilities, there is limited

access to internet and good infrastructure. There are critical needs of orientation and training to managers and health workers on IHIMS with simple guidelines. Periodic review, follow up, and monitoring are essentially needed to improve quality of health information and timely reporting across the country.

Therefore, an integrated health information architecture is envisioned to better coordinate and harmonize health information from a range of data sources that are timely extracted and integrated for repository. This approach provides evidence through dashboard, reports, events and alerts, and those can be used by policy makers, planners and programme managers for decision making (Fig. 2).

***Figure 2:*Integrated health information system architecture framework**



(Source: Health Metrics Network, WHO:2012)

While there have been significant efforts to initiate reporting of disaggregated data by age, gender, caste and ethnicity in selected districts, the scope of health information system has further expanded in terms of monitoring universal health coverage (UHC) and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, innovative approaches and smart eHealth investments are needed to strengthen strategic information at all levels.

In the federal context, data collection, management, analysis and use within the IHIMS requires clear direction and a roadmap to enhance investments and health impacts. The first and foremost priority is to update existing information system and related investments so that appropriate data policies and capacity building needs could be realistically addressed. This will further help in creating a foundation of reusable and interoperable information exchange that is essential to improve evidence-based policy making and planning within the federal system.

There is an emerging need to strengthen central data repository to house data generated from routine health information system and national surveys. In addition, there are critical needs to promote the appropriate use of digital technologies for health and create an environment for standards-based interoperability to improve data and information flow and use. While information and communications technologies present new opportunities and challenges, there is a growing consensus in the health community that the strategic and innovative use of digital technologies is a key to harness evidence-informed health policies and actions.

4. Policy Landscape

The Constitution of Nepal 2015 has ensured every citizen the provision of basic health services from the state as a fundamental right and it takes into account the importance of healthy and productive citizens in national development. It is the state's responsibility to ensure quality and equitable access to universal health care by increasing investment in the health sector[1]. As per the constitution's sole and shared

1

right, the responsibility of health has been given to federal, provincial and local level government with the activities including health policy, guideline development, quality assurance, monitoring, prevention and control of communicable diseases, placed under the jurisdiction of the federal government.

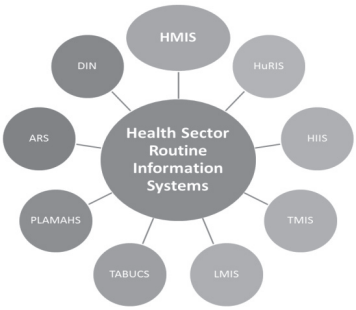
Nepal's 15th year plan (2019/20-23/24) sets a goal of ensuring access to quality health services at the population level by strengthening and expanding the health system at all levels. The plan clearly articulates a new strategy to further systematize, strengthen and optimize the use of existing health information system in reviews, monitoring and evaluation, and evidence-informed policy making. The strategic actions mainly include: a) improve the quality of health information in the changing context of advanced information and technology services and maximize the use of the information research, surveys, projections, and analysis in decision making, and b) scale up electronic reporting systems across all health facilities, and connect to national network of data for updates and dissemination. Furthermore, the quality of services is monitored through Minimum Service Standards (MSS) which plans to develop another database and hence can be considered for integration to health information systems.

In line with the federalism, Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) has formulated national health policy (2019) that broadly highlights equitable distribution of health resources, universal health coverage and access to quality health care services for all. One of the strategic outcomes of Nepal's health sector strategy (2015-2021) is improved availability and use of evidence in decision making processes at all levels. More focus is on e-health strategy, roll out of unified codes to ensure interoperability of different information systems, create central data repository, initiate electronic recording and reporting systems, and build institutional capacity of generation, processing, analysis and use of information at all levels.

In this context, Health Information System Strategy (HISS) was developed in 2007. Based on this strategy, new systems to consider disaggregated data by gender and caste/ethnicity were piloted in three districts: Lalitpur, Parsa and Rupandehi. The strategy mainly aims to strengthen existing health information system that contributes to implementation of Nepal Health Strategy (2015-2020) as well as 15th National Development Plan, as well as tracking the progress of universal health coverage and health sector SDGs.

The existing health sector information include a variety of sources from routine health information, vital registration, facility-based information, diseases surveillance, as well as other domains such as human resources, training, logistics, drugs, Ayurveda, finance, etc, which are illustrated below (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: **System of health data sources and health information systems**



(Source: Health Management Information System, Department of Health Service, 2020)

In 2008, for instance, with the expansion of internet access in Nepal, the Logistics Management Division (LMD) of the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) saw the possibility of transforming decision making within their supply chain by creating a computerized logistics system that could be shared through a web-based interface. Realizing the benefits of a more integrated system, the LMD took a decisive step to implement a web-based LMIS, as well as an inventory management system.

5. Digital Health Governance

Countries in Asia Pacific region are facing similar health information challenges. Lack of regulation and governance, weak national health informatics capacity, and fragmented information systems that do not take an enterprise approach are all common issues in the region. Many countries do not have a system of unique patient identification; funding priorities are not always set by the ministry of health (MOH), and there is weak interagency and public–private collaboration.

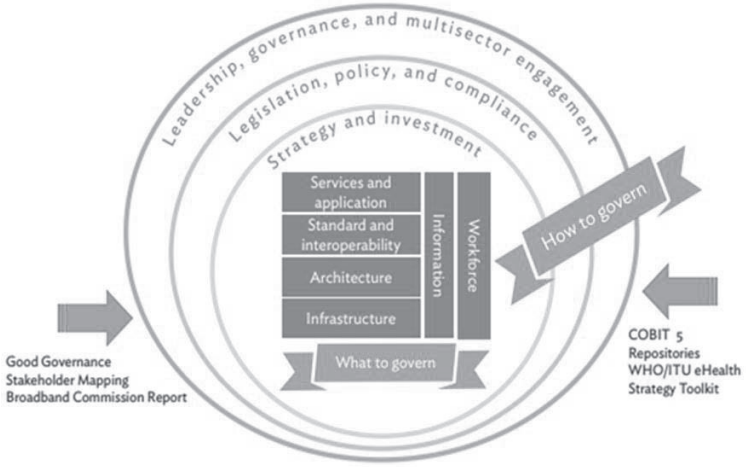
However, increasing access to ICT, and in particular broadband and rapid advances in ICT solutions, raises the prospect of addressing these shortcomings and solving problems. For example, engaging digital communications can encourage community development and behavior change, and remote areas can be connected to expert care via tele-health. Digital health can transform record keeping, data sharing, and usage; enhance communication between patients and their providers; and improve service quality through more efficient resource allocation while lowering health care costs.

In the recent years, digital technologies are showing remarkable values for health. The common technologies such as internet, smart phones, tablets and laptop computers have been very helpful to better manage health services and monitor the impact of population health policies around the world. Thus, they provide a wealth of opportunities in shaping the future of health policies to improve health and wellbeing of all populations.

More significantly, digital technologies are being used to improve health information system at all levels. This has been instrumental in strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency in data collection, reporting and monitoring the performance of health sector at large. However, there are critical needs of building the capacity of health workers at the community level to ensure the technologies they adopt are better supported, managed and effectively used.

In the recent years, there is a growing need for a digital health information governance architecture framework (HIGAF) designed to meet the needs of developing member countries and enable health sectors to use existing IT governance initiatives to drive digital health. The key desire driving HIGAF is for countries to establish a holistic approach to integrated health information system management based on a digital health enterprise, an end-to-end system.

Figure 4 : Health ICT Governance Architecture Framework



(Source: Adapted from WHO/ITU National e-Health Strategy Toolkit)

On the other side, effective use of digital technologies can also support self-care, provide ways to address health needs, and enable access to health services. In this case, digital health provides important tools to reach individuals and the public with health messages that can be acted on, such as targeted health campaigns or text reminders via mobile telephones to take medication or attend clinic visits. Improving the digital health literacy can help to educate, inform, motivate and empower individuals and families for desired behaviour change.

At the community level, health facility managers should also be able to share data with national systems, which requires alignment with the national plan as well as with existing regulation and policies for data privacy and protection. Of course, the appropriate use of digital technologies empowers the health workers to improve the quality of services.

In many developing countries, the impressive trend of investing resources on digital health has shown strong commitment to use digital technologies for advancing universal health coverage advance Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The use and scale up of digital health solutions can revolutionize how people achieve higher standards of health, and access services to promote and protect their health and well-being.

6. Conclusions

In the context of globalization, there are critical needs of harnessing the potential of information and communications technologies to accelerate progress across the health- related SDGs. That is why, there is pressing need to enhance the governance of digital health for strengthened health systems across the developing countries.

Despite remarkable progress, there are emerging needs to ensure institutional support for the development and consolidation of national e-health strategies and their effective

implementation in the federal context. The local governments might need comprehensive health information to further improve participatory planning and management of health services. Therefore, provision of comprehensive digital health training and guidelines are urgently needed to enhance the capacity of health facility managers and relevant stakeholders at the local level.

While addressing social determinants of health, there are critical needs to promote digital health interventions. With integrated health information system, the existing challenges of quality, coverage and equity goals can be better addressed within the health system. More importantly, it is high time to establish centre of excellence or innovation hubs to assess and promote digital health solutions that are aligned with the national needs and priorities.

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Challenges of Participatory Research and Development in New Normal Situation: Practitioners' Perspective

UTTAM UPRETY

Abstract

Despite its prominence and being commonplace across sectors for about four decades, participatory research and development has never been free of challenges. An approach that considers the right of people to have key roles throughout the stages of research and program cycles was considered to have several underlying challenges, particularly related to the engagement of people in the process, setting common understanding about the aim of the participatory exercises, use of appropriate methods and tools in creating conducive environment in knowledge generation, and linking the research to the action, to name a few. Given that the new normal situation induced by the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to impact all aspects of human interaction, this exploratory study investigates how practitioners of participatory approach are concerned regarding the challenges in the new normal situation, and contextualizes these challenges within a broader existing challenges. Based on the cases of four practitioners, the worldviews of these practitioners are contrasted with existing challenges. The major challenges include: (a) a protracted anti-participatory process mindset has found the pandemic as an additional excuse, (b) poor access of marginalized people to information technology, (c) poor capacity of participatory process practitioners in creatively using technology, (d) mistrust in technology and participation fatigue, and (e) lack of proactivity among participatory practitioners in creating spaces, including online platforms and tools and sharing best practices.

Keywords: Participation, Facilitation, New Normal, Marginalized Groups, Technology

1. Introduction

Putting the participatory research and development, and challenges into context

Participatory approach, in research and development, has gained prominence over the past four decades and is widely used in research across sectors and development projects (Bruges & Smith, 2007; Rauschmayer & Risse, 2005). Cornwall (2002) argues that participatory alternatives have gained ground across sectors, such as budgeting, policy dialogue, planning, project appraisal, assessments, and monitoring and evaluation blurring old boundaries and creating new configurations of power and resistance.

Considered a relational process aiming at collectively generating new knowledge that should contribute in learning, reflection and action cycle (Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright, 2019) participatory research is believed to generate holistic understandings apart from carrying potentials of empowering, policy influencing and better collaboration and partnership (Giatti, 2019).

However, the term participation is not free from contention. Different manifestations of participation of individuals and communities present challenges around how to define it (Draper, Hewitt, and Ismail, 2012). The manifestation of participation has been explained in terms of levels and typologies that varies based on intentionality, associated approach and those who initiated it (Cornwall, 2008). Whether it is Arnstein's ladder of participation that considers citizen on the receiving end of projects or program, or Jules Pretty's typology of participation that considers more about the user of participatory approaches, both are normative in essence and describe shifts from control by authorities to control by people. To explain the claim that participation is ultimately about power and control, Arnstein highlights that local self-mobilization, which he considers a highest level of participation, may be actively promoted by the state and international agencies as part of their efficiency goals that are entirely consistent with a neoliberal approach to development, but it may not be empowering the local people. Draper, Hewitt, and Ismail (2012) argue that it is most helpful to see participation as a continuum rather than asking a dichotomous question if something was participatory. They believe that a dichotomous understanding is likely to overlook the complexities in terms of purpose, ground reality, and the degree of participation that could realistically be expected in a specific context. A problem as Cornwall (2008) sees as to whether 'participation' is considered as means or an end in itself makes it difficult to equate participation to 'empowerment', which are vague concepts but often used synonymously (Draper, Hewitt, and Ismail, 2012).

The new normal (as the Oxford dictionary-2020 defines as an event, or status, or era that previously was unfamiliar, or atypical situation that has become standard, or usual, or expected) could be a time of uncertainties, changes and challenges as Buheji and Buheji (2020) predict to come ensuring the community and organization's rapid response and the efficient adaptation to change and even making the world for its re-emergence with a stronger position. However, it is

not yet clear whether would it be that simple in the case of participatory research and development work. A pertinent question exists whether it is a must for the participatory research and development to be pandemic resilient? Moreover, it is not clear yet on how unique the COVID-19 pandemic would be compared to other disaster to ensure participation of rights-holders and stakeholders research and development.

Since we will get to the new normal eventually, proactive leadership that recognizes new challenges early on and move quickly to adapt to them will likely to be best positioning their organizations and thrive (Levenson, 2020). It is equally true in the case of participatory research practitioners and development workers as well.

Given the confusion and curiosity on how the participatory approach would be continued in the new normal situation in Nepal, the paper explores the potential challenges posed with reference to the fundamental principles of participatory approaches. This study challenged if the participatory approach was used to the best of its core principles, investigating the new challenges and their supplementing and complementing role to the protracted challenges in making the participatory approach successful in research and development.

The next section describes and contextualizes the participatory approach, its uniqueness and the new normal situation. This is followed by a discussion on the qualitative research method employed. Next, the finding and discussion section presents the key challenges that practitioners have continued experiencing with participatory approach and its likely manifestation in the new normal situation. The conclusion section highlights policy and practical implications of the findings, in particular how to proactively create space, develop capacity in using technology creatively and take marginalized people out of the technology trap and make their voices heard.

2. Essentials of Participatory Research and Development

Participation of rights holders is central to both participatory research and any development program (that meant to be participatory) and hence, researching 'with' people rather than 'on' makes it possible to re-position people from being the subjects of research and development to being active players in the process (Cook, 2012). While participatory researchers view issues in relation to dependence, oppression, and resource inequality (Khanlou & Peter, 2004) participatory development also shares this common belief that in order to be successful, participants (known also as beneficiaries) must play a major role in shaping the way forward (Bruges & Smith, 2007).

Overcoming the 'hierarchy of credibility', as Cook (2012) quoted Winter (1998), emphasizes that the participatory research needs to be 'bottom-up' that focuses on locally defined priorities and the local perspective (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). Two core elements of participatory research (Cook, 2012) are 'quality of interaction between the researchers and the subject of research' and 'the explicit connection of research to social action whereas the former informs the latter'. However, Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) suggest that methodological contexts of its application rather than the

methods makes the participatory process distinct. Knowledge being dynamic and always in the making, the knowledge generation process is an emergent and cyclical one (Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright, 2019) that demands flexibility and openness. This demand of openness and flexibility is tied up well only when the bottom-up process is appreciated. But as Cook (2012) warns, the participatory process is likely to lose its essence if consultation is seen as equivalent to participation, and sufficient rapport and trust building is overlooked.

The participatory approach to research and development demands spaces and resources, including the time for the people to understand the process, their role and the results of the endeavour (Cook, 2012). Cornwall (2002) believes that space-making is an act of power that depends on how the process is defined and executed to address the imbalance of power that exists between researchers and the populations they study (Brown, Carter-Pokras & Martinez, 2009). Though equitable partnership and collaboration between researcher/ facilitator and communities at all levels of the process are considered vital, Cornwall (2008) fears that inequalities of status, class and social position are often reproduced and manifested in control or lending moral authenticity to the prescriptions of the powerful (Cornwall, 2002), even if participatory methodologies are applied.

There is a consensus among scholars and promoters of the participatory approaches that mere involvement is not sufficient for the participatory process to be inclusive of 'voice'. Cornwall (2008) argues that while opening spaces for dialogue through invitation is necessary, it is by no means enough to ensure effective participation. She is of the opinion that 'invited space' is usually owned by those who created it and despite their intention of making it participatory, it could just end up fulfilling statutory obligations.

Attitudes of researchers and practitioners are critical factors for a successful participatory process (Bruges & Smith, 2007) and to achieve 'catalytic validity' - the degree to which the research process re-orients, focuses and energizes participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it (Cook, 2012). As Cornwall (2008) suggests, translating voice into action requires two-way efforts - 'from above' and 'from below' that depend on the extent of engagement, time and persistence, not just the use of participatory tools, that manifest awareness of professionals (Chambers, 2008) so that the process truly becomes reflexive, flexible and iterative (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995).

3. Legacy of Challenges with Participatory Research and Development

Participatory approaches in research and development practices have some paradoxes (Cornwall, 2002). One of the challenges includes the illusionary consensus resulted due to the use of common terminology, but with different understanding (Cook, 2012). Cornwall (2002) agrees that the polyvalence of the term gives rise to contrasting beliefs. When methods are seen as ends in themselves, it usually ends up focusing not on the outcomes, but on the process only (Cornwall and Jwekes, 1995). Even the participatory research has got a vast array of labels, and Cook (2012) considers these are linked to the differences existing between participatory

researchers at theoretical and operational levels. As the role of researchers and development practitioners is expected to serve as 'a facilitator' whose aim is to 'hand over the stick' to the participant, making participation a reality in new normal situation requires a broad understanding of the term itself.

As Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) highlight, control over the process, is rarely devolved fully nor do the to-be owners of the process always want it. As participation means the powerful giving up their power, it is understandable that there are some forms of reluctance. Hence, the absence of the right way to participate can restrict beneficial social change (Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright, 2019). Since the 'community' is an invariably heterogeneous group of people representing diverse characteristics based on wealth, gender, age, religion, and/or caste/ethnicity it is not a surprise that not all of them will remain motivated or available to participate in a time-consuming process (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). In addition to those differences mentioned earlier, digital divide could be one of the prominent factors for their heterogeneity in the fast-paced technology driven society.

Other ethical issues related to participatory process involves the rights, responsibilities and roles of people - particularly to the rights to confidentiality and anonymity (Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright, 2019). In a situation where people are not confident to give consent to participate and their confidentiality is doubted their participation is a challenge. Use of technology that they are not aware of, or are not confident in, could escalate this confidentiality issue.

The practice of participatory research raises personal, political and professional challenges that go beyond the bounds of the production of information (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). Since some participatory processes have been extractive (Chambers, 2010) it leads to damaging consequences such as undermining of trust and a reinforcement of the feeling among people that their voices are not heard (Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright, 2019). Such feelings could contribute to participation 'fatigue'. As Chambers (2010) claims, there are widespread obstacles across personal, professional and institutional levels that undermines capacity of those people and this mindset is reproduced by academia and training institutes.

Participatory research faces the challenge of establishing its credentials since the researchers play an important primary role in creating a safe space to make a difference (Cook, 2012). Though it is a necessity, inclusion per se is by no means sufficient. Agreement on the outcome is subject to the participation in the decision-making process. For Rauschmayer and Risse (2005) the issue is whether all the relevant interests and affected stakeholders are known, included and/or represented in a way ensuring their equitable participation in the process. To achieve this there needs to be mutual trust among the stakeholders with diverse ideas and interests to help them understand each other's viewpoints and reflect on their own positions. It is possible when appropriate participatory methods and approaches are best combined to fit a context and time, skills and patience are availed (Chambers, 2010). As Rauschmayer and Risse (2005)

rightly highlighted, shallow participation may be found inexpensive but it runs the risk of being ineffective and the validity of outcomes might be questioned.

Non-participation or self-exclusion is also one of the challenges in the participatory process that could be the result of various reasons (Cornwall, 2008). In addition to physical conditions, including a form of impairment, of the participants (Draper, Hewitt, and Ismail, 2012) various time-sensitive roles restrict them in participating (Cornwall, 2008). As the invited space created by participatory methodologies should catalyse collective action (Draper, Hewitt, and Ismail, 2012) there is an important issue to be considered in how to maintain confidentiality or an enabling environment for them - both in case of participants being sensitive to data security with technology, or not being comfortable using it. Since some of the methods and tools demand physical proximity more than the other methods, particularly visual methods, to explore, analyse and represent their voice (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995), adapting such things to technology might require a lot of innovation, and creative use of the tools and methodology. The absence of creative use of technology, which many researchers and development practitioners may lack, are likely to promote exclusion.

Another challenge includes a phenomenon that Cornwall (2002) calls 'rhetoric of inclusion' likely to sustain or even escalate in the new normal situation. A widespread practice of representing 'community needs and wants' by someone more powerful within the community is likely to be escalated in new normal situation for multi-faceted limitations to engage wide spectrum of rights-holders.

There is a high chance of getting biases – spatial, project, person, seasonal, diplomatic and professional, and security biases (Chambers, 2008) – continue to manifest in many ways not only in the development work, but also in participatory research where researchers struggle to reconcile the demands of funding agencies and the demands of academia (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995). To overcome such biases in making the participatory research successful Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright (2019) consider seven ethical principles for participatory research, as proposed by Centre for Social Justice and Community Action and National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement, are to be taken into account. Those principles include mutual respect, equality and inclusion, democratic participation, active learning. making a difference, collective action, and personal integrity.

4. New Normal and Participation: Bridging the Gaps

The world has seen an incredible paradigm shifts since the early days of 2020 that has profound effects on approximately every aspects of life, and it indicates that the future will be different (Buheji and Buheji, 2020). As Meister (2020) adds, the COVID-19 has become the greatest accelerator for one of the greatest workplace transformations of our lifetime. She fears that the nature of our work, exercise, learning, social communication and the place we work will be changed forever. Unlike other disasters having localized interruption of activities, COVID-19 has a global impact and people are forced to work from home, and maintain social distance among others (Levenson, 2020).

The pandemic has forced everyone to adapt quickly to new realities, including shifting to virtual work arrangements and rethinking short and long-term business priorities (Crosina & Schinoff, 2020). The sudden shift to distributed, remote work has created huge challenges in how business is conducted. In addition, in some sectors and jobs, moving from a face-to-face model to a virtual model is not an option or would create an enormous opportunity loss (Levenson, 2020). Participatory research and development work could be one of them.

As Levenson (2020) foresees the sectors that survive the downturn will face a long period of adjustment to working and interacting virtually rather than face-to-face in addition to preparing themselves for future pandemics. Crosina and Schinoff (2020) also have the same opinion about the remote work becoming standard practice that seeks competence using technology which further requires collaboration with concerned educational and training institutes to learn how to utilize technology and conferencing facilities (Buheji and Buheji, 2020). However, Levenson (2020) fears that the sudden move of face-to-face interactions to virtual environment is likely to create enormous friction on how the work is conducted since he believes that virtual work deprives reading people's body language and restricts effective brainstorming as well as makes the decision-making process slower. In addition, Crosina and Schinoff (2020) believes that this shift to virtual work left workers deprived of a common place of unplanned interactions and of the vicarious learning opportunities. UNDP (2020) even expresses its worry that the shift to virtual work is likely to benefit only those with sufficient resources and ambient support.

The effect of the pandemic has been uneven across gender and other social categories. During the crisis, vulnerable groups such as women, elderly, marginalized and disadvantaged groups, particularly those engaged in the informal sector, are disproportionately affected because of their poor adaptive capacities (UNDP, 2020). A UNDP report even warns that the pandemic laid bare gender and class dimensions, accentuating the traditional fault lines of inequality.

Despite Crosina and Schinoff (2020) considering 'repurposing' and 'recreating' as important opportunities for managers and leaders to better understand and manage their remote work, participatory research and development work seems to be challenging since it requires a high level of collaboration and interdependence. However, as they suggest rightly, it is now time to consider how to strategically balance what used to be the practices of participatory research and development and what it is now.

5. Study Method

This research employs an exploratory, qualitative research approach based on a case study design inspired by Stake (2005). An inductive approach was used in collecting and analysing the qualitative information gathered through four key informants. Stake (2005) argues that multiple instrumental cases may or may not require possessing common characteristics. The cases in this study were chosen in order to understand the larger situation and what is common and what is particular about the case, its professional

background, its physical setting, and geographical particularities. The study interprets participants' world views and perceptions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of the participatory approach and their engagement in promoting it. I asked the study participants about the context of their engagement with the CSOs. I employed purposeful selection of cases to represent the spectrum of professional background and current engagement (Merriam, 1998) with the aim of providing representation (balance and variety) and acknowledging opportunities for an in-depth examination of various interests. I selected four cases for in-depth individual case studies. The four respondents are considered important figures in advancing participatory approaches in their day-to-day professional life. In the first part of interaction, the focal issues concerned their motivation to use participatory approaches, their level of engagement, engagement period, and their broader understanding of the participatory approaches and its uses across sectors. As part of the inductive approach, I used an unstructured interview method and open-ended questions (Fontana and Frey, 2005). I generated the interview themes to capture the context, content, and process or their involvement in participatory processes.

Mr. Gobinda Raj Poudal, a development professional with about three decades of experience working with various national and international organizations is currently affiliated with Kathmandu University School of Arts and teaches community development and participatory research methods for Bachelor's Students. In addition, he is a well-known facilitators promoting and using participatory methods and tools in his professional life. His opinion is expected to represent the blended perspective of academia and development professionals. Two other participants, Mr. Gautam Raj Adhikari (Project Director, Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Center) and Mr. Khim Regmi (Chairperson of Surkhet-based NGO from Karnali Province) are leading figures using participatory approaches and tools in their development programs. Though Adhikari is based in Kathmandu, most of the projects he looks after belong to Karnali Province and he has been using participatory methods and tools in his organizational as well as development programs. Mr. Regmi, who comes from Karnali Province, carries grass-root experiences of participatory process, including the seven-steps planning process that is promoted by the local governments.

Finally, Ms. Meenakshi Dahal (Ph.D.) represents the participatory process practitioners with focus on children's education. She brings more than two decades-long experience working with various national and international organizations.

To ensure informed consent (Fontana & Frey, 2005) I discussed research aims with the respondents and informed them about their right to privacy, including protecting their identity should they prefer. Before an interview, I requested their permission to record the conversation. As all of the respondents are well known public figures advocating for the participatory approaches in different fronts and professional platforms, they were happy to be mentioned and were confident that the study would have no ethical implications to their personal and professional lives. I asked participants for their consent to develop

their stories. Further, I went back to the them individually with their respective stories and insured against any deviation before finalizing them.

The data analysis followed the inductive approach, a two-step process that resulted in the analytical/empirical categories used in the Findings and Discussion sections. In order to make sense and derive meaning from the field data, I managed, analyzed, and interpreted the data by reviewing all the notes immediately after each interview (Merriam, 1998), and transcribed the interviews in the same order that was conducted. After this, I employed the systematic process of thematizing to analyze the qualitative data into development of five empirical categories (a) success factors of a participatory process, (b) health pandemic suppressing participation, (c) seven steps planning process almost defunct during pandemic, (d), multi-faceted challenges caused by pandemic, and (e) possibilities of participation in new-normal situation.

6. Findings and Discussion

In this section, I have presented study participants' understanding and perception about the relevance of the participatory approach, its unique position in research and development and the challenges – both protracted and emerged in the new normal situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, I have made an effort to compare and contrast, as applicable, the participant's worldviews to the other scholar and practitioner's view as highlighted in the earlier section. Overall, study participants tended to focus on six key concerns, as elaborated below.

6.1 Uniqueness makes continued relevance of participatory approach to research and development

The participatory approach to research and development will remain as relevant as it has been in the past. All of the respondents agreed that belief in multiple reality makes participatory approach relevant across sectors and time. They affirmed their understanding that the participatory approach aims to create synergistic effects from meaningful interaction among multiple stakeholders while taking their different contexts and standpoints into account. Meenakshi, Gautam, and Gobinda unanimously believe that the participatory approach is best in increasing ownership among stakeholders engaged in the process. Gautam shared his project experience that 'beneficiaries take a lead in coordination and collaboration with government line agencies and other stakeholders while implementing the project as well as implement their action plan on their own' to reinforce his claim. Similarly, Khim considers cultural sensitivity and prioritizing local issues to also help in increasing ownership.

The quality of results, whether it is participatory research or participatory development activity, is also an added value that is believed to continue making participatory research and development (PR&D) relevant. As Gautam pointed, 'multiplier positive effects of PR&D, including quality of the results, and evidenced benefits shared by the group help make the results sustainable'. On the other hands, Khim argues that bridging knowledge between various stakeholders, including outsiders engaged in the process, makes the resultant knowledge from the participatory process better than the sum of individual knowledge.

Though purpose determines a lot, all study participants believe that a portfolio of varieties of tools makes the participatory approach unique and relevant as the tools can be flexibly adapted to the different contexts while taking into account the level of participants, focusing on the group instead of individuals, and in making information visual.

6.2 Success of PA requires serious preparation throughout pre, during, and even post-event context.

Creating equal and equitable opportunities in any participatory process is not confined in a participatory event, rather it starts from the beginning. From the human rights perspective, creating equitable space for marginalized communities requires prior information to them so that those participating in the event/ participatory exercises have time to consult their colleagues and attend the program informed of all the issues to be discussed. Gautam believes that 'when they are able to consult their fellows in advance, they will be able to bring a collective voice and valid information to the group process which leads to their empowerment'. Moreover, Khim considers the selection of appropriate venues for participatory exercise and the representation of multiple groups to be important factors in enhancing access of all stakeholders. His idea supports Cook's (2012) argument that the participatory process loses its essence if sufficient investment is not made in rapport and trust building, which starts even before the real-time participation in research and development.

However, most of the factors that make the participatory process a success are related to the execution phase of participation. Creating opportunities for equal participation is very important when real-time interaction is taking place. As Gautam asserted, the use of appropriate tools plays a significant role in creating a conducive environment for marginalized groups to enjoy equal opportunity. The role of facilitator is crucial in not only creating an environment conducive to everyone in sharing their voice, but to avoid domination of interest groups as well. This is where he considers the role of multiple tools comes in to make immediate adjustments in the process to manage emerging group dynamics. For him, 'reaching out to agreement is not always important, and not even possible, but it is important to ensure that the voice of the unheard is heard'. Both the skills and attitude of facilitators play important roles to create equal opportunities. Study participant's experience echoed with Bruges and Smith (2007) who also claim that attitudes of researchers/practitioners are critical factors for a successful participatory process, absence of which could make the process like a part of statutory obligations (Cornwall, 2008). Khim uses a metaphor to explain his idea explicitly:

"Society is like a cup of tea where three layers are evident - top thin layer

of cream, middle layer as largest segment of society, and the lowest layer

of stuffs unable to get soluble in it fully. This lowest part represents

marginalized communities and is largely ignored. It is likely that practitioners

are biased and consult only those at the top, and unless they make special

effort, meaningful participation of

marginalized groups will remain low."

Meaningful engagement is also an important factor of successful participatory processes that provides participants the opportunity to go into the depth of an issue and further to reflect well on the information. All of the respondents were of the same view that it makes a difference if those participating in a process are able to speak their mind. Gautam explained that effective communication among those involved in the process helps identify the agenda and issues rooted in the context that further inculcates a feeling of ownership. Unless the process empowers them, study participants' ideas correspond to the concerns as Cornwall (2008) highlighted, that mere involvement does not guarantee inclusiveness of 'voice', but rather inequalities might continue to be reproduced and manifested in control or lending moral authenticity to the prescriptions of the powerful.

The success of the participatory approach should consider post-participatory event actions as well. The ownership and accountability as inculcated among the participants should be reflected in their efforts in implementing their collective decision where Gautam and Gobinda consider that participatory monitoring and evaluation play an important role.

6.3 Health pandemic has been considered an excuse to suppress use of participatory approach

Though for many researchers and development practitioners the participatory approach was a 'mask' to facipulate (manipulation in the name of facilitation), the COVID-19 pandemic has given them an additional excuse to withhold its practice. All study participants unanimously agree that since the pandemic began, one of the necessary conditions for the participatory process to be successful, physical gatherings, has been almost impossible. In addition, they agree that the pandemic has limited the time available for rapport building, use of multiple tools, and enough reflection. While comparing their prior experience in using the participatory approach, they have a strong feeling that the pandemic has provided an excuse for those who were not favoring participatory process. This claim aligns with what Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) highlighted, that personal, political and professional commitments are required to create a space for participation and to avoid the process being extractive (Chambers, 2010). Apart from it, pseudo representation on behalf of marginalized communities such as women, disabled and Dalits, is on the rise since the pandemic has created wider psychological problems - while some people are focused on other issues, those marginalized communities are neglected.

Even with selected participatory cases, the research participants have observed recently the problem with physical gathering has challenged in visualizing ideas, one of the shift participatory approach aims at bringing to conventional methods. Meenakshi shares her observation that even facilitators are handicapped - they are unable to use available tools creatively to fully engage participants while using online platforms and tools. Moreover, they are unable to see underlying group dynamics and so, are unable to make mid-way corrections to guide the process well. Hence, the idea of Daper, Hewitt, and Ismail (2012) who argued that methodologies should catalyze collective action and it

need to respect rights to confidentiality and anonymity (Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright, 2019) becomes relevant. Meenakshi considers that participatory approach practitioners are neither proactive in taking any initiatives to address the situation, nor is there a noticeable sharing among the practitioners on the successful use of a participatory approach during the pandemic.

6.4 Seven-steps planning process that intends to promote participation is almost defunct now

The seven-steps planning process (it used to be a 14-step process prior to federal governance structure in Nepal) itself has limited space for participation at the cluster level for a strange reason, the absence of the Cluster Development Committee, that used to engage people from different walks of life, has systemically restricted the participation of those marginalized groups. Instead, Ward Office representatives have engaged people around them in the process. It is generally observed by all study participants that even before the pandemic, most people were not informed of the participatory planning process, and those aware of the event were self-excluding them as they didn't feel that they would be heard. It violates a condition considered important by Rauschmayer and Risse (2005) that all the relevant interests and affected stakeholders are known, included and/or represented to ensure their equitable participation in the process. It means once people don't see any value in their participation, they are likely to develop 'participation fatigue'. Despite experiencing widespread practices of 'guided participation', Meenakshi however, adds that some active local CSOs used to bring the marginalized community themselves, or at least they were bringing issues of the marginalized community to such planning processes.

Study participants firmly believe that from the participation point-of-view, the seven-step planning process is now almost defunct. As Gautam shares his experience, the planning period overlapped with the COVID-19 pandemic, restricting the possibility of vulnerable and marginalized group's participation whereas those ill-motivated stakeholders in power, who were against participation, have got a good excuse to derail the process. Gobinda, Khim and Meenakshi believe that local government stakeholders hardly made any attempt to make the process participatory to the extent possible, given the odds. As social distancing measures and other health-related cautions seem to last for a significant time, so is the likelihood for exclusion as well. They are concerned about the significant negative consequences more likely in the years to come as Rauschmayer and Risse have rightly claimed that shallow participation may be found cheap, but it runs the risk of being ineffective and the validity of outcomes might be questioned.

6.5 Challenges to participatory approach during the new normal is multi-faceted

In addition to some of the protracted challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic has also introduced additional challenges in the portfolio of participatory approach. The challenges have a long range that are related to ideological and principles related issues, digital divide, social stigma against vulnerable and marginalized groups, lack of trust and confidence with technology-based participation for security reasons, all of which lead to further marginalization

and participation fatigue to name just a few.

Apart from poor access to digital technology and various online platforms, the resource and knowledge gaps are key hindrances to the participatory approach. Since the tools should be context specific, geography and other social factors also play important roles in its use and a variety of tools are needed to facilitate meaningful engagement. Poor or limited access to such technologies/ tools and poor skills in using them restricts participation. Gautam shares:

"Participatory monitoring and review planned to be carried out through virtual means

During the lockdown period was successful in Kapilbastu and even with Surkhet team to

some extent. However, it was not possible in Jumla, Mugu, Kalikot, Humla, Rolpa

and Bajura. Technology can be used in urban areas, whereas in rural areas it may be difficult for various reasons - resources, access to tools/technology, and even skills. It is likely to further marginalize those marginalized groups and their issues are likely to remain unaddressed, or even if addressed it will not actually be their problem, rather of those who created and owned the space."

The technology trap is likely to emerge as a key bottleneck for the participation of marginalized people. All study participants fear that it further stratifies society, making it further difficult to include the voiceless, even at 'attendance level participation'. This situation is likely to create a technology bias, (Chambers, 2008) further restricting the participation of marginalized groups. Whereas they already have poor access to advance tools and online platforms that some practitioners have started using, some of them who can afford to buy the technology are poorly skilled in using it effectively. While some technologies are not appropriate in visualizing the information to create 'group memory' Khim and Gobinda worry that local power dynamics might dominate the use of technology in addition to the process facilitator's inability to see from distance if all participants are equally engaged in the process. Since Cornwall (2008) believes that translating voice into action requires two-way efforts – 'from above' and 'from below' this technology deprivation may impede efforts 'from below'. Gobinda has a strong feeling that different layers of people between researchers/facilitators and the research/participants make it even challenging in making the best use of technologies due to skills and communication incompatibilities. He had more to say:

"Local power dynamics could be even stronger in the new normal situation. Even

if marginalized communities have access to platforms and online tools,

there will be a local facilitator working with other experts whose presence might

suppress their true feelings. So, qualitative information, particularly the inner feeling

of vulnerable and marginalized groups, could be compromised while using technology."

Participation fatigue, one of the protracted challenges, is likely to have a different

manifestation during new normal. Whereas a larger section of marginalized people will have a widespread feeling of exploitation and their inability to see the outcome of their inputs will again reinforce the participation fatigue, Meenakshi believes that some technology-friendly people might be worried about the security concerns of digital technology being used in participatory processes and they might be reluctant to discuss sensitive issues. So, both marginalized communities as well as the technology savvy community are likely to develop participation fatigue, but for different reasons. This challenge is related to the rights to confidentiality and anonymity (Abama, Banks, Cook, Dias, Madsen, Springett and Wright, 2019).

Another challenge the study participants see in the new normal is about the potential domination of disinformation in the opinion-making process in the absence of collective engagement in knowledge creation. It will be challenging to triangulate information and see if it is authentic, and Meenakshi fears 'difficulties in verification of sources of information in the knowledge-making process is likely to be dominated by handful of people'.

Vulnerable groups are isolated and likely to be excluded for health reason as well. As Khim adds, 'the participation of COVID-19 infected persons and even their family members and relatives are largely stigmatized, and they prefer self-exclusion from the participatory process'. It might serve as another form of bias that Chambers (2008) considers the main hindrance for participation. Apart from their negative self-image, other community members are also likely to withdraw from participating in a process even when social distancing measures are put in place. Hence, Meenakshi worries that the inability to input their voice makes them less confident in doing so and causes further falls in deprivation cycle.

Since group interactions that create space for marginalized community to voice their concerns, a fundamental element of participatory approach, has already been compromised, Gautam is worried about an ideological concern of whether the participatory approach would continue to prove its relevance in achieving its fundamental objectives in the new normal situation. He adds to his list of concerns that if the benchmark of participation in normal situation would be equally applicable in the new normal situation. However, Gobinda has a different perspective on the issue. He thinks that the absence of the voice of marginalized communities implies how important it is to have their meaningful participation in the process that determines their destiny.

Without investment in capacity building of prospective participants on using the available technology to the best extent possible, it is unlikely that their meaningful participation would be a reality. Similarly, unless the facilitators are serious in addressing the problem and create a safe space for all to interact, there will be a domination of tools/technology experts in the group thinking process. Gobinda's worry lies on the reproduction of fake participation even while technology has been used. While attendance has mostly been used as evidence of participation, it might be the same with a screen shot of virtual gathering having been used as another form of evidence. However, he seems optimistic from a pragmatic

perspective that it is still possible to reach out to the larger section of vulnerable groups and do surveys by using FGD, KII with the use of technology and still achieve desired levels of reliability and validity with some limitations of making processes and information visible to the extent expected. Other challenges all study participants believe will remain in the new normal situation are the art and skill dimension of a true facilitator.

6.6 Reaching out to the unreached is possible with proactive efforts from participatory approach lovers

Despite some challenges, creating space for the participation of marginalized groups is still possible to some extent. Meenakshi considers that paving ways to reach out to the unreached is itself a challenge and the COVID-19 pandemic has added more challenges. However, there is a common understanding among four study participants that if not at the highest level of participation in the continuum, engaging selected representatives of those communities at some crucial stages and bridging their voice with the key stakeholders is possible even in the technology-driven spaces in the new normal situation. Khim sees the possibility of recording the voices of those groups and sharing in the participatory platforms. Meenakshi and Gobinda foresee the role of strategic mobilization of local media in bringing the voice of the voiceless. Gautam adds to this possibility that media mobilization is more applicable where access of marginalized community to the improved digital technology is limited. He believes that by amplifying their voices, the media could serve as a grievance sharing platform and it help in identifying policy issues. Additionally, Gautam thinks that mainstreaming technology can begin with the use of smart phone, telephone and other simple online platforms available.

They see the possibility of engaging people from different walks of life in seven-steps planning process if the local government really wishes to. Gobinda thinks that governments can increase the access of local people to internet facilities - by adding more towers, increasing coverage of Wi-Fi, and even making internet facilities available free of cost for the time being. In addition, Gautam and Khim see possibilities of mobilizing the Cluster Development Committee and facilitating small group discussions through cluster level thematic task forces.

However, it needs the proactive role of participatory process advocates and practitioners. All study participants have the same feeling that unless participatory approach practitioners put concerted efforts in bridging the technology gap and in creatively using the available technology with a true spirit of participatory approach, it is not going to happen. Learning sharing and capacity building among the practitioners would add value to that effort.

7. Conclusions

The four participatory approach practitioners who participated in this study unanimously believed that the relevance of participatory approach continues to remain unchanged even in the new normal situation. Despite this, the success of the participatory approach requires serious preparation, honest facilitation and a clear follow-up plan that the participants own and implement. However, there is a strong concern that the pandemic has added

another excuse for those who would not want to share power, and even the platform that has been created to engage people in the seven-steps planning process is made defunct, or manipulated in the interest of elites. In addition to protracted challenges from earlier days, the new normal situation will add multi-faceted challenges to participatory research and development work. Challenges include the digital divide and health-related social stigma restricting participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups, lack of trust and confidence in technology-based platforms restricting honest opinion sharing, all further leading to participation fatigue. Another painful realization among all of the study participants was that participatory approach lovers lag far behind in using available online tools/platforms in creative ways, and there is negligible sharing among them on the success stories. The findings inform policy dialogue among various stakeholders on how to avoid the technology trap being a bottleneck for meaningful participation of poor and marginalized groups. Local governments need to partner with cluster level civil society organizations and use simple yet effective means of communication to make marginalized people feel engaged and heard. In addition, participatory approach advocates and practitioners have to be proactive in developing their skills in using technology and online platforms creatively without compromising the basic premise of the participatory approach and increase knowledge sharing, in addition to increasing technology literacy among the cluster-level CSOs to bridge communication between people and local governments.

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Strategies for Participatory Evaluation in New Normal created by COVID-19 in Nepal

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed exceptional impacts on people's lives and livelihoods. With the travel restriction and social distancing, now and possibly in the future, it has and will have significant implications on the participatory evaluation process. Considering the implications, a desk review and expert consultations were carried out to document major challenges in the evaluation process and identify project level strategies for effective planning and management of evaluation in the changed context. The review reveals that the COVID-19 posed unprecedented challenges on evaluation approaches and the use of participatory tools for field data collection. The shrinking opportunity due to the pandemic to use the participatory tools have posed challenges on the basic tenet of the participatory evaluation. Development evaluator, working in a participatory process, have increasing responsibilities to devise appropriate evaluation approaches and methodology processes that fit with the complex development landscape in the new normal situations while keeping the possibility of participatory evaluation process less affected. The paper also suggests practical strategies to keep the data collection process participatory to the extent possible while managing the participatory evaluation. The major strategies include systematic context and risk analysis, reviewing evaluation plans, balancing methodological approaches, exploring context-specific secondary data and using local resource persons.

Keywords: Evaluation, COVID-19, Evaluation Design, Participatory Tools, New Normal

1. Introduction

The world is at an existential crossroads. The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting societies and economies at their core (UN, 2020). It has posed severe health, social, economic, and political consequences and with a tragic loss of life worldwide (UNDP, 2020a; Sathian et al, 2020). In addition to these impacts, the COVID has also impacted tourism, remittance and agriculture sector significantly (UNDP Nepal, 2020, Poudel and Subedi, 2020; Pokharel, 2020). Unless vaccines solutions on COVID-19 are found, the global crisis will continue for years and this can be a major catastrophic event in human history.

The humanitarian and development crisis created by COVID-19 at the global scale has direct implications on planning and management of the development evaluation (UNDP, 2020b). The participatory evaluation approaches are being hard hit due to the imposition of travel restriction and social distancing. It is, therefore, important to review the existing challenges and seek possible adaptation on evaluation approaches and methods so that participatory tenets are continued to the extent possible. The situation is further challenging in Nepal as there exist dearth of credible information, inadequate capacity of the supply and demand side of the evaluation and weak technological base for collecting data from the field through virtual interactions.

2. Objective and Method

The main objective of this paper is to review the current situations during COVID-19, identify practical challenges while conducting participatory evaluation and propose plausible strategies to address the challenges that promote active engagement of beneficiaries and stakeholders in the evaluation process. The strategies are believed to assist evaluators and decision-makers to manage the evaluation process effectively. The framework, however, will need to be adapted considering to local circumstances and the relevance of project objectives. The paper reviewed the existing situations through literature review (web browsing), reviewed assessment reports released by various organizations, carried out limited expert consultations (viber and zoom consultations) and used the author's own experience while evaluating the COVID-19 Pandemic.

3. Understanding the Context

3.1 Participatory Evaluation

Participatory evaluation is probably the most common approach used in development evaluation in Nepal. The participatory evaluation involves a partnership between the trained evaluation personnel and organization members with programme responsibility, and people with a vital interest (i.e. users/beneficiaries) in the programme (Cousins & Earl, 1992).

Participatory evaluation is about counting the value and perspectives of people (Chambers, 2009). It involves stakeholders and beneficiaries in different parts of evaluation planning and management. The approach helps to develop mutual trust, respect and collaboration among stakeholders and finally empower people to bring local perspectives in the evaluation process. According to Campilan (2000), participatory evaluation has some advantages such as identify locally relevant evaluation questions, improve accuracy and relevance of reports; establish and

explain causality; empower participants; build capacity; and sustain organizational learning.

3.2 Evaluation under Complexity

The development interventions are already going through complex processes but the pandemic added further complexities to the development evaluation process. This inevitably requires carefully designed evaluation processes that respect and integrate complexity generated by the pandemic and other global challenges, such as global warming, poverty and environmental degradation. In this context, Patton (2020) viewed that 'all evaluators must now become developmental evaluators, capable of adapting to complex dynamic systems, preparing for the unknown, for uncertainties, turbulence, lack of control, nonlinearities, and for the emergence of the unexpected events. This is the world in which evaluation will exist for the foreseeable future. Hence the evaluation plans and design are to be adapted considering these changes while maintaining the 'good enough' rigour and systems that nurture sustainable transformation and learning.

3.3 Impact of COVID-19 on Participatory Evaluation

In these uncertain times of COVID-19, the evaluation actions face severe challenges in planning and management (Patton, 2020; UNDP, 2020b). Some of the challenges include fewer resources available for evaluation as the huge chunk of development funds are likely to divert in responding to the pandemic. As a result, the quality evaluation required to respond to complex situations may get less priority.

According to Vaessen and Raimondo (2020) evaluators are facing pressing challenges during the COVID as they used to have the luxury of time for evaluation planning and management, operate within clear theories of change, and employ robust methods and tools, use multiple sources of data, and conduct in-depth interviews with a range of stakeholders.

With the changing context, especially due to the travel restriction, maintaining social distance, and stringent policy guidelines to meet people, there are reduced opportunities to carry out evaluations by joint planning, project sites observations, data collection and sharing the findings by adopting participatory principles. The crisis affects different people in different ways and would impact disadvantaged populations disproportionately (UNFPA, 2020). Even for the face to face interaction, the situations may force to take convenience sampling which poses additional risks of avoiding stakeholders who are already excluded in the community such as poor, vulnerable, remote settlers, women and old people.

Earlier experience has also shown that distance-based data collection from the beneficiaries is not without challenges (Tamí-Maury et al., 2017). This would further affect during COVID-19 pandemic. Generally, people in rural project sites are not aware of and accustomed to working in virtual mode by telephone conversations. Even if virtual or telephone meetings are organized, there is a possibility that those excluded communities may not have such facility (e.g. smartphone, internet and appropriate software). Without rapport with the communities through informal chat and personal sharing processes, it is difficult to earn adequate trust to get deeper

information from the beneficiaries. In many cases, interviewers lose opportunities to notice and record body language and facial expression which are also important tools to understand the feeling of participants during the participatory evaluation process. These situations suggest that it is highly likely that the participatory approach of evaluation is compromised with COVID-19 risks.

3.4 Adapting the Evaluation Processes amid the Pandemic

There have been some autonomous responses to COVID-19 by evaluator and organizations working in the evaluation field. Although some observations and guidelines are available virtually, there still exists inadequate information on this theme while the paper was being written. With the increasing complexity with 'known – unknown' situations, evaluators now need to rethink and adapt to the evaluation planning, management and validation functions considering conceptual, methodological and ethical consideration in the new normal situations. According to Macfarlan (2020), there is a need for fundamental changes in evaluation from linear processes of using knowledge to plan and check compliance to move adaptive management process of acting under conditions of ongoing uncertainty and imperfect information.

There are on-going discussions on the approaches to be used in evaluation in the changing context. One group of the evaluators are arguing for promoting and use of real-time evaluation and developmental evaluation as the situations are becoming more complex and uncertain (Patton, 2020; Macfarlan, 2020), while the other group of evaluators are viewing that the Pandemic has created a serious challenge that arrests flexibility of carrying out a comprehensive evaluation with involving beneficiaries in a full-fledged manner. Hence, the evaluation processes should use distance or virtual approaches while conducting the evaluation. Given the context, most evaluators agree that there is a clear trade-off for carrying out proper participatory evaluation and require a careful rebalancing the methodology to address the situations.

Following questions may help evaluators to understand the context better, develop risk parameters and prepare adaptive strategies that help to rebalance the methodological approach:

- Is there a significant change in the context and increased risk level to effectively evaluate field operation?
- Is there need to change the evaluation approaches, design and standards?
- Is there need to change from face to face type of interaction to virtual or on-line discussions? If this is the case, then are there basic facilities available to carry out virtual meetings/ interactions? What support may be needed in the intervention sites to participate in the interaction process?
- Is there any potential risk to beneficiaries including marginalized and excluded groups from the new measures of evaluation and how this can be mitigated?

3.5 Participatory Evaluation Strategies to Address the Challenges

A strategy is a simple outline of how organizations intend to achieve their expected goals. In this case, the strategy will help to understand the context and provide some logical steps to address the challenges posed by the COVID 19.

It is very difficult to predict how COVID-19

pandemic will evolve across the world. Considering the challenges, participatory evaluation planning and implementing evaluation involves a notable trade-off or choices. This challenging context requires a framework or working guidance to evaluators that may help to ensure credible evaluation while promoting the participatory process to the extent possible. The overall process should follow the 'do-no-harm' principle to safeguard all people involved in the evaluation process (UN-Women, 2020). UNDP (2020c) provided specific tips on evaluating programmes during crises and they include to rethink evaluation plans & teams; evaluate the impact of COVID-19; collect data remotely; engage stakeholders virtually; share evaluations globally, and connect with evaluation networks. In this context, integration of following strategies in the evaluation process is expected to make the evaluation process more practical, relevant to the project context, adequately answer the evaluation questions, maintain 'good enough' rigour and provide evidence for learning and decision making. The proposed strategies include (Fig. 1):

Strategy 1: Carry out the Systematic Context and Risk Analysis

Given the multi-dimensional effects of the pandemic, it is likely to see the changes in people's behaviour, economic structure, employment rates and types, food security and people's livelihoods. These direct and indirect changes should be explored and their possible links and impact pathways are to be understood by evaluators. Evaluators need to assess these generally subtle but important changes, reflect in the project causal link and theory of change in designing and implementing evaluations. The process could also include the capacity analysis of relevant stakeholders (local partners) and beneficiaries to use the new technologies (such as smartphone and other communication/voice related software) to understand the COVID-19 risks. It is likely that many rural people – especially women – do not have phone and internet access therefore conducting remote data collection can be a risk, and convenience-based sampling may provide bias data. It is equally important to know whether the tools/methods proposed are suitable for that specific context. All these contexts and potential risks require to document and properly assessed.

Strategy 2: Reviewing and Rethinking

Figure 1: Participatory Evalution Strategies

Evaluation Plans and assessing evaluability

The context and risk analysis as mentioned in strategy one would provide a basis for rethinking on the evaluation approach and methodology, and considering the evaluation ethics. Evaluability assessment by reviewing 'the extent to which an activity or project can be evaluated in

a reliable and credible fashion' (OECD-DAC, 2010) is required. While doing so, considering evaluability 'in principle', 'in practice' and 'the utility' (Davies, 2013) is important. For this, evaluators need to thoroughly review their evaluation plans by examining immediate practical risks (i.e. human health and organization/ government code of conducts) which might affect on evaluation approaches, evaluation design, evaluation questions, visit to project sites and type of beneficiaries to be met. Evaluators, therefore, need to prepare feasible evaluation plans and the proposed evaluation approach should have higher acceptability of existing limitation without compromising the rigour and participatory principles.

Strategy 3: Propose Balance the Methodological Approaches

The crisis poses the imperative of changing the methods and process of the evaluation. Evaluators, therefore, need to explore the rebalancing the face-to-face interviews with remote data collection tools. Some of the commonly used tools include Voice Over Internet Protocols (VOIP) - such as Skype, Zoom, Viber, Messenger, and WhatsApp - online survey, webinar, videos and photos, satellite images and GIS maps. Sagmeister (2017) provides a useful toolkit to tech-enabled handheld devices for digital data collection, remote sensing with satellites images, communication with online platforms and broadcasting with radios and other forms of (social) media. Such tools and approach can be useful for addressing evaluation questions related to the physical status, major socio-economic changes and environmental consequences.

Use of balanced methods is always good to have more interactive discussions with beneficiaries that still maintain the participatory approach in the time of crisis. This means when possible, remote data collection tools should not replace face to face participatory interactions but instead complement it. When possible, the evaluation team is expected to organize transect walks for project site observation. The observation process can either be passive by silently visiting the intervention sites without engaging beneficiaries or has some low profile interactions with beneficiaries with considering the COVID-19 risks.

Use of virtual tools and techniques is a new practice in the evaluation field in many developing countries including Nepal. It requires some time to orient stakeholders and beneficiaries in using these tools. To make it interactive and participatory among the beneficiaries, virtual meetings can also be purposefully planned by providing prior information with the objective of the meetings including the type of information expected from them, technology use guidelines, proposing the interaction time suitable to them and ensuring their availability for the meetings.

While using remote data collection methods, ethical consideration can be a key concern. Evaluators, therefore, need to check the ethical aspects considering the risk of pandemic vis-à-vis the required rigour of the evaluation to be carried out. Consideration of gender, people in exclusion and equity issues are particularly important aspects while carrying out data collection. Careful use of technologies and other logistics may increase the interest and participation of beneficiaries even in the distance data collection.

Strategy 4: Exploring Credible Secondary Sources and Validation of Information

Use of credible secondary data is a good source to generate basic information and may also serve as a resource for additional analysis. Use of locally available reports on various themes produced by government agencies or other credible organizations is advisable. Those reports may include baseline report, government statistics or evaluation related documents which can be used in different stages of evaluation. This information can serve for data validation and triangulation.

Strategy 5: Working with Local Organizations/people while Carrying out Evaluation

The evaluation process should consider using the existing local capacities that support the participatory evaluation process. Use of local resource persons or enumerators from intervention areas is better placed to carry out telephone interviews with beneficiaries or have some formal and informal chat. They know the place, socio-economic context, local-level conflict, gender issues and other important aspects that help to reframe the evaluation questions and collect data. They can also assist in data triangulation by using locally available information. This process would be highly effective in the place where language, culture and customs are barriers for external people.

4. Conclusion

The current COVID-19 induced restriction of travel in the project intervention sites and guidance of social distancing hamper in participatory interactions and systematic data collection during the evaluation process. Where possible, evaluators need to explore the new approach with rebalancing the face to face interaction with a new approach of remote data collection tools to avoid the potential pandemic risks and to also maintain participatory principle in evaluation. Strategies are to be developed taking consideration of local context, evaluation needs and the pandemic risk. The review suggests some strategies and they include: systematic context and risk analysis, reviewing evaluation plans, balancing methodological approaches, exploring context-specific secondary data and using local resource persons. These strategies could be a key consideration to address challenges posed by COVID-19 while maintaining participatory principle to the extent possible in a difficult time. The strategies may be customized depending on a local specific context.

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Changing Political Culture and its Impact on Nepalese Society

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Abstract

Nepal is a multicultural and multifaceted country. Its political culture is delicate and conservative. Political culture is belief, orientation, cognition, and patterns of individual attitudes toward politics among the members of a political system. Politics and government change more frequently but the pace of political culture takes a slow motion. The political culture of a society shapes the forms and the structures of political system. For the process of nation building and progress of the society, it has to be congruent and compatible with the induced political change. But Nepali society and its political culture are not liberal and tuned to the fast-changing phenomena of global politics though the system, and the governments are frequently changing. So, instability of government and stagnation in development has pushed Nepali society far off. Political parties supposed to be the vein and blood of the democratic system have failed to come up with clear ideology and vision to the nation building. The patrimonial and Hindu hierarchal social systems are other responsible impediments. Many other things have changed over the two decades in Nepalese political annals. However, the change has hardly changed the mentality. The country has been suffering from 'Delhi compromises." The abolition of monarchy and the onset of federal democratic republic system are the basic premises to lead the nation with new horizon and vision. But there is a dearth of a statesman with statesmanship as well as statecraft which is imperative. The attitude, behaviour and nature of 'the old mindset' should be changed as prerequisite for the well-being and prosperity of the people and the new Nepal.

Keywords: Political Culture, Political Institution**,** Cognition, Hindu Ethos, Mass Culture.

1. Introduction

Political culture is related to social institution/s of an individual, group of individuals, society or nation. It is a psychological aspect of political development, and not necessarily homogeneous. Political culture is belief, orientation, ideas (cognition), and the pattern of individual attitudes toward

politics among the members of a political system (Almond and Powell 1975: 50). A large community may contain sub-groups which have incongruent political culture. A dominant political culture may emanate from political or social leaders and need not necessarily be of the majority, whereas both dominant and secondary political cultures may either be supportive or potentially destructive of stabilizing the political system.

The social environment nurtures powerful traits, attitudes and values. The notion of political culture assumes that the attitudes, sentiments, and cognitions that inform and govern political behaviour in any society are not just random congeries but represent coherent patterns which fit together and are mutually reinforcing (Pye 20072:7). Political culture takes a very slow mode of change. A famous writer, George Bernard Shaw mentions in his play, *Arms and the Man*- 'everything has its own rate of change. Passions change more quickly than manner, moral more quickly than passion, and in general, a conscious reasonable intellectual life more quickly than the wilful affectionate' (Shaw 1979). Politics and governments change faster than the political culture, which takes a snail pace. The political structure and the system have changed faster in Nepal over the last five decades. But how far has the political culture changed congruently compatible with the republican setup? The discussion in this article is whether the political culture has changed simultaneously following the restoration of multiparty system (1990) and also with the recent onset of federal democratic system of Nepalese politics. Further this article also focuses on whether the Nepalese societies and institutions are greatly touched or modified by the global changes of 1990s in general and the abolition of two hundred years old monarchial institution in particular. Of course, there are replacements and changes which can be witnessed in different spheres of governance and attitudes of the populace. However, the attitude and behavior of the ruler has hardly changed. The political change has rarely transformed the mentality and legacy of the ruler. Since 1951, the country has been suffering from the 'Delhi compromise' which poses a different kind of problem both, ideologically and culturally (Rose 1973: 279).

Political culture, in a positive sense, is a civic culture. A stable democracy stems from the presence of the civic culture, rather than vice versa. Almond and Sidney Verba write 'if democracy means anything, it means that in some way governmental elites must respond to the desires and demands of citizens' (Mann 1987: 292). However, the pattern of Nepali rulers' attitudes is changed without any nuance for the public wellbeing and welfare. Therefore, Lokraj Baral attributes (to) Nepalese politicians as leaders of old mindset in the changed context. Is the lack of transformation so because of age factor (old figures) or oriental dogmas occupied in Hindu philosophy and its culture? In fact, things are changing in their own scale of pace, i.e. from Rana oligarchy to democracy (1846-1950), multiparty efforts (1951-1960) to partiless Panchayat system (1962-90), constitutional monarchial system to republican setup (1991-2006).

The objective of this paper is to examine the interplay of social, economic, and political forces to probe out and analyse the outcomes of political changes in the new perspective- the political culture where abolition of monarchial institution

and onset of federal republic system has its cumulative causation.

The political culture of a society is greatly affected by the political structures whereas the operation of the structure is conditioned by the cultural context in which it is set (Davies and Lewis 1971: 112). There are interdependencies and relationships between and among culture, religion, psychology, and politics. The above is the reason why the Maoists wanted to demolish the existing Hindu hierarchy systems restoring **secularism, federalism**, and **People's Republic** during the People's War. The political culture limits the pace of change as it constrains a lot of innovations as implications. By nature, Nepali political culture is conservative and even apathy. And the current Nepal's political culture lacks the axiom. For instance, the ideological status of Nepal Communist Party, Nepali Congress, Rastrya Parjatantra Party and Terain parties (forums).

2. An Overview of Nepalese Political Changes

The political upsurge, the causality of referendum of 1980, conveyed a new direction for Nepal, i.e. voices towards multiparty system. It was a 'renaissance or a new awakening in Nepali society'. The voices and interests of Nepali people reflected in the referendum. About 45% mandate (voters) was achieved in favour of multiparty system. It was milestone and major departure of classical political culture in Nepalese political annals. During 1990s, the changing domestic and regional (South Asian) political scenario along with the fall of dictators in the Eastern Europe and elsewhere virtually touched all the political elements of the Nepalese society. Subsequently, Nepalese people were caught into frequent unrest to attain popular sovereignty. Consequently, the multiparty system was restored in Nepal in 1990 (Sharma 2002). Aftermath the event, a decade long of poor government performance led to political instability. It resulted in revival of active monarchy and then the upheaval of republic forces- a decade long Maoist insurgency which abolished the two and half century old institution of monarchy. However, Nepali people have gained nothing in this regard except for the free media and relatively, three decades of stability during the reign of Partiless Panchayat system (1962-90).

3. Nepalese Political Culture

Nepalese political culture is apathy and intrinsically complex which is based on patrimonial culture and patriarchal system. An insider can see the impact of Hindu social system on political institutions and behaviours (Joshi and Rose 2004 viii). However, from outside, it appears to be as simple as osmosis and vulnerable rather than delicate. It has orthodox political value. Post 1950, susceptible leaders tried to impose and exercise exotic model of democracy in Nepali society. A decade (1951-61) remained vacant of politics. Almost three decades (1962-90) was lavished in partiless politics with another one and a half decade (1991-2006) governed by abortive democracy. The crisis in Nepal's national identity precipitated by such a revolutionary upheaval continues to deeply affect the individual and social lives of a small band of Nepali elites. Years of transitional politics (1951-59) remained as a period of political infancy, which Nepali leaders prefer to call *Shisu Prajatantra*. The successive governments formed during 1951-59 were so enmeshed in interpersonal, intra-party, and inter-party

conflicts that the task orientation was all but lost from the public life of the country. The existing atmosphere of frustration and cynicism virtually ruled out the possibility of any rational, predictable, and stable party politics. The rise of political influence made the nature of transitional politics more personality-centered than ever before (Joshi and Rose 2004: x). The current state (2006 to date) of the State is no far from the same legacy rather is in turmoil. So, the government always becomes arbitrary due to the crises of confidence.

Nepali society is virtually divided vertically and horizontally. Economic classes (stratification), castes and social values are based on the hierarchy system. The extremely hierarchized individuals appeared to be having the hardest time in adjusting to change (Bista (2001:155). Brahmins as *pundit* (priest) and Chhetri were so called upper caste class. The Matwalis, basically ethnic groups, were considered as the warrior and guards of the nation. The Baisyas and Sudras (mostly considered untouchable castes) were called the professionals and had been the labours of the society. The latter groups of the people who compose about one fifth of the population had been involved in traditional occupations such as ploughing land, sewing clothes, and preparing utensils for daily activities. Newar, Kiratis and Thakali were and still are mostly mercantile people. Before any institutional change, it is necessary to have clear view on what is to be changed, why, and how. This further requires an understanding of what institutions are and how they work. In particular, it is important to stress that institutions are the parameters of action. Institutions are bounded, integrated, and internalized sets of social components: ideas, concepts, symbols, rules, statuses, relationships, and so on (Morse 1969:268).

Johan W. Lewis portraits some aspects of the theory of change:

First, the creation of new roles, institutions, values, and social relationships during meaningful social transformation produces instability and may lead to anomie. Adjustments and compromises made by the leadership in the interests of social order or survival may delay or distort programs of social change beyond the delays and distortions caused by the expected difficulties in attitudinal change and institutionalization. Second, the changes in a society both influence and are influenced by political leadership because social development affects any current distribution of social power. In most societies, three typical groups of leaders become mutually involved in conflicting ways in the processes of change: the colonial or pre-modern elites, the revolutionary elites who have usually seized formal power from the pre-modern elites, and the successor elites who hope to replace the pre-modern and revolutionary elites. Finally, the third relevant consequence of social transformation concerns cultural variation and increasing differentiation and specialization ("the social limits of politically induced change," Morse 1969:1-2).

We have 'elite political culture instead of mass culture'. Thus, the different kinds of orientations which exist in a population will have a significant influence on the ways in which the political systems work (Almond and Powell 1975: 50).

4. Impact on Nepalese Politics

Despite lots of changes in the political sphere of Nepalese societies, the political

culture of the society has not changed substantially. However, the three decades long exercise of multiparty system has awaken the citizenry of the nation. The parochial leadership and charting out federalism sans abiding the norms and values of them lead nowhere. Where is the comfortable majority PM K.P. Oli's government going? Where is the opposition party/ies, street youth forces and civil societies or political parties' ancillaries? The April movement (2006) had unleashed complex and multifaceted forces, who were seeking for their reasonable participation in government for power share. They claim as being excluded in the monarchial paternalism. Political changes in Nepal have not brought correlated changes in the social, economic and intellectual life of the country.

The composition of Nepali society is complex and multifaceted or multicultural. It has about a dozen religions and more than 125 languages and dialects. By ecology, the country comprises three eco-zones: Mountain (15%), Hill (68%) and Terai (17%). There are 59 Janajatis (Indigenous nationalities) altogether, more than 124 castes/ethnic groups along with development disparities and discriminations such as central and mid western development regions (CBS 2011). They have a universal trait of factionalism and split. Party structure and decision making is highly centralized. Since 1991, conflicts among and within parties have made it difficult to maintain governing coalitions, and have resulted in 11 prime ministers in 13 years (Manikas 2003:183 and 197). Similarly, the mass media which claims of being voices of the people is not free from partisan interest. This heterogeneity of the society is widening the gap between the haves and the have nots. This is more evident from the soaring development of the Kathmandu valley over the couple of decades. Political parties are in the politics devoid of democratic values and norms.

However, by virtue, there is prevalence of harmony and unity as a symbol of homogeneity in the diversity, for instance in the case of annexation of Limpiya chura in New Nepal map. There are no fights and disputes among the different religious groups, castes and other classes. There is a perfect partilessness for power sharing among the various political parties, e.g., the chances of all political parties government and alliance of all camps/centres. Envoys, especially from Lainchour, Maharajgunj and Baluwatar, frequently call on or visit Baluwatar (PM's residence) and also the residences of the leaders of the major political parties. These meetings must have meanings but it is not usual on Nepalese diplomatic affairs since 1951. Political parties cannot move ahead sans their support and help. Academic institutions have been turned into political platforms to recruit party cadres and its institution leaders are nominated by informal recommendation of the students. Political leaders and their parties have become hunk and monk for chair and power. They have no preference and understanding of the popular mandate. Adult suffrage has got no value- a candidate defeated in the election seeks berth as legislature and PM.

5. The Latest Change Agents

At the wrap up of the twentieth century, globalization and revolution in Information Technology have dazed the leaders and political economy in its direction. Dictators' regimes are crumbled down.

Neo-parliamentary democracy has come into being. It was actually royal *felo de se* to abolish monarchy being lured for power. What interest groups did the Congress, UML, Maoist, mainly represent? How did the historical 12-point Delhi understanding set these political forces? Did the understanding take place in such a way as to ensure a balance among divergent interest groups? What was the class character of the collusion leaders/ship and how does it affect the constitution making? A good understanding of the evolution of Nepal's polity and the accompanying constitutional changes requires one to raise the above queries and consider several other important issues. How was the monarchy able to maintain its political dominance in the past? What were the economic groups parties depended upon for financing their election expenses and mobilizing workers for electoral victory (Ray 1982: 2)? Similarly, the grand design, the 12-point pact, architect by the leftist and the other political leaders of India in New Delhi is not delivering the desired outcome.

6. Components and Compositions of Nepalese Political Culture

The oriental societies, especially the South Asia, are full of Hindu ethos and are predominated by its culture. Whether one likes or not, the womb to tomb ritual is heavily influenced by the basic norms and values of the Bedas and the Gita. Buddhism, Sikh, Jain religions are the by-products of the Hindu philosophy. Wherever and whenever the inculcation of Hindu thought prevails, the hierarchical and paternal society automatically originates. The Hindu culture provides guardianship to its disciples. The weaker sections of the society always seek helps from the stronger. Respect to superior is the virtue and the discipline of the society which is considered the beauty of the Hinduism or oriental society. The role of the father, the teacher, the guru or the pundit cannot be ignored easily. The social process in Hindu society is hierarchical known as Indonised culture. The culture also has political implications. In its lowest ebb, the politics is attributed as Bihari culture in South Asia where degeneration of democracy takes place. Most South Asian countries are exercising the western democracy, especially the west-ministerial parliamentary system. It has injected the exotic political culture in predominant Hindu culture. Therefore, the stabilization of new political system and its governments has taken a long time. Nepal is no different in this regard.

Nepal was ruled for a long time under unitary governance system till (2015) post unification by Prithivinarayan Shah under the control of a strong central government for about two hundred forty years. It created a lot of fundamental values and institutions. Some of these basic fundamentals cannot be overlooked as the premises of these are based on the Nepalese realities such as Hindu social values, settlement of local disputes by panchas, geophysical determinants of the local government units, and etc. These are the ground realities and practises of oriental political culture.

7. The Perspective Scenario

Nepal is facing challenges of adapting and adjusting her ancient political and cultural heritage to a set of rapidly changing conditions brought about by the immense scientific and technological changes of the 21st century. No cultural system has more than two alternatives to match the tempo

of the changes. It must either adapt itself to the new conditions (Maoist vision) or resist them rather than being dragged. However, the latter has minimal chance of success in the contemporary world. It is up to the NC and the NCP to decide what to do next. It is consensus of their individual choices and decisions which will decide the future of Nepal's cultural and social system. Their decisions will be vital for the future generations of Nepalese (A. L. Bashan "Foreword" in Gupta 1972). How lucidly Lucian W. Pye portrayed the politics- 'The elusive boundaries of politics seem ever to be shifting. Politics is always more than the mere words and actions of the professed politicians; yet at moments it seems to shrink to the antics of little, scheming, power-thirsty men (1972: 3)'.

There were no demands of federal and secular state until 24 April 2006. The key variable in the political change (i.e. republic) is in general the political factor in which our plural society interacts with non-political forces (Ray 1982: 84). Meanwhile, Nepal will remain in the same status, i.e. the crises of institutionalizing the innovative achievements such as multiparty system and inclusive democracy under federal democratic republic state. Nepali voters will have to bear multiparty sans democracy. The government will rule without rule of law. Citizens will be treated without sovereignty. Nepal always remains rich in culture but poor in civic culture, i.e. political culture. Nepal is exercising the parliamentary system rarely with a democratic culture. The destabilization and the discrepancy of popular movements are continuum since 1951, 1960s, post-1990 and still prevails today. Whatever the progress and developments of infrastructures took place in Nepal were initiated during the Panchayat era. A new beginning with a great leap is in anticipation.

8. Conclusion

Nepali political culture is an apathy culture. A drastic shift along with programs for indoctrination of modern mindset is required within the leadership (Morse 1969). Nepali political personality is gradually emerging, drawing inspirations from its own historical and cultural background as well as from India, other Asian neighbours, and the West (Joshi and Rose 2004: 13). However, we have limited our culture to just reservation and assimilation in the name of autonomy and integration. The traditional political culture has impeded the functional and ideological decentralization in Nepal. So, the federal concept is being forwarded as a remedy. However, the political leaders seem to lack vision and destination. Political parties are devoid of ideology and principle. Parties from all extreme destinations are united for power sharing. They are more involved in bickering issues among themselves for power rather than in discussion of intra-party democracy. Factionalism and split have become the basic tendency. Politics in Nepal is heavily influenced and inspired from India, and even in crucial mode guided by them. Democratic practices such as elections, parliamentary affairs in the house, intra and inter-party democracy are worse than that in southern neighbours. Patrimonial and patriarchal cult prevails in the behaviour and nature of the ruler. Favouritism, nepotism, oligarchic and coterie decision supersede the mass decision. Family rule and repetition of same person in indifferent

positions is unique. Politics to rulers in Nepal has become a royal charm for livelihood. Citizens remain in apathy and in indifference to the new system aftermath the structural and the government changes. Nepali political culture still has to undergo a huge transformation to be acceptable to everyone. A charismatic leader is in utmost need. At the same time, it must encompass all the aspirations of all the groups, and be the vehicle and support for their transformation into successfully adapted modern societies (Bista 2001: 162). After the republic setup, Nepal is in a need of a revolution for zero ground. Nothing is impossible!

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Ethical Dilemmas in Researching Children in Developing Countries: An Ethnographer's Response

MEENAKSHI DAHAL, PhD

Abstract

Educational and social researchers frequently face complex challenges. These include conflict between the legally and morally binding principles of participants' protection, standards and criteria of quality and relevance of research, and ethical in meeting the criteria of the ethics. The challenge starts before the research and there are additional challenges when children are taken as a subject. Research involving children has both advantages and limitations. The major concerns are regarding the rights of the children, respecting their choice to participate or to leave the research process and the challenges with respect to children's special nature. Children are regarded as vulnerable and incompetent objects requiring protection in family and community. To re-conceptualize children as a social actor and acknowledge them as independent research participant is the challenge for the researchers. Researchers need to develop a new framework and different approach to capture children's voice. This paper discusses on the ethical dilemmas of the researcher (ethnographer) while researching with children.

Keywords: Children and Childhood, Children's Ethnography, Ethics, Consent

1. Introduction

The demands of social research are increasing over time. There are various methods that can be utilized for social research. Qualitative research approach is one that is adopted for exploring the life-worlds of people deriving meanings of what they say and do. Qualitative research can produce different kinds of knowledge that are tacit in the socio-cultural contexts for different purposes which can be related personally and emotionally (Hollowy & Todores, 2007). Also, qualitative research provides detail information about human behaviour, emotion, and personality, characteristics, behaviour along with needs, desires, routines and a variety of other information of the participants.

Educational and social researchers frequently face complex challenges stemming from the conflict between the legally and morally binding principles of protection of participants. The challenges are mostly in the standards and criteria of quality and relevance of research (Tangen, 2014). In such cases, researchers have to be keenly aware and more importantly ethical in meeting the criteria of the ethics from the very beginning of designing to implementing the research activities. So, it is imperative that, all the researchers comply with the ethics in review process of conducting research. For the qualitative researchers, it is vital to be well aware of research ethics while maintaining the research process.

Research ethics have also recently been receiving a great deal of attention, and there are debates about the extent to which research differs with the different groups of participants. More specifically, there are some variations in the process (tools) in the research of adults and children. This paper explores some of the ethical dilemmas while researching with children. The paper attempts to raise broader questions about the ethics on social research with children and young people from the perspectives of an ethnographer.

The purpose of this paper is to initiate discourse on the ethics in qualitative research paradigm faced by ethnographers while researching children. In so doing, I argue that ethical standard may have a common ground but vary with individuals' social and cultural background and the values they carry. Qualitative research paradigm is used extensively by researchers in diverse disciplines such as education, sociology, etc. Therefore, qualitative researchers have to ensure their position when they present their results (O'Reilly, Ronzonu & Dogra, 2013). Being an ethnographer, they need to focus on the everyday lives of the people and aware of their own biases. And there are contradictions and dilemmas in maintaining ethics in a real field work situation because of the subjectivity of the researchers and the research participants. When there are children as research participants then the responsibilities for maintaining ethics is increased.

This paper is organized in four sections reflecting the area of ethics in working with research that focuses on children and families. First, the paper describes children and childhood with the help of the sociocultural theories. Next, it describes the implication of this in the qualitative research methods. A third area focuses on ethics of social research with children. Finally, the paper analyses some philosophical overviews of the ethics in the research process.

2. Children and Childhood

It is important for children to have their own voice in the world. Through play and learning children need a voice to express their needs, wants, and desires. They grow and develop on their own family and cultural context. There are five domains in child development. They are, physical, social, emotional, cognitive, language, and communication. They are interwoven in a child's life and are developing simultaneously. However, all individual child develops on their own pace (Kagan, Moore & Bredekamp 1998). It makes them different from others.

Each child is unique and has different

characters according to their age. They are diverse in many ways, and particular groups of children are not homogenous either (O'reilly, Ronzoni & Dogra, 2013). The researchers need to explore the nature of children, their social and cultural context, status and their developmental milestones. Therefore, while studying the children, the researcher must think about the nature of the children, their interest and the values along with their parents' consent.

It is always complex to study the children because children are growing in all five domains of development. The development milestones of each child can differ and depends on their genes and the environment where they are growing. Each of these areas of development is uniquely growing at different and this makes observation and assessment challenging. The researchers' view to understand children's social actions as competent participants and the adult centred actions bring ambiguity in the process (Keddie, 2000). In general, the research method is applied to the children from the perspectives of the adults. And the development and application of the research tools are similar as is applied to the adult participants, from qualitative interviews or group discussions. But the problem with this approach is that the differences between adult researchers and child subjects in terms of social identity are not always adequately addressed (Punch, 2002).

Knowledge, skills and patience are required for understanding children and to further conceptualize them within the research process. Researcher cannot assume the children to be ignorant and incapable of understanding the research questions, while asking them about things they have never experienced. Therefore, there are some differentiations on the selection and the use of methods (tools) in studying children. Children have different capabilities and are encouraged to be skilled in different mediums of communication (drawings, stories, written work, photo explanations and so on) but are nonetheless competent and confident in them (Morrow, 2008). Hence the study of children needs a new paradigm for understanding their creativity and the rights they deserve.

Children experience and express the world in their own way. Listening to them carefully and appreciating their wide "array of language" helps adults to understand what children saying (Hall & Rudkin, 2011). Therefore, social theorists and adults have to adapt and adjust themselves by rethinking children, childhood, child rights, their position and their socio-cultural context. Children are a part of the society, an active agent able to contribute in the socialization process. "Adult is committed to nurturing children as community protagonist help children exercise their rights and assume responsibilities to the greatest extent possible" (Hall & Rudkin, 2011). From a sociological point of view children and childhood are viewed as a social construction and children are social actor (Einarsdottir, 2007). This is the new perspective to view childhood. Observing and interpreting children's behaviours requires intensive and careful observation, as well as reflection and analysis.

Under these guidelines, research involving children does not necessarily entail the use of different methodologies, but an adjustment in the way of approaching the research, always taking into consideration the different reality of children, that is,

for example the distinction between child and adult. So, it is not a matter of age, but rather the methodologies selected should be appropriate for the people involved in the study, their social and cultural context as well as the subject under investigation. Children are part of a society and their lives are naturally complex, so a holistic perspective of the child must be taken, one that can recognize the many different variables that influence development and behaviour (Morris et al. 2007).

3. Ethnography and Children

Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings using methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities. Ethnography research approach includes participant observation, in-depth interviews and group discussions. One of the key methods of this method is participant observation.

Earlier ethnographic approach was mainly interested in in-depth study focusing on people's everyday lives in natural settings (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Ethnography as methodology explains enough the ways of engagement in culture sensitive manner understanding people and their contexts. The children are not away from human life-worlds however, the process did not explicitly focus on children and childhood in particular. The dominant conventional ethnographic research methodologies focus less on shedding lights to the particular ways of engagement in the contexts of children for understanding their worlds. Nowadays ethnography recognizes children as active contributors to their own lives and to how childhood and society are constructed in different cultural and historical contexts (Konstantoni and Kustatscher, 2016).

Ethnographic research in early age children is often conducted along with their parents taking considerations of young children's experiences of or within particular subjects. Ethnographers require to recognize the nature of the children and how they imagine and expressed their own worlds (Konstantoni & Kustatscher, 2016). The researcher must understand the developmental perspectives of the children and provide space to the children for their participation. However, the researcher is the key to shaping the research process, engaging with children and maintaining power relations between researchers and the children.

4. Research Ethics

Ethics can be defined as a ‘set of moral principles and rules of conduct’ (morrow, 2008). And ethics in research relates to ‘the application of a system of moral principles to prevent harming or wronging others, to promote the good, to be respectful, and to be fair’ (Sieber 1993 as cited in Morrow, 2008). This is a common terminology in the research however understanding ethics and maintaining it is another challenge for the researchers. According to the Lofland & Lofland (1993) communication within the research place is too personal or too sensitive to legitimize the study. The questions are raised on the ethical stand of the researchers themselves. And the understanding of ethics is different according to the values, norms and the cultural context of the researchers. Viewing ethics as an ongoing social practice, “ethical dilemmas may arise at any stage of the research and cannot be ignored against it” (Powell & Smith, 2010). The responsibility for ethical research ultimately lies with the researcher but there

is a danger that researchers may "abdicate" the responsibility to ethics committees (Alderson & Morrow, 2004). And when it comes to the study of the children the level of commitments is increased.

It is critical to address the foundation of ethics prior to describing the other ethical issues in research involving children. Before starting the ethical issues in research involving children, it would be important to understand the foundations of ethics in research. Usually, when we talk about ethics it is understood as the set of rules designed for the correct decision between right and wrong, "a code of professional conduct" (APA, 2012). The most common way of defining ethics is as norms, or as a list of conducts that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. The ethical norms may have a common ground but vary in the way individuals interpret, apply and balance them in their lives and professions. The norms can be varied according to the culture, group and the regions. Therefore, the ethical understanding of the western world can be different from the understanding of the eastern world.

Some of the norms are varied in each setting, but there are some common ethical understandings which are important for the researchers. According to the Vedic (Eastern) philosophy, ethics is the synonym of 'Dharma' (Agrawal, 2007). Dharma is understood as truth, doing right or proper and it is the normative sense while it comes in the case of research. It suggests that one should always speak truthfully. "When it comes to a question of reporting it, you should say what has taken place; not anything different" (Tirtha, 1997). Therefore in the eastern practice ethics can be values, culture and belief systems that any individual carries with them.

The importance of ethics in research has increased for other reasons as well. People in general are more comfortable with dichotomies (Gilchrist, 2010). However, the ethical issues are mostly multifaceted. In the research, we should not expect simplistic answers, or superficial explanations. Instead, we must be vigilant in observing, reflecting, and examining the voices and actions of participants (young children). Therefore, ethics promote moral and social values with rights, safety and dignity of the participants and responsible researchers.

5. Research with Young Children: Ethical Consideration

There has been an increasing amount of attention given to the ethics of social research in general (Morrow, 2009) and research with children in particular. Research involving children have indeed many advantages and limitations. Both advantages and limitations concern the children themselves, as well as the researchers. The major concerns that arise are regarding the rights of the children such as, non-coercion, non- discrimination, fairness, protection, respecting their choice to participate or to leave during the research process. And the challenges to the researchers begin with respect to children's special nature.

While taking the ethical considerations in research, the discussion revolves around fundamental principles - information, consent, confidentiality and use - but is dominated from different perspectives, by reflections on informed consent and protection of participants (Skanfors,

2009). Consent in relation to children's understanding of research information is a difficult task. In general, research with children from a sociological perspective raises the same methodological and ethical questions that all researchers face (Docket & Perry, 2011). It requires additional attentions during the data collection, while talking with children by providing enough time, sense of security and valuing them. The appropriate and honest ways of collecting, analysing and interpreting data and of disseminating findings with the protection of the research participants (children) is an important and risky task in the research. However, research with children does raise questions that require specific consideration, largely because of the way childhood is constructed and understood within different cultural contexts (Docket & Perry, 2011).

In general, research ethics may be divided into three main domains, (i) ethics within the research community, (ii) protection of research participants, and (iii) the role of value of educational research in society (Tangen, 2014). The domain one is mostly about the research process and the quality. It is about "the freedom of research, independence, professional integrity, and good research practice, including respect for colleagues and students" (Tangen, 2014). Second domain is about the protection of the research participants. "It is the obligation to protect individuals from harm and respect their human dignity, integrity, and freedom-that s well-being and autonomy" (Tangen, 2014). Researchers need to be clear on their position and doing no harm to the participants. They must have to respect their interests and culture. The third domain is about the implications of the research. It includes "the relevance of research for educational practice and policy-making and the value of educational research for various groups, typically children and young people" (Tangen, 2014). The social value of research is substantial it can influence policy makers and the practitioners both directly and indirectly.

These are not only the ethical issues but also the quality standards of the research process and the results. There are some issues like privacy, confidentiality that require and need to be addressed while researching the children. These are the ethical provisions that are to be addressed while researching adults as well. However, Alderson and Morrow (2004) revised the issues as "purpose of the research; environment; parental consents; dissemination and the impact on larger groups of children in general". There are some specific requirements which may not be addressed by general research ethics while researching the children. Researcher has to define the research framework and the process as according to social and cultural context of the participants. The children's support in the research depends on children's competencies, perceptions, age, gender, ethnic background, personal characteristics and so on. The sensitivity of the interaction is increased during the process as children are potentially vulnerable to exploitation in interaction with adults (Lansdown, 1994). Therefore, adults have specific responsibilities towards children and the interpretations of their voices. Sometimes when the research is school-based, other challenges of domination come up from the teachers/adults in the information sharing

and while taking the consent.

The rights of the children are the key concern before applying the research method and the tools. In the Convention on the Rights of the Children (CRC) some of the articles have clearly mentioned about the children, as 'the right to be properly researched' (CRC, 1989). Also, CRC has provisioned the children to have the right to express their opinions in matters concerning them (Article 12). Researcher has to be aware of the right to express themselves in any way they wish (Article 13), allowing the children to express verbally as well as with the use of other non-verbal patterns. There are some additional provisions in the CRC like children rights to have quality services, and protection from any forms of exploitation, including being exploited through the research processes and through dissemination of information (Morrow, 2008).

The researcher should inform family about the aim and process of the research and take consent to involve children in the research process. It is clearly mentioned that the education and development of the children should never be hindered in this process. Children need to be well protected and supported for their active participation without any fear, greed and pressure. The confidentiality of the information and the child as a person should be well maintained. The name and the identity can never be disclosed for the well-being of children. The researcher must be aware of the maintaining the confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies, as well as with individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest.

6. Ethical Challenges in the Research

In a qualitative research paradigm, ethnography is the ethical commitment from the starting to each step of the research and the writing (Madden, 2010). It requires every effort to maintain dignity, privacy and safety of the study participants. Researchers have to develop numbers of strategies to apply. It may require special attention to moral and ethical guidelines which are designed to protect the rights of the individual research participants. The challenge starts before the research. There are some ethical standards which need to be maintained by the researchers. Some countries have their own ethical standards which researcher has to meet before proceeding with the research.

The general purpose of research that involves children is to obtain in depth understanding and legitimate information about them. As an ethnographer s/he includes all the members even though children are the primary focus. One important issue in ethical analysis of research is the definition of each individual, their duties and obligations. The ethnographers need to be always aware of the subjects of the research, that is, the children do not necessarily have to be at risk. The most important dilemmas that arise during the different stages of the research can be summarized as, obtaining consent for participation in the research; conducting interviews with or administering tests to the subjects; and providing information about test results to parents or others outside the research team (Morrow, 2008).

6.1 Consent

Consent is the permission given by the participants for the research. The researcher after consent may take an interview, can record their voices, and take photographs. This consent is a very important step in the process of research and is one of the most common factors in all ethical considerations. According to the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2008), even though a child may not be legally competent to give consent, researchers should gain informed consent. This means that parental consent is not enough (UNICEF 2002) and that both the parents and child should be informed about the implications of the research. So informed consent is based on three features; the knowledge and information provided to the participants in a form they can understand; their voluntarily consent and competence to give this consent (Dockett & Perry, 2011). Informed consent ensures that if the child participants are capable of providing assent, in addition to the consent of the adult with parental responsibility, they know they have a choice as to whether to participate in the research.

In order to promote informed consent, researchers should develop suitably customized information that children can understand, since all the children do not have the same understanding capacities as an adult and may not be able to interpret all the information provided by the researchers. In such case parents are the primary actors to provide with the consent but again researcher has to be clear on the children's agency as a social actor and respect and acknowledge them accordingly (Skanfors, 2009). However, ensuring the voluntary consent is also very important but informed consent is quite problematic. This is because it may be difficult for them to fully understand every aspect of the research.

For Dockett & Perry (2011) the issue relates to whether they can "rationally, knowingly and freely give informed consent". While one could argue that children are far more competent than this suggests, especially if adults take the trouble to ensure they explain things in a clear and understandable way, very young children and babies are not in a position to sign a consent form or provide their assent. Furthermore, they are unlikely to understand many aspects of the research in advance of it actually happening. This is where the ethical dilemma presents itself to the researcher.

Parents play a key role in consultations with children therefore the parental consent is important for involving children in the research. Although it is important to gain the consent of adults (parents) on behalf of the young children, there must be an effort to make children understand and obtain their consent as well. It is not the case that the young children do not understand and respond on the consent. There are cases where very young children and babies are able to give or withdraw their consent to research in a variety of ways, such as refusing to co-operate, become abnormally quiet, turn away and cry or sound distressed (Skafons, 2009).Therefore the researcher needs to be sensitive to the moment in order to understand children's behaviour, and a good knowledge of the children is essential. Researchers also need to be attentive that children may sometimes dislike responding or try to withdraw their consent temporarily. Therefore, it is important to understand children's behaviour whether

they are participating happily or just for pleasing an adult and may not show their distress as they truly feel. To conclude, informed consent is not only an *a priori* condition, but is an ongoing requirement to continue throughout the whole research process and achievement.

6.2 Ethics during Research

Many researchers, after obtaining consent and dealing with ethical issues before the research, they then focus on the process of data collection in the field. While researching the children the issues may arise during research as well, such as the way of the children respond or not willing to participate in the process. The researchers need to be ready to respect their right to withdraw from the research at any stage. Furthermore, one of the key concerns is the subject matter of the actual research, which should be introduced in such a way that it will not disturb or frighten children. Actually, there are differences in how children communicate and experience the unequal power relations that exist between adult researchers and children participants (Kirk, 2007).

There is a dilemma and debate regarding the relation between researcher and the research participants. Since the ethnographer tries to explore the real world and the perspectives of the research participants, it may create a power relation when there are children as participants. They feel compelled to answer, participate and may not be able to show their unwillingness to participate because of the adult- children relations, where children understand the adults are powerful and are to be obeyed at any cost. According to Kirk (2007), the adult "centeredness" of most societies and the unequal power relations that exist between children and adults are reproduced during research. So, children may experience pressure, which is not conscious, but a result of the power relationships that are reproduced, and will not feel free to refuse participation, leave in the middle of the research or express their own opinions and share freely their experiences (Kirk, 2007). Children might think that they cannot leave in the middle of the discussion or the adults (parents) force them to continue and are unable to quit the activities. In most of the cases, where a child is under 16 years of age, parents or other adults act as 'gatekeepers' giving consent to their child's participation and as protectors who may deny children the opportunity for participation or, on the other hand, force them into participation, resulting in feelings of conflict, guilt, threat to self-esteem, fear for failure or embarrassment (Kirk, 2007). Researchers have to ensure that the children participating do so at their own free will and that the rights of the child are fully respected in the research process. They also have to be ready to deal with any negative emotions that the children may experience during their participation in the research by acknowledging the dynamics of the structures of power and fear that exist among adults and children, especially marginalized children.

6.3 Ethics after Research & Confidentiality

Ethics is an important part of the research planning, implementation, evaluation, and reflection. Ethics is vital throughout the process. Therefore, maintaining ethics during and after the research is equally important. The role of the researcher to maintain the confidentiality of the information is crucial. Personal data needs additional safety during the data

processing and analysing. When the case is of children, they need additional care while sharing the information with adults (parents) and also preventing them from any adverse effect assuring that his/her answers will not be revealed. While the child participating in the research in such situations the researcher has to maintain "a balance between the parent's right to know and the child's right to privacy" (Morris & et al 2012). Apart from the parent's issue, the researcher must stick on to the ethics around sharing the results with other researchers and other groups. It is very important and sometimes very problematic, to maintain confidentiality while balancing the rights to information and rights to privacy. Researching in the issues on abuse and violence or as an ethnographer the information about abuse may cause adverse effect on the children while sharing with their parents. Children may reveal the information of abusive parents and where the relationship between parent and child is awkward and even if abusing parents are presented with the results of the research, this may not make them reconsider their behaviour, but could make them angrier with their children. This could not only affect the children but also affect the results of the research, since abused children may feel less free to give honest answers (Morris & et al 2012). One way of getting over this challenge is to ask for permission of the child subject to disclose information about the research afterwards, even though this is not practical, since children's understanding can be very different, and parents may blame the researcher.

Therefore, the confidentiality is very important since disclosure of information can put the children and their rights at risk. Most of the researchers claimed that they treat all the participants and the information provided with as confidential. But in real situation confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In such cases researcher has to face the dilemma in whether sharing or hiding the confidential information to the parents if they require access to the results of the research. The compromising takes place in the cost of protection of children from the potential risks and harms.

Ethical challenges, as presented above are general, faced by all researchers. However, as an ethnographer there are additional challenges when children are taken as a subject. In the family and community children represent a vulnerable and incompetent object requiring protection. To re-conceptualize children as a social actor and acknowledge them as an independent participant is challenging in within the family. Therefore, ethnographers need to develop a new framework and different approach to capture children's voice.

7. Conclusion

The key concern of children's research involves the issues related to the children from their perspectives. Therefore, the researchers who involve children in their research need to be aware on the use of tools and methods during the research process. The objectives of the research are not only to know about children but also that could empower and enable children in the socialization process. Children need to be active participants in the research process, not just objects of protection. Research method has to be designed as the children can able to express their opinions and know about their rights. The research activity must be designed as broader benefits of the children. It is regulated to

ensure the rights of children, taken proper consent (from adults as well as from the children themselves). The confidentiality and privacy are well maintained, and the communication and information are well protected at all times.

Children are more sensitive and ethical issues are of equal importance with methodological issues. However, and despite the differences, researches involving children can also function as examples of good practice, even for research involving adults, with close attention paid to the process of obtaining informed consent and to providing understandable information for research participants, attention to the unequal power relations between participants and researchers, etc. Thus, research involving children, when ethical, can set the standards for all types of researches, while at the same time help researchers learn even more about childhood systematically and without the danger of putting the children at risk, especially the very young ones or the very vulnerable ones, such as abused children.

In exploring the ethical grounds, researchers must always consider the children's rights. The researcher has to be well aware of that the onetime consent may not mean that the children will participate during the entire research and that at any point, they may drop out of the study. There must be revision of the process, used tools and comfort from the children's perspectives. Specifically, the ethical challenge for the researcher in working with children is complicated. There is a delicate balance of ensuring that the children's rights are protected. Equally important, the researcher must balance the needs and rights of the parents. Finally, the researcher is striving to ensure authentic and valid data throughout the process.

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Barriers of Rural Women's Representation and Participation in Local Governance in *Sudur Pachhim* Province of Nepal

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the study of women's participation in local governance with specific reference to rural women in the Sudur Pachhim provinces on Nepal in local level election 2017. Taking the status quo pertaining to the representation of women in local governance, it identifies the barriers to councils the development and advancement of women to councils senior administrative and political positions; and it also argues for increased representation and participation of women in local governance. The presence of more women is required if the local governance system is to become inclusive of the diversity of the people it represents, especially women. Furthermore, change is more likely to occur when elected women are supported by the presence of more women at the senior administrative levels in the local governance system. Through their knowledge and understanding of the construction of power relations at the local level, rural women have creatively managed to produce, reproduce and use alternative strategies which are based on their sexuality and traditional gender roles in challenging and transforming gender inequality at the local level and in improving the quality of rural women.

Keywords: Representation, Participation, Local Governance, Rural Women

1. Introduction

Women's voice in Nepal has grown in strength due to a significant increase in the number of women's organisations. During the Panchyat period, a number of organisations were established with active support from urban elite groups, but none was able to mobilise public opinion and rights, in part because these organisations did not reach into the rural areas where the majority of the population lived and in part because the objectives of these

organisations in furthering women's issues were not unified. At the time of Democracy there were a dozen women's organisations, primarily based in urban areas and oriented to councils welfare-related activities. After the comprehensive peace agreement the new frame of politics that highlighted the multiple dimensions of power and oppression, including contestation in politics and self-determination alongside class, nationalist and anti-imperialist struggles.

By the late 2000s many changes had taken place. First, the number of these organisations had grown rapidly during this period. Second, these organisations shifted their emphasis from welfare to development, stressing the importance of enabling poor women to obtain access to credit, employment, income, literacy, healthcare and family planning. Third, these organisations had begun to expand their activities into rural areas and were mobilising rural women on a regular basis (Maske,shubba and wiba 2016).

The renewed attention to women's organising can be linked to a growing realisation of its unique location with-in social movements, in particular the critical and potent role it can play in political and social projects, in revitalising social movements, and in deepening democracy in society at large. There are at least two related reasons behind such a role: first, the women's movement for councils an encompassing conception of political engagement that spans "the personal and the political", which confronts the question of power in both the reproductive and the productive spheres, underscoring the need to intervene in private and public arenas of political contention (Marana, 2007).

Second, the women's movement(s) cuts across and straddles various social movements, political blocs, sector-based organisations and ideological formations. As such, the women's movement is able to capture a wide range of issues and struggles, which makes it well placed, theoretically speaking, to generate a sharper, more textured view of power inequalities and present a more comprehensive, holistic and inclusive framing of progressive political projects (Maranan, 2007).

In this respect, the women's movement(s) has the potential to become a pivotal force for democratic deepening and transformative politics, which will be significant not only within social movements but also, more importantly, in society at large. However, alongside such recognition is a need for a critical reflection on, for example, the kinds of political projects that can be agreed on.

At civil war, women's participation in the liberation struggle was acknowledged and reconciled by passing various pieces of legislation. The pieces of legislation were passed by the government partly as a result of pressure from women leaders. The changes were driven by the need to mobilise rural women to participate in post-civil war development and reconstruction. Though post-civil war Nepal witnessed legal reforms that pushed through liberal feminist reforms, the changes were structured to exclude women in the rural areas. The result was that patriarchal discourse, practice and ideology reinforced male dominance in these areas (Gaidzanwa, 1994; Kesby, 1999; Pradhan, 2010).

Fundamentally changing the status quo and promoting women's rights were a secondary and very small part of this state 'benevolence' (Maske,shubba and

wiba 2016). The women were officially recognised as an oppressed group and as such were the target of a conscious government policy to change their situation. The government wanted to transform the status of women so that they could assume their rightful position in society and work alongside their male counterparts in the development of the nation. The idea was to eliminate all customary, social, economic and legal constraints that inhibited women's full participation in the development of the country.

By the mid-1990s there were 56 registered women's organisations independently addressing various aspects of women's lives in urban and rural areas. Despite initial atomisation, these organisations have come to constitute a network as each developed an operational niche or sector complementing the work of sister organisations in formal and informal struggles for gender justice (Acharaya, 2005). Although the organisations reflected a conceptual unevenness in the understanding and articulation of gender as a political struggle, with some overtly feminist in orientation and others more mainstream or conservative in their approach, they all played a role in re-defining the private and public sphere in the process of demanding full rights for women (Maske,shubba and wiba 2016).

A landmark development in projecting the gender question was the founding of a women's coalition on constitutional and governance issues in 1999. It was an influential voice in the constitutional reform movement. The Women's Coalition consisted of women activists, academics, researchers and representatives from more than 150 women's and human rights organisations. It stood as a broad lobby and advocacy front that pressed for constitutional reform which would protect women's political, social, economic and cultural rights (Acharya, 2005). However, the pronounced shift to state authoritarianism resulted in repressive measures that weakened the Women's Coalition. In particular, political violence, a raft of authoritarian legislations on political and civic life, deterred progress in the advocacy and lobbying role of groups that constituted the Coalition.

There are still major gaps or structural constraints that women's organisations have to negotiate and overcome. The two levels of their struggle have been described as crucial. The first is the level of a feminist consciousness, where women have fought a war against patriarchy since the pre-independence period, through a critique of discriminatory legislations and demands for committed measures to increase women's political representation. The second is at the oppositional level, where some women's groups in alliance with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and opposition political parties have challenged the state and legitimacy of the ruling side and the lack of a free participatory environment (Chand, 2015).

This paper focuses on women's participation in local governance in Nepal with reference to the Sudur Pachhim provinces. Arguments for women's participation in local governance are advanced and thereafter, the research methodology and the findings of the study are presented.

2. Objectives

The main objectives of the study were to identify and explore the key barriers that

rural women face in their representation and participation in local governance.

3. Research Design and Methodology

A qualitative research method was used in the study. Empirical data was gathered through interviews in the *Sudur Pachhim* provinces on Nepal. The research findings indicated that rural women face a number of constraints in getting access to and participating in local governance. These constraints include; cultural beliefs; violence against women; lack of resources; lack of mutual support among women. Among others, the study recommends the creation of an enabling environment for women's political empowerment and capacity-building programmes.

Nepal has seven provinces 77 Districts, 293 Municipality and 460 Rural Muncipilities (RMs). The study covered one province of Sudur Pachhim with a total of 9 Districts, 34 Municipality and 54 Rural Muncipilities 374 councils in the province were sampled using the purposive sampling technique. The sample of the study was comprised of 250 respondents. They comprised of 9 District Administrations (DAs), 105 Council Members, 6 officials from NGOs at provincial level, 10 party district chairpersons of the political parties and 120 rural women at province. Male members were included to establish whether their views on women's representation and participation are of any divergence from the views of women and if so in what particular aspects. The inclusion of men in the sample was important to understand the impact that women have on men in local government structures and also to understand how they view changes that are likely to take place, if any, as a result of the inclusion of women in this sphere of government (Mahara and Tamoli, 2010). The intention of sampling women council members was to establish how such women perceive the process of getting elected into local councils.

Qualitative data was used in this study. Qualitative research methodology was chosen because the investigation involved an in-depth study of entities such as legal, institutional, policy and decentralisation aspects of representation and participation which are the main features of local governance. Data collection was undertaken through interviews. The interviews were controlled to the extent that each participant covered the specific areas which were being explored, yet still sufficiently open and flexible to allow a cooperative approach, with each participant being able to speak in his or her own words. The research enlisted the services of two research assistants who underwent training before going on a pilot scheme by collecting data from the field. This pre-testing of the interview schedules helped to determine the competence of the research assistants, as well as the validity and reliability of research instruments. The study therefore seeks to address the question: What are the barriers faced by rural women in representations and participating in local governance?

4. Status of Women Representation

The following table shows the women participation in local level election 2017.

S.N	District	Local Level	Council Member	Win		Total
				Male	Female	
1	Achham	10	474	284	190	474
2	Kanchanpur	9	478	283	195	478
3	Kailali	13	655	382	273	655
4	Dadeldhura	7	274	161	113	274
5	Doti	9	343	202	141	343
6	Darchula	9	320	188	132	320
7	Bajhang	12	488	286	202	488
8	Bajura	9	362	215	147	362
9	Baitadi	10	440	261	179	440
Total		88	3834	2262	1572	3834

Source: *Election Commission Nepal*

In the above table there are 9 district 88 local governments in *Sudur Pachhim* Province. Out of 3834 total member there are 1572 members are Female. That is 41% of total members.

5. Key Findings

Women's representation and participation in politics at the local government level is a key driver for their empowerment. It is at the local government level where political parties are able to recruit their members and identify potential candidates who can later move on to contest at the national level (Panday, 2008). It is also at the local level where there is a higher probability of direct impact of women in politics because of its proximity to the community. Global evidence about women's actual presence in rural local governments and their potential impact is still very scarce (Ishwori, 2018). Although information about the number of women in urban local governments and national parliaments is collected and systematised as a key indicator for assessing progress on the advancement of women's political rights, research available at the global and local level on women's presence in rural local governance is virtually non-existent (UCLG, 2004). While women's participation in politics, at both national and local government levels, is a matter of gender equality.

Opare (2005) argues that the ability of any group of people or their chosen representatives to participate in decisions affecting their lives not only puts them in a position to contribute ideas but also provides them with the tools and options for reshaping the course, direction, and outcome of specific programmes and activities which will determine their future. It is therefore critical to engage women in decision-making processes within the communities where they reside and obtain their livelihoods.

Other assertions often encountered are that local politics is about issues that concern women's daily lives such as water, waste disposal, health and other social services. This implies that participation in local government is an extension of women's involvement in the civic issues facing their communities (Joshi, 2015). Other scholars

also suggest that it is easier for women given their household constraints and childcare responsibilities, to participate in public life at a level more proximate to them (Eva, 2011). Such assertions may imply that national-level politics is about issues more distant from and perhaps incomprehensible to women. However, practical concerns are undoubtedly important as such arguments seem to convey the ideological flavour of patriarchy.

A more convincing argument for representation and participation of women in local governance is rooted in the conviction that unless all sections of society, whether women, racial or religious minorities and other disadvantaged groups are represented in legislative bodies, their interests will not be articulated and therefore will suffer from policy neglect (Chowdhury, 1994; Panday, 2008). Democratic history and practice clearly demonstrate that even democratic institutions, based as they are on the principle of one-person-one vote, are blind to cultural and gender differences. Therefore, they do not spontaneously provide any guarantee for effective representation of women's interests, or indeed those of other marginalised or excluded groups (Joshi, 2015). For there to be tangible policy outcomes that take into account the special needs and interests of women, there is need for effective representation, which in turn may involve making a case for special arrangements, such as quotas for women's participation. It is because of these imperfections in the way in which representative institutions actually work, that the case has been made for replacing the "politics of ideas", rooted in the context of rival political visions, by the "politics of presence" effectuated through safeguarded quotas (Phillips, 1995; Joshi, 2005).

In view of the foregoing argument for the participation of women in local governance, this study investigated the following key barriers faced by women with regard to their participation in local governance with particular attention paid to the rural women.

5.1 Political Violence against Women

Throughout the interviews with council Member, District officials, NGO Officials, party chairpersons and rural women, the issue of political violence arose as a barrier to rural women getting into local politics.

The study showed that 90% of respondent agree with the argument which were 91% council Member, 78% District officials, 67% NGO Officials, 40% party chairpersons and 96% rural women ranked political violence as the biggest barrier to

Table 1 Political Violence is the Barrier

Respondent	Persons	Yes	No	%
District official	9	7	2	0.78
NGO Personal	6	4	2	0.67
Council Member	105	96	9	0.91
Rural women	120	115	5	0.96
Party chairpersons	10	4	6	0.40
Total	250	226	24	0.90

Source: *Questionnaire Interview*

the participation of rural women in local politics. It was observed that violence against women in Nepal takes mainly the following forms: physical, psychological and forced isolation and the undermining of a woman's self-esteem, sexual violence and economic violence, through which women may be denied access to work, income and maintenance. The respondents indicated that Nepalese politics was fraught with violence, especially during war periods, and unfortunately women were seen as easy targets. Some respondents indicated that in the war time violence, rural women were systematically raped and tortured to ensure their isolation from the communities in which they had been politically active. She indicated that she knew of incidents where people were abducted and tortured. She said that women felt that standing for elections is not worth the sacrifice they have to make. Research participants concurred that the violent nature of Nepalese politics and the country's political instability period was a deterrent to women standing for elections as member. Female member and representatives of women's organisations indicated that women are the ones who promote unity and harmony in communities.

Political environments in Nepalese have been tense, hostile and volatile. Manifestations of violence included torture, rape, beatings by youth militia invading villages, burning down houses, and setting up torture camps in rural and urban areas. Interviews with council members, rural women and women's organisations highlighted the issue of political violence both as a barrier to women getting into local politics as well as to their ability to participate effectively once they were elected (Sakya, 2019).

5.2. Culture and Socialisation

Culture and socialisation was ranked as the second barrier to the participation of women in local governance.

In the case of culture and social aspect the 85% of respondent agree with the argument which were 88% council member, 67% district officials, 83% NGO officials, 60% party chairpersons and 86% rural women were mentioned the patriarchal mindset that they encountered in society and in political parties as the key challenge in performing their role as public representatives effectively. They said that they were not treated equally by male members and were not taken seriously by some authorities. Female members complained that male

Table 2 Culture and Socialisation

Respondent	Persons	Yes	No	%
District official	9	6	3	0.67
NGO Personal	6	5	1	0.83
Council Member	105	92	13	0.88
Rural women	120	103	17	0.86
Party chairpersons	10	6	4	0.60
Total	250	212	38	0.85

Source: *Questionnaire Interview*

members brought their patriarchal attitudes from home to the council. Male domination in the councils and in its functioning makes it a patriarchal site where women have to continue to fight their way by resisting public patriarchy on a daily basis.

The cultural barriers shaped by patriarchal political discourse become vital structural factors in determining the level of women's participation in politics. Women have to negotiate their entry into and claim public space according to the discursive, cultural and material opportunities available to them in a given cultural and societal context. Although gender role ideology is not static – rather it is in flux due to its constant intersection with ever-changing economic, social and political systems – women continue to be defined as private beings in dominant cultural discourses, which results in creating structural barriers to women's entry into politics (Bratton, 1989).

5.3. Lack of Resources

The third most important factor that limits the respect and legitimacy in decision-making of rural women is their lack of economic means.

The availability of resources; 80% of respondent agree with the argument which were 82% council member, 67% district officials, 100% NGO officials, 70% party chairpersons and 82% rural women were cited lack of resources as a factor which limits them in participating in local governance. Women's economic activities and the resources they may generate would strengthen women in several ways. First, economic resources may free the necessary time for discussion and participation on local decision-making. Second, they empower women, giving them the sense they can accomplish things. Third, they raise the stature of women within their communities, both with men and with young people. Not having economic interests precludes a range of interests that would compel women to set certain priorities, support particular local investment, and take an interest in national policies.

Most of the council members cited inadequate resources as hampering their operations and development plans in the individual councils. The female members pointed out that if a chairman is not well known and does not have influence within their political parties, they struggle to access sufficient resources to implement development

Table 3 Lack of Resource

Respondent	Persons	Yes	No	%
District official	9	4	5	0.44
NGO Personal	6	6	0	1.00
Council Member	105	86	19	0.82
Rural women	120	98	22	0.82
Party chairpersons	10	7	3	0.70
Total	250	201	49	0.80

Source: *Questionnaire Interview*

projects. For those with political muscle, resources are forthcoming. The Members also agreed that their allowances were too low and in most cases they use their own resources to do their work. The three most important resources, according to Medoff (1986) are money, people and time. He indicated that candidates with more money in an election campaign are more likely to win. He argues that women candidates never raise as much money as their male counterparts, so women need to develop promoting and networking to reduce this disadvantage.

5.4 Domestic Responsibilities

While the survey showed that the 80% of respondent agree with the argument which were 82% council member, 67% district officials, 100% NGO officials, 70% party chairpersons and 82% rural women were rated this as a barrier, possibly because they have been socialised not to think of their domestic chores as a barrier, women have the burden of domestic or private responsibilities which they have to balance with their political and public duties.

In addition many of them have jobs so that they can support their families, resulting in their having to juggle their time between politics, work and home. Lack of support from husbands and families exacerbate this situation. Female members interviewed (74.5%) mentioned that they were fully supported by their families in contesting as members. However, they mentioned the continued pressure they had to face to shoulder their domestic responsibilities in the same way as before. They said they had competing demands on their time due to their triple productive, reproductive and community managerial responsibilities. They were left with little time to participate in politics. Many reported that they suffer from extreme stress in managing these triple roles as there is no support available from their families, political parties and the state.

5.5 Lack of Education

In Nepal there is no educational requirement to become a member. In the election guidelines:"It does not matter if you are male or female, old or young, educated or unschooled, left or right wing, you should aim to be the best council member you can be." The biographical data of respondents showed that 67% of rural women had secondary education while 70% of female members had attained the same qualification. However, education is still seen as a key barrier to women's effective participation by rural women,

Table 4 Domestic Responsibility

Respondent	Persons	Yes	No	%
District official	9	5	4	0.56
NGO Personal	6	3	3	0.50
Council Member	105	90	15	0.86
Rural women	120	85	35	0.71
Party chairpersons	10	5	5	0.50
Total	250	188	62	0.75

Source: *Questionnaire Interview*

members and party chairpersons. Council Members (30%) and rural women (33%) rated lack of education as a key barrier. Women's organisations felt that women's lack of education was a key contributing factor to their lack of confidence. They also said that women's participation could be enhanced through education starting at a young age. Others said education was important because it would mean that female members would start to raise women's issues in their council.

5.6 Personal Barriers

As the findings of the study reveal, 74% of the female members, compared with 30% male, had been elected for the first-time. They lack confidence, relevant council experience and basic knowledge and skill in council work. Similarly, they indicated that they lack sufficient gender understanding on how to represent women's interests. They also lack advocacy skills to promote women specific issues. As a result of all this, they are not able to make effective alliances, networks and linkages within and outside councils with stakeholders.

The findings of the study revealed that the level of confidence and capacity-building needs of female members vary according to their political background and their exposure to the public and to political life. The needs of female members and those of their male counterparts were different. Similarly female members elected as chairpersons of council committees had specific training needs. As mentioned earlier, 74.5% of the council members said they had contested as members with the consent of their families. However, they felt constrained due to competing demands from their families and their council responsibilities. Issues of mobility, lack of independent sources of income and lack of social capital as women, limit the scope of their political work. At the personal level, female members faced barriers mainly due to demographic factors such as education, employment and age and family factors that include their triple roles and family support. These factors affect female members' self-confidence and motivation and limit their representation and participation in local governance.

5.7 Lack of Information

One important constraint on interest of women in their capability to make decisions is their lack of information. The informational constraints fall in three categories:

(a) Limited channels of communication and limited content regarding sources of information. Illiteracy is one impediment because it precludes the receipt of information from newspapers, magazines, and other printed material;

(b) Poverty is another, constraining access to television and radios; and

(c) The last constraint is time. One issue related to information channels for women is the reliance on radio and the possibility that radio broadcasts are not sufficient for informing rural women: 45% of rural women and 36% of female members indicated that radio was their major source of information.

5.8 Lack of Mutual Support among Women

While it is undeniable that women bear the brunt of gender inequality because of patriarchy and other factors, it is also true that they are their own detractors. One of the research findings is that the reason for low women's participation in politics is the 'pull-her down syndrome' among Nepalese women: 50.9% of the council members and 39.8% of rural women indicated this barrier

under 'other' factors. The female members were accepting to difficult to work with as compared with men. They indicated that women were constantly trying to outdo and out-manoeuvre each other instead of working together.

5.9 Institutional Factors

Government laws were an important factor in the selection of women into decision-making bodies, according to 35% of rural women and 42% of council members. Institutional factors refer to the laws and various formal arrangements that guide the mechanics of governance and political participation. Institutional factors that limit representative participation include the type of election system and how women's representation is outlined in a country's or political party's constitution or legal framework. This includes the rules and procedures through which candidates are selected or votes are cast in an election, and in turn helps to determine the extent to which local decision-making bodies are genuinely democratic, inclusive and gender-sensitive. Several elements of the institutional design have a major impact on women's opportunities to stand for election and to be elected (Bhattrai, 2015).

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The research findings indicated that rural women in Nepal face two problems in particular: underrepresentation and low participation compared to women in urban councils and men in formal political and economic institutions and formal and informal rural institutions. The factors commonly identified as barriers to women's participation include political violence, gender stereotypes and outright discrimination, personal obstacles such as lack of confidence, culturally prescribed domestic roles, lack of education, lack of financial and socio-economic capital, winner-take-all electoral systems, and political institutions that are not conducive to balancing family and public life.

Representation is an important indicator of the social and political status of women. Generally, women tend to be under-represented in positions closely identified with power and predominate in administrative and service occupations as indicated by the findings. Adequate representation of women in local governance is crucial to ensure that local governments are more representative of the communities they serve.

Female members have a strategic role to play in ensuring that Rural Municipals respond to rural women's needs. Female members are well placed to represent and address the diverse needs of rural women within their councils and ensure that Rural Municipals are sensitive to women's issues and that male members take them seriously. Increased participation of rural women in Rural Municipals will foster a change in attitudes to council's women's involvement in public life and expand women's opportunities beyond those traditionally assigned to women.

Participation of women in local governance should be enhanced in all three essential areas: as voters, policy-makers and as members of decision-making bodies. There is need for policies that involve empowering Rural Municipal Councils and communities to develop strategies that combine the empowerment of communities and rural women. In order to be able to identify the needs of the community and to best promote social and economic development, Rural Municipals need the

input of their constituents to be able to best identify those areas that need addressing. Rural Municipals must encourage the involvement of the community and community organisations in local governance. This will help in developing capacity of women and institutions for effective political participation and contribute to the improved economic and social outcomes in the form of poverty reduction, sustainable development and more balanced gender relations in Nepal.

The dominant ideology in organisations should not be male-biased because under such circumstances transformation is unlikely to take place. Male-dominated hierarchical power often purposefully excludes women's participation or devalues their contributions, creating a disabling environment for women's advancement. These intangible informal institutional values, norms, structures, and processes are difficult to recognise and often constitute a greater barrier than formal rules. For women to benefit, leadership needs to become actively involved in the social transformation of patriarchal norms and values and must include women's perspectives on and participation in the transformation process. Women in leadership positions likewise need to challenge the rules and not to play by them.

There is need for collaboration with local universities, research institutions, academia, media and women's movement in undertaking in-depth research on gender issues, challenges and coping strategies including the issues of political representation and participation and documentation of the research findings for a database of local knowledge on the subject. Such indigenous knowledge can be very useful for designing, formulating and implementing gender-sensitive policies and evaluating their impact on participation. It can also be used for identifying training needs and developing training material, besides sharing with women the contributions of their female colleagues, successful practices and lessons for improved participation.

Fostering a more inclusive and transformative type of politics means creating a more generalised political participation. Political participation is therefore a continuing process. It is necessary to create an environment that will facilitate the election, appointment or promotion of a sufficient number of women to decision-making positions. The goal of a sufficient number refers more to a situation where it is no longer remarkable for women to be put in positions of power, rather than a specific target of say 20% or 30%. Yet this environment is not simply for producing women leaders but also to develop a new and active citizenry among women. A strong political will on the part of government and the leadership of political parties, business, trade and labour unions, academia and other social institutions is critical in achieving an environment conducive to promoting women's political participation.

The mass media can be used to make women aware of their contribution and to expose gender inequalities. Furthermore, media work is also important to combat negative stereotypes. National institutions in many countries implement broad-based public information campaigns concerning the restructuring process. Differing starting points of women and men, and between different groups of women and men, must be taken into consideration

when developing strategies for public information and education. This can be done through assistance to public information campaigns through local radio stations, theatre groups or trained multipliers can be an effective tool to demonstrate to women the relevance of restructuring for their daily lives. Relevant issues to address are the roles and functions of local authorities as well as central government, opportunities for women to participate in local government development and decision-making processes, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

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Exploring Food-Related Barriers and Impact on Preschool-Aged Children in Pokhara, Nepal: A Qualitative Review

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Abstract

This study explores knowledge, food beliefs and cultural environment about food recommendation trend among the poor mothers related to feeding of their offspring. Mothers' insufficient knowledge including the existing food beliefs and attitudes are one of the underlying causes of nutritional problems in Nepal. The study has set out the following objectives: identify major barriers for recommending healthy food for preschool-aged children; assess knowledge and beliefs about nutritious food amongst mothers; assess health-seeking behaviour for rural and urban children. This study used qualitative focus group methods where fifty participants took part in seven focus groups discussions. The data were thematically analysed. The study identified five themes: poverty, knowledge, policy, misbeliefs about breastfeeding and food beliefs and cultural influences. Many participants thought that children are generally at risk due to poverty, poor knowledge and strong-rooted cultural practices and beliefs. This study found 'diversified views' as a major barrier to food and health-seeking behaviours. However, spiritual healers highlighted the importance of linking beliefs with cultural and religious norms and values. This research suggests that a public health approach is urgently required to address the nutritional problems associated with food behaviours and the major barriers to maternal knowledge and food beliefs.

Keywords: Knowledge, Beliefs, Culture, Malnutrition, Poverty, South Asia

1. Introduction

Mothers' misunderstanding about healthy foods and the role of healthy eating in combating nutritional problems can lead to inappropriate feeding of young children which can lead to several complications such as human sacrifices in pre-school-aged-children (Joshi et al., 2012; Najar & Sharma, 2015). There are still several misconceptions or beliefs regarding healthy diets still exist in this world including Nepal (Bist et al., 2010; Acharya, 2013). It may be attributed partly to traditional/spiritual healers and their status in society (Mishra & Etherfor, 2000; Lobstein & Davies, 2008). Sufficient nutritious foods are hugely important for the health of pregnant and lactating women, children, and old and sick people because insufficient food consumptions may lead to malnourishment. Pregnant women are more likely to have a low birth-weight-baby, develop anaemia and have complications during delivery. Thus, there is a high risk of mortality for both mothers and children (Horton,2008). It is a bit challenging work to change existing negative issue about healthy foods and health-seeking behaviours (Horton, 2008; Joshi et al., 2012; Karkee et al., 2014; Najar & Sharma, 2015). There are several food beliefs and misconceptions available in Nepal, especially in poorer communities. The existing food beliefs about healthy diets which are an impact on the health of mothers, children, and old and sick people (MoHP, 2017). It may contribute to the high prevalence rate of malnutrition (undernutrition & stunting). Across the different geographical regions of Nepal, there is diversity of food habit that inspired by the availability of food as well as cultural and traditional food beliefs that affect health and nutrition in both positive and negative ways (Meyer-Rochow, 2009; Adhikari, 2010; Ellahi, 2014; Acharya et al., 2016).

2. Research Methods and Materials

This research is a qualitative study using Focus Groups Discussion (FGDs) (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Creswell, 2014). FGDs were mostly conducted in local government offices or hotels. Three groups, out of seven, were literate and all discussions were held in Nepali (Creswell, 2014). We conducted one pilot study consisting of nine people in Kaski district (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC) approved this study (reference no.1438). Seven different focus group discussions (see Table 1) were conducted. Two groups out of seven were involved in maternal and infant health management. There were between four and eleven participants in the seven focus groups. The discussion lasted 90 to 120 minutes and all the data were recorded manually as consent given by the participants, but they refused to be audio recorded (Braun & Clark, 2006; Creswell, 2014).

2. Analysis

These data were transcribed, translated into English and analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006; Creswell,2014) applying the elements of the conceptual framework of Marks *et al*., (2001). By reading the transcripts possible themes were identified and then sections of data were structured into themes and sub-themes (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Creswell, 2014). The transcripts were analysed by the first author and verified by another author. Quotes illustrating key themes were then selected (Samik-Ibrahim, 2008). All the gathered themes were rearranged and

refined and merged into five overarching themes.

2.1 Results

2.1.1 Demographics of the FGD (Focus Group Discussion) participants

A total of fifty participants (33 men and 17 women) were recruited, forming seven focus groups. The pharmacists' group was the smallest, whereas the health workers' group was the largest one. The auxiliary nurse midwives, health workers and policy people worked for the local government. The mothers' group was also as a part of the local government. The social workers were volunteers with the Nepal Red Cross Society. Pharmacists and spiritual healers were self-employed. Table 1 shows that most of the focus group participants were men, Hindu and aged 36 to 45 years old.

2.1.2 Diversified Views

Figure 1 signifies the major barriers to recommend healthy diets for pre-school-aged children. This study explores a new knowledge that added to a literature, the diversified views (DVs), referring to the multiple opinions which appeared to exist in every household. The highlighted variables on the diagram 'Influencing Factors', are strongly and directly associated with the study population. The non-highlighted variables are also important, but to a less direct degree than the highlighted (Figure 1). Thus, these variables are often the key activating issues for the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices about the healthy foods that revealed positive, negative and neutral views which are directly or indirectly influenced the food choices and health-seeking behaviours either positively, negatively and or neutrally. The 'DVs' or multiple opinions are being emerged when relatives, friends or neighbours are visits a sick child's home. During the visit, they generally collect several information about the cause of child sickness, the food given to the child,

Table 1 Demographics of FGD Participants

Group label	Gender		Age Group Ratio (Years)				Religions	
	Male	Female	25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Hindu	Buddhist / Christian
Pharmacists	4	-	1	3	-	-	4	-
Auxiliary Nurse Midwives	-	7	4	2	1	-	5	2
Spiritual Healers	5	-	-	-	-	5	5	-
Mothers' Group	-	7	2	3	1	1	3	4
Health Workers	10	1	3	5	3	-	10	1
Social Workers	9	-	3	2	3	1	9	-
Policy makers	5	2	3	3	1	-	7	-
Total (n=50)	33	17	16	18	9	7	43	7

and health services that taken by the parent. Based on the visitors' previous experiences, they give advice about the healthy diets and consultations. For example, if a child is suffering from the common cold and fever, the visitors often suggest that the green leafy vegetables, fruits and yoghurt should be avoided. Their suggestions are often based on Ayurvedic treatment systems which are associated with the several food restrictions and on the nature of the ailments. Similarly, they also recommend certain health institutions and professionals including traditional/ spiritual healers. With a load of visitors' visit, the sick child's parent collects a multiple opinions (DVs) about the child sickness including food and health-seeking behaviours. This act confused the parent and leads to delay in seeking the medical consultations and the child's diet. Thus, DVs are identified as the major barriers for the food and health-seeking behaviours.

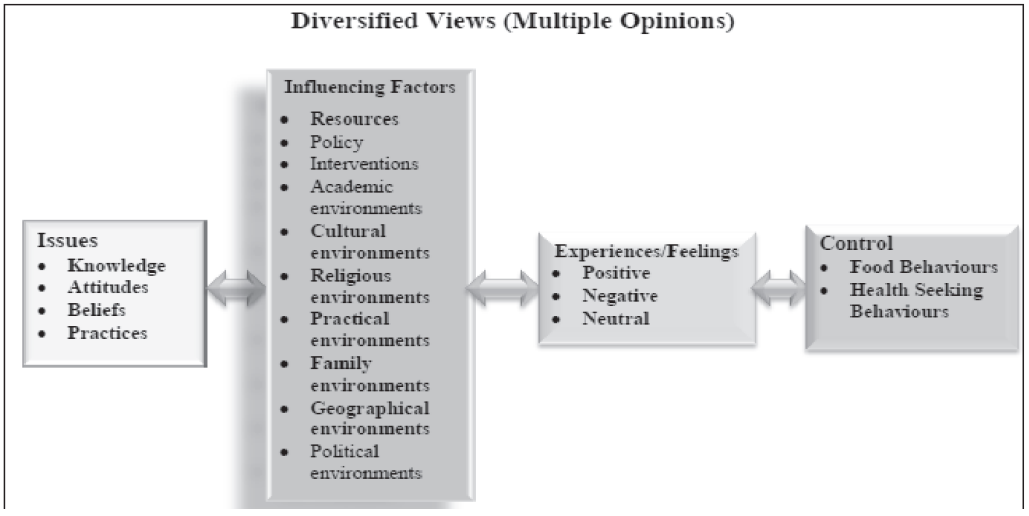
Poverty

Members of all FGDs thought that poor, illiterate and underserved populations were vulnerable due to both poor education and knowledge about healthy food, and strongly embedded cultural beliefs. Fruits, green vegetables, and another healthy commodity were found expensive in this communities.

In the issue around the access of the private health services by the poor people from the rural community, whilst the policy-people added:

"hardly any poor people reach this facility because they do not trust government health services due to poor tadak-bhadak (decoration) compared with private ones. So, the poor people are being attracted by private facilities. Most of the rural community rarely reach services because of their poor finances. On the other hand, they are habitually involved in traditional and spiritual regimes." (FGD: Policy People).

Figure 1. Diversified Views: a Major Barrier to Food Recommendation.



Due to the poor financial status, most low-income families are linked with their daily work in the agriculture field. For this reason, they must involve in their work. In Nepal, women's status is generally low and even more so amongst the poorest. Poor women often work harder than men especially on the land and in the house. In some ethnic groups, they hardly have any time for childcare and feeding.

Knowledge

This theme covers the level of mothers' insights about common healthy foods and their availability. In terms of knowledge about nutritious food, the FGDs revealed three different sub-themes. First, all groups suggested that the level of awareness about undernutrition was lacking in poor people, impacting on nutritional statuses such as non-exclusive breastfeeding, inappropriate child-feeding practices, inadequate diet and rest for women during the pregnancy and insufficient health-seeking behaviours. Secondly, most participants also regarded the low level of knowledge as one of the major factors for undernutrition including healthy diets, for example, one of the ANMs said that:

"I noticed one family who stayed next door to a sub-health post (SHP) in my working area, who had four children. The grandparents always used to recommend them ready-made foods. After one year these children – three out of four – were diagnosed with undernutrition by the SHP and sadly one died. After this episode, they realized that it was due to the regular feeding of ready-made food. The people of this area have poor knowledge of a healthy diet. It may be due to poverty and low level of education." (FGD: ANM).

Thirdly, knowledge about nutritious food is highly diversified in the district. A few mothers who live in an urban area, who are educated and rich, are perceived to be highly knowledgeable about healthy food but still have poor knowledge on how to prepare it to preserve its nutritional value. All focus group participants, except the spiritual healers, independently voiced similar opinions about mothers' knowledge and perceptions on undernutrition. Most of the participants also regarded the low level of knowledge as one of the major factors of undernutrition.

Policy

The debate focused on existing health and food policies. A policy for the provision of free healthcare services at a government facility under the district hospital has been progressively introduced, reducing financial barriers to promote uptake by poor and marginalised groups. However, health inequalities may even grow as the rich may benefit more than the poor.

The groups of pharmacists and policy people shared their views in the discussion of policies. In contrast, the ANMs, mothers' group and spiritual healers did not discuss policy at all. The latter might be due to a lack of knowledge of health policy including nutrition because of their low socio-economic status and education compared to the other groups. Additionally, ANMs and mothers' group members may have been concerned that their voices might reach higher authorities and may impact on losing their jobs. For the same

reasons, lower level health workers were also observed to be silent or digress from the topic when discussing policy issues concerning higher health authorities. A major concern was the policy relating to the free government health care services. The pharmacists agreed that:

"An officially free health care policy was mainly targeted at poor and marginalized groups in the society, but in practice disparities remain, as rich people are getting more benefit than the poor. It is documented in government records that the service has been used by poor and disadvantaged groups, but practically it was used by rich and politically influential people." (FGD: Pharmacist).

The pharmacists commented on the weaknesses of child and maternal health policy. The healthcare service provision was very different from private and public health institutions and they thought policies must be the same in both institutions. The private health sector may not follow government rules and regulations regarding the financial issue. There was also a lack of supervision and monitoring issue associated.

Misbeliefs about breastfeeding

Breastfeeding has lots of benefits to both the baby and mothers. It protects them from helps digest solid foods and protects from infections. It also continues to supply the balance of nutrients that they require. Beliefs and attitudes concerning breastfeeding were also associated with wider cultural and traditional beliefs. A typical comment was expressed by ANM as follow:

"I think breastfeeding is highly effective for children. My mother-in-law and mother taught me the importance of breastfeeding and colostrum because there are a lot of rumours about breastfeeding around this society and people do not listen to the facts about breastfeeding and colostrum and they confronted. I also have observed my mother's health which is associated with long-term breastfeeding in the past. She is still beautiful and healthy". (FGD: ANM).

Most women reported that they squeezed out colostrum due to negative cultural beliefs and reinforced by their mothers-in-law, spiritual healers, and some health workers. One of the mothers in the FGD murmured that:

*"In my case, I could not feed colostrum to my children because my mother-in-law forced me to discard colostrum before starting breastfeeding. But I had repeatedly explained to her about the significance of colostrum for the new borne which I had learned from FCHV (Female Community Health Volunteer) despite this she did not agree with me and I was compelled to discard it." (*FGD: Mothers Group*).*

Most of the female participants showed considerable interest in breastfeeding and felt that breast milk was better than any infant milk formula and an artificial food supplement. The mothers' FGD agreed that most of the mothers wait at home for the child to recover by itself before making a short visit to a healer and wait for some days. Only if the child does not recover will they consider attending the healthcare institutions. If they do not have enough money, then the sick child stays at home without the treatment.

Food beliefs and cultural influences

The beliefs or misbeliefs about nutritious food might have been continuously practising mainly from the Ayurvedic and Unani eras and they are still actively embedded in all ethnic groups in Nepal.

Why are they so strongly enrooted in the Nepalese society? The first reason is that going back the nearly two decades; the health care system was much more focused on urban areas, mostly the capital, cities/ towns, and district headquarters. For the remote and village areas, spiritual healers (*Jhankris*) and herbal remedies (*Jadi-buti*) were the only healthcare options.

Only the policy people, pharmacists and the health workers were found to distinguish the cultural impacts and the food behaviours of the community people. The policy people have argued that:

"Cultural issues have a strong impact on people's food and health-seeking behaviours. Food habits and practices are closely associated with the typical food behaviours of particular groups of people and the cultures which followed the codes of conducts concerning the food choices, the cooking methods, the eating habits including the frequency and time of meals and size of portions." (FGD: Policy People).

Food habits and practices are strictly linked to the wider cultures. The people follow the codes of conduct about the food selections, consumptions, preparations and food habits. Based on the social hierarchy and the patriarchy system, most of the Nepalese communities are traditional. The social hierarchy and patriarchy systems are the major generator of the diversified views (multiple opinions) particularly for the healthy food recommendations in the children, pregnant and lactating women (see Figure 1). The focus groups highlighted crucial issues about food beliefs. A member of the mothers' group added that:

"Many families believe that feeding lots of healthy foods to pregnant women will make delivery difficult, so, they even reduce the number of healthy foods when they noticed the pregnancy symptoms. Thus, I have observed that many pregnant women are being prevented from (eating) the healthy foods." (FGD: Mothers' Group).

The health workers, pharmacists, and social workers expressed similar views on food beliefs and cultural issues. Overall participants believed that obese or overweight children healthy and low-weight babies signify the poor socioeconomic status of a family.

Concerning the cultural influences, most participants had similar views except for the spiritual healers. The spiritual-healers and pharmacists highlighted on the existing cultural influences and healthy diets. Moreover, they added that the cultural environment is completely bounded by the existing religious norms and values. For example, the meat items and dairy products are always taking separately. The mothers' group, ANMs, and social workers focused on the health-seeking behaviours from the different angles and expressed their views and experiences more openly.

2.2 Discussions

The study revealed that poverty, knowledge, existing food-beliefs, policy issues, and the health-seeking behaviours are the major factors which prevent mothers to recommend nutritious food to their children.

This study revealed the several misconceptions about the healthy foods including breast feedings, for example, describing the colostrum as the *bighaouti*, *pip*, *khoti*, *bikh*, *khil*, and *phohar (yellow or thick substances, pus, poison, and dirt)* (Odent, 2011; Joshi, 2012). The colostrum is also called pus

within an illiterate community because of the way it looks (Sibeko, et al.,2005; Adhikari, 2010; Odent, 2011; Joshi, 2012). Many people still believe that the first milk is an unsafe substance which should be discarded (Odent, 2011; Acharya, 2013; Acharya et al., 2015;2017). Surprisingly, even the owners of the cattle do not give the colostrum to the calves in rural Nepal (Subedi, 2002; Adhikari, 2010). The breastfeeding practices are contrary to the World Health Organization's recommendation that should start in the first hour after birth. Fortunately, the breastfeeding rates, after the expelling colostrum, were high and expressing are still stimulates a mother's milk supply (Sibeko et al., 2005; Joshi, 2012).

Another example of food belief, in Nepal, a food is considered pure or impure depending upon the types of food, its source, and handling (Shakya, 2006; Subedi, 2002; 2011). In Nepalese and the Indian cultures, the concept of cold and hot food is very significant and still exists, especially in the rural communities (Pool, 1987; Sibeko et al., 2005; Shakya, 2006). It is believed that the cold items are the cooling foods such as fruits, green leafy vegetables and other types of vegetables (Pool, 1987; Adhikari, 2010; Sharma et al., 2016). Likewise, the hot food items are also prohibited when someone has needed to cool off and they are preferred for extra energy and nutrition (Storer, 1977; Hill, 1990; Shakya, 2006). The hot and cold food beliefs are held by many people in the communities (Storer, 1977; Shakya, 2006) together with people from the South Asian communities (Ellahi, 2014; Biza-Zepro, 2015). This concept is thought to be originated from the ancient Hindu medical and Ayurveda system and has been influential in the medical practices since ancient times (Frazer, 1963; Fieldhouse,1995; Lindeman et al., 2000). The basic concept of the Ayurveda and Unani medical systems is the maintenance of a dynamic balance in the body (Storer, 1977; Christian et al., 2006; Shakya, 2006). As with the Ayurveda system, the Unani medical system includes the hot and cold food classifications, however, the two classifications were not the same (Storer, 1977; Shakya, 2006). Generally, foods with a pungent, acidic or salty taste are considered hot while those with a sweet, astringent or bitter taste, cold (Shakya, 2006). Likewise, this study also received similar information from the FGD participants. They said that food classification was conceptualise from their ancients and they are still underpinning of this philosophy.

This study cited the commonly held beliefs that if a woman eats more foods during pregnancy, she will have a big baby which can cause a problem during the delivery (Christian et al., 2006; Simkhada et al., 2010; Devkota et al., 2012; Acharya et al., 2016). Acharya and colleagues (Acharya et al., 2015) revealed that the beliefs about healthy diets were strongly linked with cultural and religious norms and values which is still unsolved issues in this communities. Christian *et al.* reported that the rural women's eating habits during pregnancy in the Terai area were avoiding eating green leafy vegetables, fruits and dairy products and reduced the size of the portions (Christian et al., 2006).

As per the National Plan of Action of Nepal (NPAN, 2007), the key contributing factors of childhood nutrition were the childcare practices, women's educational

status and household's food security. Generally, illiterate people have several strong negative views of certain healthy diets, but this study found that there are no differences between educated and non-educated mothers on this issue. Educated mothers also are highly influenced by social constructs and religious beliefs.

Biza-Zepro highlighted that food consumption is influenced by socio-cultural factors within the households, cultural attitudes towards the various healthy foods, methods of food preparation and child-rearing practices (Biza-Zepro, 2015). This study also found the similar information as revealed by Biza-Zepro, 2015. This study only focused on the influential factors of the child-feeding practices which were observed the socio-cultural issues including religious norms and values as the key factors (Ellahi, 2014).

Regarding the food beliefs, this study identified that the older generations, the Hindu manuscripts and the films/dramas are generally blamed for influencing foods and health-seeking behaviours. This study also found that the key rationale for sacrificing animals as a pragmatic means to fulfil the nutrient requirements (Adhikri, 2010). The food beliefs, particularly, associated with the children, sick people and pregnant/lactating women, both, positive and negative ways within most of the households in Nepal (Christian et al., 2006). It seems that mothers and older women in households, they maintain the traditional food-beliefs. Besides this, religious people, the herbalists, quacks and the health workers are also preserving the traditional food beliefs in the community (Adhikari, 2010; Biza-Zepro, 2015). Unfortunate events or incidents that occur within a household or community as a result of consuming certain healthy food items also helps to create the negative beliefs about a healthy food (Subedi, 2002; Sibeko et al., 2005; Subba et al., 2007). For example, most of the mothers do not give the pomegranate to their children, because they believed that it causes constipation, etc (Adhikari, 2010) and is an example of the perception-based-evidence.

More importantly, this study has identified the 'diversified views' as a major barrier (Acharya et al., 2017) to the food recommendations (see Figure 1) that emerged when relatives, friends, and neighbours visit the sick child's home. In the past, the rural communities depended on the spiritual healers (*Jhankris*) and the herbal remedies (*Jadi-buti*), even today, most of the people are still trusting in the spiritual healers (Tamang, 2010). When people feel unwell, they relate this to devils, witchcraft (*Boksi)* and the ghosts (*Bhut)* and therefore, they go to the traditional healers (Stone, 1976; Storer, 1977; Subedi, 2002). Shamans or healers are still affecting the people's thought including those people who are associated with the food science in this community (Christian et al., 2006; Meyer-Rochow, 2009; Biza-Zepro, 2015). They have the support and perpetuate this traditional system as it is their main business (Stone, 1976; Storer, 1977).

There are many examples of the existing food beliefs and behaviours involving odd philosophies of causal relationships in South Asia (Fieldhouse, 1995; Sharma et al., 2016). Poverty and socio-cultural practices such as paying less attention to the supplementary feeding of children or late weaning are the major underlying issues of undernutrition among the pre-

school-aged children (Onta, 2003; Karkee et al., 2014). The culture of Nepal that affects food and health-seeking behaviours which, in turn, contributes to a high prevalence of undernutrition (Devkota et al., 2012; Karkee et al., 2014.; Acharya et al., 2017) whilst there is a body of research on the behavioural aspect, such as the importance of feeding behaviour on childhood nutrition (Azugbene, 2017), what is interesting is that the most of the research does not critically examine such as why such insufficient food and health-seeking behaviours are present in local communities. Onta highlighted in his study, the lack of knowledge on well-being and health safety along with nutritious food and uptake of health services in Nepal (Onta, 2003). But present study explained that knowledge, poverty, food beliefs and socio-cultural issues including religious norms and values could be blamed for the high prevalence of malnutrition in Nepal

3. Conclusions

Generally, it is observed and described that the study population is strongly embedded with the existing cultural and religious norms and values which support the practice of the food beliefs routinely. Their responses highlighted mainly the complexity of nutritious foods, socio-cultural beliefs and health-seeking behaviours about the healthy diet. There are several misconceptions being practices about the consumption of nutritious foods in the study population which are generally derived from the traditional treatment systems such as the Ayurvedic and homoeopathic. These misconceptions are strongly related with the food and health-seeking behaviours and many more other factors (see Figure 1) that prevented mothers from recommending a healthy diet to their children.

4. Recommendation

This study suggests that it is urgently needs to be focused on the nutritional issue of Nepal and conclude with the further investigation particularly focusing on influential elements which are highlighted in figure one (see Figure 1). The community-level approach such as '3P Awareness Module' should be used and focused on the use of the local resources, promotion of kitchen-gardens and improve on the infant-child-feeding practices. Likewise, at the policy level, Nepal should focus on the implementation and evaluation sectors within the government health network and this should support for appropriate interventions and researches including reviewing the nutrition guidelines. For more insights on this issue, the further study needs to conduct urgently required to address the existing food beliefs, the cultural and religious issues.

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Food and Nutritional Security in Karnali Province of Nepal

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Abstract

The study aims to assess food and nutrition security situation in Karnali Province. The Province has been considered as a food and nutrition insecure zone for the last five decades. Out of 10 districts in this Province, Dailekh, Dolpa, Jajarkot, Jumla, Mugu, Humla and Kalikot districts are mostly food insecure. Karnali is one of the poorest Provinces where 51.2 % of the total population is living below the poverty line. The Karnali Province has deficit of cereal food grains except apple and ginger due to weak agricultural extension services, poor marketing, less access to transportation facilities, low irrigation, poor governance, labour shortage and less government attention to explore the existing potentials of the Province. Generally, natural disasters and structural causes are responsible for food and nutrition insecurity in the province. The structural causes include insufficient investment in agriculture, feudal land tenure system, poor infrastructure development, mismanagement of food, weak distribution system, poor governance, less poverty focused and gender sensitivity, labour shortage, etc. The food and nutrition security is a complex socio-economic and political issue. It is more related to governance, accountability, efficient management, transportation facilities, and access to market, social justice and political commitment. Local farmers' experience and knowledge about the agriculture extension system (e.g. seeds, fertilizer, irrigation, plant protection, participatory agriculture research, appropriate technologies, value chain-based marketing, transportation facilities, etc] should be taken into account during agricultural project cycle management.

Keywords: Food and Nutrition Security, Agricultural Extension Services, Structural Causes, Poverty, Value Chain-based Marketing

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Karnali is the largest Province of Nepal with an area of 24,453 km^2. The Province is surrounded by Gandaki Pradesh in the east, Province No. 5 in the south-east and the south, Sudurpaschim Pradesh in the west and Tibet Autonomous Region of China in the north.The major trade centers of the Province are Birendranagar, Gamgadhi, Khalanga, Dunai and Sinja valley. All districts have access to roads but they are very narrow, just graveled and risky. Because of poor connectivity, the region has suffered from long back; the foods are highly expensive and more dependent on the rice supplied from National Food Corporation. Surkhet, Dunai, Simikot, Gamgadhi and Jumla are some of the airports of the Province that connect Karnali people to rest of the country. The Province is fertile for fruit like apple, orange, pomegranate and walnut which are traded all over the country. Maize, barley, wheat, millet, and paddy are the staple food crops. Similarly, mustard, soybean and hot chilly are some of the noteworthy cash crops of this Province. The paddy variety, known as *Jumli Marsi,* is a popular variety cultivated in Jumla district. Owing to weather conditions, cultivation activities are limited to one crop per year or in optimal conditions, three crops in two years in some of the district of this Province [DVN, 2018, p 21].

Food and nutrition insecurity is a chronic problem in the hills and mountains, particularly in the Karnali Province of Nepal. Historically, food deficits were reported from 1972/73 and in response the Government of Nepal established the Nepal Food Corporation (NFC) to supply subsidized food in 1974. The food and nutrition security is not only a technical subject matter; but also a socio-economic and political issue. Food and nutrition security is a fundamental human rights and basic need for survival of people. Therefore, this issue seems to be crucial for the development discourse. The scope and relevance of the research is significant at household, community, national and international levels. The shortage of food is directly related to population growth and crop productivity per unit area. The relevant findings would contribute to body of knowledge around food and nutrition security and livelihood issues at household, community, and national levels [Thapa, 2013].

Food is regarded as sources of energy, medicines and nutrient for the human body. Food and nutrition security is when all individuals have reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious food to lead a healthy life. Food and nutrition security has four dimensions that encompass both chronic and transitory (acute) situations: availability, access, utilization and stability. According to the WHO, nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body's dietary needs. Good nutrition - an adequate, well balanced diet combined with regular physical activity- is a cornerstone of good health. Poor nutrition can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development, and reduced productivity[1] Undernutrition in Nepal is indicated primarily by stunting growth, wasting and anaemia. According to the Nepal

[1] http//www.Google.com accessed on 30.07.2013.

Demographic and Health Survey (2011), 41 % of Nepali children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition while 11 % are wasted. Some 46 %% aged between six and 59 months are anaemic[2].The World Food Summit (2009) has defined food security as "a situation in which all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (WFS, 2009).

World Bank (1986) has stated that food security as the "access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life." This definition encompasses many issues. It deals with production in relation to food availability; it addresses distribution in that the produce should be accessed by all; it covers consumption in the sense that individual food needs are met in order for that individual to be active and healthy. The availability and accessibility of food to meet individual food needs should also be sustainable (World Bank, 1986). Similarly, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) defines food security as a situation when "all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life" (USAID, 1992).

The concept of food sovereignty has been arising in Nepal as well for the last decades. Food sovereignty is promoted by *La via Campesina* and other peasants' organizations, raised during World Food Summit 1996. This is a political concept - set of principles that protect the policy space for peoples, countries, and groups of countries to self determinate their agricultural and food policy, their model of production and consumption. Forum for Food Sovereignty (2002) defines "food sovereignty is the right of individuals, communities, peoples and countries to define their own agricultural, labour, fishing, food and land policies, which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and cultural appropriate food and to food–producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and their societies" (Thapa, 2014,p 13).

Human Right Activists have also promoted the right to food concept as well in Nepal and elsewhere for many years. The right to food does not only focus on access to food, but also implies access to productive or income generating resources. It underlines access to dignity. It is both instruments, normative and legal framework to free the world from hunger. It emphasizes state's responsibility and obligations inherent to human rights. Individuals and groups can demand compliance with the state obligations under the right to food. The right to food pays special attention to the right to food of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups and can be used to empower victims of right to food violations (Thapa, 2014, p 14).

1.2 Global Food and Nutrition Security Situation

The United Nations WFP (2020) has warned that an estimated 265 million people could face acute food insecurity by the end of 2020, up from 135 million people before the crisis, because of this.

[2] http://www. nepalnews.com accessed on 18.09. 2012

Food producers also face large losses on perishable and nutritious food as buyers have become limited and traders stop engaging with farmers (WFP, 2020).The number of undernourished people in the world is estimated to increase to 815 million in 2016, up from 777 million in 2015 but still down from about 900 million in the year 2000. Similarly, while the prevalence of undernourishment is projected to have increased to an estimated 11 % in 2016, this is still well below the level of a decade ago. Nonetheless, the recent increase is a cause for great concern and poses a significant challenge for international commitments to end hunger by 2030 (MOALMC, 2018, p 1).

The 2030 SDG Agenda call on all countries and stakeholders to work together to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. A multi-sectoral approach which connects nutritional outcome, agricultural productivity and household income is needed to address the issue. Such an approach must highlight the interconnectedness between agriculture and nutrition and the need to consider food diversity as an important aspect of food security. The multi-sectorial approach also needs to consider the agricultural food systems as a whole instead of focusing on individual food components (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2017).

1.3 Food and Nutrition Security Situation in SAARC

World Bank (2020) has pointed out that South Asia still accounts for about 40% of the world's stunted children, which means that they are too short for their age, usually from malnutrition. The stunting affects brain development and has a lifelong impact. Women in South Asia have some of the world's highest rates of anaemia, an iron deficiency (World Bank, May, 2020). In the SAARC region, prevalence of stunting is the highest for Pakistan at 45%, followed by Afghanistan at 40.9%, India at 38.4%, Nepal at 37.1%, Bangladesh at 36.1%, Bhutan at 33.6% and Sri Lanka at 14.7% for 2014-16. Prevalence of wasting is the highest for Sri Lanka at 21.4%, followed by India at 21%, Bangladesh at 14.3%, Nepal at 11.3%, Pakistan at 10.5%, Maldives at 10.2%, Afghanistan at 9.5% and Bhutan at 5.9%. Similarly, prevalence of underweight is the highest for both Afghanistan and Bangladesh at 32.9% , followed by Pakistan at 31.6%, Nepal at 30.1%, India at 29.4%, Sri Lanka at 26.3%, Maldives at 17.8% and Bhutan at 12.8% (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2017).

1.4 Food and Nutrition Security in Nepal

World Food Programme Nepal (2020) has warned that the nationwide lockdown and slowdowns induced by COVID-19 pandemic in all major sectors of the economy is expected to affect Nepal's most vulnerable and food insecure populations. Massive slowdown in tourism, service and manufacturing sectors has resulted in widespread work stoppages and layoffs. Around 62 %of workers in Nepal are employed in the informal sector, with a little number of people adopting social insurance policy (WFP Nepal, 2020). Furthermore, WFP pointed out that "if the present trend continues, food insecurity is expected to increase among households engaged in informal labour, precarious labour, service sector and daily wage work, as well as households with returnee migrants and income losses,".

With respect to food and nutrition security,

Pearl S. Buck (2018) stated that "A hungry man can't see right or wrong. He just sees food". It is therefore that previously Nepal focussed only on food rather than its quality and diversified foods to address overall food and nutrition security.

Despite Nepal does not have worst food and nutrition security situation among SAARC countries, it has realized that the nutritional status of women and children, especially the vulnerable groups (infant, children, pregnant and lactating mothers) is still very poor. Nepal has a very high rate of child malnutrition, as 36% and 27% of children under five are stunted and underweight, respectively. About 17% women of reproductive age have chronic energy deficiency (Body Mass Index less than 18.5) and 41% of those populations are anaemic (NDHS, 2016). Similarly, women and children also suffer from some of the world's highest levels of vitamin and mineral deficiencies which can be emphasized by the fact that vitamin A deficiency is the cause of deaths of approximately 6,900 children in Nepal each year. One in five (21%) children is born with low birth weight in Nepal reflecting malnutrition in the womb. Consequently, 2 to 10 times the risk of death and also at higher risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease in adulthood could be seen. Iodine deficiency in pregnancy causes more than 200,000 babies a year in Nepal to be born mentally impaired and intelligence quotient (IQs) that are 10 to 15 points lower than those not deficient. About 2-3 % of GDP (US$ 250 to 375 million) is lost every year in Nepal on account of vitamin and mineral deficiencies alone and scaling-up key interventions to address these deficiencies will cost a small fraction of that amount (World Bank, 2012).

Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), 2016 has shown that the national household food security is only 48.2% whereas in rural areas the percentage is only about 38.8%. The severely food insecure households are about 10%. Geographically, the mountain region is suffering more from food insecurity where the percentage of food secure households is 38.4% compared to Terai where the statistics is about 51%. Furthermore, the severely food insecure households in mountain region are about 13.8% compared to 9.2% of Terai region. In terms of development Region the food secure households are lowest in Mid-Western region (only 27.7%) and the percentage of severely food insecure households in that region is highest (about 16.9%). Looking at provinces, the Karnali Province has the lowest level of food and nutrition security (food secure households are only 22.5%) and the severely food insecure households are about 17.5% (NDHS, 2016).

1.5 Agricultural Policy and Program of Karnali Province

Karnali Province (2018) has formulated agricultural policy and program to address chronic problem of food and nutrition security. With the vision of achieving food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture development for food and nutrition security, the provincial government has forwarded following policies in the agriculture sector (cited by DVN, 2018):

- Commercial agriculture will be promoted through one farm one commercial incentive to farmers' groups, cooperative and private agro business-based on income and employment generated by the farm.
- Organic agriculture production will be highly emphasized by developing competent human resources, organic agriculture focused research,

education and skills. Agriculture knowledge centre developed under provincial agriculture directorate will promote agriculture development. Agriculture colleges, soil laboratories, pesticide and seed laboratories will be established. Organic fertilizer, agriculture mechanization and organic pesticides factories will be established in public-private cooperative partnership.

- Increased organic farming increased prosperous Karnali slogan will be used as the main motto for agriculture development. One local level one model farm and one cooperative - one model agriculture, livestock and fisheries farm principle will be adopted. Agene bank will be established to promote conservation and increase productivity and extension of local crops, breeds and water animal landraces.
- Food and nutrition security in the Province will be ensured by increasing productivity, proper distribution and storage. Transportation subsidy in close collaboration with the Government of Nepal for food will be provided to rural districts like Humla and Dolpa, which lack road connectivity.
- Improving the food habit of people by promoting the consumption of local and indigenous food.
- Market oriented and environment friendly crops will be promoted for commercial production.
- Maximization of returns from subsidy and incentives for increased production and productivity. Misuse of such support will be controlled by compelling groups, cooperatives or private farms to return cash. Any kinds of additional support will not be provided unless they return completely.
- Modern and high tech nursery will be established to ensure regular supply of saplings of demanded fruit, flowers, ornamental crops and vegetables.
- Private farms and cooperatives will be encouraged to invest in tissue culture laboratories of banana, potato, lime and mushroom; and other modern technologies like hydroponics. Subsidy and other support schemes will be provided to such farms.
- One ward one agriculture and one veterinary technician's campaign will be accomplished with support from central and local governments.
- A contribution-based farmer's pension scheme based on farmers' categorization will be initiated from at least one local body of each district.
- A roster of commercial organic farmers will be developed and such farmers will be supported based on their production. Chief Minister's excellent farmers' award will be awarded to the best farmers to motivate them.
- A functional coordination mechanism will be developed to work with Prime Ministers Agriculture Modernization Project, High Value Agriculture Project, other central projects and NGOs/INGOs working at national and local levels.
- Production of organic fertilizers and organic pesticides will be promoted to reduce the use of chemicals and antibiotics used in fish farming, poultry and dairy industry; and virtually declare Karnali Province as organic. Integrated community farm will be developed in support from Province government.
- Organic cooperative complex will be developed in Surkhet.
- Policy formulation for land use maximization. A powerful provincial land commission will be formed to find solution to all kinds of land issues.
- The fragmentation and fallowing of land will be highly discouraged. The record keeping of absentee landlordism and fallowing of land will be initiated with the support from local level. Land bank will be established and operated for facilitating the leasing of such lands to small and landless farmers.
- A large scale processing centre will be established in Surkhet for the processing of medicinal plants and other NTFPs. The model processing units will be established in the Himalayan districts like of Humla, Mugu and Dolpa. High priority will be given for the research, study, production, sale and marketing of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants.
- Any factory or Industry supporting the organic Karnali will be supported highly.
- Large scale organic fertilizers, Agro machineries and pesticides factories will be established to supply the demand of Karnali Province; and
- Agro-tourism will be promoted through organic food and home stay.

- The agricultural policy and program seems to be good to make a difference in the life and livelihoods of poor and vulnerable communities of Karnali Province. However, it has to see the results of the policy and program.

1.6 Research Objectives

- To assess food and nutrition security situation of Karnali Province, Nepal, focusing on sources of livelihoods in terms of cereals, vegetables and fruit, and milk and meat production.
- To analyse the major causes of food and nutrition security in Karnali Province and way forward to solve the problems.

2. 2. Methodology

Participatory approach and methods were used for the study such as Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) which is an approach for learning about and engaging with communities. Thapa (2018) has pointed out that the PLA combines an ever-growing toolkit of participatory and visual methods with natural interviewing techniques and is intended to facilitate a process of collective analysis and learning (Thapa, 2018). Document review, focus group discussion, key informant interview, perception mapping of stakeholders towards the process based on their satisfaction and score ranking tools were used to capture qualitative and quantitative information from the respondents. The quantitative and qualitative information was collected and analysed in order to map out the real situation. This study was carried out in February 2019 to July 2020.

2.1 Results and Discussions

2.1.1 Food and Nutrition Security Situation in Karnali Province

Karnali Province is mainly mountainous region. Karnali Province is regarded as food and nutrition insecure zone for the last five decades due to neglected by the Government of Nepal. Historically, before the unification of Nepal this region was prosperous due to the trade surplus with Tibet Autonomous region of China. RSS (2018) has pointed out that out of 10 districts in the Province, Dailekh, Dolpa, Jajarkot, Jumla, Mugu, Humla and Kalikot are food insecure. A government data shows that each person in these four districts consumes 191 kg of food grains annually compared to the annual consumption of 201 kg of food grains by each individual of the other three districts in the Province, namely Rukum, Salyan and Surkhet. Last year, Karnali Province faced shortage of 18,407 tons of food grains, according to D. Srivastva, technical assistance at the Ministry of Agriculture whereas Rukum, Surkhet and Salyan had surplus production. The food-hit districts of Dailekh, Dolpa, Jajarkot and Jumla had severe shortage. According the Ministry of Agriculture, Dailekh was short of 1,530 tons of food grains like paddy, wheat and corn, Dolpa needed 2,666 tons of food to feed its people, Jajarkot required additional 3,594 tons of food grains on top of its annual food production to become food secure, and Jumla had a shortfall of 4,133 tons in food production. The districts of Mugu, Humla and Kalikot had food shortage of 5,102, 8,415 and 14,633 tons respectively. Increase in foreign employment aspirants from the Province, distraction from agriculture, low rainfalls, migration, unmanaged urbanization and climate change are to blame for the Province facing food shortage, said P. B.Thapa of the Ministry (RSS, 2018).

2.1.2 Undernutrition Situation

Jumla district has been focused for undernutrition situation that represents the Karnali Province. Jumla is located in

the central part of the Karnali Province. R. P. Kami from Hiya Khola of Tatopani rural municipality-6, Jumla wakes up early and heads towards the Karnali Highway. There, she grinds stones to meet her daily needs because her farmland barely produces food that would be sufficient for three months. At the age of 35, R. Pyari is a mother of five children, all of whom are malnourished because she lacked nutritious food during her pregnancy and in her maternity period. Four of her children are daughters. L. M. Kami from Lum village of Patrasi rural municipality - 4 married at the age of 15. At the age of 19, she was a mother of two, both of whom are reported malnourished (Upadhyaya, 2018). Decreasing soil productivity, lack of irrigation facilities, increasing import of food grains, rapid urbanization, shrinking farmlands and lack of irrigation facilities in terraced lands are contributing to rising food insecurity, according to B. P. Kandel, Chief Agriculture Development Officer at the District Agriculture Development Office (DADO).When Jumla was linked by roads in 2006 AD, many farmers left agriculture and started to construct hotels and shops along the roadside. While road networks triggered small enterprises, it led to a decrease in farming.

B. Dharala is one of the farmers who left agriculture and entered into business. He believes that the road networks had led to an increase in food imports. Before the roads was constructed, his family reared cattle and grew millet, buckwheat, and potatoes. The crops were sufficient to feed the family for a year. Now, his farmlands are barren. Some of his children are studying while the others are either migrant workers or working in the district itself. “Who would work in the fields when the harvest doesn’t equal our toil? Besides, there are not people from whom we can see support as well,” says Dharala.

Due to ever increasing trend of foreign employment, Jumla is left with women, elderly and children. Those left behind have their own constraints to work in the fields. As a result, food production has declined, says B. B. Chaulagain, 74, Tila rural municipality, Jumla.

The District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) states that production of winter crops reduced by 20 to 25 %. According to Balak Ram Devkota, the district's Planning Officer, winter crops such as wheat and millet continue to see a fall for three years in a row.

Climate change has also affected yields. Farmers continue to depend on timely monsoon to irrigate 23,166 hectares of terraced farms in the district. However, untimely rainfall, drought, landslides, and hailstorms ruin the crops. Part of the 3,269 hectares of land with access to irrigation has been converted into a residential area. These factors combined together have reduced district’s food productivity per unit area by 15%.

DADO, Jumla states that 26, 615 tons of paddy, maize, millet, wheat, buckwheat, and sugar are produced annually. According to DADO’s Senior Agriculture Development Officer, Bharat Prasad Kandel, the district is left with just 16,390 tons of food grains after farmers use 10,000 tons for seeds, grains and to brew alcohol. He adds that Jumla requires 21,033 tons of food each year. A simple calculation shows that the district is short of 4,643 tons of food grains every year. “what is

more concerning is the fact that farmlands are being left barren and shrinking quicker," says Devkota.

2.1.3 Status of Poverty

One of the major reasons for food insecurity is poverty in Karnali. With 51.2% of the total population living below the poverty line, Karnali is one of the poorest Provinces, according to the 2017 Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) published by the National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal.

According to the Regional Agricultural Directorate, Surkhet, 800,000 people lack access to basic needs such as clean drinking water, sanitation, and cleanliness, electricity, health care and education in the Province. The government aims to reduce poverty below 6 % to meet Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 AD.While the MPI lacks district-wise analysis, Nepal's Human Development Report (HDR) of 2014 shows that Jumla's Human Development Index, calculated by average life expectancy, literacy and per capita income, stands at 0.409. A complimenting human poverty index shows that 42.09 percent of the total population is below the poverty line in Jumla. The poverty index shows that there are 13 other districts where poverty is more acute.

The District Disaster Relief Committee has its preparedness plan to avoid food insecurity. To avoid food scarcity during natural disasters, the district stockpiles food supplies that would be sufficient for two months, according to B. Kandel, a Senior Agriculture Development Officer, and member secretary at the District Food Network. The District Food Network also meets every quarter to assess the district's food condition. "This is not sufficient to reduce the district's food insecurity," says Mun Rawat, District Forest Officer, Jumla. In his opinion unplanned road construction without assessing the environmental impact has decreased fertile lands. He added that such short-sighted development could lead to new natural disasters such as floods and landslides in the long run (Upadhyay, 2018). This situation is similar in other district as well.

Due to increasing outflow of youths as migrant workers, B. Nepali from Tatopani rural municipality-4 told that the government should bring policies and programs that would help to create jobs within the country in order to retain youths. Meanwhile, B. P. Kandel, a Senior Agriculture Development Officer, believes that the ability to - reverse trend of decreasing fertility of farmlands would help to increase productivity and reduce food insecurity. Other efforts include bringing programs to promote youth-related agricultural activities putting an end to child marriage, reducing gender based discrimination and increasing awareness among the local people about local varieties of nutritious food grain.

2.1.4 Status of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) have been analysed in order to map out the real situation of agriculture farming in Karnali Province (Table 1).

Table 1: SWOT Analysis of Agriculture in Karnali Province

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Natural place for organic production	Poorest connectivity amongst the provinces, causing low level of market integration	Advocate the famous Karnali organic products at national and international level	Dependence on other provinces for rice might deepen unless behavior changes and food diversifies
Good habitats of medicinal and aromatic plants	Lack of irrigation for better production	Opportunities to develop crops as future smart crops	Danger of quitting agriculture by many farmers because of low level of market integration and more dependence on Indian labor market
Niche-based production	Lack of suitable agricultural lands because of high hills with no connectivity	Cash the intervention of value chain projects like HVAP, RISMFP, KISAN and ASDP and develop value chains of other commodities	Chronic food insecurity due to low level of resilience caused by nature- induced disasters
Suitable for apple, walnut, potato, beans	Poor infrastructure for post-harvest and processing	-	-

Source: *Adapted from DVN, 2018*

2.1.5 Intra-household Food Consumption

The intra-household food consumption pattern and decision-making process is an important issue for analysis point of view in the present context. The household is the economic production unit where contribution of individual member regarded as a crucial aspect. Table 2 shows the food consumption pattern of son, daughter, daughter–in-law, mother/mother-in-law, father/father-in-law, grandson and granddaughter and their role in household decision-making process.

The study reveals that the food consumption pattern and role in the household decision-making position of son, father and grandsons ranked first, second and third respectively in the area while food consumption pattern and role in the household decision-making position of mother, daughter, granddaughter and daughter-in-law ranked fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh respectively in the area. This study corroborates the strong position of patriarchal society in the area due to traditional beliefs, Hindu mythology, and low level of consciousness among the rural people. This is the typical case of rural people in the study area. It was reported during the study that women in households were quite literally a residual category in intra-household food distribution, eating after men and the children and making do with what is left. This discrimination is governed by cultural factor, particularly the patriarchal social structure. Women did not have land entitlement and control over productive resources. As a result, position

of women in the family and community seems to be low. The score ranking method had been used to know the intra-household position of members, using ten maize seeds for each indicator and finally totalled the score and found the rank based on the highest score. This is a relative method of scoring rather than an absolute one that shows the general trend of rural society.

Table 2: Intra-household Food Consumption and Household Decision-making in Karnali

Indicators	Son	Daughter	Daughter in-law	Mother/ Mother-in-law	Father/ Father-in-Law	Grand son	Grand Daughter
Ownership of land	10	0	5	5	10	10	0
Being served food first	8	4	3	5	8	10	6
Breakfast	5	3	2	4	5	8	6
Having meat/fish	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Having milk/ghee	8	6	6	6	6	10	8
Having amount of vegetables	6	5	4	6	6	8	7
Having amount of fruit	6	5	2	5	5	8	6
Wearing clothes	8	5	3	4	4	8	7
Contact with offices	8	6	3	3	10	2	1
Kitchen work	2	6	10	8	6	1	3
Guidance to laborers	8	3	4	6	10	2	1
Borrowing credit	8	2	4	6	10	1	0
Household Head	8	4	6	8	10	5	2
Love and affection	8	4	2	6	8	10	8
Control over parental property	8	4	6	8	10	6	3
School enrolment	10	8	6	2	2	10	8
Health facilities	10	8	4	7	8	10	8
Care during delivery	-	8	8	8	-	-	-
Influencing household decisions	8	5	6	8	10	4	3
Amount of *Dachhina* in *Dashai*	8	7	4	5	5	10	8
Use of soap during bathing	8	4	4	5	5	8	6
Rest hour	8	4	2	5	3	10	6
Respect	6	4	2	8	10	6	5
Score	169	115	106	138	161	157	112
Rank	**I**	**V**	**VII**	**IV**	**II**	**III**	**VI**

Source: *Key Informant Interview, Dailekh, 2019*

2.1.6 Rural Livelihood System

The livelihood system determines the household food security and socio-economic position in the rural communities of Karnali Province. The Mandala approach had been used to analyse the household livelihood situation in the area. The Mandala divided into nine squares that start from physical base to individual orientation of the family, including physical, psychological, social, and economic and knowledge based strategies that determined the strengths and opportunities to secure life and livelihoods of households. It always starts from inner reality to outer reality of the household as shown in the figure (Table 3). In each square, there are some proxy indicators where put the plus sign in positive case and minus sign put in negative case. The positive symbol represents the strengths and negative symbol represents the weakness of livelihood of the household. This household scored almost all positive symbols that indicate the secure livelihood and all the round food security. There has not been reported the negative type of behaviour in the family members that significantly contributed the well-being of the household. This is a success case study of middle-class households in the study area.

Table 3: The Mandala Approach to Rural Livelihood System of a Typical Farmer in Karnali

9. Individual Orientation • Learner + • Experimenter + • Owns fodder trees +	8. Family Orientation • Oppose to chemical fertilizers + • In love with nature + • Organic farming +	7. Collective Orientation • Prefers village life + • Active member of rural development and saving & credit cooperative + • Member of Community forestry+ • Member of poverty alleviation fund + • Member of ThapaTole Agriculture Cooperative +
6.Inner Human Space • Innovativeness + • Courageous + • Cooperative + • Hardworking + • Determined to achieve goal +	5. Family Space • Joint family + • Food and fodder security+ • Increase in work load - + • Reduced migration + • Respects family members' attitude and values ++ • Strong leadership +	4. Socio-economic Space • Major income from agriculture • livestock and market sources + • Productive investment in new seeds + • Commercial vegetable farming +
3. Emotional Base • Attached to caste customs and traditions + • Attachments to local maize, wheat and rice varieties + • Ancestors' stone and land + • Use of farm yard manure + • Less use of chemical fertilizer +	2. Knowledge and Activity Base • Experience with new vegetable crops + • All are literate + • Own traditional Agricultural implements + • Vegetable crops technology + • Market access +	1.Physical Base • 3 Ropani *bari* + • 8 Ropani *khet* ++ • Irrigation facilities in *bari/khet* ++ • 3 crops per year, trees ++ • 1 bullocks and one buffalo and 6 goats + • Vegetable farming + • Slate roof house +

Source: *Key Informant Interview, Dailekh, 2019*

2.1.7 Agricultural Commodity Supply Status of Karnali Province

The Karnali Province has deficit of many agricultural commodities except apple, ginger and non-timber forest products due to weak agricultural extension services, poor marketing, less access to transportation facilities, poor irrigation facility, poor governance, labour shortage and poor government attention to explore the potentials of the Karnali Province. This Province is highly potential for apple, walnut, pear, citrus, vegetables, potato, yam, colocasia, cattle, sheep, goat production, apiculture, non-timber forest products, ginger, coffee, tea, etc to increase the income of farmers (Table 4).

Table 4: Agriculture Commodity supply Status in Karnali

Main Agriculture Commodity	Status of the commodity	Scope to increase production
1. Rice	Highly deficit	Less potential
2. Wheat	Highly deficit	Potential
3. Maize	Deficit	Potential
4. Vegetables	Deficit	Potential
5. Potato	Slightly deficit	Potential
6. Pulse crops	Deficit	Potential
7. Oilseed crops	Deficit	Potential
8. Mango	Deficit	Not potential
9. Banana	Deficit	Not potential
10. Apple	Seasonal surplus	Highly potential
11. Citrus	Deficit	Highly potential
12. Onion	Deficit	Highly potential
13. Tea	No production	Highly potential
14. Coffee	Deficit	Potential
15. Cardamom	Deficit	Potential
16. Ginger	Surplus	Highly potential
17. Goat meat	Deficit	Highly potential
18. Poultry meat	Deficit	Potential
19. Pork	Deficit	Potential
20. Buff	Deficit	Potential
21. Egg	Deficit	Potential
22. Milk	Deficit	Potential
23. Fish	Deficit	Potentiality
24.Non-timber forest products	Surplus	Highly Potentiality

Source: *Agriculture Statistics Book, MoAD, 2017 and Field Study, 2019*

Note: **Sufficient:** Need not to import and not enough for export, **Surplus**: Enough production for export also, **Deficit:** Need to import, not enough production

2.1.8 Underlying Causes of Food and Nutrition Insecurity

Broadly natural disasters and structural causes are responsible for food and nutrition insecurity in the Karnali Province.

Natural Disasters: Nepal loses an estimated 12.9% of its development spending and 5.39% of its real GDP per year on average in disaster response and recovery alone (Oxfam, 2008). Karnali Province is prone to various kind of natural disasters. The common natural disasters reported are landslide, snowfall, drought, hailstones, earthquake, flood, outbreak of epidemic diseases and the like. They also cause food and nutrition insecurity in the area by damaging crops, livestock and lives of vulnerable people.

Structural Causes are as follows:

Insufficient Investment in Agriculture: According to the field study, there has been less investment in the agriculture sector, particularly in irrigation, high yielding and disease resistant varieties, seed production, fertilizer, training and technological development to grow food grains and cash crops to generate income that resulted food and nutrition insecurity and unsustainable rural livelihoods.

Feudal Land Tenure System: there is unequal distribution of land in hills, mountains and Terai. A total of 5% of rich people own 37% of arable land whereas 47% of tillers own only 15% of the very land (UNDP, 2004). Among them, only 10.8% women have land ownership. Around 70% Dalits are landless. By analysing the above scenario, one can identify the following key socio-economic issues related to the poor and marginalized group of people's right to land resources:

- Land is a basic natural resource of livelihood for many poor families. Thus, denials of land rights of poor families are the key cause of poverty.
- Land is also a source of power in Nepali society. Lack of access to and control over land and other natural resources are the basis for the existing discrimination and structural violence in terms of caste, gender and class. A large chunk of land is owned by the 'high caste', men and rich class. This has created conflict amongst the people in the land rights issue.
- Access to a piece of land is the entry point of having access to basic services and rights, such as banking services, electricity, water, citizenship, etc. This is the basis of right to shelter and livelihood of smallholder farmers.

Poor Infrastructures: poor rural road network and irrigation is considered as limiting factors to supply the agricultural inputs and food items on time in remote areas. Poor road infrastructure limits the practice of high productivity agriculture. The study area has poor access to infrastructure, particularly rural road, irrigation facilities, agricultural extension services, market, etc.

Mismanagement of Food: people use cereals in preparing local liquor, which results in food deficit. Alcohol drinking is common among people across the study area.

Weak Distribution System: there is a poor distribution system where there is shortage of food particularly in Hills and Mountains due to weak management, poor government accountability and inadequate pro-poor policies to overcome food insecurity on time. The syndicate system used by transport associations complicate the movement of goods, resulting in high transportation costs, which affects the price of commodities. The syndicate is the monopoly market system, which is anti-democratic and anti-people that resulted price hike of the food items in the study areas.

Poor Governance: the government seems to be ineffective to deliver food items for vulnerable communities due to less political commitment, poor accountability and weak advanced planning at village and district level.

Fuel Price Hikes: The increase in fuel price affected in the high cost of food transportation to remote areas. However, many scholars argue the rise in 20% oil prices in 2008 has increased the cost of transportation by about 90% over the last 12 months. Rising world oil prices also increased the cost of agricultural inputs for farmers in the study areas as well.

Agricultural Policies: there have been limited subsidies in agricultural inputs as results the high cost of seeds, fertilizer, insecticides and agricultural implements. Resource poor farmers could not afford to buy the agriculture inputs on time. There is gap between policy and practice at village level.

Less Poverty Focused and Gender sensitive: Agricultural program have not been effective to address gender equality and social inclusion (poor, Dalits, ethnic groups and socially excluded groups) due to poor political will power. The lack of pro-poor and gender sensitive agricultural technology also cause food insecurity due to less focus on capacity building of women at rural areas.

Agricultural Labour Shortage: in the study areas due to seasonal migration of active economic population to Gulf countries and India for employment that also contributed to reduce food production.

The food and nutrition security is not only the technical subject matter. This is complex social, economical and political issue. It is more related to governance, transportation and communication facilities, social accountability, value chain based marketing, efficient management, social justice and political commitment. This is an integral part of social, economic and political system and structure of the Nepali society and culture. The farmer experience and knowledge into agriculture extension system [seeds, fertilizer, irrigation facility, plant protection measures, agriculture research, appropriate technologies, value chain based marketing, transportation and communication facilities etc] should be taken into account while planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the agricultural programming. The agricultural extension education and research activities have remained in the interest of agricultural scientists and senior extension officers rather than the needs and priorities of small holder and women farmers. The impact on food and nutrition security and changes in the lives of poor women and men has been minimal.

Seddon and Adhikary pointed out that the conflict resulting from a political insurgency

whose stated objective is to bring about a social and political revolution in the name of the popular masses is likely to have distinctive effects on local lives, livelihoods and food security (Seddon and Adhikary, 2003, Pp. 10-11).The food insecurity in any ecological region, community, individuals, ethnic/caste groups etc is due to unequal distribution of resources and injustice in the society. Seddon et.al further stated that the top 20% include wealthy landowners and rich peasants: those who have reasonably large areas of good land and food security from their own production; households with one or more members in secured and reasonably well-paying employment, usually in the public sector; village money-lenders and merchants. The vast majority of the 40% of 'reasonably secured' households and many of the poor also have diversified livelihoods, and the impression gained from the majority of statistical surveys and reports that these rural Nepalese are overwhelmingly involved in farming is misleading. The very poor have little room for manoeuvres and few choices. They rely heavily on the sale of their labour for survival; households tend to be smaller and are often only 'fragments' of broken households; ill–health is common and lives are often extremely precarious. They belong to the rural poor and 'working' classes (Seddon & Adhikary, 2003; Pp. 40-41, Thapa, 2013). The Karnali Province is really marginalized and excluded area in terms of development point of view including food and nutrition security and secure livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable groups.

3. Conclusions

The Karnali Province is one of the poorest and marginalized provinces of Nepal. Mostly mountainous districts like Dolpa, Humla, Jumla, Mugu, Kalikot, Jajarkot, and Dailekh are food and nutrition insecure, where low agricultural productivity and poorly functioning markets limit access to food and nutrition for the most poor and vulnerable groups of society. One of the major reasons for food and nutrition insecurity is poverty. In Karnali, around 51.2% of the total population is living below the poverty line. The main source of livelihood of the local people in the Karnali Province include cereal crop production, animal husbandry, seasonal migration, labour wages, potato farming, horticulture (apple, walnut, etc), non-timber forest products, etc. Food and nutrition insecurity in any ecological region, community, individuals, ethnic/caste groups, etc is due to unequal distribution of resources and injustice in society. The Karnali Province has deficit of cereal food grains except apple and ginger. This Province is highly potential for apple, walnut, pear, citrus, vegetables, potato, yam, colocasia, cattle, sheep, goat production, bee keeping, non-timber forest products, ginger, coffee, tea, etc to increase the income of farmers. The Government of Nepal should focus on infrastructural development, functioning value chain-based marketing, effective agricultural extension services, promotion of high value crops (vegetables, apple, walnut, livestock, non-timber forest products, etc), tourism, good governance, etc to make a difference in the lives of women and smallholder farmers. Provincial and local-level governments have a crucial role to play in facilitating the process of integrated community development, including food and nutrition security of the poor and vulnerable population.

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Community Based Early Warning System In Flood Resilience Context At Nawalparasi District, Nepal

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Abstract

The community-based early warning system is considered a major component of physical and social capitals under the Sustainable Livelihood Framework. This paper is unique in nature that brings various scientific and social science perspectives from the ground in relation to DRR and EWS. It portrays practical situation in flood context and how the physical assets like early warning system and social bonding, linkage, and networking help to minimize the adverse impacts from flood. The paper focuses on the application of community-based early warning systems in flood resilience context of Nepal. This paper includes the community based early warning framework and focuses on how it supports the vulnerable communities during the flooding events. The key finding of the research is the four elements of early warning system (EWS) i.e. risk knowledge, monitoring and warning services, dissemination and communication and response capacity should work together and failure of any element at any point negatively affects the whole EWS system and thereby increasing the flood risk and limiting the response capacities of the communities. The different components of the community based EWS should adequately consider the vulnerable groups based on demographic composition mainly by ethnicity, age, sex and physical ability.

Keywords: Early Warning System, Flood, Resilience, Capacity, Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, Capitals,

1. Introduction

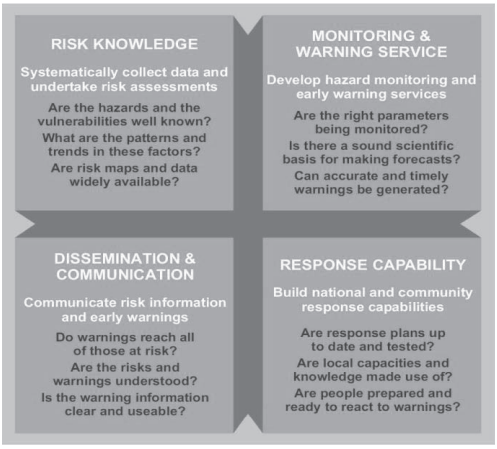
Significant flood events have occurred in the Narayani River (Gandaki) basin in the recent years like 2009, 2013, 2017 and most recently in 2019 (Zurich, 2019). In the Narayani River basin, as with other basins in Nepal, flooding has a impact on communities residing in the Terai (NCVST, 2018), affecting livelihoods and especially affecting subsistence agriculture in the floodplains (Zurich, 2019). Floods impact not only the human causalities but also kill livestock (cows, pigs, chickens and goats etc.) which is of critical importance to poor communities (Baral, 2009). Floods also deposit sand on farmland, negatively affecting agricultural livelihoods and food production (Gautam and Dulal, 2013). As well as damage to lives, livelihoods and property, floods damage critical roads, communication infrastructure and power supplies, significantly impacting development (Gautam and Dulal, 2013). To minimize the losses and respond to the impact of the floods; an effective early warning system plays a vital role. An early warning system that is part of physical capitals, works well when there are well functioning social capitals (Aldrich, D., 2012) and ultimately contribute to sustainable livelihoods framework.

Community based early warning is a major element of disaster risk reduction. It helps to prevent loss of life and reduces the economic and material impact of disasters. To be effective, early warning systems need to actively involve the communities at risk, facilitate public education and awareness of risks, timely, clearly and concisely disseminate messages and warnings and ensure there is constant state of preparedness. Early warning systems (EWSs) are defined as "the set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable those threatened by a hazard to prepare and act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss" (UNISDR, 2006). In the flood context, community disaster management committees and their task forces involved in the effective early warning mechanism provide warnings that are accurate, timely and understandable, enabling the risk groups to respond appropriately is called the community based early warning system (Shrestha et al., 2014). EWS need to be more people-oriented for it's more effectiveness. Effective EWS hence relies on effective development of four key components of EWS which are often also sub-systems within the overall EWS (Figure 1). Four essential generic components of EWS and its definition are (UNISDR, 2006):

- **Risk Knowledge:** Risks arise from the combination of hazards and vulnerabilities at a particular location. Assessments of risk require systematic collection and analysis of data and should consider the dynamic nature of hazards and vulnerabilities that arise from processes such as urbanization, rural land-use change, environmental degradation and climate change. Risk assessments and maps help to motivate people, prioritize early warning system needs and guide preparations for disaster prevention and responses.
- **Monitoring and Warning Service:** Warning services lie at the core of the system. There must be a sound scientific basis for predicting and forecasting hazards and a reliable forecasting and warning system that operates 24 hours a day. Continuous monitoring of hazard parameters and precursors is essential to generate accurate warnings in a timely fashion. Warning services for different hazards should be coordinated where possible to gain the benefit of shared institutional, procedural and communication networks.

- **Dissemination and Communication:** Warnings must reach those at risk. Clear messages containing simple, useful information are critical to enable proper responses that will help safeguard lives and livelihoods. Regional, national and community level communication systems must be pre-identified and appropriate authoritative voices established. The use of multiple communication channels is necessary to ensure as many people as possible are warned, to avoid failure of any one channel, and to reinforce the warning message
- **Response Capability:** It is essential that communities understand their risks; respect the warning service and know how to react. Education and preparedness programmes play a key role. It is also essential that disaster management plans are in place, well-practiced and tested. The community should be well informed on options for safe behaviour, available escape routes, and how best to avoid damage and loss to property

Figure 1: Four element of People Centred Early Warning Systems



Source: *UNISDR, 2006*

This paper is analysed and discussed below considering the UNISDR's four laments/components of people centred early warning system.

2. Materials and Methods

The study data and findings presented in this paper are a part of the ongoing PhD research being carried out at Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU), Rampur, Chitwan, Nepal. Paklihawa and Kudiya communities of Susta rural municipality in Nawalparasi district under Province Five were chosen to gather and examine empirical evidences on the roles of social capital on flood resilience capacity. Kudiya and and Paklihawa of Susta rural municipality are the most flood prone communities in Nawalaparsi district and these research communities are vulnerable to monsoonal flooding almost every year. The communities regularly facing and responding to flood events was taken to be suitable for the research as it would provide community-based evidences for the role of social capital in community resilience. The communities were selected purposively using the following criteria: (a)severity of annual flood, (b) upstream and downstream communities within the district, and (c) exposure to the flood (distance from the river side.

Mixed research method was applied to collect both qualitative and quantitative data for the research purpose. Primary data was collected by administering household surveys within 402 households of respective communities, which was supplemented by information gathered using 4 Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and 4 Key Informant Interviews (KII) in the two communities. FGDs were carried out in the mixed groups (male and female) and KIIs were carried out with community leader, ward representative and mayor or deputy mayor, who has extensive knowledge and information about flood and its impact in the respective communities. The secondary data collection included review of literatures, articles, published and unpublished materials and books. A total of 10540 households are the total number of households in the two study communities where 5362 households are in Kudia and 5178 households are in Paklihawa. The sample size for household survey was

calculated with a formula established by Yamane (1967:886): n=N/1+N (e) 2; Where: n= sample size, N=population size of the households in the rural municipality and e = level of precision.

Based on desired 95% confidence level, 402 households were calculated as the sample size for the study within the two communities. The sampling strategy was adopted as stratified multistage sampling to be able to capture the scattered study communities. In the first stage, a stratum of vulnerability based on the distance from the river was created. The second stratum was created based on the vulnerability of upstream and downstream communities. Finally, households were selected randomly within each community from the sampling frame (household list) in the respective communities.

For this paper, the result and findings are analysed and discussed considering the UNISDR's four pillars of the people centred early warning system and its impacts at the community level. The results and findings are from above research fields sites that it may have limitation to generalize the results and findings at all levels.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Respondent's demographic characteristics

Out of 402 respondents, 227 (56%) were female and 175 (44%) were male. Higher respondent's age groups (n=286, 71%) fall under 26-50 years categories (Table 1)

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents from Kudia and Paklihawa

Age Group (years)	Female	Male	Total
15-25	16 (7.05 %)	13 (7.43 %)	29 (7.21 %)
26 -50	168 (74.01 %)	118 (67.43 %)	286 (71.14 %)
Over 50	43 (18.94 %)	44 (25.14 %)	87 (21.64 %)
Total	227 (100 %)	175 (100 %)	402 (100 %)

***Source**: Field Survey, 2019*

There were different age group of participants from age of 15 to over the 50 years. 227 women and 175 males (total 402) participated in the survey, where 76 % women and 67% male participant were with the 26-50 age group.

Table 2: Ethnic composition of the respondent in Kudia and Paklihawa

Ethnic group	Kudiya(n)	Paklihawa(n)	Grand Total(n)
Chaudhari	69	19	88
Kanu/Kalawar/sah	30	15	45
Majhi	7	19	26
Mushar/Dalit	7	54	61
Muslim	22	34	56
Other	15	6	21
Pahadi	40	14	54
Yadav	12	39	51
Grand Total	**202**	200	402

Source: Field Survey, 2019

The table 2 includes the ethnic composition that who participated in the survey from of Kudiya and Paklihawa sites. Chaudhari, Pahadi, Kannu/Kalawar were the major ethnic groups in the Kudiya, while Mushar/ Dalit, Muslim and Yadav were major ethnic groups in Paklihawa.

3.2 Risk Knowledge

Out of 402 respondents, 396 (98%) respondents know that where to evacuate if there is flood in the communities. The respondents knew the areas that are likely to be inundated during flood and the safe spaces within or nearby communities to evacuate for safety. Only 1% respondents were not aware about where to evacuate. In a Community based Early Warning System (CBEWS) an emphasis is placed on community actors having (awareness and understanding of risk vulnerability, capabilities, exposure and hazards (Practical Action and Mercy Corps, 2012). From the table 3, participants from both study areas explained well about the warning level and danger level of the flood gauge. The community people are aware about the flood gauge installed in the river. The gauge includes green, yellow, and red marker according to the risk of the flood and inundation to the communities. The communities have also prepared flood risk maps clearly showing the areas that are regularly inundated, the number of houses under risk, spaces and houses that are relatively safe, the evacuation routes and other physical capitals within the communities. These maps have helped in mapping the community's risk and increasing their risk knowledge. Application of GIS shall support in risk mapping and increasing risk knowledge of the communities.

Chi-square is significant at 0.382 which is smaller than 0.5 at the 95% of confidence interval and 2 degree of freedom; so the null hypothesis

Table 3: Risk Knowledge of respondents about where to evacuate after receiving the flood alert by ethnicity and sex

Ethnic	Female Response			Female Total	Male Response		Male Total	Grand Total	Chi - Square at P-Value = 0.05
	I don't know	No	Yes		No	Yes			
Chadhary			59	59	1	28	29	88	
Kanu/Kalawar/sah			22	22		23	23	45	
Majhi			11	11		15	15	26	
Mushar/Dalit	1	1	28	30		31	31	61	Sex = .382
Muslim			31	31		25	25	56	
Other			9	9		12	12	21	
Pahadi		2	37	39		15	15	54	
Yadav		1	25	26		25	25	51	
Grand Total	**1**	**4**	**222**	**227**	**1**	**174**	175	402	Ethnicity = .730

Source: Field Survey, 2019

is rejected, so both and male and female have similar knowledge about where to go if they need to evacuate but they have different knowledge level considering the ethnicity (sig = 0.730). From the FGD, Pahadiya, Chaudhary, Yadavs are found more knowledgeful than Mushar/Dalit and Muslim communities regarding the flood risk in the communities and safe spaces. Pahadiya, Chadhari and Yadav have more access to information than Mushar/Dalit and Muslim.

3.3 Monitoring and Warning Service

Table 4 shows that Out of 227 Female, 196 respondents receive the flood warning services and that allows them to protect assets, livelihoods and to keep safety (evacuate), while only 4 Female didn't receive the warning service. Similarly, out of 175 male, 159 respondents receive the warning services and that helps them to protect their assets, livelihoods and safely evacuate. Table 4 also shows that education level of the participants is not significantly affected for monitoring and receiving warning services. Out of 138 females who have never attended school, only 2 females mentioned that they didn't receive the warning services and 3 females were not sure about the services, while there are no male mentioning that they are not receiving the warning services. From the FGD, we found that there are local Disaster Risk Reductions (DRR) institutions in both research areas. These DRR institutions are integrated into the local government's structure at ward level. Both Kudiya and Paklihawa have DRR early warning task forces comprised of community volunteers, which is responsible to monitor and receive the weather forecast and early warning and disseminate the flood alert/warning to the community people through siren, megaphone, whistle, flags etc. Community level structures, such as Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs), also monitor and record information on flood levels, duration and impact (Gautam and Phaiju, 2013).

Department of Hydrology and Meteorology has established a real time flood monitoring and warning services in Narayani river basin that helps in reducing flood risk and damages to the people living in the terai plains downstream.

In both case the Chi square value 2.35 and 8.55 in 2 df and 12 df with an associated significance level of .383 and .636 respectively, which are greater than the alpha value 0.05, so result from the study are not significant. This means that monitoring and warning service by Male is not significantly different from the monitoring and warning service by Female; in the same way getting information with different level of education does not differ. From the FGD, it was found that the monitoring and warning services by sex and education did not make significantly difference to both study areas. The local level DRR institutions and early

Table 4: Flood monitoring and warning services receiving by sex and education level

Response by Sex	Class 1-5	Class 6-10	Finish college (14)	Never attended school	University	Grand Total	Chi-Square at P-Value = 0.05
Female	**65**	**19**	**5**	**138**		**227**	
I don't know				3		3	
No,	2			2		4	
Yes, but we don't know what to do							
Yes, that allows us to protect assets, livelihoods and to keep safe or get to safety (evacuate)	54	17	4	121		196	
Yes, but that allows us to just evacuate	9	2	1	12		24	Sex = .308
Male	**86**	**34**	**9**	**42**	**4**	**175**	
I don't know							
No,							
Yes, but we don't know what to do	2					2	Education = .636
Yes, that allows us to protect assets, livelihoods and to keep safe or get to safety (evacuate)	76	33	7	39	4	159	
Yes, but that allows us to just evacuate	8	1	2	3		14	
Grand Total	121	31	14	180	4	402	

Source: *Field Survey, 2019*

warning tasks forces have been well trained by local NGOs and communities are aware of the flood early warning system in place.

3.4 Dissemination and Communication

Systems are put into place and tested to ensure that the early warning is disseminated widely and in a timely and efficient manner (WMO, 2015). "An actionable early warning provides a timely message that reaches, is understood and is acted upon by the population at-risk" (IFRC, 2012). From the FGD in the both study areas, it was found that both the study communities have strong community-based disaster management committees (CDMCs) and they have also three tasks forces namely early warning, first aid, relief distribution. They have upstream downstream linkage and coordination for effective EWS communication and information

dissemination. Both communities have flood alert dissemination and communication plan. Both communities have phone diaries and contact details of hydrology metrology's personnel of Devghat, Chitwan. From the FGD, we found that both communities have well functional dissemination and communication system through CDMCs. Department of Hydrology and Meteorology has a real time river monitoring system for Narayani with a hydrology station at Devghat. Whenever, the water level crosses the threshold of warning (7.3m) and danger (8.0 m), DHM issues flood early warning through its websites and mass SMS. There is a real time display board at Susta too which provides a real time flood information to the security forces. The vulnerable communities upon receiving flood early warning make their necessary preparations and evacuate when there is a danger. The CDMCs and Task Forces upon receiving the early warning disseminate it within the communities through siren, megaphone, flags, whistles etc. such that on any house within the communities is deprived of the early warning. Web based real time monitoring has increased the lead time for saving lives and properties and engagement of communities and security forces for EWS dissemination has increase its effectiveness and efficiency. However, the people have also reported of some limitations in communication during flood due to mobile network failure and no telephonic communication. The community based early warning system need adopt measures to overcome network failure problem.

3.5 Response Capability

Actions focus on strengthening the "capacity of at-risk communities and volunteers to receive, analyse and act on warnings" (IFRC, 2012). From the FGDs, response capabilities have been strengthened by predefining response options, roles and responsibilities (including identifying evacuation routes and safe areas), ensuring teams have access to dissemination and response materials (e.g. loud speakers, life vests, rope) and embedding response plans in wider contingency plans that coordinate across multiple local and national levels. The communities also reported of conducting flood simulation exercise in a pre-monsoon period which provides them to test their flood communication and response capabilities. During the FGD and KII, the respondents have informed that early warning system has provided adequate time for the communities to prepare for saving their valuable assets, lives and livelihoods. Similarly, the local government representatives have also informed that the communities whose response capacities have been strengthened through different trainings and workshops have incurred less losses and recovered quickly in comparison to other communities. After the EWS is in place, on any human casualty has occurred due to flood in the two communities. The trainings, orientation and workshops organized by development agencies to enhance the response capacity of the communities have been successful in doing so to a great extent. The communities have also reported for physical infrastructures like resilient evacuation routes and safe community shelters to strengthen their response capabilities.

Table 5: Flood response capacity of respondent by the Sex in Kudiya and Paklihawa (N=402)

Responses	Female	Male	Total	Chi-Square at P-Value = 0.05
I am not sure what to say	4 (100%)	0	4	Chi-Square Value = 0.000
No, I don't know	82(70%)	34 (30%)	116	
Yes, I know to respond to the impact of the flood	141(50%)	141(50%)	282	
Total	**223**	**175**	**402**	

***Source**: Field Survey, 2019*

The Chi-Square value is 17.427 which is significance level of 0.000 which is small than alpha value 0.05; so, the results is significant: The response capacity on flood response is significantly difference between Male and female. Each study area has CDMC and they are well trained, however during the FGD, male members of the CDMC have found more empowered and skilful than women members to cope and withstand from the impact of the floods.

4. Conclusion

This paper has outlined the status of CBEWSs in study areas of Nawalparashi, Nepal, the benefits they have offered to communities that are vulnerable to flooding, as well as some ongoing challenges in similar other parts of Nepal too. UNSDR's four element of people centred EWS found useful to assessing the community based EWS in the above study areas. Both study areas have community based EWS system that includes risk knowledge, monitoring and warning service, dissemination and communication, and response capacity. These four elements of EWS should work together, failure of any element at any points negatively affects to the whole EWS. The key findings include that both study areas i.e. Kudiya and Paklihawa have well-functioning community based Early Warning System (EWS). Ethnicity and sex wise demographic composition in the community have found some different performance in their community based EWS. The performance of respondents on monitoring and warning services and response capacity have found difference by ethnicity and sex, respectively. This needs to be improved for stronger, equitable and well-functioning community owned EWS. The age and education level of the respondent have not impacted significantly in the four elements of the community based early warning system. Both communities have physical and social assets. As part of the Physical capitals, both communities have EWS display board, mobile SMS alerts, community siren, lifesaving equipment, ropes and tubes etc to respond at the time of flooding. Similarly, as part of the social capitals, both communities have community-based disaster management committee and their task forces. They help and cooperate to each other at the time of floods and other disasters. The community based early warning system as the sub-set of physical and social capitals have contributed to prepare and respond to the impact of the floods and to the livelihoods of the above

rural communities of Nawalparshi district of Nepal. The EWS communication and dissemination component needs to be strengthened further for increasing the effectiveness of the system.

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Sustainability of Irrigation Systems from Community Participation in Institutions

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Abstract

The sustainability of irrigation systems rests on the good combination of bio-physical condition of the canal, community and institutional rules which can boost the direction of member-based, participatory and decentralized governance structure. The research reveals that physical sustainability is an important dimension for ensuring consistent operation from its own resources in a sustainable way covering its costs. The findings suggest that the quality of the repairing materials and workmanship need attention from community users to avoid expensive maintenances works. It reveals that the sustainability of irrigation, land ratio increases in self-governed irrigation systems in comparison to joint governed irrigation systems. The research suggests that the local/ self-governed irrigation systems are outperforming over the joint governed irrigation systems as highlighted in the theory of Governing the Common. It means that local organizations can be successful in maintaining the natural resources and avoiding over exploitation.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Community Participation, Water Management

1. Background

Establishment of a sound governance mechanism is critical to utilize available stock of water. A large number of studies have been conducted on irrigation management, but it has not been studied the comparison between governance and sustainability of irrigation systems. Hence, this study was conducted to compare the governance and sustainability between self-governance and joint-governance irrigation systems.

The comparative study deals with sustainability from the community participation in the self- governance - Panchakaya and joint-governing- Khagari irrigation institutions in Chitwan. The sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations (Brundtland, G., 1987; United Nations, 1987). The water sector is characterized by inadequacies and inefficiencies in service delivery

(Gardner-Outlaw & Engelman, 1997). Irrigation assists farmers to produce reliable crop yields, often 3-4 times than the rain-fed crops. Irrigated farming systems play an important role for food security worldwide. The study I based on the theory of Ostrom's Institutional Analysis and Development Framework (IAD) (Ostrom, E., (2011); Ostrom, E. (2009) and focused on the attributes: biophysical components, community, and institutions which contribute in sustaining of community irrigation through its governance.

2. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to investigate attributes of bio-physical condition, community and institutional rules of IAD for comparative analysis between self-governance and joint-governance irrigation systems to water management.

3. Methodology of the Study

The study covers all three attributes of the IAD for the analysis. Descriptive and analytical research design is used for the study. A qualitative orientation is employed in this research. Qualitative research is conducted to explore and gain an understanding of a problem or issue (Creswell, 2007). Although there are many traditions within qualitative research, this work is oriented towards a "grounded theory" approach to allow for themes to emerge from the data during analysis, capturing the essence of meaning or experience drawn from different situations (Bowen, 2005). The irrigation systems were purposively selected.

4. Findings of the Study

4.1 Bio-physical Attributes of Canals: Sources of Canal Water

The source of water for both self-governance -Panchakaya and joint-governing- Khagari irrigation institutions is the Khageri River. The intake structure of self-governance is located in the upstream of Khageri River, whereas joint-governance is located just south of the Tikauli Bridge on the East-West Highway in Chitwan.

In September 2016, 1.500 cubic meters per second were the highest discharge recorded in the self-governance, whereas in August 2016, 7.221 cubic meters per second was the highest discharge recorded in the joint-governance. In an average 5.085 cubic meters per second of the joint-governance is better than the 1.255 cubic meters per second of the discharge record of the self-governance.

Table 1: Discharge Record of Canal by Month (in Cubic Meter per Second)

Canal Operating Month	Self-governance		Difference	Joint-governance		Difference
	Before (1997)	Now (2016)		Before (1997)	Now(2016)	
January	NA	NA	NA	2.380	NA	NA
February	NA	NA	NA	2.075	NA	NA
March	NA	NA	NA	1.650	NA	NA
April	0.428	NA	NA	1.610	NA	NA
May	0.746	NA	NA	2.100	NA	NA
June	1.042	1.042	0.00	3.960	3.116	-0.844
July	1.039	1.080	0.041	4.160	5.662	1.502
August	1.120	1.400	0.28	5.840	7.221	1.381
September	1.190	1.500	0.31	5.910	6.362	0.452
October	NA	NA	NA	5.710	3.066	-2.644
November	NA	NA	NA	4.900	NA	NA
December	0.850	NA	NA	3.318	NA	NA
Average	0.916	1.255	0.339	3.634	5.085	1.451

Field Study, 2016

4.2 Physical Condition of Irrigation Systems

The self-governance is categorized as a small irrigation system which covers about 600 ha command area. It follows in north-south direction with steep gradients and require more operation and maintenance (O&M). The dam/headwork is shown in Photo 1The joint-governance was one of the oldest agencies-governed irrigation system. In winter and spring seasons, water is found flowing freely in stream as natural course, but water can be reserved in reservoirs to use routinely in turn of different branches to reduce the water scarcity. The dam/headwork is shown in Photo 2.

The following are the main problems associated the instigation: no appropriate mechanism of already in used O&M, decrease bed-level with excessive soil eroding and leakage of water from the canal.Water Distribution Mechanisms and Irrigation Ratio

In the self-governance, gates with open-close revolving heads were installed. In the joint-governance, Department of Irrigation (DoI) had set up open-close slot gates. The gross command area of self-governance is 600 ha through the canal network of the system (whereas 400 ha was targeted first to cover with intensive management). After handing over to the farmers, of the 600 ha command area, the irrigated area has been increased to160 ha (from the 440 ha to 600 ha) in summer, 80 ha (from 120 ha to 200 ha) in winter and to 20 ha (from 100 ha to 120 ha) in spring.

In the case of joint-governance, of the 3900 ha command area after the irrigation system handover to the Water User Association

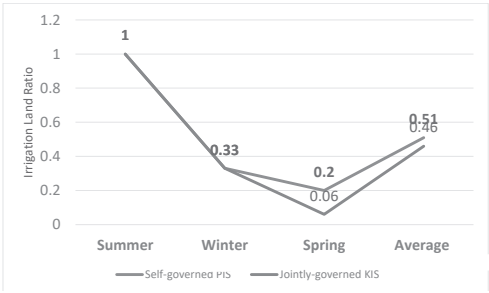
(WUA), now, irrigated ha has been increased to 800 ha (from the 3100 ha to 3900 ha) in summer, 454 ha (from 846 ha to 1300 ha) in winter and 25 ha (from 200 ha to 225 ha) in spring. The lower irrigation percent was found due to scarcity of water in the canal in spring and winter. Now, the areas of irrigation were found to increase due to the intervention of WUA to cleaning and repairing of the branch/filed canals at times. It has been found that the disrupted flow of water, frequent system breakdown, long waiting periods for connection in the distribution networks, unsatisfactory customer relations and haphazard irrigation application in the field levels.

Physical indicators are related to the changing or losing irrigated land in the command area by different regions. Here, irrigated land (ha) refers to the portion of the actual irrigated land (ha) in any given irrigation season. Irrigable land (ha) is the potential scheme for the irrigation command area (Vermillion, 2000). Vermillion's formula is used to get the irrigation land ratio as:

$$Irrigation\ Ratio = \frac{Irrigatd\ Land}{Iragable\ Land}$$

The irrigation ratio was found 1.00, 0.33 and 0.20 in self-governance, whereas in joint-governance, it was 1.00, 0.33 and 0.06 in summer, winter and spring season respectively.

Figure 1: Trend of Irrigation Land Ratio



Field Study, 2016

It was found that enough water (1.00 irrigation water ratio) to irrigate all the irrigable land in summer season, whereas in winter season, it was 0.33 irrigation ratio in both systems. In spring season, 0.20 of irrigation ratios was found in self-governance, whereas in joint-governance, it was 0.06. The irrigation ratio in spring season was better in self-governance in comparison to joint-governance.

The dimensions of the existing irrigation, and land ratio (0.51) were better in self-governed irrigation systems than in joint-governed irrigation systems (0.46). The irrigation, land ratio (irrigated land against irrigable land)

Table 2: Irrigation Land (ha) Ratio

Irrigation Season	Self-governance			Joint-governance		
	Irrigated	Irrigable	Ratio	Irrigated	Irrigable	Ratio
Summer	600	600	100.00	3900	3900	100.00
Winter	200	600	0.33	1300	3900	0.33
Spring	120	600	0.20	225	3900	0.06
Average	920	1800	0.51	5425	11700	0.46

Field Study, 2016

was not lost, rather it was increased in all seasons. The innovative prospective for the farmers could be in relating opportunities to increase the cropping intensity and productivity with the appropriate controlling of irrigation water for income generation.

4.3 Attributes of Community

WUA plays a key role in integrated approaches to water management that seek to establish a decentralized, participatory, multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary governance structure. All farmers are encouraged to be a member of WUA to take initiatives to improve the productivity and sustainability. Executive Committee (EC) is re/formed and ratified by General Assembly according to bylaws. The membership was known as the member of the system. The membership was distributed to the farmers on the basis of household (per house, one member) is summarized in Table 3).

Table 3: Membership/Renewable

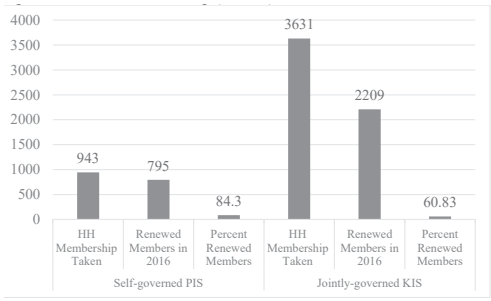
Branch	Self-governance					Joint-governance				
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	I	J	K
Unit	No.	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	368	324	72.8	268	120.8	564	520	92.2	375	72.8
2	124	64	51.6	64	100	836	477	57.1	350	73.3
3	87	39	36.2	25	64.1	454	314	69.2	225	71.6
4	60	48	80	48	100	504	222	44	150	67.5
5	452	184	41.7	182	98.9	499	249	49.9	170	68.2
6 East	240	108	47.8	63	67.9	672	526	78.3	326	61.9
6 West	-	-	-	-		652	355	54.4	201	56.6
7	148	92	56.5	61	66.3	343	317	92.4	206	64.9
8	139	84	60.4	84	100	260	252	54.5	101	40
Minor1	-	-	-	-	-	158	122	77.2	40	32.7
Minor2	-	-	-	-	-	298	94	31.5	20	21.2
Minor3	-	-	-	-	-	172	111	64.5	25	22.5
Minor4	-	-	-	-	-	112	72	64.3	20	27.7
Total	1618	943	58.28	795	84.30	5524	3631	62.10	2209	60.83

Field Study, 2016 A: HH in Command Area, B: HH Membership Taken, C: HH Membership Taken, D: Renewed Members in 2016, E: Renewed Members, F: HH in Command Area, G: HH Membership Taken, I: HH Membership Taken, J: Renewed Members in 2016, K: Renewed Members

In self-governance, of the1618 households in the command areas, only 58.28 percent has taken membership whereas in joint-governance, of the 5524 households, 62.10 percent has taken as the membership certificate. Among the users who have taken member, their membership was not as per their size of landholding but based on the household of farmers, the ratio of membership was low in self-governance in comparison to joint-governance.

The percent of membership renewable household was high (84.30) in self-governance, whereas in joint-governance, it was only 60.83. Due to more reliable irrigation water in self-governance, it was renewed their annual membership in high percent than joint-governance (due to the unreliability of water).

Figure 2: Renewed Membership (Percent)



Field Study, 2016

WUA was fond to be quiet effective for collecting water fees, informing about the purpose, use of the fees in time in self- governance whereas in joint-governance, it was limited. This will become increasingly important as fees are increased over time. As a consequence, the WUA was mainly seen as an organization to distribute water and collect the water fees for the system improvement.

Farmers were found to be stronger from their renewed the membership in time as defined by-laws. So, farmers were found interested to maximize the membership and renewed the membership in farmers' interest. Some farmers were not interested to renew the membership, one of the reasons for such reluctance of the farmers in joining the WUA was the lack of confidence over the water availability.

4.4 Demography of Water User Association

The organizational structure consists of four layers: Main Canal (MC), Branch Canal (BC), Field Channel (FC) and Outlet in the command areas.

In WUA of self-governance, out of the 40 elected members, 22.5 (9) percent were women, whereas men were 77.5 (31) percent. This indicates the low representation of women in WUA. In WUA of joint-governance, out of the 96 elected members, women were 28.13 % and men were 71.88 %.

Enriching representation of women is essential for the active participation and sustainability of the system. Respondents said that "we can do ourselves; we are not dependent with men. In the past, calling of husband and mother in laws' name was social

Table 4: Composition of Elected Women and Men (Number)

Branch	Self-governance						Joint-governance							
	Women			Men			Women				Men			
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	2	1	1	1	3
2	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	4
3	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	4
4	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	1	-	2	1	-	1	3
5	-	-	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	2	1	1	1	3
6 East	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	2	1	1	1	3
6 West	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	4
7	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	4
8	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	4
Minor 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	2
Minor 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	2
Minor 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	2
Minor 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	2
Total	-	-	9	8	8	15	-	9	1	17	13	4	12	40

Field Study, 2016, A: Chairperson B: Secretary C:Member D:Chairperson E:Secretary F: Member G:Chairperson H:Vice-chairperson I:SecretaryJ:Member K:Chairperson L:Vice-chairperson M:Secretary N:Member

taboo, but such restriction is no more." The renewed 84.30% was higher in self-governed irrigation systems than joint-governed irrigation systems (60.83%). This can be summed up that the rate of renewal of membership increases as the reliable irrigation service exists.

Regarding the FC composition by ethnic-groups, there was domination of Brahmin/Chhetri (Khash) in all the levels of water users' committee with a majority of male. The representation of women in the EC was negligible and decision levels was also minimal. In general, presence of women is only considered for fulfilling the criteria of meeting rather than decision-making roles.

4.5 Attributes of Institutional Rules

Attributes of institutional rules was carried out about how the rules were applied "before" and "after" WUA intervention.

Table 5: Rules Adoption

Rules	Indicators	Adoption in Self-governance		Adoption in Joint-governance	
		Before	Now	**Before**	**Now**
Boundary	Land within location	Applied	Applied	Applied	Applied
	Share proportion of water	Not Applied	Not Applied	Not Applied	Not Applied
	Membership to receive water	Not Applied	Applied	Not Applied	Applied
Position	Water guard rotation	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied
	External Water guard	Hired	Not hired	Hired	Hired
	Local Water guard	Not hired	Hired	Not hired	Not hired
Allocation (Choice)	Water fixed in proportions of land	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied
	Water drawn in fixed time slot based on individual needed	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied
	Water turn in fixed order on branch canal	Applied	Applied	Applied	Applied
Information	Rule publicity	Not Applied	Applied	Not Applied	Applied
	Canal measurement	Not Applied	Not Applied	Not Applied	Not Applied
	Reporting (minutes and finance)	Not Applied	Applied	Not Applied	Applied
Aggregation	Farmers agree to time-slot change	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied
	Community votes to change time	Not applied	Applied	Not applied	Applied
	Water guard decides on disagree	Not applied	Applied	Not applied	Applied
Payoff	Penalty for breaking a rule	Not applied	Applied	Not applied	Applied
	Water tax	Applied	Applied	Applied	Applied
	Labour contribute by farmers	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied
Scope	Extent of land define to water apply	Applied	Applied	Applied	Applied
	Limit of water define from system	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied
	Crops define to use water	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied

Regarding the institutional rules, WUA was closely facilitated for empowering women and minority-groups to attain social goals such as building mutual trust and enhancing democratization by arranging an organized forum for expressing users' common interests, thereby making them self-reliant. Self-help orientation was found in self-governed irrigation systems which developed an independent leader among the farmers, ultimately to minimize the cost of water.

5. Conclusion

This study has confirmed that irrigation systems can be sustained by good combination of the attributes of bio-physical, community and institutional rules. Membership renewable rate implies that users' ownership of the irrigation systems has been increasing over the period of irrigation system. Sustainability of irrigation, and land ratio can be increased significantly through a change in governance regimes. Farmer feel of "our

canal" in self-governed as opposed to "the government run canal" has been the main factor in an increased sense of ownership because the Department of Irrigation, the government agency often mislead farmers' initiation/agendas towards sustainability.

The study concludes that it needs further study in other regions, comparing two irrigation systems for reliable water distribution in a sustainable way, and its effectiveness in leadership, productivity and livelihoods. Furthermore, it recommends a comparative study about the requirement of cost for operation and maintenance to run irrigation systems in a sustainable way. 'Bottom up' approach was adopted to foster the collective goals and felt a more sense of ownership over the system due to full-fledged authority in self-governed irrigation systems, which was given little inspiration to farmers towards water delivery.

Finally, it is recommended that the varied inward types of informal leaderships have developed by exercising a higher level of governance over a period of time in self-governed irrigation system. Hence, it is recommended to promote self-governed irrigation system to lead by real water users and participate in decision-making for transforming new ideas extensively.

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Short Communication

New Normal: Building our Behaviour in new Virtureal World

SARAH BLIN

In the last few months, I had dropped the habit of writing my monthly email to my team, partly because we were interacting so much online and partly because it still felt like we were operating in an emergency mode. We are now in this 'new normal'… the world has changed so profoundly since March. The workplace, which is for so many of us, the cornerstone of our daily lives, doesn't exist anymore. There is no more morning Namastes, no more chatting at the tea stand, no more waiting for people in the meeting room, no more chitchats at the lunch hour, no more knocking at doors, … Our workplace was also the field: the interaction with our partners, the meetings with the community sitting on straw rugs, the walks through the hills and fields to witness the achievements and challenges of those we try to support. This is also gone.

The hope of a vaccine keeps us afloat but rolling out vaccines fully will be long and protracted. In the meantime, our best protection from the virus is our mask and our clean hands: even at home and even with our friends. This period has been mentally straining for us, dealing with the care needs at home, figuring out what the future is made of, coping with the demands of work and all the restrictions. You can take solace in knowing that this is a shared experience. We are together responsible for supporting each other during this period.

When Oxfam started planning for our COVID response and our business continuity, we assumed that this would be like any emergency – an acute event with a response, followed by recovery and reconstruction. As humanitarians we saw ourselves as frontline responders. In many other countries around the world, I/NGOs indeed remained at the fore front. But for us in Nepal, it was all different; we have been restricted in our ability to get to the field and rely 100% on our partners. Supporting them remotely and using our pre-existing knowledge of the communities and the environment has allowed us to support the best we could. But even our partners have struggled to reach communities and are still doing so remotely. So far, only a handful of us have left Kathmandu. My former boss at Save the Children always used to say "if you don't deliver, you are not relevant". I

used to respond to him "if you don't bear witness, you are not relevant". It seems that lockdowns keep us from delivering and witnessing … whilst the livelihoods of people are hit hard.

This feeling that we are doing our work by proxy, that we are administrating rather than acting is frustrating. We need to build our new normal. What office space can we imagine that would allow us to be together and still protect us? What field work interventions can we imagine to access and connect to communities? What safe interactions can we create so that we can continue to exchange, learn, generate ideas in our interactions with stakeholders? The coming period will be about accepting the reality rather than hoping for life to be like before. Similarly, how can our partners be most efficient and relevant in their support to communities? How can we best grasp the lived reality of the communities we support? As our relationship with partners has changed, what are we learning about partnerships ? We need to expand our horizons and find the best ways to operate in our new *virtureal* world. It will mean reviewing methodologies and revisiting services and operations so that we are not hindered by lockdowns and restrictions We don't have the answer yet but everyone of our activities has the potential to be revisited from that angle, so that we can remain relevant.

On this note, I wish you courage. You can take pride in the fact that aid workers around the world, despite difficult circumstances, continue to address inequality everywhere to create a better future for us all.

Take care and stay safe

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Short Communication

Restarting Nepalese Tourism Industry in Post-COVID Situation: Some Suggestive Thoughts

RABI JUNG PANDEY

Nepal at present is facing crises in both the domestic and the international tourism activities. So, it is very important of making the right decisions at the right time.

It has been over six month's period that we have lost the tourism activities at almost zero level. Now the time has come to 'restart' our tourism. We need to do so on the back of many weeks of hard work and commitment. This COVID-19 crisis has affected all of us.

UNWTO research shows that several countries around the world are starting to ease restrictions on travel. At the same time, governments and the private sector in those countries are working together to restore confidence and essential foundations for recovery.

As has been suggested by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), now time has come to act concertedly both by Government and the tourism entrepreneurs to assess the likely impact of COVID-19, mitigate the damage to economies, and safeguard jobs and businesses following the UNWTO Global Guidelines to "Restart Nepalese Tourism Industry" in 'new normal' situation.

Based on the UNWTO Global Guidelines, it is suggested to the Government of Nepal (GoN) to follow following roadmap and priorities for the tourism sector in the challenging days ahead, from providing liquidity for vulnerable tourism businesses to opening of borders.

At the same time, it will be very important to continue to promote innovation and sustainability in tourism sector. Here are some specific suggestions for different sectors to revive our tourism:

1. For Tourists to visit Nepal, need to create tourists incoming environment through:

- Building confidence in Nepalese tourism industry through safety and security on COVID-19
- Opening of borders with responsibility
- Showing the readiness and response of GoN for the COVID-19 transmission compared to the other competitive destinations

- Collaborating with national tourism bodies as well as with the global level tourism bodies to help the Nepalese tourism industry prepare and respond to global health emergencies.

2. Among Nepalese tourism entrepreneurs, GoN should help to adopt policy and guidelines to:

- Provide liquidity ("*Rahat Kosh*"/ a subsidized loan) and protect jobs in the tourism sector
- Establish public – private collaboration for an efficient reopening of tourism industry
- Harmonize and coordinate protocols and procedures designed to operate tourism businesses
- Add value to jobs through new technologies for effective and efficient operation of tourism industry
- Adopt new innovations and sustainability policies for tourism development and operations
- Knowledge sharing and collaboration with all tourism stakeholders locally and globally
- Destination re-branding highlighting the positive elements of the tourism products and services available in Nepal.

3. For ultimate results achievement, GoN should play a catalytic role to:

- Create maximum "Tourist Satisfaction"
- Earn national revenue in a sustained way
- Promote "Domestic Tourism" properly, encouraging with adequate resources to mitigate and recover from outbreaks
- Sufficiently educate and prepare service-providers and human resources within the tourism and hospitality industry for the recovery, to retain and collaborate with guests/ potential guests appropriately to avoid uncertainties and risks
- Make the social media and mass media more responsible and ethical for Nepalese tourism industry
- Aware and enhance the Nepalese tourism industry, regarding announcements and advices from global tourism institutions such as UNWTO, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) etc. in order to help to recover the Nepalese tourism industry from this pandemic situation at global standard.

With these points, I would like to conclude that Nepalese tourism industry can re-think for new business models with innovation and digitalization in the whole tourism industry helping achieving the sustainable development goals through sustainable-oriented segments of our rural, natural and cultural tourism development as de-escalation phases initiated by several other countries toward the 'new normal'.

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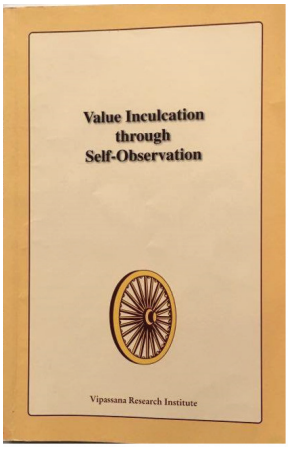
Book Reviews

Value Inculcation through Self-Observation

BY: MAHENDRA SHAKYA



At the time when humanity and human values are being attacked everywhere and there is a growing concern that the modern education system is deficient of value educations, the book' Value Inculcation through Self Observation' could be a very good book for the educationists, development workers and all those who are worried for the future of the nation and the entire world. The book has suggested self-observation, which is beyond the boundary of sectarian divisions, as the methods to inculcate human values in the education system.

The first chapter of the book talks about the importance of value education with the views of many international dignitaries. One of which is a citation from the Upanishads," Sa Vidhyaya Vimukti"i. e. education is that which leads to liberation. Furthermore, it highlights that Education Commissions in India from Radhakrishnan Commission (1949) to Kothari Commission (1964 to 66) have repeatedly stressed the need of providing a holistic education that satisfies all aspects of human life: physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual aspects. Kothari Commission made a clear and strong recommendation to incorporate moral and spiritual education as an integral part of the education system at all levels of education.

The second chapter is about the concerns that the inclusion of value education could imply patronization of a particular

sectarian belief that could spark issues of violating constitutional secularism in secular countries. However, the author argued that Universal Human Values (UHV) like truthfulness, honesty, universal love, compassion, kindness, non-acquisitiveness, cooperation, and abstaining from stealing, and sexual misconduct, etc. are universal and beyond the boundary of sectarian beliefs. They are the backbone of every civilized society, and the introduction of these values in the education system should not be treated as a constitutional violation. The author further illustrates that mental defilements like an ill will, anger, animosity, greed, lust, etc. have the characteristic of 'burning'. Anybody regardless of any sectarian beliefs, having a mind full of these defilements would experience burning and measurable feelings. However, if the mind is pure and free of these defilements as per the Laws of Nature, it is full of love, compassion, kindness, equanimity, etc. and these qualities have the characteristic of happiness, peace, and harmony.

Further chapters illustrate the tools and methods of introducing value education. Some of the Philosophers claimed that the value education cannot be taught formally in the classroom. The author argued that if value education cannot be taught, immoral behaviors like dishonesty, corruption, violence, sexual misconduct cannot be changed. On the contrary, the author illustrates that imparting value education is possible if it is supported by strong justification and not dependent on myth. Myth based statements like "punishment and reward after death in the other world" does not appeal to the youths and can even become counterproductive. The book further states that imbibing UHV is essential to harmonize the subconscious and conscious part of the mind by suitable practical training.

Mere imparting what is moral and what is immoral is not enough for transformation; however, the modern youths want a satisfactory answer based on rationality and practical experience to the question of why? Such an answer can be given only through a proper analysis of human life, its goal, and its purpose. They need to be supported by scientific logic; therefore, the author has tried to relate value education with Quantum theory, and Neuroscience as the Universal Laws. The author further illustrates a quote from *Dhammapada,* the Buddhist collection of dictums that we will be happy if we act with a pure mind with love, compassion, truthfulness, non-jealousy and argues that this is Universal and is equally applicable to all regardless of sectarian divisions. When anger arises within us, first of all, we suffer. These core values are Universal and above the sectarian boundary. We should imbibe these laws for our good, for our happiness.

Self-awareness is the most exceptional among the superior qualities of human beings because this gives human beings the ability to control their feelings and

behaviors and to alter and control the environs as they wish. According to modern neurology, nature has achieved this quality through the evolution of the human cerebral system. Despite this, the human cerebral system is still not being utilized to its fullest potentials. Most of the time we employ only the left half of the brain. Further evolution of human beings would be possible by utilizing the right cerebral hemisphere and thus developing intuition, holistic modes of thinking, and greater self-awareness. This is the most cheerful message of this book.

The book concludes that classroom teaching can only provide an intellectual framework to convince the youth about the need of adopting these values; nevertheless, it is not sufficient to enable the youths to imbibe these values. Practical training in cultivating mindfulness as given in Vipassana meditation retreats is very effective in transforming and strengthening the mind so that one can lead a life in consonance with these values. It is a purely scientific technique of self-observation, a universal culture of the mind, which does not subscribe to any sectarian beliefs, dogmas, or rituals. It should, therefore, be universally acceptable, as an integral part of education.

Today the entire world is suffering from the Pandemonium of COVID-19. It is estimated that more than 2300 youths have committed suicide during the lockdown period so far in Nepal. The government has been widely criticized not only for being insensible in handling the case; however, also criticized for exploiting the crisis as an opportunity to accumulate money. In this respect, Nepal can benefit immensely from the core message of the book. It should exploit the full potentials of Vipassana meditation in transforming the youths, bureaucrats, and political leaders. Vipassana is a two-in-one solution in the present crisis. It boosts morale as well as self-awareness of its practitioners. The government of Nepal should train school teachers at all levels so that Vipassana meditation can be introduced and value education can be inculcated through formal classes in schools. There is a great need of incorporating value education as a part of the mainstream education system at all levels. Vipassana can also be piloted in some of the isolation centers.

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Ana Maria Bianchi	Does a development methodology require a shift from state-centred to people-centred approach?	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	9-14
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Anne Sophie Lunding	Why gender is not only about women? (Review of the book entitled *"The myth of community: Gender issues in participatory development"*, edited by: Irene Guijt & Meera Kaul Shah, Foreword by Prof. Dr. Robert Chambers)	BR	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	39-40
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	Asmita Poudel (with Asin Sharma, Ashesh Karki, Melipa Thapa, Manoranjan Regmi, Niva Shakya)	Youth-driven change	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	36-43
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	Badri Aryal (with Durga Devkota, PhD; Anoj Chhetri, PhD)	Intergenerational mobility in occupation of people in Nepal : A hypothetical explanation	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	128-135
	Balendra Prasad Deo	Application of participatory mapping and participatory GIS for rural tourism planning	RA	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	9-11
	Ballav Mani Dahal	A new book on *"Appreciative Participatory Planning Approach"* (APPA) (Book review authored by Chet Nath Kanel & Mingma Norbu Sherpa/UNDP)	BR	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	
	Balkrishna Sharma Silwal	Village development program: A sustainable way of poverty reduction through social mobilization process	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	42-44
	Balkrishna Sharma Silwal	Local Development Fund (LDF): A leading social mobilization wing- its challengs and opportunities	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	33-35
	Balkrishna Sharma Silwal	Social mobilization: Role of social mobilization agencies towards poverty reduction in Nepal	A	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	42-44

Balkrishna Silwal Sharma	Towards inclusive growth: Is it possible to achieve government targets without effective roles of private sector in Nepal?	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	67-72
Bharat Nepali	Special provisions for Dalit inclusion	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	28-32
Bhola Bhattarai	Shifting power from state to community control in forestry: An ethnographic study	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	5-13
Bhola Prasad Dahal	Understanding on participatory approaches	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	2-4
Bhola Prasad Dahal	*Participation*'s 7th issue highlights (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	2
Bhola Prasad Dahal	Value of education in conflict	RA	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	14-17
Bhola Prasad Dahal	*Participation*'s 8th issue highlights (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	1
Bhola Prasad Dahal	Participation: A way for inclusion and democratization (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	1
Bhola Prasad Dahal	*"Getting to the 21st century (Voluntary action and global agenda)"*: A critical review of the book	BR	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	16-18
Bhola Prasad Dahal, PhD	Children's participation in Nepal: Rhetoric to reality	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	76-89
Bhola Prasad Dahal, PhD (with Uttam Uprety)	Monitoring and evaluation system: measuring development results	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	5-21
Bidhya Shrestha	Media exposure and its impact on antenatal visit in Nepal	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	54-59
Binod Chapagain	The flown bird reverted: Experiences of returned migrant women in Nepalese hills and plains	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	29-40
Birendra Prasad Shrestha	*Participation* 8th issue: some reactions	Letter	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	44
Birendra Prasad Shrestha	Useful in the context of development and studies (Letter to the Editor)	Letter	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	57
Birkha Kranty	In search of new Village Development Committee (VDC): Experiences from Dolakha	RA	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	32-35
Bishal Bhakta Kasu	The role of NGOs and micro-finance institutions in an early coping strategies against the impact of HIV/AIDS	RA	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	20-24

Bishal Bhakta Kasu	How do intermediaries compliment?	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	30-32
Bishal Bhakta Kasu	Migration as a livelihood coping strategy in Doti	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	24-26
Bishnu Hari Devkota	Assessment on the disaster preparedness system of Nepal Red Cross Society	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	85-96
Bishnu Neupane	A Good discourse for quality education (Book: *Siksha- Kina, Kasto Kasari* by Prof. Dr. Suresh Raj Sharma)	BR	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	110-112
Bishnu Raj Upreti	RAAKS: an alternative approach to research and development	RA	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	5-10
Bishnu Raj Upreti, PhD	Conflict analysis and impact assessment of development programs and projects	RA	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	13-17
Bishnu Raj Upreti, PhD	People's participation in peace process in Nepal	RA	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	9-11
Bishnu Raj Upreti, PhD	Sustaining peace through conflict sensitive development approach	RA	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	19-23
Bishnu Raj Upreti, PhD	Nepal's peace process: Bumpy road from transition to transformation	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	2-8
Brahma Dhoj Gurung	Joint evaluation of micro projects	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	24-26
Brahma Dhoj Gurung	Multi-partnership approach in community forestry	RA	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	33-37
Chandi P. Chapagain, PhD	Appreciative inquiry for building human capacities and achieving development missions: An innovative approach for the new millennium	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	38-41
Chet Nath Kanel	Pictorials: An effective means to communicate with rural people	A	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	20-23
Chet Nath Kanel	Quality Education and Inclusion Issue in Community Schools of Nepal (A case Study of a Rural School from Kavre District)	RA	**15**	Year 16,No 15; **Aug. 2014**	46-56
Chet Nath Kanel	An assessment of urban area-based cooperatives from women's perspective	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	97-109
Chet Nath Kanel	Nepal's tourism and knowledge infrastructure: Some perspectives	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	99-103
Chet Nath Kanel	A very good gift to Nepalese educators [Book review authored by: Prof. Dr. Suresh Raj Sharma, entitled "*Siksha – Nepalko sandarva* (Education in Nepalese perspectives)]	BR	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	108-110

Chet Nath Kanel (with Fatik Bahadur Thapa, Ashbin Kumar Pudasaini)	Exploring, claiming and shaping the rights of older people in Nepal : Some key phenomena, achievements and way forward	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	161-173
Chhing Lamu Sherpa	Reflection on Yangon, Myanmar and on the Pacific Regional Conference for 'Rapid Ageing and A Caring Future'	Reflection	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	110-115
CN Harit	Book review of the book entitled *"Participatory Project Cycle Management Handbook" (*authored by Krishna Babu Joshi)	BR	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	111
CN Harit	A Nepali scholar's international gift: *"Philosophy of Fearism" (*authored by Desh Subba)	BR	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	135-137
Dal Bahadur GC	Participation of disadvantaged groups in local development	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	33-37
Dal Bahadur GC	Raising incomes and improving the health of poor older people in Nepal	Report	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	41
Dal Bahadur GC	Participatory governance assessment : Research highlights	Report	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	42-43
Dechenla Sherpa	Stories of sensibility and success: Opening vistas for rural poverty alleviation	A	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	24-25
Deepak Chapa	District forest officers toward participatory culture	RA	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	35-37
Deepak Raj Chapa	Only civil society can play transformational role	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	41-42
Deepak Chapa (Chapagain)	Coping with parkinson's disease: A real life experience	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	107-110
Deepak Raj Paudel	Effect of public expenditures on literacy and poverty: Evidences from Nepal	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	89-98
Dev Raj Aryal (with Beatriz Pena Alvarez)	Community-managed land use system in carbon sequestration and biodiversity conservation: An example of Southern Mexico	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	9-13
Dharma Raj Dangol, PhD	Participatory approach in agro-tourism education at IAAS (TU): Experiences and future directions	RA	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	28-29
Dharma Raj Dangol, PhD	Applied ethno-botany education and research: Participatory development trend in IAAS of Tribhuvan University of Nepal	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	51-53
Dhruba Raj Ghimire	Functional literacy of children in rural areas in Nepal: Status and challenges	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	5-15

	Dilli Raj Dahal, Prof.	Social exclusion and group mobilization in Nepal: Example from Dhanusha district	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	12-13
	Durga Lamichhane	Children's educational rights in Nepal: Rhetoric and reality	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	56-61
	Earl James Goodyear, PhD	Safer communities through disaster risk reduction (DRR) : Strategic program linkages that support overarching SCDRR's outcomes	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	5-11
	Earl James Goodyear, PhD	Mass evacuation and timely mobilization : Key to minimizing impact of natural disaster	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	148-160
	Earl James Goodyear, PhD	Organizational learning in disaster preparedness and response	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	96-101
	Fatik Thapa	Networks management challenges and opportunities	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	39-41
	Fatik Thapa	Participatory approach and its institutionalization	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	18-19
	Fatik Thapa (with Tej Prasad Adhikari)	Indigenous nationalities and participation in the state mechanism	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	8-12
	Gana Pati Ojha, PhD	Implication of income generating program on gender empowerment	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	35
	Gana Pati Ojha, PhD	Building and strengthening partnership: A case of Chitwan, Nepal	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	26-29
	GB Adhikari	Pathways to participation: Personal learning and reflection	RA	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	18-21
	Gopal Nepali (Badi) (with Yuba Raj Guragain)	We review and revitalize participation	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	76-80
	Gopal Tamang	DEESA framework: A participatory process of institutionalization	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	18-20
	Gopal Tamang	The five "L"s a self assessment tool: Measuring NGOs development continuum	A	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	12-15
	Gopal Tamang	Mainstreaming Madarsa into formal school system: A case of Banke, Nepal	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	28-31
	Gopal Tamang	Sustainable community-based approach to self-managing older people's associations (OPAs)	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	46-49
	Gopal Tamang	Measuring quality education and learning outcomes through EGRA: A learning experience from Kenya	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	70-79
	Gopal Tamang	Integration of action-oriented vocational education: Options for quality change	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	77-88

	Gopal Tamang	Community practices in participatory monitoring and evaluation system	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	22-30
	Gopal P. Tamang (with Nanda Lal Majhi)	Non-formal education: Tools for bridging the gap between thinking and doing	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	88-97
	Hans Van Rijn (with Chris Jackson)	Men, women, money: A budget approach to gender	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	14-16
	Hazel Ettridge	Lighting the fire: The tradition of Gurukul	A	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	50-51
	Hazel Ettridge	Legislative theatre: A potent and powerful tool for change	A	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	45-47
	Hemant R. Ojha	Terai forestry and possible strategies for management	RA	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	22-26
	Hemant R. Ojha (with Shambhu Prasad Dangal, Krishna Prasad Paudel)	Participatory Action and Learning (PAL) in community forest management	RA	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	17-18
	Hemant R. Ojha (with Bharat Pokharel)	Democratic innovations in community forestry: What can politicians learn?	RA	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	22-25
	Herina Joshi	Hygiene promotion works: Women volunteer participation in integrated water, sanitation and hygiene improvement project	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	95-100
	Hitendra Raj Joshi	Ground water recharge solution by rain water using dried shallow dug-wells in Kathmandu, Nepal	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	87-94
	Hom Nath Gadtaula	Multiple perspectives of participation: A case study from Kenya	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	2-5
	Hukum Bahadur Singh	Recalling the NEPAN history (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	3
	Hukum Bahadur Singh	'The future of participatory approaches: New challenges and strategies' (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	3
	Indra Bilas Poudel	Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): A giant global step for poverty reduction	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	32-35
	Indra Bilash Poudel	Cooperatives: A basic concept	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	101-104
	Indra Mani Rai (Yamphu)	Child participation through children clubs: Perpetuating exclusion and inequality in Kapilvastu and Pyuthan districts	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	90-106
	Indra Mani Rai (Yamphu)	*The rise of ethnic politics in Nepal: Democracy in the margins* [Book review: Susan I. Hangen (Editor)]	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; Aug. 2016	105-107
	Isabella Cazottes	Community health and development program	A	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	11-18

	Jailab Kumar Rai	Caste system, Dalits and their marginalization in Nepal	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	25-27
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Participatory Rural Appraisal: Reinventing itself	RA	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	4-6
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Let's learn from Doon Valley	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	28-29
	Jhabindra Bhandari	*Jamkhed:* A book for all development workers	BR	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	40-41
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Indigenous people and development	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	17-18
	Jhabindra Bhandari	*'Participatory Appraisal of Natural Resources' :* A book review authored by Neela Mukherjee	BR	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	45-46
	Jhabindra Bhandari (with Indra Rai)	Towards sustainable peace building	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	9-10
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Community mobilization: The path to social change	A	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	26-27
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Public health towards a new perspective	A	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	26-27
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Pro-poor health policy: Enlarging people's choices	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	14-17
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Harvesting nutrition: Emerging needs for multi-sectoral approach	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	111-116
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Health impacts of climate change in Asia	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	57-61
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Participatory peer-led intervention model for reducing HIV risk behavior among female injecting drug users	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	118-125
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Life skills-based education for HIV prevention in south Asia	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	62-67
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Policy response to HIV & AIDS in Nepal	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	105-109
	Jhabindra Bhandari	Participatory development: Enlarging people's choices	RA	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	38-39
	Jib Raj Acharya	The barriers to uptake of eye-care services for leprosy patients in Nepal	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	59-69
	Jib Raj Acharya (with Edwin Van Teijlingen, Prof.; Jane Murphy, PhD; Marin Hind, PhD)	Assessment of knowledge beliefs and attitudes towards healthy diets among mothers in Kaski, Nepal	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	61-72

	John Cameron, PhD	A participatory approach to evaluating NGO development impacts on the lives of poor and disadvantaged people: Experience of NGO/CBO Participatory Learning and Advisory Project (NPLAP)	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	14-17
	Judith Van Eijnatten	Forest user group development process	A	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	24-32
	Jyoti Danuwar	Meaning of social and political inclusion for Awaliya (indigenous communities of Inner-Terai, Nepal)	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	19-23
	Kalpana Rimal	Self perception of female secondary school principals on their role performance	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	79-87
	Kapil Kafle	Roles of media to bring women in political leadership	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept 2019**	88-95
	Karna Bahadur Nepali	Untouchability and case-based discrimination in Nepal	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	49-61
	Keshav Kumar Aacharya, PhD	Governance in critical stand point to implement post-disaster initiatives in Nepal	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept 2019**	5-15
	Khageshwor Giri	A good discourse on the political economy of agriculture in Nepal	BR	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	138-139
	Kiran Maharjan	Turning upside down: Impact of climate change	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	81-89
	Keshav Kumar Aacharya, PhD	Transforming grassroots association through community governance in Nepal	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	62-78
	Krishna Babu Joshi, PhD	Performance-based funding In district development committees (DDCs) of Nepal	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	21-28
	Krishna Bahadur Thapa, PhD	Preliminary scenario of dyslexia among Nepalese primary school children	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	113-119
	Krishna Bahadur Thapa, PhD	Evolution of special need education: segregation to inclusion in mainstream education system	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; Aug. 2016	51-55
	Krishna Ghimire	Investment in girls' education	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	43-45
	Krishna Ghimire	Strengthening women's participation : A cursory analysis of women's participation in cooperatives in Makwanpur, Nepal	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	89-99
	Lal Bahadur Pun	The underlying factors of exclusions in Nepal	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	27-37
	Lal Bahadur Pun	The unreached people in participatory development: Rhetoric and realities in Nepal	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug 2012**	39-48

	Lal Bahadur Pun	A local method of development practice: A reflection of *Dhukuti* in Mustang	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	5-15
	Lamu Sherpa	Attitude and behavior of PRA practitioners: A reflection of Nepal's experiences	RA	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	33-34
	Laxman Acharya	Consequences of foreign aid in Nepal	RA	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	24-29
	Lochana Shahi (with Mahesh Jaishi)	Role of appropriate technology in reducing women's agricultural work-load: An experience from Okhaldhunga, Nepal	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	38-47
	Madhav Bhandari (with Kishor Bhandari and Saroj Bhandari)	Understanding Nepal's development (Letter to the editor)	Letter	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	53
	Malcom J. O'dell Jr., PhD	From inquiry to impact: Adding an appreciative dimension to participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation	RA	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	39-41
	Mahendra Kumar Shakya	Vipassana meditation for good governance in Nepal	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	35-44
	Mahendra Sapkota	Contestation in the leadership of social movements: A critical reflection from Tharu movement in Nepal	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	16-26
	Mahesh Jaishi	Livelihood future of resource scarce areas for marginal groups	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	51-59
	Mahesh Jaishi (with Lochana Shahi And Bikash Khatiwada)	Decentralized agriculture development practice in VDCs: An experience of Okhaldhunga district	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	100-110
	Mahesh Sharma	Decentralization: A critical instrument for participation	RA	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	19-21
	Mamta Sitaula	Situation of child marriage and education in Satar community in East Nepal	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; Aug. 2016	41-50
	Man Bahadur BK	Reaching poorest of the poor: Building inclusive micro-finance	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	45-50
	Man Bahadur BK, PhD	Work force diversity leads organization towards increased productivity	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	5-8
	Man Bahadur Thapa	About 'Participation' (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	1
	Man Bahadur Thapa	About 'Participation' (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	1
	Man Bahadur Thapa	NEPAN and participatory processes in Nepal	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	59
	Manohara Khadka	Gender equity in community forestry in Nepal: Achievements and issues	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	12-13
	Meenakshi Dahal	Education for girls: Can the target be achieved?	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	110-117
	Meenakshi Dahal	The status of early childhood development centres in Nepal	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; Aug. 2016	30-40

	Meera Shrestha	Letter to the editor	Letter	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	144
	Michael Maynard	Why participation is big business for big business?	A	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	3-5
	Mohan Prasad Wagley (Interview by Deepak Chapa)	Participatory approaches in Forestry sector: Status and challenges	Interview	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	39
	Mom Bishwakarma	Federalism in Nepal: Identity, politics and pragmatic with Dalit community	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	80-86
	Mukti Rijal, PhD	Taking a great leap into future [Book review authored by Anil Thapa, entitled: *"Abiram Baburam"* (An autobiography of Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai, former PM)]	BR	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	111-113
	Nani Ram Subedi	Gender and caste issues: A self-starting approach	RA	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	8-10
	Nani Ram Subedi, PhD	Local governance: From where to start?	RA	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	22-25
	Nani Ram Subedi, PhD	Emerging new organizations for advocacy initiatives	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	21-23
	Nani Ram Subedi, PhD	Traditional knowledge systems of mountain communities	RA	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	6-13
	Nani Ram Subedi, PhD	People-Centric Advocacy (PCA) for rights-based approach to participatory development	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	27-32
	Nani Ram Subedi, PhD	Advocacy for social change: A 10-stage approach	A	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	2-5
	Nani Ram Subedi, PhD	Mountain life and local governance	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	14-17
	Nar Bikram Thapa (with Prakash Shrestha)	An experience on community review process	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	36-38
	Nar Bikram Thapa	Combating xenophobia and discrimination against Dalits in Nepal: A case of social inclusion	RA	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	39-49
	Nar Bikram Thapa	Making difference in the lives of Terai Dalits: A case of Mahottari	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	13-18
	Nar Bikram Thapa	Food insecurity in Dailekh: People are surviving with hunger	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	6-11
	Nar Bikram Thapa	Reorientation of on-farm livelihoods programming towards household food security	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	42-50
	Nar Bikram Thapa	Impact of climate change in food security: A case of Dailekh district, Nepal	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug 2012**	49-58
	Nar Bikram Thapa, Phd	Evaluation of the community-led solid waste management program in Lalitpur Sub-Metropolitan city, Nepal	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	41-54

	Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD	An evaluation study of food and nutrition project, Dailekh, Nepal	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	62-75
	Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD	Impact evaluation of HIV project in Baglung, Nepal	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	48-60
	Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD, Prof.	Assessment of promoting women's economic leadership in Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces of Nepal	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	79-87
	Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD, Prof.[3] (with Sadhana Parajuli, PhD[1]; Prakash Gyawali[2])	Impacts of climate change on agricultural production: A case from Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	60-71
	Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD	Impact assessment of sustainable development planning program in Nepal	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	21-34
	Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD	Evaluation of street children and vulnerable families in Nepal	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; Aug. 2016	73-88
	Narayan Prasad Bhatta	Using appreciative participatory approaches to evaluation	A	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	30-32
	Narayan Prasad Bhatta, PhD	Comparative performance between self-governed and jointly governed irrigation system in Nepal	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	37-45
	Netra Prasad Timsina	Basta and beyond: Linking and learning with the grassroots (A review of an article authored by G. Esteva, & M.S Prakash)	Review	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	40
	Nirmal Kumar BK	Community forestry and livelihoods: A political ecology of forest resource scarcities to the poor	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	60-68
	Nisha Sharma	The street child in my eyes	A	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	31
	Nisha Sharma	Experience from Laos	A	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	36-38
	Normichi Toyomane, PhD (with Tej Sunar)	How to promote GESI- responsive participatory development in Nepal	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	27-38
	Padam Bahadur Shrestha	Environmental laws and issues of equal rights	RA	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	30-31
	Padam Prasad Bhusal	Internal displacement in Nepal problem and way ahead	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	36-38
	Prabhat Bikram Chhetri	Women's participation in local governance	RA	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	6-8
	Prakash Budha Magar	Provocation for Development (A review of the book by Prof. Dr. Robert Chambers- *"Provocation for Development")*	Review	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug 2012**	116-117
	Prakash Budha Magar	Monitoring and evaluation on economic, social and cultural rights in Nepal	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	31-37

	Prakash Gyawali, Er[2] (with Sadhana Parajuli, PhD[1] ; Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD, Prof. [3])	Impacts of climate change on agricultural production: A case from Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	60-71
	Prakash Kafle	Rights-based approach: Development thinking for new century	RA	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	33-36
	Prakash Kafle	Equity and social justice in community forestry: Random observations from field work in Banke, Nepal	RA	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	30-32
	Prakash Kafle	Gutu revisited: Memoirs of a development worker	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	90-92
	Prakash Kafle	Re-defining participation beyond compulsory labour contribution: Lesson from food security projects in Nepal	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	16-20
	Prem Sharma, PhD, Prof.	Paradigm shifts in development: A cursory observation	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	25-36
	Prem Sharma, PhD, Prof.	Nationalism, sovereignty and the vote	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	14-20
	Purna Nepali (with Kalawati Rai, Mahima Neupane, Samana Adhikari, Shristi Singh)	Livelihood security of Dalits: A case of Katunje, Bhaktapur	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	20-24
	Rabi Bahadur BK (with Badri Aryal)	Livelihood sustainability of squatter settlements in Pokhara	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	46-53
	Rabi Jung Pandey	Continued efforts make it sustainable supporting community-based tourism	A	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	33-35
	Raghav Raj Regmi	Participatory theme in development literature (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	1
	Rajendra Gupta	Participation in a group: Types and affecting elements	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	37-38
	Rajendra Gupta	Empowering through capacity building	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept.2004**	48-49
	Rajendra Khanal	Nepali proverbs that propagate gender discrimination	RA	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	22-23
	Rajendra P. Sharma	Still bias!: Let's explore and use alternative anti-sexist language	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	54-57
	Rajendra P. Sharma	Managing urban affairs through inclusive and participatory approaches in Nepal: Current status, issues and opportunities	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	15-19
	Rajendra P. Sharma	Urbanization and climate change: Adaptation of climate change for sustainable urban life in Nepal	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug 2012**	16-28
	Rajendra P. Sharma	Redefining slum in the context of urbanizing Nepal	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	122-133

Ram Chandra Khanal	Community participation, status and determinants: A case study from community - managed schools in Doti district	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	39-42
Ram Hari Adhikari	The roles of health services in tourism development of Nepal	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	55-64
Ram Prasad Aryal, PhD	Family separation of people residing at elderly homes of Pokhara city	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	60-71
Renuka Singh	Letter to the editor	Letter	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	116
R. Michael Fisher, PhD (with Desh Subba)	The true gift of education for development: A fearist perspective	RA	**17**	Year 18: No. 17; **Aug. 2016**	23-29
Rita Thapa (with Joanna Morrison)	Community planning to improve maternal and neo-natal health in Makwanpur district	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug 2012**	5-15
Robert Chambers, Dr., Prof. (Interview taken by Shree Ram KC)	I see a great and lasting future for participatory approaches	Interview	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	50
Rudra Charmakar	Nepali mass media and subaltern (Dalits)	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	69-75
Rupa Basnet	Letter to the editor	Letter	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	116
Rupa Basnet	Letter to the editor	Letter	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	176
Sadhana Parajuli, PhD[1] (with Prakash Gyawali[2], Nar Bikram Thapa, PhD, Prof.[3])	Impacts of climate change on agricultural production: A case from Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept 2019**	60-71
Saloni Singh	Women and political participation in Nepal	RA	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	27-32
Saloni Singh	Gaining gender equity through participatory, accountable and process-based governance and public decision-making	RA	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	47-51
Sam Chimbuya	The role of participatory tools and techniques in community-based planning (CBP) in South Africa	RA	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; **Sept. 2006**	2-7
Sandip KC	Maternal health of Nepal : A social issue rather than health sector problem	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	105-112
Sandip KC	Letter to the editor	Letter	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	176
Sanju Galkopakho	Understanding Nepal's development (Letter to the editor)	Letter	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	53
Sanju Nepali	Gender relation and its impact on girls' education among Dalit community	RA	**13**	Year 14: No. 13; **Aug. 2012**	29-38
Shailendra Sigdel, PhD (Interview by Anne Sophie Lunding)	The long hard way to pro-poor governance	Interview	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	11-14

	Shashi Rijal	Poverty reduction : Facing the challenges	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	18-21
	Shashi Rijal	Creative imagination for peace	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	45-46
	Shibesh Chandra Regmi, PhD	Participation and participatory process in social development	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	9-12
	Shiva Bagale	Child education and deprivation in Nepal	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	79-84
	Shree Prasad Devkota (with Shiba Bagale)	Discourse of inclusive education from Dalit perspectives in Nepal	RA	**15**	Year 16: No 15; **Aug. 2014**	39-45
	Shree Prasad Devkota	Identification of skills in conflict and prevention strategies in schools: A case study of Kaski district, Nepal	RA	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	73-78
	Shree Ram KC	Development communication: Necessity for strategic plan	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept.2004**	50-52
	Shree Ram KC	A family with no choices: A family's story from Fakhel, Makwanpur, Nepal (Photo-feature-based article)	AA	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	52
	Shree Ram KC	Pathetic picture: Floods in Western Terai, Nepal (Photo-based story)	A	**8**	Year 8: No. 8; Sept. **2006**	48
	Shree Ram KC	On the way to independent life (Photo feature-based article)	A	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	45
	Shree Ram KC	Struggle against poverty: Women reaching the destination	RA	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	42-44
	Shree Ram KC	Social media for change: Promoting citizens' participation and empowerment	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	117-121
	Shyam Adhikari (with Nirmal Phuyal and Sangita Shakya)	Food deficit and coping mechanism: Experiences of mid and far western Nepal	RA	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	36-40
	Shyam Adhikari	Breaking the vicious cycle of poverty: Field experience of a poverty reduction project	RA	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	18-21
	Som Raj Acharya	It's time to identify new issues (Letter to the editor)	Letter	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	4
	Sushant Acharya	Advocating for good governance in Nepal (A book by Dr. Bishnu Raj Uprety, *"Sushanko paripreksha ma samriddha Nepalka abarodh ra aayam")*	BR	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	171-173
	Sushma Poudyal	Local feminism and feminist ethnography in the Himalayas	BR	**16**	Year 17: No. 16; **Aug. 2015**	140-141
	Tanka Prasad Pokhrel	Buddhist councils: Means and ends for clarity and revitalization	RA	**19**	Year 21: No. 19; **Sept. 2019**	102-109
	Tej Prasad Dhakal	Understanding Nepal's development (Letter to the editor)	Letter	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	53

	Tej Raj Dahal	Capacity strengthening of partner organizations	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	33-34
	Tej Raj Dahal	Challenges of an inclusive constitution making process (Chairperson's pen)	Editorial	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	1
	Tunga Bhadra Rai	Social Inclusion Research Project in NEPAN	Report	**9**	Year 9: No. 9; **Aug. 2007**	40
	Tunga Bhadra Rai	Social Inclusion Research Project in NEPAN	Report	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	55
	Tunga Bhadra Rai	Priorities of socially excluded people	RA	**11**	Year 11: No. 11; **Aug. 2009**	24-27
	Uday Kishor Bhandari	Very useful 'Participation' (Letter to the Editor)	Letter	**10**	Year 10: No. 10; **Aug. 2008**	57
	Udhdab Parajuli	Public auditing system: Bringing transparency in rural community-based organizations	A	**7**	Year 7: No. 7; **Dec. 2005**	28-29
	Uddhav Rai	A pray for food in conflict	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	5-8
	Yak Raj Bhandari	Integration and practice of value-based education in community schools, Lalitpur, Nepal	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	98-104
	Yamuna Ghale	Nepal's entry to WTO: Reflection on stakeholder participation	A	**6**	Year 6: No. 6; **Sept. 2004**	11-13
	Yamuna Ghale (with Kailash Nath Pyakuryal, PhD, Prof.; Durga Devkota, PhD, Prof.; Krishna Prasad Pant, PhD; Netra Prasad Timsina, PhD)	Citizen participation in food security policy formulation in Nepal: A case of agriculture development strategy	RA	**18**	Year 20: No. 18; **June 2018**	136-147
	Yashoda Rijal (with Nilhari Neupane, Puran Mal)	Theoretical framework of political economy for natural resource management in Nepal	RA	**12**	Year 13: No. 12; **July 2011**	38-41
	Yashoda Rijal	Mapping health impacts of climate change from global to local level	RA	**14**	Year 15: No.14; **Aug. 2013**	65-76
	Youba Raj Luintel	Can participatory research really empower local people?	A	**4**	Year 4: No. 4; **July 2002**	3-8
	Yubraj Shrestha	Sharing without boundaries (Letter to the editor)	Letter	**2**	Year 2: No. 2; **June 2000**	4
	Yubraj Shrestha	Towards a wider use of PRA tools	A	**3**	Year 3: No. 3; **June 2001**	19
	Yubraj Shrestha	PRA and literacy: The process of community self realization and awareness building	A	**5**	Year 5: No. 5; **July 2003**	30-32

Compiled by: ***Prabuddha Kandel,*** *Volunteer; Nepal Mega College/National Development Centre (NDC), Kathmandu. Sept. 2020*

NEPAN Ghar

(National Participatory Development Resource Centre)

NEPAN members, Old and New, always aim for developing NEPAN as a **National Participatory Development Resource Centre** in future, the long-term vision are therefore putting lots of effort to ensure that vision to be materialised. NEPAN has its own three-storied building (NEPAN GHAR) with necessary equipment, spaces, including an official training hall for workshops, trainings, meetings and other activities along with WiFi facilities. NEPAN has its own Resource Centre (RC) for promoting participatory approach in development interventions and decision making of public affairs.

Participation

Year 22, No. 20, September, 2020

CONTENTS

Editorial 4

Articles

1. Post-COVID Revival of Homestay Tourism and Stakeholders' Capacity Development Issues: Some Reflexive Perspectives from the Fields
CHET NATH KANEL 5

2. Challenges to Participatory Research and Development in the New Normal Created by COVID-19
EARL JAMES GOODYEAR, PhD 15

3. Future Transformation: The Era of New Normal Fear of Further Marginalisation of People Due to Digital Divide
ANOJ CHHETRI, PhD 22

4. Integrated Health Information System Architecture: Towards Digital Health Governance
JHABINDRA BHANDARI.....32

5. Challenges of Participatory Research and Development in New Normal Situation: Practitioners' Perspective
UTTAM UPRETY.....40

6. Strategies for Participatory Evaluation in New Normal created by COVID-19 in Nepal
RAM CHANDRA KHANAL, PhD 57

7. Changing Political Culture and its Impact on Nepalese Society
Prof. PREM SHARMA, PhD.....65

8. Ethical Dilemmas in Researching Children in Developing Countries: An Ethnographer's Response
MEENAKSHI DAHAL, PhD.....73

9. Barriers of Rural Women's Representation and Participation in Local Governance in ***Sudur Pachhim*** Province of Nepal
JAMUNA SAUD.....85

10. Exploring Food-Related Barriers and Impact on Preschool-Aged Children in Pokhara, Nepal: A Qualitative Review
JIB ACHARYA, EDWIN VAN TEIJLINGEN, JANE MURPHY, MARTIN HIND, BASMA ELLAHI AND AMRITA JOSHI.....98

11. Food and Nutritional Security in Karnali Province of Nepal
Prof. NARBIKRAM THAPA, PhD.....111

12. Community Based Early Warning System In Flood Resilience Context At Nawalparasi District, Nepal
N. GYAWALI, D. DEVKOTA, P. CHAUDHARY, A. CHHETRI, AND N.R. DEVKOTA, AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY UNIVERSITY, RAMPUR, CHITWAN, NEPAL.....128

13. Sustainability of Irrigation Systems from Community Participation in Institutions
NARAYAN PRASAD BHATTA, PhD 138

Short Communication

14. New Normal: Building our Behaviour in new Virtureal World
SARAH BLIN 147

15. Restarting Nepalese Tourism Industry in Post-COVID Situation: Some Suggestive Thoughts
RABI JUNG PANDEY 149

Book Reviews

16. Value Inculcation through Self-Observation
BY: MAHENDRA SHAKYA 151

17. Editorial Policy 154
18. Guidelines for the authors of Participation 154
19. BIBLIOGRAPHY Participation Issues 1 to 19 159

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