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Challenges of Contribution-based Social Security in Nepal

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Abstract

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of Nepal's contribution-based social security system, focusing on its development, current challenges, and future prospects. It delves into the legislative framework, particularly the labour Act 2074 and the Contribution Based Social Security Fund Act 2074 and examines the system's impact on the labour market and social protection. The study identifies key challenges such as administrative inefficiencies, gaps in coverage, and financial sustainability issues. It also presents policy recommendations to improve the system's effectiveness and inclusivity, emphasizing the need for robust reforms and better implementation strategies. The findings, supported by data from the International Labour Organization and other relevant sources, aim to offer a thorough understanding of Nepal's social security landscape and inform future policy decisions.

Keywords

Social Security, Contribution, Challenges, Nepal.

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Challenges of Contribution-based Social Security in Nepal

1. Introduction

Social security is an attempt to bring the socially and economically vulnerable people out of crisis by arranging their safety and security that improves their economic and social status. Under social security, policy and programs are formulated to provide security or protection to the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable citizens. The International labour Organization (n.d.) has defined social security as protection against life risk which includes nine principal branches of social security namely medical care, sickness, unemployment, old age, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity, and survivors' benefits. There are three key issues that social security covers. First is the positive intervention on labour market, second, social security insurance and the third one is social assistance (Ghimire, 2078 B.S.).

According to Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, a person has the right to social security and every country should ensure the protection of economic, social, and cultural rights of an individual (United Nations, 1948). The article 43 of the Constitution of Nepal has included the provision of social security as a fundamental right. The Constitution includes the provision in the concurrent list of the federal, provincial, and local level. To ensure the contribution based social security right of the labourers and provide them the social security, the Contribution Based Social Security Act, 2074, Contribution Based Social Security Fund Regulations was promulgated in 2074. After this, the Social Security Fund (SSF) was also established in Nepal. Section 4 of the Act has provisioned that the contribution from the contribution qualified income of the labourers should be contributed to the fund and the employer enrolled in the fund should contribute the additional fixed amount to the fund in the name of its employees. However, it has been five years since the establishment of the fund and the number of employees enrolling in the fund has been slow.

From Fiscal Year 2068/069 SSF started the collection of contributions and providing insurance for workplace accidents, health insurance, and maternity health etc. The record as of 23 July 2024 shows that altogether 19,238 employers (government, non-government, and private sector) with a total of 1502924 individual workers are registered in the social security fund. In this context, the general objective of this study is to identify the challenges of contribution based social security programs in Nepal. The study focuses on the awareness status that contributes to the perception of employers on contribution based social security program in Nepal.

2. Research Methodology

For this study, researchers have used a qualitative research method. Researchers used for data collection included content analysis, Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KII). The three data collection tools were deployed during the research. First, content analysis. Under the content analysis the constitution of Nepal, legal provisions, and literature, related to contribution based social security in Nepal including the Labour Act 2074, Contribution Based Social Security Fund Act 2074, reports, various studies, and other relevant literature on contribution based social security were analyzed.

Similarly, during this research, five FGDs were held in different places in Nepal. The information on the issues such as employers' perception on SSF legal provision, its problems were collected from the participants during FGDs. Furthermore, checklist-based KIIs were conducted. Total 9 KII were conducted including trade union leaders, SSF representatives, representatives from ministry of labour, and other experts were taken. The interview checklist was prepared for this.

3. Understanding Social Security and Social Protection

The concept of social security started in the sixteenth century in Britain. According to this concept, the state had arranged a home for elderly and incapable people as well as employment opportunity for the unemployed. After the pension program for elderly people started in 1908, the formal social security program was started. After three years in 1911, insurance was introduced and in 1940 the public health insurance program was started (Briggs, 1961).

The application of social support system started in the USA and Canada in the seventeenth century. However, the formal social security plan started in the USA in 1935. The huge economic crisis in 1930s and war led to death of many people with thousands of disabled people. Thus, preventing people from the crisis at the old age and easy management of expenditure on time, the social security concept was introduced. In the Nordic countries Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland too, this plan had been initiated since long. Denmark had started the financial support to the elderly people in the early 1911. Iceland started the social security plan including old age insurance, health treatment facility and so on in 1909, Sweden in 1913, Norway in 1936 and Finland in 1939. Today most of the countries around the world have been implementing social security programs in one way or the other.

Social security is any kind of collective measure or activity designed to ensure that members of society meet their basic needs. Similarly, they are protected from the contingencies to enable them to maintain a standard of living consistent with social norms as suggested by international instruments (Khanal, 2012). He further argues that social security is any government system that provides the citizens or its members monetary assistance to people with an adequate or no income.

3·1 Social Protection

Social Protection is a set of public policies and programs which seeks to assure basic needs and a minimum level of security for the people (ILO, 2010). It refers to government interventions in response to vulnerability, risk, deprivation, and poverty which are deemed socially unacceptable in a country (Norton et al., 2002). They further argue that social protection addresses extreme deprivation, poverty and vulnerabilities and particular needs at different stages of the human's life cycle.

Social security always contributes to reduce inequalities and empower the vulnerable and marginalized population like PWDs, aging people, sick, girls, women, widow (Townsend, 2009). Khanal (2018) examines that social protection is important for inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development of the country. Social protection policies and programs can be well understood by dividing the concept into two parts. First is Social Insurance (SI) and second is Social Assistance (SA). SI covers the risks associated with sickness,

unemployment, disability, maternity, old age, and industrial injury (ADB, 2012). ADB (2013) also incorporates under SI health insurance, old-age insurance, PWDs, unemployment insurances as well. According to Khanal (2018) there has been four kinds of social insurance in Nepal. The first one is retirement benefits i.e., pension, gratuities, allowances, and medical facilities, second, employees' provident fund, third, citizen investment trust and fourth, social security fund.

Similarly, SA includes health assistance, assistance for aging people, disaster relief assistance among others. These assistances are targeted to the poor and vulnerable people (Upreti, et al., 2012). Various programs under social security such as support to the senior citizens, PWDs as well as women allowances, scholarship, free health care and medicine distribution have been implementing in Nepal since long (Koehler, 2014).

3·2 Social Security

There is no common definition of the concept of social security. Social security is the security that the state furnishes against the risks of an individual and his/her dependents. Furthermore, it is instrumental in promoting human welfare and social consensus on a broad scale, and to be conducive to and indispensable for fair growth, social stability, and economic performance.

ILO (2010) defines social security as any program of social protection which is established by the legislation or any other mandatory arrangement that provides individuals with a degree of income security when faced with the contingencies of incapacity, old age, survivorship, unemployment, PWDs, or rearing children. It also offers access to preventive and curative medical facilities and services. Similarly, ILO Convention on Social Security (Minimum Standard) No. 102, in 1952 defined social security as follows:

> "Social security is widely accepted as the protection which society provides for its members through a series of public measures to; offset the absence or substantial reduction of income from work resulting from the contingencies of employment injury, maternity, sickness, unemployment, old age, invalidity, and death, provides them with health care and it also provides financial support to families with children."

Giri (1972) defined social security as one of the dynamic concepts of the modern industrial age which directly influences social,

political, and economic policies in the state. Van (2007) explains the type of pension system and argues that system plays an important role to providing necessary income to elderly populations and in alleviating post retirement poverty among the poorest sector of society. According to Park (2010) a good social security system must have certain basic features including affordable, broad-based, robust, sufficient, and actuarial. Barrientos (2009) identifies a few characteristics of social security. These are certain desired properties, providing social insurance, and contributions relating to benefits, reducing inequalities across demographic groups, and increasing the incentives to work. In the meantime, Borsch-Supan (2005) explains certain prominent principles of social security. These are social Security should cover the total population of the country, welfare contributions should be withheld from employee's salaries, the level of benefits must be balanced with the contributions, it should be financially independent. Similarly, social security schemes should redistribute wealth from those who must those who need it, it should be compulsory for all citizens, and pension benefits need to be adjusted over time based on wages and inflation.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 22 clearly indicated that everyone has a right to social security and realize it through national and international cooperation (United Nation, 2014). Article 25 of the same declaration imparts that everyone has the right to live a standard of the life for his/her health and his/her family and has the right of social security in the event of unemployment, widowhood, sickness, disability, old age, and in difficult conditions beyond his/her control.

3·3 Importance of Social Security

According to Ginneken (2005) a social security scheme is built around four constituent parts i.e., coverage, benefits, financing, and administration. Each of these has certain components for which indicators can be established. All components influence how effectively social security can be extended. Barrientos (2009) examines a large extension of the social security programs throughout the developing countries in recent times. Social security is important in developing countries, and it has a strong focus in reducing poverty and vulnerabilities. Social security always protects the poor and vulnerable people, family, and households. Barrientos further adds that social security is a key component of development

policy and is expected to increase productive capacity through investing in human and physical effects.

The Social Protection Groups have recommended social security as the legal right with coverage to basic health and basic income assurance, social support to employment and creation of national security system. The groups strongly focus on basic health facilities for everyone with maternity support, elders, unemployed, sick persons, minimum income guarantee for children, and the persons with disability. ILO (2006) emphasis that there is need for countries to establish a sustainable social security system to address the growing inequalities in societies.

Social security and human rights have a very strong and significant relationship. Poudel (2013) finds out that social security benefits are related with maintaining and changing in the quality-of-life changes in living standard, maintaining the daily life after retirement from service, feeling secure and satisfied in their jobs. The main aim of social security is to ensure that no one lives below a certain level of income, and everyone has access to basic services.

3·4 Contribution-based Social Security

The contribution-based social security fund offers the different social security schemes altogether, which are in tune with the ILO Convention no. 102, 1952. ILO has a more administrative concept of social protection and includes labour protection in the social security. According to the Income Security Recommendation, 1944 No. 67, income security schemes should, restore up to a reasonable level, income which is lost due to the inability to work including old age or to obtain remunerative work, or by reason of the death of the breadwinner.

Contribution based social security is taken as a modern social security program. Traditional types of social security schemes are gradually losing their dominance in occupational pension schemes in many countries. According to Barrientos (2009) there has been a gradual shift towards a defined contribution scheme. Contributory pension is the amount of money set aside by an employer or employee or both to ensure that at retirement there is something to fall back on as income.

The contributory social security is a fully funded scheme which generates adequate funds through certain percentage of contribution

from monthly earnings by both employee and employer through a form of savings. Contribution schemes are more secure because the participants see the contributions deposited in their individual accounts (Aiyabei, 2010).

Furthermore, contributory social security scheme is a system in which an employer pays certain amount of money regularly into a pension fund while the employee also pays some money into the same pension fund which forms the aggregate of what the employee gets at the time of retirement. It serves as a social welfare scheme for the age and ensures workers save to cater for their livelihood during old age (Sule & Ezugwu, 2009).

Asami (2011) evaluated the status and situation of social security in Asian countries. He found that newly industrial countries in Asia have shown good progress in the expansion and management of the social security program both quantitatively and qualitatively. According to him the two-tier mode is the best for providing basic social protection and avoiding unlimited increase in government expenditure on social insurance. Recently most of the social protection available to the public is state funded, but there is an increasing movement toward contributory social security programs in the Asian countries.

Gill et al (2005) argues that lack of proper information about the legal procedures and benefits in the reformed system leads to the employer and employees not being interested to enroll in the contribution based social security programs. Adeoye et al. (2016) studied the effectiveness of contributory pension scheme in Lagos and found that the contributory pension determines the employee's productivity and pensioners welfare. They further identified that the contributory pension scheme is one of the essential ingredients needed in both public and private enterprise which impacts on efficient utilization of employees in achieving the present and future goals of an establishment. From this study it can be concluded that contributory pension scheme is a strategy of minimizing overall cost and wastage thereby improving productivity and efficiency.

Sterns (2006) finds out that social security and pensions could discourage labour turnover from the company and enterprises. According to him if both employers and employees contribute to the scheme, then it serves as a general area of joint interest and cooperation and helps to foster better employment relations between employers and employees.

3·5 Social Security in Nepal

There is a long history of social security in Nepal. Buddhist and Hindu religion provide basic activities of social security such as giving alms, philanthropic health, and education services. According to Mathema (2012) the social security policy of Nepal was based on dictatorial system till Rana regime. It depended on the order of the head of the state.

The formal social security program started in Nepal from 1991 B.S. with the establishment of Military Money Fund for providing the financial support to the armies after retirement. Later in 2001 B.S. the public service provident fund was established for the government employees to provide financial assistance to them after retirement.

Democracy was established after the peoples' movement in Nepal in 2007 B.S. with the abolishment of autocratic Rana Regime. The country adopted the constitutions and formulated acts and regulations to turn the state activities under the rule of law in Nepal. In the meantime, Nepal became the member state of United Nation and signature country of ILO and various other international conventions.

The Public Service Act 2013 made provision of the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) the contribution based. There had been provision of collecting the saved amount of the employees in EPF established in 2019. Not only the government employees but the private organizations could also use the EPF for their labourers and employees. There are legal provisions on the social security schemes for employees such as insurance, treatment, leave, pension, and gratitude amount. The GoN initiated universal social pension scheme for the elderly, single women and PWDs in the 1994 (Khanal, 2014). These schemes have been expanded after the 2006 political change. The Constitution of Nepal gives highest priority to the social security and protection to the people.

There have been various social protection programs targeted to the vulnerable groups in the latest time in Nepal. The first step towards social protection was initiated by the GoN in 1994. The GoN announced one hundred rupees per month allowance for the seventy-five years and above citizens. The governments formed after this also went on adding some more provisions and benefits to make the beneficiaries' lives easier through social protection. Social security allowance with different rates is being distributed all over

the country in cash or entitlement to the different categories of people. There are about 10 categories of beneficiaries. These are: senior citizens, widow, senior Dalits, Dalit children, single women, endangered indigenous nationalities, people with disabilities, Karnali zone children, fully disable person, Karnali zone senior citizens, and pregnant women.

They are receiving allowances as social security benefits. The Constitutions of Nepal provisioned social security to its citizens under the section of fundamental rights and duties. Social security has been included as the concurrent right of federal, provincial, and local government. Similarly, Article 41 provisioned rights for senior citizens, Article 42 specified the right to social justice, Article 43 mentioned the right to social security. There is the provision of making policy to protect the single women, orphans, children, disabled, incapacitated and people who are on the edge of extinction. Similarly, the Civil Servant Act 1993 has some provisions to support the government employees during the period of retirement in different forms.

Niraula (2018) focused on non-contributory social security program in Nepal. He further explains the trends and prospects of social security program in Nepal. He examines the social security system of Nepal that has been introduced by the government of Nepal as a social protection tool.

3·6 Contribution-based Social Security in Nepal

The concept of contribution based social security was introduced in Nepal through the budget speech of the fiscal year 2066/67 B.S. The social security program would be supported through 1 percent taxation of the first slab income of the employed people until the social security tax provision came into application. The main aim of the state was to manage further funds for expansion of the social security with time. The social security fund management and regulation was formulated in 2067 B.S. and SSF was established. The main aim of the fund was to keep the record of all contributions into a computerized system and implement various social insurance schemes.

Nepal promulgated two major legislations related to labour namely the Labour Act and the Contribution-based Social Security Act in Nepal. It also prepared regulations required for the implementation. The social security act 2074 and its regulations provide legal foundations for the application of the new scheme. The

contribution based social security scheme is funded through the contributions made by the workers and the employers while workers contribute 11 percent of their basic salary, the employers to up 20 percent of the worker's basic salary. The labourers and workers are eligible to participate in the social security scheme from day one of their employment.

The Social Security Regulations has been published in Nepal Gazette on 19 November 2018 with immediate effect. The SSF has formulated the social security schemes operational directives to operate the social security schemes pursuant to section 10 of the social security act.

The regulations have not specified the sector or nature of industry, service, business, or transaction and other to enroll with SSF. So, all employers are required to be registered with the SSF. The SSF has introduced the following social security schemes,

⇥ Medical treatment, health, and maternity protection scheme,

⇥ Accident and disability protection scheme,

⇥ Dependent family protection scheme, and

⇥ Old age protection scheme.

The employer and the employees are required to contribute a certain amount of employee's basic salary each month to the SSF as showm in the following table:

Table-1 : Contribution Rate in SSF

Sr. No.	Contributor	Amount (%of basic salary)
1.	Employee	11 percent
2.	Employer	20 percent
Total		**31 percent**

Sources : Social Security Act, 2018.

According to the act, the total contributed amount is allocated for four different schemes of SSF. SSF provides each benefit within legislative framework developed and updated from time to time.

Table-2 : Schemes of SSF

Sr. No.	Social Security Schemes	% of Amount
1.	Medical treatment, health, and maternity protection scheme	1 percent

2.	Accident and disability protection scheme	1.40 percent
3.	Dependent family protection scheme	0.27 percent
4.	Old age protection scheme	28.33 percent
Total		**31 percent**

Source : Social Security Act, 2018.

At present there is provision of retirement age of 60 years and a regular pension scheme after working for 15 years according to the labour act. Only the employees who were getting salary from the government of Nepal and few public corporations were only getting these facilities while this is planned to expand to the people working in every sectors. The employees getting appointment after 17 July 2019 were covered with this scheme. However, the manpower appointed before this date and working also can be associated with this plan. Nevertheless, there have been problems with payment due to some unclear provisions in the fund. Khanal (2018) finds out that hardly any payment has been made by the fund to the intended beneficiaries.

4. Findings

In this research, five FGDs were conducted during the collection of perception of employers. These FGDs were conducted on fundamental concepts of social protection to improve understanding of social protection and contribution based social security. Similarly, KII were conducted with experts who were well known about social security and contribution based social security fund in Nepal. In this sub-chapter, the information attained from KII and FGD is analyzed and presented.

The employers during the FGDs and experts during the KIIs put forward their perceptions on why the employers have not registered in the contribution based social security fund. These are given below:

4·1 Lack of Proper Knowledge and Awareness of SSF

The employers who participated in the FGDs mentioned that they did not have enough information about the SSF policies. Some representatives from Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) stated that SMEs were not included in discussions regarding SSF and hence their knowledge regarding the fund and its policies is low. Similarly, participants also mentioned that their employees lack clear

knowledge about SSF and its benefits. Due to this some employees feel insecure about what will happen to their salaries if the company registers in SSF. One participant mentioned facing situations where employees asked for their money back when it was deducted for SSF contributions. This is also due to lack of knowledge of SSF benefits. Some participants stated that there is a communication gap between employees and employers regarding SSF as well. Hence many employees are unsure/unclear about SSF's basic concept.

Some participants mentioned employers not being aware of their responsibilities towards employees because of not registering in SSF. One KII respondent said that although the SSF program is ideally good, there are few issues which act as impediment to being registered to the program. He added:

> "The program is ideally good; I do think that the government introduced it suddenly in a context where the stakeholders are used to the concept of EPF and are not aware of how SSF works. This made them reluctant to adopt SSF. In addition, the trust and assurance that stakeholders have in the government is not there. Another issue that employees have is receiving monetary benefits only in the future rather than present".

4·2 Confusion among the Organizations and Employers

Some SMEs representatives were not aware of SSF being compulsory for all sectors and businesses. Some had previously thought that SSF was only meant for large organizations. In the meantime, the confusion among employers is due to the existence of multiple similar programs. Some participants of FGD mentioned due to the existence of SSF along with EPF and other similar programs at the same time, employers were confused if they should register in SSF or not.

4·3 Unsatisfied by Benefits provided

Some participants of FGD expressed dissatisfaction with provisions related to returns/benefits from contributions made to SSF. A journalist who has been studying and reporting about social security and SSF for a long time also mentioned that the employees are not registered in SSF because the benefits for employees are not so attractive. He said:

> "The SSF has not brought working guidelines on benefits in accordance with the contribution collected. In many cases, the

guidelines have been made such that the benefits are less than what was received previously. Thus, banking, financial sectors and hotel business are not attracted toward SSF. The trade unions of the banking sector filed a case in the Supreme court. While contribution was 31 percent, the benefit packages are not in accordance with the contribution raised, the labour and trade unions are not attracted towards SSF. The employers also escape from this pointing on employees. In some sectors, the SSF is providing weaker benefits than that provided by insurance, Citizen Investment Fund or Employment Provident Fund. Thus, employees getting benefits from those other than SSF previously do not want to join SSF."

A high-level official of GoN also agrees with this. According to him, the benefits provided by the SSF is less compared to the contributions from the employees and employers. The employees are pressurizing the employers for not being registered to the SSF. He adds:

"Compared to the contribution, the benefit is insignificant. Until the fund rethinks this there is very little possibility of practical and effective implementation of contribution based SSF. Now the employees must contribute 31 percent and the benefit received is less than 20 percent. Thus, the employees are not attracted towards SSF. It seems that the benefit compared to that have been provided by corporate sector, bank/finances, hotel sector since long is more than that provided by SSF. The registering process has been hindered by this reason."

4·4 Problems arise when moving from one Organization to another

Some of the employers admit that it is difficult for being registered to SSF because of the employers not working in a company for long time and change the company rapidly. Participants of FGDs from Madhesh area mentioned of there being problems when a registered employee moves from one organization to another in short time.

4·5 Policy-related to SMEs and Self-employed

The SSF guidelines have not been able to include the policy related to SMEs and self-employed. The participants in the discussion stated that this is the reason for a big number of companies not being registered to SSF. Some participants of FGD

mentioned that SMEs and self-employed organizations should also be included in SSF.

4·6 SSF's Administrative Procedures

Some participants mentioned that the complex administrative procedures of SSF are a reason why they have not been registered yet. The date by which contribution is to be deposited needs to be changed from the 15th of every month to a later date to make it easier for employers to process. Similarly, the participants of FGD mentioned that the insurance schemes of the SSF are extremely monotonous to claim. The process requires a lot of paperwork and requires a long time to get benefits for the victim. The process should be simplified and have easy access.

Some participants of FGD described cases where specified hospitals denied services via SSF as they confused the patient as beneficiary of the National Health Insurance program instead of SSF medical program. In order to avoid such situations, providing proper training or guidelines to implementing partners of SSF would be helpful.

4·7 Lack of Government Contribution

Many participants in the discussion admitted that they were dissatisfied with the government that there is not any contribution from the government side in the SSF. Participants in Madhesh area mentioned dissatisfaction with SSF due to there being no contribution to the fund from the government's side. An employer mentioned that there are various reasons for the employer not being registered to SSF. She said:

> "There are some issues with SSF policies that the companies are raising. There is no contribution from the government's side. There needs to be more welfare benefits in the fund for employees. The SSF is not appealing to the employers and employees for them to be registered."

4·8 Areas in Policy which require more Clarity

Many participants were not clear on what type of accidents were covered and what were not. Similarly, what is covered by the medical scheme and what by accident scheme was also not clear enough to them. SSF registration policy for firms employing ex-government, police, army personnel need more clarity as these

employees cannot receive SSF currently because of the already received public pensions. This was a problem specifically expressed by representatives from security firms.

4·9 Political Reasons

The employers stated that there are two major political reasons which act as an impediment to them to being registered to SSF. First is the lack of Citizenship Certificate. Participants in all FGDs mentioned that some workers do not have Citizenship certificates which makes it difficult to register. Similarly, the second reason is foreign workers. Participants in Western Terai area pointed out that many organizations in the Terai region are dependent on workers from other nationalities including India. Those companies who rely more on Indian workers face problems in being registered to SSF because of lack of legal clarity in this issue.

4·10 Receiving Monetary Benefits only after reaching 60 years

The retirement age of government employees is 58 years. However, there is provision in SSF for getting pension only after the age of 60 years. All participants in FGD sited difficulties in motivating employees to join SSF due to provisions of SSF where monetary benefits are received only after retirement. They added that employees were unhappy that even after 60 years of age there are no provisions for receiving a one-off large amount instead. In the meantime, some respondents said that employees want money from the fund after leaving their job and not after retirement. So, though the SSF is beneficial, the employees are not positive towards this because of getting monetary benefits only after the age of 60 years.

5. Conclusion

Social security is a trendy issue and agenda in contemporary times. The traditional types of social security system and schemes are gradually losing their dominance from the many countries around the world. Barrientos (2009) explains that there has been a gradual shift towards contribution based social security from the traditional types of social security program. A contribution based social security program is a fully funded and contribution-based scheme that generates adequate funds through a certain percentage of contributions from monthly earnings by both employer and employee through a form of savings.

The awareness of the concerned persons and stakeholders is important for effective implementation of social security programs. Liebman and Luttmer (2012) argue that the contribution based social security program can be effective only when contributors are fully aware about it. Similarly, Reyers (2018) drew similar conclusion in his study carried out in South Africa. According to Reyers, if both the employers and employees are well informed about all aspects of the contribution based social security program including its importance and legal obligations, then it brings positive changes.

The study shows that employers are less aware and not fully aware of legal and policy level provisions of SSF. During the study, the majority of the employers were found to have not taken contribution as extra financial burden. However, lack of awareness, lack of knowledge of legal provisions of social security, lack of support of employees and trade unions were the major reasons behind the employers not being registered.

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Dual Diplomacy of Nepal in the Indian National Movement of 1857

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Abstract

This study examines Nepal's nuanced role during the 1857 Indian Rebellion, highlighting the strategic and cultural complexities faced by Prime Minister Janga Bahadur Rana. Aligning with the British to preserve Nepal's sovereignty, Janga Bahadur simultaneously offered refuge to Indian rebels like Begum Hazrat Mahal and Nana Saheb, showcasing Nepal's intricate position. The research utilizes historical records and contemporary accounts to reveal how Nepal provided essential military support to the British while covertly aiding the rebels. British concerns about Nepal's dual role led to increased military surveillance at the border. Janga Bahadur's diplomatic efforts to mediate between the British and rebels, coupled with his later arrests and conflicts, further illustrate the challenges of balancing sovereignty and regional alliances. This study offers insights into the interplay of cultural solidarity and geopolitical strategy in colonial contexts, shedding light on the role of smaller states in imperial conflicts.

Keywords

Sepoy mutiny, Nepal-India relation, Begum Hazrat Mahal, Janga Bahadur.

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1. Introduction

On August 24, 1608, the British first arrived in Surat, India, to do business. The British East India Company, founded in 1600, played a pivotal role in establishing British dominance in the region. Under the leadership of Robert Clive, the company achieved a significant victory in the Battle of Plassey in 1757, allowing them to trade without paying taxes in Bengal. Following this, the company secured further victories in the Buxar War (1764), the Anglo-Mysore Wars (1766-1799), and the Anglo-Maratha Wars (1772-1818). These triumphs enabled the company to control most of the land in India.

At its peak, the British East India Company ruled much of Southeast Asia and parts of Hong Kong, with an impressive force of 270,000 troops. By the mid-19th century, the company effectively governed all of India. However, discontent with British rule culminated in a significant revolt in 1857-58, known by various names: the Sepoy Mutiny, the Indian Mutiny, the Great Mutiny, the Mutiny of 1857, and the First War of Independence. This uprising began on May 10, 1857, when soldiers in Meerut, 64 km east of Delhi, initiated a rebellion. The soldiers' rebellion gradually expanded to include non-military citizens in the northern Ganges plains and central India, spreading to the north and east. With assistance from the Nepal government, the British East India Company suppressed the rebellion on June 20, 1857. Despite being seen as a British ally, Nepal cleverly adopted a dual diplomatic policy during this period.

The War of Independence in 1857, led by local Rajas, the people, and Indian soldiers against the British, holds significant importance not only in Indian history but also in the history of Nepal. While most historians have noted that Nepal did not assist the Indian freedom fighters, secret documents from that era reveal a more nuanced stance. These documents show that Nepal adopted a dual policy, both supporting and not supporting each side as needed to affirm and protect its independence and sovereignty. This strategic

approach highlights Nepal's careful diplomatic maneuvering during the conflict.

The Indian sepoy mutiny in 1857 had both positive and negative effects in Nepal. Many local Indian kings sought refuge in Nepal during this time. This study aims to explore the role Nepal played during the mutiny, focusing on how the Nepalese government and people interacted with both the British and the Indian freedom fighters. Previous studies often stated that Nepal only supported the British government. However, this study tries to reveal that Nepal also secretly supported the Indian people. Previous studies have largely overlooked Nepal's dual approach, where the country secretly supported Indian rebels while publicly aligning with the British.

The rationale behind this research lies in understanding the complex relationship between Nepal and India during British rule. Despite the tension, the Nepalese people supported Indian citizens, and the cultural ties between the two nations remained strong. The objective of this study is to uncover the nuanced role Nepal played during the 1857 revolt, highlighting its dual diplomatic strategy. The implications of this research are significant as they provide a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural connections between Nepal and India, which have existed for centuries and continue to influence the relationship between the two countries today.

2. Materials and Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the dual role played by Nepal during the Indian Rebellion against the British East India Company, a century after the British Empire was established in India. The Indian Rebellion of 1857 was a pivotal event that not only laid the groundwork for India's eventual independence but also led to significant casualties and a wave of refugees seeking asylum in Nepal.

To investigate Nepal's nuanced involvement, a comprehensive approach was taken. Historical documents from the Ministry of Archaeology and related departments in both India and Nepal were examined. These documents provided critical insights into the interactions between Nepal and the Indian rebels, as well as the British government.

In addition to primary sources, the study relied on secondary materials gathered from various libraries, archaeology departments,

private collections, journals, and online databases. These sources were meticulously organized to ensure a thorough understanding of the historical context. The data collection process involved:

1. **Document Review :** Historical records and documents from governmental archives in India and Nepal were scrutinized to trace Nepal's diplomatic stance and actions during the rebellion.

2. **Secondary Source Analysis :** Various secondary sources, including books, articles, and online databases, were reviewed to supplement and contextualize the primary data. This ensured a well-rounded perspective on the events.

3. **Data Processing :** Information was systematically organized to identify relevant themes and patterns. Irrelevant or redundant information was filtered out to focus on the most pertinent details.

4. **Qualitative Analysis :** The analysis employed both descriptive and analytical methods. The descriptive analysis narrated events and behaviors related to Nepal's role, while the analytical approach interpreted the implications of these actions on Nepal-India relations.

3. Result and Discussion

The Indian freedom struggle of 1857, according to British historians, is often described as a brief uprising that lasted only a few months. From May 10 to September 16, 1857, the independent Indian government, known as Azad Hindustan, established its rule in Delhi. However, this period of autonomy was short-lived. After the capture of Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, the British reasserted their control over Delhi and achieved significant victories in Jhansi, Farrukhabad, Bareilly, and Lucknow.

Despite these setbacks, the freedom fighters demonstrated remarkable resilience and refused to accept defeat. To continue their resistance and strategize for a resurgence, many of them crossed into Nepal. The British managed to suppress the rebellion in several areas, yet their dominance remained tenuous in numerous regions. Key centers of resistance during this period included Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Faizabad, Awadh, and Bareilly, extending towards the Bihar region. The determination and strategic retreats of the freedom fighters underscore their enduring commitment to the struggle, even in the face of substantial challenges (Ramakanta, 1877 : 281).

Janga Bahadur Rana, the Prime Minister of Nepal, was prepared to assist the British during the critical period of the 1857 Indian rebellion. However, the majority of his colleagues in Nepal were inclined to support the Indian rebels. This division is exemplified by an incident in 1877 AD when Dhir Shamsher, a prominent Nepali figure, informed a British officer that all the Bharadars (nobles) except Janga Bahadur wanted to aid the rebels and drive out the British, in alignment with their longstanding national sentiments. Janga Bahadur's decision to support the British was a strategic move aimed at preserving Nepal's sovereignty and securing its position. In contrast, his colleagues felt a strong affinity with the Indian rebels due to shared cultural and historical ties.

The support of Janga Bahadur was crucial for the British, as Nepal's assistance played a significant role in helping them regain control in several areas. Meanwhile, the inclination of the other Bharadars to support the rebels underscores the widespread sentiment against British rule in the region. This episode reflects the complex interplay of local and regional politics during the 1857 rebellion and highlights the pivotal role Nepal played in this historical context.

The historical relationship between Nepal and India during this period is significant. Despite the official support for the British, the sympathies of the Nepali people largely lay with the Indian rebels. This dichotomy illustrates the deep cultural and historical connections between Nepal and India, which persisted even under the pressures of colonial rule. Studying this period reveals the multifaceted nature of Nepal's political stance and the enduring bonds between the two nations.

The priest of the palace was a key figure advocating for Nepal's support of the Indian rebels during the 1857 uprising. He argued that if Nepal assisted the rebels, British rule in India would be brought to an end. However, Janga Bahadur held a different perspective. He believed that although British control in India might be temporarily disrupted, the British would likely regain power within six months. Janga Bahadur warned that if Nepal supported the rebels and the British subsequently regained control, Nepal could risk losing its independence within two to three years.

When Janga Bahadur consulted with his advisors and military leaders on whether to support the British or the rebels, Padma Jang

noted that Janga Bahadur was already convinced that supporting the British was the most prudent course of action. He believed that aligning with the British would ensure Nepal's safety and sovereignty in the long run (Rana, 1974 : 189).

Following the fierce revolt against the British in India, there was a disagreement among British officials regarding whether to seek Nepal's assistance. The Governor General of India, Lord Canning, preferred to avoid relying on Nepalese support, believing that it might undermine British authority. Conversely, the British resident in Nepal, Ramsey, supported seeking cooperation from Nepal. Those opposed to enlisting Nepalese help argued that doing so would imply a lack of confidence in British soldiers and officers, potentially revealing the British government's vulnerability to Indian observers. This view was accepted by the majority of British officials, including English officer H. C. Tucker, who expressed his opposition to involving the Gorkhas in a letter dated June 13.

> "I am completely against and oppose the entry of Nepali soldiers into our state. If we cannot end this problem without the help of the Gorkhalis, then we should think that it is time to leave this place. The presence of Gorkhali soldiers would adversely affect neighboring states." (Ramakanta, 1877 : 228).

Similarly, an English judge from Gorakhpur wrote a letter stating, "the Gorkhalis are very dangerous, they give us more trouble than good help" (Ramakanta, 1877 : 228). In a similar vein, Mrs. Canning remarked to Hudson, "You praise these Gurkhas like your husband, but I can assure you that they are looked on here as being little better than the rebels" (Hunter, 1896 : 256). The British East India Company officials were skeptical of Nepalese military aid, viewing Nepalese soldiers as outdated and inexperienced compared to the more modern and practiced Indian rebels.

As a result, when the rebellion began, Jang Bahadur's offer of assistance to the British was initially declined. The British East India Company only acknowledged Nepal's willingness to help with a formal thank-you. However, as the British position in India deteriorated, the situation shifted. By June 1857, more than 50 British individuals persecuted by the rebels were given refuge in Nepal's Terai region, though they were barred from entering Kathmandu or the inner Terai. Jang Bahadur even took the drastic step of executing soldiers who supported anti-British sentiments or advocated for

joining the Indian-led struggle instead of aiding the British. This illustrates the complex and strategic decisions made by Nepal during this tumultuous period (Ramakanta, 1877 : 284).

In a letter to the resident of the Company government in Nepal, Jang Bahadur emphasized his commitment to the British cause by reminding sepoys and Umraos not to assist the rebels and highlighting his respect and honor from the British government for his efforts. He noted that he had worked diligently for the good of the British government and his brothers and soldiers (Nepal, 1984 : 48).

As the British position in India deteriorated daily, they grew increasingly apprehensive about the potential for their Gorkhali troops to side with the Indian rebels. Despite these concerns, Jang Bahadur managed to convince the British to accept Nepal's assistance. Consequently, the British agreed to deploy Nepalese troops to support them. Jang Bahadur sent soldiers to India in stages: 6,000 troops on July 2, 1857; 8,000 troops on November 18, 1857; and 9,000 troops on December 10, 1857. On December 30, 1857, Jang Bahadur's forces launched an attack on Gorakhpur (Rana, 1974 : 200).

With the arrival of the Nepalese troops, the British position began to stabilize, and the rebels' position weakened. The support from the Nepalese army enabled the British to regain control of key locations, including Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Faizabad, Amberpur, and other northern regions (Melleson, 1889 : 226). During this campaign, 70 individuals were killed, including Lieutenant Colonel Madan Man Singh Basnet from Nepal, and many others were injured. Notably, Gambhir Singh Rayamazhi from Devidatta Gana distinguished himself by single-handedly killing seven unarmed rebels and was honored with the title of Bahadur by the Indian government (Rana, 1974 : 199).

Jang Bahadur returned to Nepal on May 4, 1858, traveling through Banaras. Meanwhile, some Indian rebels who had survived the conflict began to cross into Nepal, seeking refuge and planning to continue their resistance against the British. In response, Nepal adopted a policy of supporting these Indian freedom fighters, offering them sanctuary and ensuring that those who sought shelter would not face death.

4. Nepal's Policy on Supporting Indian Rebel Soldiers

Nepal provided refuge and support to Indian soldiers who had rebelled against British rule. After the British emerged victorious,

Jang Bahadur returned to Nepal, while the surviving rebels sought safety within Nepal's borders. Nepal adopted a policy of protecting these rebels by sheltering them and ensuring their safety. Following the Sepoy Rebellion, Indian soldiers who fled the conflict were granted asylum in Nepal. However, British forces could not openly enter the Terai region due to the risk of encountering rebel resistance. Additionally, the treaty between Nepal and the British government included provisions preventing British soldiers from entering Nepalese territory (Naraharinath, 1965 : 131-133).

In this context, Nepal's policy of monitoring British activities and protecting Indian rebels led to some British soldiers monitoring Nepalese government camps along the Gandaki River. These British soldiers, acting as spies, relayed information to the Governor General stationed in Fort William, Calcutta. Consequently, the Governor General sent letters to the Nepalese government urging them to expel the Indian rebels from the Terai region. Despite these requests, Nepal largely disregarded them, allowing the Indian freedom fighters to operate in the Terai unhindered.

Contemporary secret and military documents reveal that, although the British were gradually regaining control over the rebellion in India, they struggled with the situation in Oudh and Ruhelkhand, where Farrukhabad became a stronghold for the freedom fighters. Despite numerous challenges, the rebels remained hopeful. Whenever British troops surrounded them, they would retreat through difficult routes into Nepal. When opportunities arose, they would rejoin the conflict or participate in marches. The British, hoping that the malaria-infested Terai would naturally diminish the rebel numbers, chose not to exert significant pressure on Nepal. They also hoped to persuade the Nepalese government to return the remaining rebels. However, the Nepalese government ignored these requests, allowing the rebels to continue their activities in the Terai. This stance is confirmed by the following two documents:

a) The then British Resident in Nepal made the following allegations in a secret letter written to his superior in India on 25 January 1858:

> "Due to the lack of clear orders from the King of Nepal, Nepalese soldiers have not arrested the Indian rebels who have entered Nepal. I requested Lieutenants Bhagat Singh and Haridas of the

Nepalese forces stationed at the Jaleshwar base to keep a strict watch on the activities of the Hindustani soldiers. If they do not want to arrest the Hindustani soldiers, at least they should keep a strict watch on their activities and inform us immediately of any developments" (Ramsey, 1858).

b) Similarly, in a letter written to his superiors in May 1858, the Commissioner of Patna made the following allegations:

On May 22, 1858, the Magistrate of Tirhut observed a platoon of Hindustani rebels within the borders of Nepal. When he requested immediate action from the Nepali military officers stationed at Janakpur, they responded that they would not take any action until they received orders from their government, nor would the British (Letter from officer to Superior, 1858: 240). This incident was not isolated. Earlier, in January, numerous Hindustani soldiers had similarly crossed into Nepal, bringing cannons and elephants without impediment. Despite these activities, no Nepali officials intervened to stop the rebels or return them.

The Nepali government took deliberate steps to prevent British soldiers and spies from infiltrating its borders or acquiring sensitive information. The Nepalese showed clear sympathy for the Indian rebels, and as a result, the Nepalese government only provided the British with information that would not significantly damage their relationship or substantially harm the Indian rebels. This was evident from a letter dated March 6, 1859, from Commander Kelly of the British Field Force to his officers. In the letter, Commander Kelly noted, "The Government of Nepal has not sent me any confidential information to date. The information I receive comes solely from their intelligence sources" (Kelly, 1859).

Similarly, G. Ramsey, a British resident in Nepal, detailed the nature of Nepalese support for the Indian rebels in a letter dated March 8, 1859. Ramsey's correspondence outlined the assistance provided by the Nepalese to the rebels who had taken refuge in the Terai region of Nepal:

"I believe that the Nepalese authorities possess more knowledge about the plans of the Hindustani rebels than they are disclosing. I have received clandestine reports indicating that the Nepalese government is secretly supplying stolen food items to the rebels

while purchasing these items at the stated price. Additionally, the rebels have recently provided the Nepali soldiers with 5,000 guns, spears, shields, and swords. Information from the Border Magistrates and the Government of Nepal suggests that 5,000 weapons and ammunition are being supplied to the rebel forces. While I remain skeptical about these claims, it is possible that the Nepalese administration has distributed food items to border villages to safeguard them from potential looting. A few days ago, an English officer visited Kathmandu and observed some well-bred Anta Arabian horses grazing in the mountains along the route. Upon inquiring with locals, he learned that these horses were purchased from a small village permanently settled in the Terai forest. It is possible that Hindustani rebel soldiers sold these horses to obtain food" (Ramsey, 1859).

Based on the information provided, it is evident that both Nepali and Indian soldiers were aware of the establishment of a base for Indian insurgents in the Terai region of Nepal. British representatives frequently reported that these rebel soldiers found refuge in the Terai. During this time, soldiers stationed near the Terai border did not impede the entry of refugees into Nepal. Instead, they meticulously gathered information about these refugees, including details about their numbers and backgrounds.

On February 2, 1859, Nidhi Pudasaini, a Subedar in the Nepalese Army, sent a letter to Prime Minister Jang Bahadur detailing the arrival of these refugees. In his correspondence, Pudasaini described his efforts in facilitating the movement of cavalry soldiers from notable figures such as Raja Devi Bakhsa Singh of Gonda, Raja Jwala Singh of Churda, Bala Rao, and Begum Hazrat Mahal of Lucknow across the river into Nepal. His men compiled a comprehensive inventory of the refugees and their equipment. The list included 1,160 individuals, 223 guns, 21 spears, and 6 mechloks (a type of firearm). Additionally, it detailed 228 horses, 16 cannons, and 497 swords, as well as 1 bowman, 7 elephants, and 6 camels. Pudasaini assured the Prime Minister that he would continue to closely monitor and record all future arrivals across the river (Pudasaini, 1859).

5. Espionage at the Nepal-India Border

In response to the information suggesting that Nepal was actively supporting the rebels, the British decided to station additional troops at the Nepal-India border. They deployed British soldiers and even a

platoon specifically to monitor Nepali activities and maintain strict surveillance along the river ghats. This increased military presence is documented in a letter from British Colonel Kelly, stationed at Velwabazar camp, dated March 6, 1859.

Colonel Kelly reported that on March 3rd and 4th, Indian rebels had crossed the river and entered Nepal, advancing towards Butwal. There were concerns that the rebels might soon launch an attack on Gorakhpur district. In response to this threat, Colonel Kelly ordered a portion of his troops to establish a defensive position at Badhwaghat. He planned to move the remaining soldiers to Satti Budhwaghat to either cross the river or remain there as needed. Additionally, he instructed that pressure be applied to the Government of Nepal to destroy all boats at Sikraulaghat to prevent any further crossings by the remaining rebel soldiers (Kelly, 1859a).

6. Brave Begum of Lucknow

Another letter details that soldiers loyal to Begum Hazrat Mahal of Lucknow had crossed the Gandak River into Nepal. During the Indian rebellion, not only soldiers but also numerous Indian civilians fought against the British. Following their defeat, these rebels fled to seek refuge within Nepal's borders. At that time, Nepal had a tradition of allowing sadhus (holy men) to enter and leave freely, a practice that extended to all people seeking sanctuary. On May 10, 1859, a British spy reported that rebels had entered Nepal and had been observed by spies. In response, the British swiftly ordered their troops to take action. However, due to Nepal's position as a foreign territory, their army was unable to cross the border. The British then requested the assistance of the Nepali security forces to apprehend the rebels. Unfortunately, the local Nepali authorities did not cooperate and actively prevented the arrests. As a result, the rebels were able to evade capture and continued to stay within Nepal, where they found safety.

After being engaged in continuous conflict for two years starting in 1857, the Indian commanders believed that their situation might improve if they could find refuge in Nepal. By 1859, 60 commanders who had fought in the war had crossed into Nepal and set up camps in various locations. British spies frequently reported on these movements. This information is corroborated by a letter dated April 14, 1859, from Colonel Kelly, who was stationed near the Nepal-India border. In the letter, he wrote that:

"Yesterday, my intelligence captured a Hindustani soldier and brought him before me. This soldier had served in the army of Begum Hazrat Mahal and Khan Bahadur Khan, the Nawab of Bareilly and the then Commander-in-Chief of the Hindustani Army, until the evening of April 7, 1859. At that time, the Begum, her son Shahzada Virjis Qadr, and Nana Saheb Peshwa were in the fort of Nuwakot, located beyond Butwal. They were protected by around 200 bodyguards stationed in the fort, while the rest of their soldiers camped in the dense forests of Butwal. Bala Rao, with his 2,000 soldiers, had established a strong position near Ratanpur, directly opposite our front. It is also reported that the king of Gonda, Devi Vakhsh, was setting up his camp with a large force a short distance west of Dukharari, near Tulsipur" (Kelly, 1859b).

Following two engagements with our troops on March 25 and 28, the rebels' morale has declined, and many are abandoning the city. Despite Bala Rao's efforts to bolster his troops with daily rations of half a seer of rice per person, the rebels are unlikely to surrender unless they are driven to starvation. All rebel soldiers have been informed that they will receive pardons if they surrender, but it appears that very few will agree to do so unless their situation becomes dire.

Currently, there are no remaining rebel forces on the east side of Butwal. Brigadier Rowcroft has informed us that there is a significant possibility of a rebel platoon advancing towards our front. In response to this potential threat, I have dispatched four platoons, equipped with cavalry and artillery, under the command of the Lieutenant Colonel of His Majesty's Thirteenth Infantry to Bansi. This move is intended to prepare for any possible rebel advances and ensure the security of our position. (Kelly, 1859). When Colonel Kelly wrote the letter to his superiors, Khan Bahadur Khan of India and his minister Shobharam were in Nepal. The Hindustani army was suffering from malaria, and many of these patriotic Hindustani heroes succumbed to Terai fever. The extent of the casualties remains unrecorded. This situation was mentioned in contemporary British newspapers, The Bengal Halakhwar and the India Gazette as follows:

Bala Rao, the brother of Nana Saheb (Peshwa), Talukdar Hardatta Singh of Bhauni near Bahraich, and the Nawab of

Najibabad died on July 19, 1859, in the forest near Butwal within the Nepal border due to extreme heat. Almost all the rebel soldiers were suffering from Terai malaria. Nana Saheb, who was very sick himself, said that he would either give up his life there or die fighting on the battlefield. The Begum (Hazrat Mahal) has held out bravely so far. If she manages to move to Pargana or Tirhut, she might cause more trouble, which seems to be her plan (The Bengal Halknabar and India Gazette of July 1858, 1858).

7. Asylum to Wives, Families or Women of Rebel Forces

The government of Nepal and its military chiefs had sympathy for the Hindustani rebels. This is evident from a report sent by General Badrinarsingh Rana of the Nepalese Army to his superiors on March 24, 1859. At that time, 4,000 British soldiers, equipped with many cannons, suddenly reached Pali Majhpali, Gandak Tari, against the rules. Subsequently, Begum Hazrat Mahal left and reached Butwal. The report states:

"Intelligence reports that Begum's soldiers were encamped near Sauraha. As soon as she saw the arrival of a large British army, she quickly fled towards Butwal. A large number of women, children, and servants also accompanied her." No armed men were seen with them. The Begum sent me a letter from the keeper at Butwal's Palace. In the letter, she expressed her wish to come to the mountain. I responded that I did not have the authority to make such a decision. Despite this, I could not bring myself to force the innocent children and women back down. Therefore, I allowed them to come up to the mountain. My conscience did not permit me to force these sheltered refugees to descend again. I will continue to follow orders as before (Rana, 1859). In this way, it seems that the Indian independence fighters have started requesting asylum from the Nepalese government.

8. Petition by the Rebel Regiment of Nasirabad to the Government of Nepal

A very important Indian Freedom Army that took refuge in Nepal was the Nasirabad Regiment. This regiment had fought alongside the British on several fronts before entering Nepal without success. Exhausted from living in the jungle, suffering from hunger and disease, Haresh Khai and its officers requested the Nepal

government. The request bore the stamp and signature of General Ram Bakhsh of the 9th First Battalion, Brigadier Major Mansharam, and Gangasingh Lunt of the 9th Nasirabad Division. The application was sent by the Hindustani soldiers to the Government of Nepal on April 22, 1859, on behalf of all 4,000 soldiers and officers in their cantonment in Nepal. The following was mentioned in the petition:

> "We, the entire army, rebelled against the British (Firangis). The reason is that a hundred years ago, these Englishmen came to Hindustan and gradually raised their forces, eventually becoming the masters of all the native states of India. Our forefathers served them, and we did the same. In return, the British government always took care of us and our children. With God's grace and our help, the British conquered the kingdoms they wanted. Thousands of our Hindustanis died in these wars, yet we never sought any excuse or rebelled. Everyone knows how well we served the British. But in 1857, the British issued an order that new cartridges brought from Britain must be used. These cartridges contained cow and pig fat. Not only that, they also ordered us to eat wheat flour mixed with human bone dust" (India-Nepal Magazine, 1980).

First of all, this work started in the Meerut cantonment. The soldiers, for the sake of their religion and honour, refused to accept the order. To force compliance, the British soldiers stood before us, prepared cannons, and confiscated the weapons of 84 of our soldiers, imprisoning them. Because of this, we and our countrymen stood shoulder to shoulder and fought the British everywhere to defend our religion. We did not fight to gain property or kingdoms, despite British claims to the contrary. The British propagated that we fought for these reasons, deceiving many kings and chiefs who didn't care about their religion and honour.

These misguided leaders believed the false statements of the British and prepared to fight against us. As a result, we had to continue fighting for the next two years. The kings and chiefs who supported us in this struggle faced significant suffering. We fought continuously for two years to protect our religion and honour because, for both Hindus and Muslims, if their religion is destroyed, they have nothing left in the world. Despite our efforts, we received no help because all the kings and chieftains sided with the British. We fought everywhere for the sake of religion, endured hunger, and

faced countless hardships. Now, we know that no one can protect our religion because the British have won over everyone and are trying to arrest us by paying large sums of money (India-Nepal Magazine, 1980).

9. Negative Policies of the Nepalese Government Toward the Rebels

After returning from assisting the British, the relationship between Janga Bahadur and the British deteriorated for a period. Consequently, despite the need to retract his actions, Janga Bahadur, the Prime Minister of Nepal, issued two orders that created a strained atmosphere between Nepal and the British for some time (Foreign secret consultation of 26th November 1859). Among the main leaders of the rebellion in the Terai of Nepal during this time were Begum Hazrat Mahal, her son Virjis Kadar, Peshwa Nana Saheb and his brother Bala Rao, Devi Waks, Veni Madho, Jwala Prasad, Devi Din of the Nashirwad Brigade, Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, Nizam Muhammad Hussain Raja Diggvijay Singh of Gorakhpur, Maulvi Muhammad Sarfarz Ali Adi was the main one (Russel, 1896: 48). Seeing that these rebels could regain their lost state and position in India if they could obtain the help of the Government of Nepal, Raja Gangadhar Rao and Bala Rao wrote a letter to Janga Bahadur on 22 January 1859 in which they said:

> Now we are taking refuge in Nepal. So you can do whatever you want to hold us or keep us free. Now we will give one crore rupees to Nepal and five crore rupees after taking back Lucknow and Gorakhpur. No one can save our religion except you. We are cows, do what you want (Gangadhar and Bala, 1859).

In this situation, Janga Bahadur was unable to take action against the rebels. On one hand, he wanted to support the rebels, while on the other, he faced the challenge of enforcing his orders. He even informed Dr Oldfield that although he had issued orders to eliminate the rebels, he was uncertain whether the troops would follow through with them. (Pravin, 1971 : 29).

Similarly, on the other hand, killing cows and Brahmins within the borders of Nepal is considered a great sin and a big crime legally. Therefore, he said that the said work cannot be done. Understanding the complex dynamics between the rebels and the British, Janga Bahadur sought to mediate. On February 27, 1859, he sent a letter to

Begum Hazrat Mahal through Captain Niranjan Rayamazhi, advising her to reconcile with the British for her benefit. In response, Nawab Ali Muhammad Khan, also known as Mammu Khan, acting on behalf of Begum Hazrat Mahal, rejected the offer, stating that they did not need Janga Bahadur's assistance. This refusal put Janga Bahadur in a difficult position. Subsequently, he was arrested by the British with Janga Bahadur's assistance, tried, and sentenced to exile in the Andaman Islands (Pravin, 1971 : 29).

At this time, Janga Bahadur changed his approach towards the rebels. He arrested Nawab Khan Bahadur Kha of Ruhelkhand and handed him over to the British. The British executed him by hanging in the main square of Bareilly in March 1860.

The British made several attempts to return Begum Hazrat Mahal and her son Virjis Kadra to their own country, and they also tried through the government of Nepal. However, the Nepalese government did not comply. Many rebel soldiers, exhausted by the situation, discarded their weapons and quietly returned to their homes. The British government took no action against these soldiers. Some soldiers chose to retreat to the jungles of Nepal rather than submit to British control. Eventually, the Nepalese government ordered all of them to move to Chitwan, as noted in a document by Virjis Kadra.

After the order of Janga Bahadur, they sent all their soldiers in different groups towards Body, Chitwan, Butwal and Pallonuwakot. The Nepalese government used to take guns and other weapons from those rebel soldiers and give them rice. Facing this kind of grief, Bala Rao, Nana Saheb and several friends of Begum Hazrat Mahal, Rana Venimadhav, Davir Janga Bahadur, Raja Jograj Singh of Vaiswade, Raja Devi Wakhsha Singh of Gonda, Har Prasad of Khairabad, Thakur Hardatta Singh of Waudi, Bahraich, Nana Saheb's friend Azimulla Khan and Gulaw of Werua. The lions were killed one by one. Because of this, Begum Haresh started eating. The British tried as much as possible to take him and his son back. But he liked the sad freedom of Nepal better than the captivity of the British. In the end, falling in love with her beloved land and her purpose, she decided to seek refuge in Nepal and requested the Nepalese government to grant her refuge.

Before seeking refuge in Nepal, Begum Hazrat Mahal gathered all her diamonds and jewels and sent them as a gift to Janga Bahadur.

She did this to demonstrate her goodwill toward the Nepalese government and Janga Bahadur. Ultimately, filled with despair and without options, she arrived in Kathmandu. Although initially housed in a temporary residence, Janga Bahadur soon built a palace called Barfbagu near his palace to accommodate her. The Begum also restored and improved an existing mosque, turning it into a fort-like structure, and appointed Sarfraz Ali, a scholar from Gorakhpur who had studied in Lucknow and worked as a Ukajiu in Delhi, to oversee the mosque. Sarfraz Ali began offering prayers there but passed away within one to two years. The Government of Nepal allocated a monthly allowance of 500 rupees to cover the expenses of the Begum and her son. After Begum Hazrat Mahal arrived in Nepal, Janga Bahadur wrote a letter to Nana Saheb. The content of Janga Bahadur's letter is not known, but Nana Saheb's response to it included the following details:

> We have received your letter. Although we are far away, we have heard much about the fame of Nepal. I have studied the character and history of many past Indian kings and assessed the present rulers. However, your qualities are truly remarkable. There was no hesitation on your part when you went to assist the British, despite their longstanding disdain for your people. Your generosity is boundless. Given such exceptional generosity, would it be unreasonable to hope for your support for the Peshwa as well? Remember that the ancestors of the Peshwas have always been allies to you and your people, and I am a descendant of those Peshwas. If you can find space in your heart for your enemies, surely you can extend that same kindness to your friends.

The Peshwa's signature was affixed to this letter. Additionally, Nana Saheb sent his brother, Shrimant Bala Saheb, to speak with Janga Bahadur personally. Upon receiving the letter, Janga Bahadur dispatched one of his lieutenants, Colonel Balbhadra Singh, to meet and converse with the Indian freedom fighters. During their meeting with Balbhadra Singh, the soldiers expressed the following:

> We are fighting to protect the Hindu religion, and Maharaja Janga Bahadur is also a Hindu. Therefore, he should support us. If he aids us or directs his officers to lead us, we can resume our struggle against Calcutta. We are committed to achieving our freedom and following his commands. Any territories we

capture in the war will be placed under the Gorkha government. If direct support is not possible, we request at least to be allowed to seek refuge in his kingdom, where we will remain under his command (Savarkar Vinayak Damodar, 1947 : 518-519).

The British have extended a significant opportunity for mercy by offering a policy of pardon. Therefore, you should surrender your weapons to the British and seek refuge with them. In response, the Indian leaders provided the following reply:

> We have also heard the announcement, but we refuse to repay the blood of our brothers by submitting to them. Maharaja Janga Bahadur is a Hindu, and we do not wish to fight against the Gorkhas. We are prepared to accept his support if offered, without hesitation. However, on June 18, 1863, the Indian English newspaper Friend of India reported that Nana Saheb was being hidden by Janga Bahadur himself. This publication led the British government to suspect that Janga Bahadur was sheltering Nana Saheb. The suspicion arose because Nana Saheb had sent a letter to Janga Bahadur, who responded in kind (Times of India, 1978).

Before the British government could formally question Janga Bahadur about these suspicions, Janga Bahadur wrote to Resident Ramsey, addressing various newspaper reports that claimed Nana Saheb was in Nepal or being concealed by the Nepalese government. Janga Bahadur stated that if anyone could prove that Nana Saheb was indeed in Nepal and being hidden by the Nepalese government, a reward of 1 million rupees would be offered. In response, the Indian leaders provided the following reply:

> After receiving the letter, Resident Remsey tried to deceive Jang Bahadur by saying that since there is freedom of speech in India, newspapers are free to write anything they hear or see. After this, there is no mention of what happened to Nana Saheb, and where he went. However, some other British officials suspected that Nana Saheb had died somewhere within the borders of Nepal (Rana, 1863). After some time, in a note written by Mirsubba Rambhakta written in a copy of Chandrashamsher's library, it is mentioned that Unanarao 1 Balarao 1 was handed over to someone in the Jhari of Butwal, so it seems that Nanarao died inside Nepal. In this situation, the news published in the above-mentioned English magazine Friend of India on 18 June

1863 and the suspicions made by the high-ranking British officials at that time appear to be true (Dixit, 1978 : 70).

However, an article in the Times of India from July 1978 claimed that Nana Saheb, whose grandson wrote the piece, died at the age of 102 in the Pratapgarh district of India. The article also noted that Nana Saheb had trained in archery. This claim aligns with the possibility that Nana Saheb was in Nepal during Janga Bahadur's time. Janga Bahadur and his brothers did not fully trust the British, which contrasts with the approach of Bir Shamsher and his brothers, who provided substantial support. As a result, the Indian freedom fighters, including Virjis Kadar, gradually returned to India, with Kadar going back to Calcutta. Therefore, the account mentioned in the Times of India appears to be credible (Times of India, 1978).

On September 12, 1950, Shree Laxmanji of Pune, India, wrote a letter to Major General Sharda Shamsher, the then Director of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, through the Indian Embassy in Nepal. In his letter, Srilakshmanji, a member of Baji Rao's clan, requested the return of Baji Rao and his family's properties within the borders of Nepal (Gupta, 1950). Begum Hazrat Mahal passed away in Nepal in April 1879, 19 years after seeking refuge there. Her mortal remains were buried in front of the mosque she had repaired and improved, far from her birthplace (Pravin, 1971 : 29). With her death, a significant chapter in the history of the Indian War of Independence of 1857 ended.

The fate of the Indian rebels who accompanied Begum Hazrat Mahal and sought refuge in various parts of Nepal remains unknown. However, her son, Virjis Qadar, later travelled to Calcutta during the reign of Bir Shamsher and passed away there. His grave still exists in a place called Khizarpur. Thus, Nepal's dual role during this period was notable: while it provided refuge to Indian rebels, Jang Bahadur Rana maintained Nepal's independence by keeping the British government satisfied through military support.

10. Conclusion

The findings reveal that Nepal, under Janga Bahadur's leadership, aligned with the British to preserve its sovereignty while simultaneously offering refuge to Indian rebels such as Begum Hazrat Mahal and Nana Saheb. This dual approach demonstrated Nepal's intricate position, balancing its geopolitical strategy with cultural solidarity.

Historical records and contemporary accounts highlighted Nepal's essential military support to the British and its covert aid to the rebels. This dual role led to increased British military surveillance at the Nepalese border, reflecting British concerns about Nepal's ambivalent stance. Janga Bahadur's diplomatic efforts to mediate between the British and rebels, along with his later arrests and conflicts, further illustrate the challenges of maintaining sovereignty while navigating regional alliances.

The study underscores Nepal's careful diplomatic maneuvering during the conflict, revealing that previous historical accounts may have oversimplified Nepal's role as merely a British ally. Instead, Nepal's strategy involved a delicate balance of support and non-support to affirm its independence and sovereignty.

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Times of India, July 2,1978.   ★

Refugees, Citizenship and the Laws : An Indian Perspective

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Abstract

India has experienced a fair share of refugees from different parts of the world into its jurisdiction since independence. There has been a quite flexible approach while dealing refugees by India. The sole ground of being a refugee brings in a lot of ambiguity in the minds of the persecuted. Their future remains hazy. In this context the experiences in the host country becomes fairly important. Citizenship remains the most contested idea that revolve around the refugees. Recently in India, Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 came into existence with a lot of controversies attached to it. With the gazette notification specifying the set of rules that shall bring this act into implementation mode, it is imperative to know its impact in the domestic politics of the country and how it is going to bring changes in the lives of those persecuted refugees residing in the country since long. The act brought in scope for many refugees in India from three countries to apply for citizenship as per the provisions and eligibility. The present paper examines the act and its relevance. It also identifies the myths and realities accompanied with the statute and how it brought in a rife in the country amongst the largest minority community.

Keywords

Migration, Refugees, Citizenship, CAA, Persecution.

3

Refugees, Citizenship and the Laws : An Indian Perspective

1. Introduction

Throughout the course of history, the phenomena of human migration have been an important element. From ancient times till the present, there have been many different types of migration around the world. It has happened all around the world for a variety of man-made and natural reasons. Such movements tend to be explained considerably more thoroughly by the concept of migration. Bartram, Porose, and Monforte (2014) define migration as the movement of people, or individuals, from one location to another. It is a deeply ingrained historical phenomena and a universal component of human existence. It makes more sense to view it as a social phenomenon with broader connections across a range of domains, including politics, economics, culture, identity, and so forth.

Migration has likely always been a common occurrence since the beginning of human history. Whether it was the early migration of people in search of food and shelter, the migration that occurred during the age of mercantilism for the purpose of trade, or the arrival of Europeans in various parts of the world during the colonization, the motivation has always been survival and better sustenance. It persisted throughout the post-colonial period and attained great popularity during the neo-liberal era, when barriers were lessened, individuals could travel around more easily, and people were more motivated by the desire to improve their standard of living.

India has always seen both domestic and foreign migration (Tomar, 2020). It is clear from historical records that migration from central Asia to India formed the significant racial makeup of the nation's population. The inhabitants were drawn to the Harappa Civilization once more because of its planned architecture, ideal location, and improved means of subsistence through trade and agriculture. India saw numerous foreign invasions during the Middle Ages as a result of its immense wealth, which finally allowed

the Mughals to conquer most of this magnificent country. The modern era recognizes the arrival of Europeans in Asia and Africa for trade, which led to the process of colonization. These incidents all demonstrate how individuals travel from one location to another for a variety of reasons.

Nationalities and foreignness are recognized as crucial points of differentiation in contemporary societies, which are defined by the existence of nation-states as fundamental institutions (Waldinger & Lichter, 2003). While there may be many innate similarities between migrants and natives when people relocate, nationality remains the most significant factor in and around these types of migrants. Erdal & Oeppen (2020) propose that these migrations may be categorized as voluntary or involuntary, depending on the variables involved.

A refugee is any person, male or female, who must from their place of residence and country because they have a justifiable fear of being mistreated because of their race, religion, nationality, gender, membership in a certain social group, or political ideas. Human rights abuses, major socioeconomic injustices that force people to flee their homes, and societal collapse all have a dramatic impact on refugees and internally displaced people. More people have been affected by the rise in human rights abuses and violent conflicts, which has increased migration and brought in a large number of refugees and internally displaced people on a worldwide basis. A thorough analysis of the refugee problems demands the development of a precise standard for determining who is considered a refugee. Many attempts have been undertaken to define refugees in a way that is legally enforceable.

Other terms that coexist with the term "refugee" are "illegal immigrant" and "asylum seeker". In nations where separate procedures are followed, a person whose asylum claim is still seeking a decision from the country where it was filed is referred to as an asylum seeker. It's crucial to remember that not everyone who applies for asylum will be given it in the end, but every refugee starts out as an asylum seeker. A person who is requesting asylum may be classified as a refugee, displaced person, or migrant, including an economic immigrant. A person who formally requests permission to remain in a foreign nation does so as an asylum seeker. This status remains in effect until a decision has been made about the application.

The decision as to whether an individual will be granted protection and recognized as a refugee, or whether their request will be denied and they will become an illegal immigrant who must leave the country and may face deportation, rests with the immigration authorities of the country in which the individual has filed for asylum. The asylum seeker may be awarded refugee status and recognized as a refugee if their circumstances meet the requirements specified in the 1951 Refugee Convention. An illegal immigrant is a person who leaves their home country in search of employment, typically as a labourer. However, because they enter the nation without a passport or any other documentation, their entry is regarded as illegal. These kind of people usually cross borders and hide their identity by mixing themselves amidst the workers or labourers in that country.

2. Refugee Influx in India

According to Khadria (2005), South Asia is a region that has had significant forced and involuntary migration. Ethnic disputes, cultural rejection, and governmental and military repression of the nation's minorities are among the causes. Such a dark issue has been faced by South Asian nations including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and even Tibet and Myanmar in the wider region. Given India's prominence in the region and on a worldwide scale, there is a significant influx of refugees into its borders. India continues to house the greatest number of refugees in South Asia despite not being a party to either the 1951 Convention or the 1967 Protocol, which has about 140 signatories.

Since its inception, India has taken in a considerable number of refugees. There is a clear connection between the South Asian region's ethnic affinity and the refugee crisis in India. Because of the nation's egalitarian constitution, both its people and these newly arrived migrants who have endured severe persecution are protected from violations of human rights. The Indian Constitution's Articles 14 and 21 address the rights to equality and life of the nation's citizens as well as those who are not citizens. The approach that India has been taking to assist these refugees is based on a case-by-case analysis that results in the creation of different SOPs for refugees from each of these nations (Mittal & Tomar, 2022). Over time, the dynamics involved have changed.

Table-1 : Data of Refugees and Asylum Seekers of the Present Year, 2024

Year	Country of Asylum	Country of Asylum (ISO)	Refugees under UNHCR's Mandate	Asylum-seekers	Source	Month
2024	India	IND	251362	13792	Official estimates, UNHCR operational data	May

Source: UNHCR Refugee Data Finder

3. Factors affecting in Choosing India as the Destination

Safe haven, a concept that aims to ensure people's safety in a country, hold great promise as it can help end significant human rights violations. However, in practice, these structures are often adopted as a second-best alternative when nations are unwilling to provide refugee protection to those fleeing political violence (Arulanantham, 2000).

In India, most refugees and asylum seekers coexist with host communities in urban areas. 36% of the refugees are minors, while 46% of the refugees are women and girls. After decades of accepting a wide range of refugee groups, India has provided solutions for a large number of people who were forcefully displaced.

UNHCR collaborates closely with a wide range of stakeholders, such as line ministries, community organizations, and non-governmental organizations, to support the government's and its citizens' efforts to aid refugees in 11 states. UNHCR promotes solutions and self-reliance while concentrating on protection needs and carrying out RSD and registration.

Tucker (2018) asserts that there are several options for migration destinations and that these options might provide a hierarchy of justifications for choices. Comparative research has been employed to understand the choice of locations made by refugees from different nationalities in the receiving states. Moving decisions have been found to be influenced by a variety of factors, including social networks, information exchange, chain migration, trans-border ethnic linkages, language, labor market opportunities, education,

welfare, and the desire to live in a state that upholds democracy, freedom, and human rights. In addition, personal experiences, historical links, cultural affinity, and political situations can all have a big impact on migration decisions. To adequately comprehend and address migration patterns, policymakers and academics must acquire a thorough understanding of the complex interactions between these various components.

India appeals to South Asian refugees as a safe haven for a variety of reasons. India has developed into a prospective world power in terms of geopolitics. It should be acknowledged that political unrest has historically been widespread in South Asia. Furthermore, refugees looking for stability and prospects for a better life find India to be an appealing destination due to its robust economy and diversified culture. The confluence of these elements adds to India's image as a friendly and hospitable nation for people escaping violence and persecution in South Asia. India's standing as a friendly and hospitable nation for people escaping violence and persecution in South Asia has only gotten stronger. However, India has exhibited political stability and democracy in contrast to other nations in the region. In a similar vein, the International Monetary Fund has named India's economy the one with the quickest rate of growth worldwide. As a result, India is becoming a more desirable place to settle down and make a living. In South Asia, cultural affinity has also proven to be a significant factor in determining the fate of refugees. As a result, this community of refugees has integrated into Indian society. It also affects the demography of the area and presents a difficulty for the nation in handling security issues. In addition, refugees looking for better opportunities and a higher standard of living have been drawn to India by its robust economic growth. To preserve stability and security, the nation must confront the social and economic issues that the refugee crisis has brought about.

Since its founding, India-which is well-known for its long-standing reputation of hospitality-has had a sizable influx of refugees, according to Mittal & Tomar (2022). Based on the fundamental tenet of "Atithi Devo Bhava", India has addressed the issues of refugees from almost all of its neighbors. India has not disregarded the humanitarian needs of refugees who are being persecuted for political and social reasons in their home countries, despite not having ratified either the 1951 Convention on Refugees or the 1967 Protocol, which amends the convention. India has conti-

nuously protected both its citizens and international residents by upholding the fundamentals of human rights.

India holds the belief that human rights are universal and apply to all individuals, regardless of their nationality, place of residence, gender, ethnic background, race, religion, or language. Although India does not adhere to any international legislation regarding refugees, it played an important role in the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which served as the main motivation for the development of the UN Convention on Refugees in 1951. The Indian delegation played a crucial role in the preparation of the declaration at the United Nations. India has also ratified the six fundamental human rights agreements. This could be viewed as a justification for India's proactive involvement in addressing refugee issues.

4. Understanding Citizenship

State and citizens are the two sides of the same coin. A state cannot flourish without its citizens. While citizens are being recognized as one just because of the existence of its state. A citizen is someone who is protected by the state and has a duty of loyalty to it. It is a two-way relationship in which the state grants him civil, political, and social rights, he must fulfil his duties and obligations toward the state. Therefore, citizenship denotes a reciprocal relationship between the state and the individual.

As a state, India has emerged with democratic values supported and assisted by the parliamentary system. This parliamentary form of the government formulates laws for those residing within its territory whether citizens or non-citizens. The parliament in India has the legitimate power to make laws that may define the legal aspects of citizenship and may also recognise or grant citizenship to people through its statutes and the provisions mentioned in the Part II of the Indian Constitution.

Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 is the recent development with regard to the amendments made in the Citizenship Act, 1955 that provides provisions for granting citizenship in India.

5. Citizenship Laws and the Historical Past

The provisions of the Indian Citizenship Law of 1955 and the Constitution were initially fairly accommodating. But as time has gone on and the situation has changed due to a host of problems

involving the influx of illegal immigrants and refugees across the border, India has tightened its citizenship regulations to safeguard both its present population and its sovereignty. The first piece of legislation passed by the Indian Parliament to restrict citizenship acquisition on the grounds of jus soli-as previously defined by the 1955 Act-was the Citizenship Amendment Act, 1987. The purpose of the amendment is to shield the native Assamese population from the adverse effects of economic marginalization brought about by the large-scale migration of undocumented migrants from Bangladesh.

A further modification to the citizenship law was made in 2004, which prohibited all illegal migrants (those who cross borders without proper documentation) from applying for Indian citizenship on the two main grounds-naturalization and registration (Malischewski, 2018). As a result, the two amendments from 1987 and 2004 illustrated how strict the laws were when it came to giving these unlawful migrants citizenship. However, the Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019 gave marginalized groups who had fled persecution in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan the chance to become citizens of India.

6. Refugees and Citizenship in India

The sole idea of being stateless brings us to a question of citizenship. As suggested by United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) a four-pronged approach to statelessness involves identification, prevention, reduction and protection (Malischewski, 2018). There is an ambiguity worldwide in terms of the total number of stateless people. Therefore, the identification of stateless people remains crucial. According to the UNHCR officials the most effective and easiest way to deal statelessness is prevention and figuring out ways to avoid the situation of statelessness. Reduction seeks to removing all kinds of barriers towards acquiring a recognition through citizenship or nationality. Those who remain stateless need to be protected. Being stateless does not mean that they are deprived of rights and respect (Malischewski, 2018).

7. Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019

The idea of citizenship is centred on the refugees because it offers hope to those who are being persecuted in their sad life. A person's status as an integral and accountable part of a political community is referred to as citizenship. According to Bellamy (2008), a citizen is a

person who is protected by the state and owes allegiance to it. A refugee's life and citizenship are intertwined.

In India, citizenship is mentioned in Part II of the Indian Constitution and is governed through the Citizenship Act, 1955 and further amendments made in it. With the recent amendment brought in by the Government led by the Bhartiya Janta Party, it enhances the scope of attaining citizenship for those within the ambit of this particular amendment act. This act was passed by the Parliament of India in December, 2019. Subsequently, the rules for implementing CAA were notified in the gazette of India in March 2024. CAA seeks to amend the Citizenship Act of 1955. The act pertains to those refugees who belong to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian community and have travelled from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan due to persecution and have entered the Indian territorial jurisdiction on or before 31st December 2014.

According to the CAA's provisions, members of the afore-mentioned communities will not be regarded as illegal immigrants, allowing them to apply for naturalization or registration and eventually become citizens of India. Additionally, the act encourages such individuals to be exempt from the Passport Act of 1920 and the Foreigner's Act of 1946, which govern foreigners' admission and exit and require them to have a valid passport, respectively.

The Government of India has issued regulations requiring migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan to provide proof of their place of origin, religion, date of admission into India, and proficiency in any Indian language. Bangladesh is extremely important to this study because it falls under the CAA's purview. It is also crucial to consider the criticism levelled at CAA for failing to include Muslim migrants in its analysis of those arriving from Myanmar.

8. Conclusion

As a parliamentary democracy, India must have clear laws addressing the situation of refugees living there. All refugees should be treated equally under this rule, regardless of their birthplace, sex, country, religion, or color. The study's findings may suggest that India adopt a unified refugee policy to maintain parity with refugees arriving from other nations. Throughout the investigation, it was noted how the state's disparate handling of refugees from Bangla-

desh and Myanmar leads to inequality among both groups of people seeking asylum. It is important to distinguish CAA from refugee policies as it exclusively pertains to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Citizenship Amendment Act not to be treated as a refugee law. It is important to note that the Citizenship Amendment Act does not apply to refugees, but rather seeks to provide citizenship to persecuted minorities from neighboring countries. This distinction is crucial in understanding the purpose and scope of the legislation. The Act aims to fast-track the process of granting Indian citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians who have faced religious persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Act has faced criticism for excluding Muslims from these provisions. Critics argue that this exclusion goes against the secular principles of the Indian Constitution and discriminates against Muslims. Additionally, concerns have been raised about the potential impact of the Act on the social fabric and religious diversity of India.

The CAA declassifies the requirements for applying for citizenship as well. It offers no answers to the different problems and difficulties that refugees and asylum seekers encounter. In order for the refugees in India to receive basic healthcare, sanitation, and education as well as be able to support their families, there must be consistency. In general, this would preserve Indian customs and perhaps pave the way for India to become the VishwaGuru in the near future.

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Unraveling the Threads : Weak Governance, Corruption and Disaster Risk in Nepal

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Abstract

Nepal has been facing significant flood, landslide, earthquake, and other natural catastrophes. The extensive crisis occurs during these catastrophes and each society suffers a lot in tackling humanitarian needs, especially the immediate response. Most of the developing countries like Nepal have been facing this during the crisis period. They are not able to timely provide the humanitarian needs to the needy ones. State institutions and mechanisms play a crucial role during the time of crisis. However, existing state institutions and mechanisms are not being able to play an effective role to overcome the crisis. In major disasters, state institutions and mechanisms are not able to function properly. This paper explores the major reasons and causes of this problem. It also assesses why the state institutions and mechanisms are not being able to play a vital role in tackling humanitarian needs in time of crisis. The findings of this paper are the weak governance and corruption as major causes behind it. Similarly, this paper also proposes for rebuilding government agencies, armed forces, anticorruption agencies and local government institutions to tackle humanitarian needs in time of crisis.

Keywords

Crisis, Disaster, State Institution, Weak Governance, Corruption. Nepal.

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Unraveling the Threads : Weak Governance, Corruption and Disaster Risk in Nepal

1. Introduction

The state institutions are not able to work effectively during disasters in the developing countries. Due to the lack of concrete policy and rules for implementation on rescue, relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction management, the states are not being able to show their strong and effective presence during the time of disaster. The affected people in the devastating earthquake that occurred on 25 April 2015, could not get basic humanitarian needs on time even in the capital city of Nepal (Kantipur National Daily, 2072a). The government of Nepal had announced to distribute an immediate support amount of Rs.15 thousand to the survivors whose houses were destroyed in the earthquake. It was to be distributed within Jestha 2072 B.S. but till the third week of Mangsir this amount has not been distributed in some districts (Kantipur National Daily, 2072b).

Not only in 2015 earthquake, but same situation is also happened in other types of disaster in Nepal. The Koshi River was bristly flooded in 2008 A.D. The flood had devastating impacts in Paschim Kushaha, Shreepur and Haripur villages of Sunsari districts. Initial estimation of damage claimed almost 50,000 population and more than 7000 households were affected (Dixit 2009). According to the government data a total of 42,765 people and 7563 households were directly affected due to the flood (DAO, 2010).

Various kinds of disasters are occurring in Nepal time and again. Earthquakes, floods, landslides, and various epidemics are recurring from time to time (Acharaya & Ghimire, 2071). Nepal is highly vulnerable to earthquake where small and large magnitude of it occurs time and again (NEMRC, 2023). The hilly and mountain regions are vulnerable to landslides and flood due to steep terrain and rivers. Each year the problems of landslides are recurring in Nepal (NDRRP, 2023). The government is not being able to show its effective presence during these kinds of disasters.

Government officials are claiming that the humanitarian help is not being able to be delivered to the victims on time solely due to the natural calamities. Is this the sole reason or are there any other causes? The evidence after the study says, "the weak governance and corruption in the state institutions is a major cause for not being able to provide the victims of the disaster with immediate basic supports." Not only in Nepal, seeing the international experiences too the weak governance and corruption seem to be the major factor (Lewis, 2010, Ewins, et. al. 2006 and European Commission, 2005). The conclusion of this article is that if these reconstructed institutions and mechanism could be made corruption free and good governance could be established then only their effectiveness could be increased.

There are five sections in this article : *first*, Introduction, *second*, state institutions to tackle disaster : an experience from Japan and India, *third*, existing legal provision and government institutions to tackle disaster in Nepal, *fourth*, weak governance and corruption : the main problem of tackling humanitarian needs in time of disaster and *finally*, strengthening and rebuilding state institutions to tackle disaster.

The research was conducted over a period of two months from October 2020 to January 2021. The research applies qualitative methodologies, as the research targets collect primary as well as secondary data from various sources. Theoretical sampling has been used for the data collection. Similarly, saturation had been used for ensuring that adequate and quality data are collected to support the study. Data collection continued till point data saturation was reached. Four specific data collection techniques were applied to conduct the research. These are content analysis, interview, observation, and case study.

2. State Institutions to tackle Disaster : An Experience from Japan and India

Japan is taken as a model all over the world in disaster management. The effectiveness of state institutions is a major factor in providing the survivors of disaster with immediate humanitarian support. The earthquake and the subsequent tsunami that struck Japan on March 11, 2011, and the following release of radiation from the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power station, constitute one of the greatest disasters to strike Japan. The initial shock was measured at a magnitude of 9.00 on the Richter scale (Panda, 2012). Japan has an

experience of good management of this disaster at a time. Japan could prevent a huge human loss with the managed mobilization of state institutions (Harvey 2009).

Sakaki and Lukner (2013 : 159-160) have stated major 6 bases for Japan for easy crisis management. *First*, the issue of political leadership and sectionalism in the bureaucracy. *Second*, the need for an information and communication strategy. *Third*, the flexible integration of volunteer efforts. *Fourth*, the use of the Self Defense Forces in domestic and international crises. *Fifth*, the importance of local government- and community-led contributions. *Finally*, the risks of delayed or inept decision-making caused by Japan's political party system. Nakabayashi (2010) argues that the Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act, 1961 clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the municipalities, prefectures, and the national government when faced with a disaster. This is the major reason to immediate response to disaster management in Japan. Carafano (2011) argues that preparedness and response, communication skills, critical infrastructure organization and international assistance are the key factors to manage the disaster properly in Japan.

In 2001 January 26 a major earthquake of magnitude 6.9 on Richter scale occurred in the state of Gujarat in India at 8:46 am local time. It lasted for 2 minutes. More than 7,600 villages of 19 districts were partially or fully affected; 13,805 human lives were lost in the state and approximately 167,000 people suffered minor or severe injury (Mishra, 2004). There was significant damage to the infrastructures with facilities such as hospitals, schools, the electric power grid, water systems, bridges, and roads. Over 1.2 million houses were damaged to varying degrees, and more than 200,000 of them collapsed completely (GSDMA, 2001). The federal and province governments quickly helped in many forms including cash, medical supplies, communication teams, shelters, food, clothing, transport, and relief workers (Tiwari, 2015). Local food markets were active within two days and building construction material was available in key locations in ten days and in less than 60 days in almost all other affected locations (Bhatta, 2009).

It was possible only with the active engagement of stakeholders. According to Price and Bhatta (2009) the major three stakeholders played vital role to provide the humanitarian support in time of earthquake disaster in Gujarat. *First*, the immediate response of the

federal government of India. *Second*, the role of state government to provide support to survivors. A single authority was created with the power to manage recovery and subsequent preparedness and mitigation efforts state-wide. The Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) was established with the chief minister as chairperson on 14 February. The package established a damage assessment system with teams of local engineers, provided support for public-private partnerships in reconstruction, and made direct payments to homeowners for shelter reconstruction (UNISDR, 2007). *Third*, proper mobilization of I/NGOs to provide support and help to needy people in times of crisis. Local communities helped one another by mobilizing resources and providing food and shelter, ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of communities were emphasized in the disaster management policy declared by the government (World Bank, 2008).

3. Existing Legal Provision and Government Institutions to tackle Disaster in Nepal

Nepal is a trouble spot for disasters, and it ranked relatively high in terms of vulnerability. There are various legal and structural provisions in Nepal to battle against these kinds of disasters carry out the rescue works and provide basic human needs on time aftermath.

The government of Nepal has promulgated the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, 2017 and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Rules, 2019 to help the victims of likely natural calamities like flood, landslides, fire, earthquake, hurricane, heavy rain, drought, epidemics, road accidents due to natural reason and industrial accidents. Various sectors have been identified for expenditure of amount collected from general people, donors and others in this fund organized under this regulation. In this Regulation it has been stated that the amount shall be spent for rescuing the people affected or to be affected by the natural calamities, protecting their property, temporary camp for immediate relief packages distribution, purchasing the basic goods like food, clothes, medicines, educational materials for the victims. Similarly, this also includes the medicinal expenses of injured people and financial aid for the relatives of those who die in the disaster for funeral ceremony.

The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, 2017 has established a national council under the leadership of the Prime Minister for disaster risk reduction and management to discharge

disaster related functions effectively. Similarly, Act also provisioned the executive committee under the leadership of Ministry of Home Affairs for the purposes of implementing policies and plans laid down by the council. Chapter four of the Act also provisioned the establishment of the national disaster risk reduction and management authority. In the meantime, Act also provision on provincial disaster management committee and provincial disaster management executive committee in chapter six and chapter seven provisioned about the established a district disaster management committee in every district for the purposes of the implement action of disaster management activities under the leadership of Chief District Officer. Similarly, every local levl also established a local disaster management committee under the chaired by the president of rural municipality or mayor of municipality. The Act also clearly enlisted the functions, duties and powers of the securities agencies and other agencies in chapter eight.

Nepal has a very strong disaster management act and federal, provincial, and local level administrative mechanisms for disaster risk management. Though these mechanisms do not seem to be effective in risk management and providing the survivors with immediate rescue, relief, and basic needs during and after the disaster.

A devastating earthquake occurred in Nepal on April 25, 2015. There are over 8,790 killed and 22,300 injuries. It is estimated that the lives of eight million people, almost one-third of the population of Nepal, have been impacted by earthquake. The physical infra-structures worth billions have got destructed (NPC, 2015).

The Government of Nepal made an official request for international assistance within hours of the 25 April earthquake. The first meeting of the Central Disaster Relief Committee (CDRC) was held two hours after the first earthquake, with the National Emergency operation Centre providing an initial report to the CDRC recommending a focus on search and rescue and lifesaving actions. Financial resources from the prime minister's disaster relief fund were immediately allocated (NPC, 2015). Over time, 134 international search and rescue teams from 34 countries responded to Nepal's request for help. The Ministry of Home Affairs reported that for search and rescue, 4,236 helicopter flights were used with 7,558 persons rescued by air and 4,689 persons rescued by land. More than 90 percent of the security forces were mobilized to focus on

search and rescue. Emergency relief and humanitarian assistance to the affected population was provided with the active support of the contribution by over 60 countries as well as the United Nations and other international agencies (NPC, 2015).

Despite all this, after the devastating catastrophe the survivors did not get even the basic human needs on time. The effectiveness of the government could not be seen during this. The state failed in case of providing the basic human needs to all the survivors and affected people on time. Barpak Gorkha, which was the epicenter of the earthquake did not get relief packages till one month aftermath. It was found that the state mechanism did not show its presence and the people did not get relief packages till the month and earthquake survivors were more affected (Nepal National Weekly, 2072). It was also found that the relief package was distributed haphazardly. For example, where there was no need for food materials it was distributed and where the *tripal* was needed other materials were distributed (Kantipur National Daily, 2072c). Neither the government could collaborate nor was the effective monitoring done. Due to this many of the affected people could not get even the minimum support during the earthquake.

Sindhupalchwok where there was maximum physical and human losses, the state could not show its effective presence till one week. The local people themselves went to the rescue works and the effected people remained starving. Not only outside the capital city, in Kathmandu valley too government could not provide the human support to the affected people on time. The status of sick people, elderly people, and mothers of infants coming to the open ground for shelter was dreadful. The government organizations and mechanisms were almost passive and ineffective at that time. The Nepal Police, Nepal Army and Armed Police Force worked actively in the rescue works. Though, the government could not provide the essential basic needs like food, medicines and *Tripal* (Nagarik National Daily, 2072). Rather many events of corruption on the distribution of relief packages by the government came into publicity one after another. The Centre of Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) formed an investigation team on 16 August 2015. This team submitted a 411 pages long report on 1 December, 2015. This report has included various evidence of corruption during the rescue, relief and rehabilitation works for the affected people (CIAA, 2072).

Similarly, Mahakali River was flooded briskly on 16 June 2013. It flooded away 109 houses in the Headquarter of Darchula, Khalanga, Brahmadev, Dhap, Dantu, Uku and Lali villages. More than 2500 people from 350 houses have been displaced. This devastating flood destroyed many offices buildings and private houses (Rawal, 2013).

The government could not provide food and shelter for the affected people on time when the whole district Headquarter had been flooded. When the government could not provide the minimum basic humanitarian support like food and shelter to the survivors. After three days of flooding on 19 June only the meeting of the related officials was held in the Prime Minister's residence. The meeting had announced providing immediate relief packages to the survivors and 40 thousand rupees each for the affected families. Then, after only one week 200 *tripal*, 400 *kambal*, 20 relep, some medicines and pius to the district headquarters which was inadequate.

4. Weak Governance and Corruption : The Main Problem of tackling Humanitarian Needs in time of Disaster

In the time of every disaster occurring in Nepal the people are not getting even the minimum humanitarian needs on time. It seems that due to the weak governance and corruption in the state institutions, the state is not able to provide the basic humanitarian needs to the needy people. Due to the governance system, state structure, transition, and problems in the entities of the government, the human rights of people have been violated during the crisis (Donohue, 2014). Due to the weak governance and corruption in the state institution, the state cannot show its strong presence during the time of disaster and crisis (Tum, 2001). Most earthquake related deaths occur in countries that are corrupt and state institutions are not able to fulfill the humanitarian support to victim aftermath (Ambraseys & Bilham, 2011 cited in Donohue 2014). In case of Nepal, due to the weak governance and corruption the state is not able to help the victims at the time of crisis. This includes six major problems.

First is the weak governance and lack of accountability. Nepal is not able to provide the basic humanitarian needs to the people during disaster due to the weak governance in the government institutions. It is not only due to the natural reason that the people suffer aftermath but due to the weak governance prevailing in the state institutions since long. The weak governance and corruption play a major role for not being able to deliver the basic humanitarian

needs on time in the time of disaster (Upadhyaya & Ghimire, 2072). In the earthquake of 2015 A.D., the government of Nepal could not provide the essential basic humanitarian needs to the survivors in a well managed way. A great amount of relief package was collected from all over the world, but the actual victims could not get those on time (Kantipur National Daily, 2072d).

Second is corruption. There is a suitable situation for corruption in every disaster. The existing law cannot work properly while the watch dog organizations also cannot be active during this situation and so corruption can occur. (Ewins et al. 2006) Corruption is a threat to humanitarian action because it can prevent assistance from getting to the people who most need it, and because it can potentially undermine public support for such assistance (Maxwell et al. 2012). While analyzing the events of calamities and crisis in Nepal corruption is seen to be a major threat. For example, 96 percent of 4 lakh 50 thousand *tripal* bought by Urban Development Ministry after about one month of the earthquake of 2015 was qualityless. CIAA investigated on this and filed case against two second class officers, three other employees and some businessmen on 6 September 2015. By claiming a fine of 2 crore 36 lakh 76 thousand 1 hundred 91 rupees, the case had been filed against them. Due to this kind of corruption in the relief packages the survivors could not get the basic humanitarian needs on time.

The *third* is Lack of proper coordination among stakeholders. It is not due to the lack of institutions during the disaster but due to many institutions working for the same aim and lack of proper coordination among them a state cannot work properly during a time of need (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2013). Similar is the case of Nepal. Various institutions have been formed for working during the disaster in Nepal. Though, there does not seem proper coordination among the institutions. As a result, the government is not being able to work effectively during the disaster.

5. Conclusion

The developing countries like Nepal are not able to provide the very basic humanitarian needs to the survivors during and after the disaster. This situation especially arises due to the weak governance and corruption in the government institutions. In the countries where there exists good governance and corruption is low; people of those countries get immediate basic needs from the government. So,

for tackling the disaster and providing the victims with basic humanitarian needs on time, the state institutions should be rebuilt and strengthened. If the state institutions could be re-built to be crisis management friendly, then it would bring positive results.

It is necessary to improve the exixting mechanism to monitor the irregularities and delays in the rescue and relief works and make these tasks more transparent, accountable, and effective. The National Vigilance Centre should be provided with the responsibility of monitoring the irregularities and delay in the rescue, relief works and creating the awareness on these. This should be equipped with the necessary means and resources. There should be a clear provision of punishment for the employees who try to get rid of responsibilities. A special unit should be formed under the CIAA. This unit should be equipped with necessary resources, skills, and capacity for investigating against the irregularities and corruption during the disaster. Similarly, third party monitoring should be implemented institutionally. The third-party monitoring team should be formed including the publicly recognized personals like economist, sociologist, anthropologist, engineer, journalist, and lawyer. This unit shall help with the rescue and relief works to make it more effective and monitor these tasks.

The coordination of I/NGOs and mobilization through one door policy is needed. After the post disaster period, I/NGOs are not distributing the humanitarian support equally in all needy places. They are mobilized and distribute the goods and services in easily accessible places. However, remote parts of affected areas are not getting proper support on time. So, the government needs to establish the desk and one door policy of I/NGOs mobilization. Local governments can play a key role in taking the initiative to protect human life and provide the proper support to survivors of disaster (Marie Col, 2007). The local level entities need to be developed as an important body for disaster management.

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Environmental Education and Sustainability Awareness

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Abstract

Young people who are empowered and conscious of the environment have the potential to be the biggest change agents for the long-term preservation and management of the environment. Therefore, environmental education that encourages such a shift will provide these young people a stronger voice on environmental problem if it is successfully applied in Nigeria. For this reason, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the environmental knowledge and attitudes of the pupils. 130 full-time environmental education students at a federal institution in Edo State, Nigeria, participated in the study. The findings showed that pupils had a high degree of knowledge and a favorable attitude toward the environment. Additionally, it was shown that there is either no relationship at all, a negative relationship, or little relationship between their knowledge and attitude toward the environment. As a result, it was determined that students who possess environmental literacy, particularly those at postsecondary institutions, are being developed to support EE in Nigeria. In order to ensure effective implementation, the researchers advise that more work be done to promote and encourage EE at all levels of the nation, particularly by the government and its agencies. International organizations as well as non-governmental organizations have a role to play in advancing the nation's sustainable development goals.

Keywords

Environment, Education, Knowledge, Learning.

5

Environmental Education and Sustainability Awareness

1. Introduction

"Environmental education is a learning process that fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action, as well as increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges." **Tbilisi Declaration, 1978.**

"Environmental education is a way of implementing the goals of environmental protection. It is not a separate branch of science but a lifelong interdisciplinary field of study", states UNESCO. This definition includes education for the purpose of protecting and enhancing the environment as well as education as a tool for community development aimed at raising standards of living.

2. The Purpose of Environmental Education

In general, environmental education has wide-ranging goals. Through environmental education, people are provided with systematic knowledge about the care that should be done in the explanation and usage of natural resources for the development and progress of mankind. Teaching people the values necessary for the preservation and wise use of the earth's resources for human survival is the main goal of environmental education. Education on the environment provides the necessary skills and information to appreciate the significance of such significant viewpoints.

When it comes to understanding the need of preserving a harmonious and balanced interaction between humans and the natural world, environmental education plays a significant role.

The following are some of the overall goals of environmental education:

⯈ To increase pupils' awareness of the environment and the range of issues it faces.

⯈ To assist the pupils in understanding how the environment and humans are intertwined.

- ‣ To educate the kids on the social rules that maintain harmony with the surrounding environment.
- ‣ To instill in the students a favorable attitude toward their surroundings.
- ‣ To acquire the necessary skills for achieving the objectives of educational assessments and environmental education.
- ‣ To assist the pupils in understanding the significance of adopting appropriate measures to address environmental issues.
- ‣ To instill in the pupils the necessary interest to recognize environmental issues so they will be motivated to work toward finding solutions.
- ‣ To set up suitable circumstances so that students can take part in the environmental decision-making process.
- ‣ To improve one's capacity for applying knowledge to achieve necessary goals and to recognize and address environmental issues through social, political, cultural, and educational channels.
- ‣ To educate the public about the environment's physical components.

To supplement the above purpose of environmental education, we also have Ecology Education with the following objectives:

- ‣ To impart the information required to cultivate a sense of responsibility toward the environment and the wise use of its resources to graduates in a range of professional sectors and various groups of people.
- ‣ To apply these abilities and knowledge to protect, conserve, and use the environment in a way that benefits both the current and future generations.

3. The Importance and Necessity of Environmental Education

The following sums up the justification for environmental education:

- ‣ Essential elements of environmental education include knowledge of the changes that have affected the land, water, weather, vegetation, social, cultural, and political environ-

ments. As such, the general public needs to be prepared with all of these in order to address environmental issues.

» Utilizing land, water, forests, and other mineral resources is the main aspect of the rural economy, with agriculture serving as its engine. The environment is affected by the unchecked and inappropriate use of these resources, which leads to a reduction in living standards, hunger, forced migration, and suffering among people.

» Therefore, environmental education is essential to raise awareness of the causes and effects of these issues, including pollution, the scarcity of food and water, the occurrence of epidemics, and natural disasters like floods, erosion, and desertification, as well as how to prevent them.

» To promote understanding and cooperation between nations, environmental education is essential.

» Both the local population and the government should benefit from public education about how local policies affect the environment.

» Environmental education must include knowledge of such global environmental issues, which the average citizen should be familiar with.

» Environmental education promotes women's and children's overall social and economic liberation. These make up a sizable portion of the natural resources used, particularly in rural areas.

Being aware of the importance and necessity of environment is crucial for:

» Preservation of the atmosphere.

» Preservation of the land's resources.

» Preservation of the biological atmosphere.

» Environmentally responsible handling of hazardous waste and biotechnology.

» Preventing illegal trafficking of trash and dangerous materials.

» Elimination of poverty and halting environmental degradation will improve living and working conditions for the impoverished.

4. Essential Elements of Environmental Education

The goal of environmental education is to make evident the interconnection of the modern world's economy, society, politics, and environment-a world in which the decisions and deeds of one nation can have an impact on other nations. In this view, environmental education ought to support the growth of a feeling of solidarity and accountability among nations and areas. Examples of environmental education include : Environmental education components serve as the cornerstone of a new global order that will ensure environmental progress and conservation. Gaining an understanding of the complexity of both the natural and built environments by individuals and communities is the primary goal of grassroots environmental education. Additionally, to get the information, morals, values, and practical skills necessary to take part in environmental quality management and social problem resolution in a responsible and productive manner. Consequently, essential elements for environmental education's constituent parts are as follows:

- Understanding and awareness.
- Viewpoint.
- Building capacities and abilities.
- Assessment.
- Taking part.

The essential elements of environmental education can also be summarized as follows:

- Think about the constructed and natural environments, as well as the social and technical structures.
- Environmental education should be viewed as an ongoing, life-saving endeavor.
- An integrated approach is required for environmental education.
- Analyze important environmental concerns from regional, national, and global perspectives.
- The focus of environmental education should be on both possible and existing environmental conditions.
- Encourage the principles and need for regional, national, and worldwide collaboration in the mitigation and resolution of environmental issues.

⤃ Give careful thought to the environmental effects of your development and expansion plan.

⤃ Give students more influence over decisions they make about their surroundings and encourage them to take accountability.

5. Scope of Environmental Education

All areas of environmental science are included in the scope of environmental education and awareness programs or environmental extension services. This includes how man has affected the environment, devastating and polluting it, but more significantly, how man can protect himself from the issues he has brought about by abusing, misusing, and overusing the resources that nature has provided. Understanding the underlying causes of environmental deterioration is just as important to include in environmental education as the effects of it. Examining the social and economic elements that exacerbate environmental deterioration should be part of these as well.

One way to characterize the scope of environmental education is:

⤃ Instruction from the surroundings.

⤃ Teaching about the environment.

⤃ Education for the environment.

Learning from the environment entails gaining knowledge from our surrounds. This involves the importance of maintaining the environment's aesthetic qualities. Studying our surroundings to understand its elements, functions, and utility is a key component of environmental education. Since we need to learn about the environment in order to make it, this is a crucial part of environmental education. Through environmental education, we may learn how to protect the environment and maximize its benefits for both the current and future generations. This is the environmental education component related to conservation.

6. The Tenets of Environmental Education

As per the Tbilisi Conference (1977), the tenets of environmental education are as follows:

⤃ Think about the environment as a whole, including the natural, man-made, artificial, and technological aspects as well as the social (historical, political, moral, cultural, and artistic).

❥ Think of environment education as an ongoing, lifelong process that extends from early childhood education to all higher education settings, both formal and informal.

❥ Adopt an interdisciplinary strategy to enable a comprehensive and well-rounded viewpoint.

❥ Adopt a community-based approach and prioritize active engagement in order to prevent environmental issues and identify solutions.

❥ Examine the main environmental issues from a global and regional perspective, that is, from the perspectives of the local, national, regional, and global levels.

7. Programs for Environmental Education

Newman (1981) developed a three-tiered classification scheme for environmental education programs based on distinct disciplines:

❥ **Environmental studies :** They address environmental disturbance issues and how to lessen their effects by modifying society (social sciences).

❥ **Environmental sciences :** The study of processes in water, air, soil, and organisms that cause pollution or environmental degradation is known as environmental sciences. It also aims to identify scientific methods for setting standards that are acceptable in terms of cleanliness, safety, and health for the natural ecosystem and the organisms that inhabit it (physical and natural sciences).

❥ **Environmental engineering :** Environmental engineering is the study of technological methods used to reduce pollution and the evaluation of how these methods affect the environment (engineering sciences).

8. Environmental Education-related Organizations

Various Environmental Education-related Organizations are depicted in the following table:

Name of Organization	Brief Introduction of the Organization
Earthscan	Originally established by UNEP in 1976, it commissions unique essays about environmental issues.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)	It is a multilateral convention to save animals and plants that are threatened. The convention took effect on July 1st, 1975, after it was opened in 1973. The Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests serves as the central body for involvement in international accords.
Human Exposure Assessment Location (HEAL)	The three components of the project are global food contamination monitoring, water quality monitoring, and air quality monitoring. It is a part of the WHO's Health Related Monitoring Programme in collaboration with UNEP.
International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU)	A non-governmental organization based in Paris promotes scientific knowledge sharing, launches initiatives that call for worldwide scientific collaboration, and conducts research and publishes papers on issues concerning social and political obligations towards the scientific community.
International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN/WCU)	A 1948-founded autonomous organization with its headquarters located in Morges, Switzerland, that initiates and supports conservation efforts with a scientific foundation. Currently going by the name World Conservation Union (WCU).
International Marine Consultative Organization (IMCO)	From the perspective of marine water pollution, it governs how ships operate on the open ocean.
Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB)	The International Biological Programme produced this result (IBP). UNESCO originally introduced MAB in 1971. This program consists of 14 project areas.
Project Earth	Created in partnership with UNEP to pique curiosity and inform youth globally about the vital concerns affecting the environment on Earth.
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	Three key objectives of the 1992 multinational convention are the preservation of biological variety, sustainable use of its constituent parts, and just and equitable distribution of the advantages derived from genetic resources.

9. Offering Environmental Education at Various Formal Education Levels

Various formal education levels for offering environmental education are as follows:

Level	Objective
Elementary Instruction	Environmental awareness; knowledge
Secondary Instruction	Pertinence to actual environmental circumstances; comprehension
Advanced Secondary Education	Preservation of the environment's natural resources; expertise
Education at College and University	Sustainable growth through addressing environmental, attitude, and evaluation issues.

10. The Intended Audience for Environmental Education

The following three audience categories have been determined for environmental education and awareness:

- **General Public :** Environmental education should be made available to the general public at all age groups, formal education levels for students and teachers, and informal education levels for adults, youth, and individuals with disabilities. Programs for environmental education are necessary to raise public knowledge of the risks to which it may be exposed as well as the state of its own surroundings. The general public, in particular non-governmental groups, should take part in the broad public education.

- **Particular Social or Occupational Groups :** These people have a significant impact on the environment by their actions and influence. These comprise industrialists, trade unionists, policy makers, architects, engineers, planners, and administrators.

- **Some Scientists and Professionals :** These groups consist of professionals who focus on particular environmental issues, such as ecologists, hydrologists, taxonomists, sanitary engineers, and biologists.

11. Importance of Teaching about the Environment

Climate crisis, environmental degradation and bio-diversity are existential threats to children's ability to survive and thrive, and

negatively affect access to water, sanitation and hygiene services. This emphasizes the need for for teaching about the environment, which may be enumerated as follows:

⤷ Inspires people to have reverence for the planet and all living things.

⤷ Develops critical thinking

⤷ Encourages leading a healthful life

⤷ Instills a worry about the environment's gradual change

⤷ Restoring the Natural Balance

12. Barriers to the Adoption of Environmental Education

As a result of the increasing awareness of the masses, awareness of environmental problems has increased. In addition, the connection between people and the environment has been interrupted due to reasons such as population growth and urbanization. Despite the recognition of its current benefits, there are many barriers to integrating environmental education into educational settings in recent years. The major barriers to the adoption of environmental education are as follows:

⤷ Hard Specialization.

⤷ Complexity of environmental education's cross-disciplinary value.

⤷ High student-teacher ratio for planning programs that involve student participation.

⤷ Lack of competent, experienced environmental educators.

⤷ Inadequate supplies, including tools, extra materials, and reference materials.

⤷ Inclination to oppose changes.

13. Conclusion

The field of environmental education is ever-changing. Such education's top goal is to cultivate a wary mindset in people regarding their entire environment. Its primary responsibility is to provide the necessary education and training to address the many environmental issues in a methodical manner. Encouraging people to live healthy, fulfilling lives requires preventing negative impacts on human health and environmental harm from things like soil, water, and air pollution, vibration, noise, and unpleasant odors.

Through the methodology of environmental education, individuals gain knowledge of their surroundings and acquire skills, values, experiences, and enthusiasm that will empower them. to handle both individual and group actions while attending to current and upcoming environmental challenges. It is the study of how human and natural systems interact with one another. A thorough lifetime education that adapts to the continually changing world should include environmental education. Through knowledge of the main issues facing the modern world and the provision of the abilities and qualities required to contribute positively to enhancing life and preserving the environment while paying appropriate attention to moral principles, it should equip the student for life.

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Racial Supremacy Bias Witnessed in Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop's 'Service and Adventure with the Khakee Ressalah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse during the Mutinies of 1857-58' : A Historical Survey

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Abstract

The Indian Revolution of 1857–58 was a large-scale uprising against British rule in India, sparked by a mutiny of Indian soldiers (sepoys) in Meerut on May 10, 1857. The revolt quickly spread to various regions, including Delhi, Agra, Kanpur, and Lucknow. Despite its reach, the rebellion was ultimately unsuccessful, with the British forces suppressing it after the rebels were defeated in Gwalior on June 20, 1858. On November 1, 1858, the British offered amnesty to those rebels not involved in murder, although they did not officially declare the conflict over until July 8, 1859. The racial discrimination and exploitation of Indians was a major factor in the Revolution of 1857. The present paper is a historical survey of racial supremacy bias witnessed in Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop's Service and Adventure with the Khakee Ressalah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse during the mutinies of 1857-58

Keywords

Indian Revolution of 1857–58, Racialism, Racial supremacy bias, Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop, False and perverted history, Jawahar Lal Nehru, Euro-centric approach, supremacy.

6

Racial Supremacy Bias Witnessed in Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop's 'Service and Adventure with the Khakee Ressalah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse during the Mutinies of 1857-58' : A Historical Survey

Writing on the episode of 1857 in the 'Acknowledgements' Prof. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya while editing the proceedings of the conferences held in December 2006 addresses the 1857 as the 'Uprising of 1857'. He remarks[1]:

> "On behalf of the Indian Council of Historical Research I would like to thank the Chairman of the National Implementation Committee, Shri Arjun Singh of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, for a generous grant for funding the conference at which the papers in this volume were presented in December 2006 as well as for other projects to commemorate the uprising of 1857."

Why does a professor like him use the noun 'Uprising of 1857'[2] is not beyond doubt. A great freedom fighter named V.D. Savarkar, more than 100 years ago, has named it as '*Indian War of Independence of 1857*'.[3] Quoting his work while in the Ahmadnagar Fort Prison Camp from August 9, 1942 to March 28, 1945.* Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru writes[4]:

> "A great deal of false and perverted history has been written about the Revolt [1857] and its suppression. What Indian think about it seldom finds its way to the printed page. Savarkar wrote 'The History of the War of India Independence' some thirty years age, but his book was promptly banned and is banned still."

Exposing 'Racialism' of the Europeans during 1857, the following is worth-mentions[5]:

> "Nehru deals with the Revolution of 1857 in the seventh chapter of his book under the sub-titles—'The Great Revolt of 1857. Racialism' and 'The Techniques of British Rule : Balance and

Counterpoise'. He discusses many aspects of this great historical event in the history of Indian people."

Jawahar Lal Nehru, on Indian Revolution of 1857, again writes[6]:

"The Revolt threw up some fine guerrilla leaders. Feroz Shah, a relative of Bahadur Shah, of Delhi, was one of them, but, most brilliant of all was Tantia Topi who harassed the British for many months even when defeat stared him in the face. Ultimately when he crossed the Narbada river into the Maratha regions, hoping to receive aid and welcome from his own people, there was no welcome, and he was betrayed. One name stands out above others and is revered still in popular memory, the name of Lakshmi Bai. Rani of Jhansi, a girl of twenty years of age, who died fighting. 'Best and bravest of the rebel leaders', she was called by the English general who opposed her."

What Indian people witness is a change from the 'Revolt' in 1942 to the 'Uprising' in 2006: though Savarkar named it 'War of Indian Independence of 1857' in 1907 while commemorating the martyres who had lost their lives during 1857-59. The author of this article suggested it as '1857 ka Viplava'[7] in 2006 and again based on the strongest evidences, he writes naming it "Indian Revolution of 1857".[8]

In fact, the Euro-centric approach[9] to Indian history suggests automatically same inbuilt bias towards both the nature of the event and the Indian people taking part in it. The early European writers tried their best to prove this event as merely the 'Sepoy Mutiny'[10] and they were, due to their racial prejudice of the opinion that the Indians taking part in it against the colonial British imperialism were not parallel to their Europan counterparts in terms of bravery and competency.

One of the finest examples is that of Mr. Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop who was posted as the Magistrate and Collector of the Meerut District in the then North-Western Provinces of India during 1857.[11]

He was out of the station and so unaware but suddenly he came to know about the outbreak of Indian Revolution of 1857. In his own words[12]:

"On the 31st of May, happening to arrive at the village of Nuggur, near the source of the Beas river, we met Major Hay, the Assistant Commissioner of Kooloo, with a young officer, on his way to Lahoul on sick leave, from them we learnt of the

massacres of Meerut and Delhi, of the rapidly spreading flames of revolt; the aspect of affairs (our misfortunes only reaching us) looked even more gloomy than the reality."

From the next sentence, he can be judged to what this article is going on to expose. It is not difficult to smell the racial supremacy bias when he uses the words 'Anglo-Saxon name' and 'our supremacy'. He remarks[13]:

"It was evident that the time had really come, of which I had frequently reflected on the possibility, when all who bore the Anglo-Saxon name in this country must join their brethren to defend our supremacy, or die hard in losing it."

Mr. Dunlop, knowing about the order of the Commander-in-Chief to military men on general leave to come back to join their duty, decided to return to join his duty too. This sense of dutifulness is witnessed in the following narration of his own[14]:

"An order of the Commander-in-Chief to military men on general leave required speke's immediate return, and, as the few weeks of cool air I had enjoyed had given me, apparently, a fresh lease of life, I deemed the commands of duty equally imperative in my own case: the next morning, saw us bidding adieu to our hospitable host, Major Hay, and returning by forced marches to the plains."

In the very next line Mr. Dunlop, refers to 'young Willoughby' and underlines the words—'Anglo-Saxons' and 'supremacy' as follows[15]:

"Here we rapidly acquainted ourselves with the unredeemed horrors of Meerut, of the 10th May, or the dreary detail of foul treachery and butchery at Delhi, ... the light struck by young Willoughby, the first hero of our great Indian tragedy, and which roused throughout India the stern devoted spirit that led a handful of Anglo-Saxons to battle with indomitable energy for the supremacy their fathers had won, and which finally planted the colours of England on the shattered site of that during deed which Willoughby has left us, as heirloom to be treasured in the memories of his countrymen."

Describing the incidents of the outbreak of 1857 in different villages in the then rural area of the district of Meerut including those of Bhojpur, Gagol, the 5 Baghi villages of Kumhera,[16] Khindora, Bhanera, Suhana and Ghayaspur inhabited by the 'Tugga Brahmins'[17]

[Dunlop uses it for the Tyagi Brahmin zemindars], he refers to Begamabad and Sikri episode. Goojar villages of Sikri, Nagla and Devsa come in his narration followed by the racial comments as follows[18]:

> "The Jats who followed had been so cowed by their losses of the previous day that they were useless, except for plunder, hundreds of them flying from a few Goojurs."

Mr. Dunlop seems summing up his feeling full of racial prejudices when he completes Chapter VI of his book. The last but two and the last but one are the paragraphs which contain the matter to this effect. He writes[19]:

> "I have often noticed that the courage of the native (unlike that of the European, which rises with his difficulties,) is invariably in proportion to his hopes of success; that individuals, if accompanied by an overwhelming force, will frequently do acts of bravery, through they will.....

> .....attacking party, and possibly a threatened approach, the moral influence of this 'firm front' is immediately recognised in the sudden collapse and ignominious rout of number one."

He further adds[20]:

> The saying, that "a coward will fight at bay", seldom applies in this country [India].

For India and Indians, his opinion what he opines is again worth-mentioning[21]:

> "A Bahadoor brought to bay, grows a cowards", would be more correct.

When examined thoroughly, Dunlop seems full of racist prejudice feeling not only towards India and Indian but he shows, to some extent, same feelings towards the Arabs and the Italian and the Spaniards also. He, in one of the related paragraphs, refers to both the nationals as follows[22]:

> "Two of the party distinguished themselves, but in a very different way: the one, a little dentist, whose military predilection and pluck ought to have placed him in the army; and the other a gentleman who would be styled an Italian or Spaniard as a euphonium for a bronzed complexion in Europe, but whom we class in this country, by ambiguous metaphor, as an 'Arabian'."

Giving information about the military expedition upon the village of Sikri near present day Modinagar, in the present day district of Ghaziabad [then in the *tehsil* of Muradnagar in the district of Meerut during 1857], he mentions[23]:

> "The dentist fairly earned the mural crown; for when the scaling party got to the roof of a house abutting against the walled enclosure where the principal Goojurs were, he requested me to give him a lift, and being but a light weight, I quickly sent him over the wall, where he stood a good chance of receiving the contents of any spare matchlocks that might be ready. Some volunteers in the crowd having performed a similar friendly turn to myself, and our party being augmented by a few more lifts from outside to some seven or eight, our revolvers and swords soon settled matters with its defenders."

In the last paragraph of this chapter, he gives a graphic description of the "Arabian". He, thus describes[24]:

> "The Arabian equestrian above alluded to, who had been for some time keeping up his courage and keeping out the rain by repeated libations of ration rum, was seized with a sudden desire for martial distinction; but unable to discriminate very clearly between friend and foe, shot one of our unfortunate Jat auxiliaries through the head. He was of course promptly deprived of his weapons, and was finally sent off to Meerut by Palkee Gharree, in a state of 'coma' possibly of 'clairvoyance'."

Notes and References

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2. *Ibid.*

3. For details, please see: Savarkar, V.D., *Indian War of Independence 1857*, [London, 1909]; reprint Calcutta, 1930.

   * About his book, the Discovery of India, Jawahar Lal Nehru writes:

   > "This book was written by me in Ahmadnagar Fort prison during the five months, April to September 1944. Some of my colleagues in prison were good enough to read the manuscript and make a number of valuable suggestions. On revising the book in prison I took advantage of these suggestions and made additions. No one, I need hardly add, is responsible for what I have written or necessarily agrees with it. But I must express my deep gratitude to my fellow-prisoners in Ahmadnagar Fort for the innumerable talks and discussions we had,

which helped me greatly to clear my own mind about various aspects of Indian history and culture. Prison is not a pleasant place to live in even for a short period, much less for long years. But it was a privilege for me to live in close contact with men of outstanding ability and culture and a wide human outlook which even the passions of the moment did not obscure.

My eleven companions in Ahmadnagar Fort were an interesting cross-section of India and represented in their several ways not only politics but Indian scholarship, old and new, and various aspects of present-day India. Nearly all the principal living Indian languages, as well as the classical languages which have powerfully influenced India in the past and present, were presented and the standard was often that of high scholarship. Among the classical languages were Sanskrit and Pali, Arabic and Persian; the modern languages were Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu, Sindhi and Oriya......".

Nehru dedicated his book to his colleagues and co-prisoners in the Ahmadnagar For Prison Camp. He uses the words:

"To my colleagues and co-prisoners in the Ahmandnagar Fort Prison Camp from 9 August 1942 to 28 March 1945".

In the "FORWARD" to the "First Impression 1981" of *The Discovery of India*, Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, on 4 November 1980, writes:

"My father's three books and *The Discovery of India, Glimpses of World History and An Autobiography* have been my companions through life. It is difficult to be detached about them...I had to correct the proofs of Discovery while my father was away, I think in Calcutta, and I was in Allahabad ill with mumps! *The Discovery* delves deep into the sources of India's national personality."

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12. Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop, *op.cit.*

13. *Ibid.*, 3.

14. *Ibid.*, 3-4.

15. *Ibid.*, 6.

16. *Ibid.*, 40-45; Edwin Thomas Atkinson, *Statistical Descriptive and Historical Account of North-Eastern Provinces of India*, Vol. III, Part II, Meerut District, North-Western Provinces Government Press, Allahabad, 1876, 332-35; H.R. Nevill, *Meerut : A Gazetteer being Volume IV of the District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*, Allahabad : United Provinces Government Press, 1903, 169-170.; Vighnesh Kumar, *op.cit.*, 51; Vighnesh Kumar and Mudit Kumar, *op.cit.*, 117-29.

17. Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop, *op.cit.*, 42.

18. *Ibid.*, 75.

19. *Ibid.*, 76-78.

20. *Ibid.*, 78.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*, 75-76.

23. *Ibid.*, 76.

24. *Ibid.*, 78.   ★

Changing Practices among the Newars : A Study from Kirtipur

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Abstract

Nepal has undergone a significant transformation from a traditionally stratified conservative society to one more open society for several reasons. We have witnessed changes in different practices for a few years. The Newars, an indigenous inhabitants of Kathmandu Valley, are not exempt from such changes. The Newars are one of the ancient groups residing in Nepal. The country's name is believed to be derived from the Newar as the 'Newar' is considered identical to Nepal. The study reveals that everyday life, traditional occupation, mother tongue practices and ways of celebrating festivals and rituals within the Newars have experienced changes. The rise of capitalism is mostly responsible for such changing practices. This study is conducted amongst the Newars of Kirtipur.

Keywords

The Newars, Changing practices, Socialization, Traditional occupation, Mother tongue and Festival.

7

Changing Practices among the Newars : A Study from Kirtipur

1. Introduction

Nepal is one of the most diverse countries in terms of population, ecology, culture, caste and ethnicity, religion, etc. People living in different parts of Nepal have their cultural practices, traditional systems, norms, values, beliefs, etc. However, we have witnessed changes in these practices since a few years back. The Newars, an indigenous inhabitants of Kathmandu Valley, are not exempt from such changes. Amongst the indigenous groups in Nepal, the Newars are one of the ancient groups residing in Nepal, and they are one of the strongest groups in terms of their culture and traditions. The country's name is believed to be derived from the Newar as the 'Newar' is considered identical to Nepal (Acharya, 2009). The majority of the Newars were Buddhist in the past (Bista, 1982). However, due to religious syncretism, in the present day, most of them practice both Buddhism and Hinduism. Until the Middle Ages, the Kathmandu valley was the main place of dwelling of the Newars. Presently, they are found in nearly every part of Nepal, from the Terai to the Himalayan highlands and from east to west.

Various accounts exist regarding the Newars' origin and ancestry. Some attempted to link their ancestry to the Nayar community of the Malabar Coast in southern India. Similarly, Bhasa Bansawali also exposes traditions indicating that the Newars migrated from India to the Kathmandu Valley in the days of Naanyadev, the first Karnataka king. Some, however, attempted to establish their genealogical connection to both Kirant and Lichhavi. Similarly, some Newar sub-group claim their ancestry with Lichhavi, who migrated to the Kathmandu Valley from India to protect themselves from Muslim invasion (Bista, 1996). Most native and foreign experts today agree that the various tribes, castes, and ethnic groups that arrived in the Kathmandu Valley over time combined in the form of quanti (Quanti is a popular food amongst the Newars, which is prepared by blending 9 varieties of pulse grains. It is prepared to mark the special occasion during the winter season.), which is the modern form of the Newar people.

2. Objective of the Study

This paper examines changing practices among the Newars, particularly in the areas of everyday socialization, occupations, use of the mother tongue, and the observance of festivals and rituals. The world is dynamic and ever-changing, and so are the communities, societies, and cultures. Such changes in today's world are caused by a variety of elements such as westernization, globalization, modernization, law, physical environment, overpopulation, migration, and so on (Piotr, 1993). The reciprocal interdependence of diverse parts of a social system drives society. No single element can influence the process of social transformation in the same way all the time (Escobar, 1997). Due to increased exposure to the outside world and the restoration of democracy, Nepal has seen a dramatic and impressive transformation from a severely stratified culture with deeply embedded conservative traditions and rituals to a manner of social contact and rejuvenation tools. Improved access to education and health services, substantial expansion of the road network and increased access to media and communication technologies have raised the aspirations of Nepalese, leading to social changes in Nepali society.

3. Methodology

Kirtipur was chosen as the study area for this research. While Newar settlements exist in various parts of the Kathmandu Valley, many areas now have a Newar in the minority due to increased migration. Kirtipur is one of the few remaining areas where the Newars are still in the majority despite rampant migration. It is situated five kilometers south of central Kathmandu. Informal interviews were conducted with 50 local respondents of different age groups for the study. The respondents belong to different sub-castes within the Newars and were selected purposively.

4. Everyday Socialization

The process of socialization and training young children is an everyday family activity. It is a fundamental aspect of their development. It encompasses the transmission of cultural norms, values, and behaviours from parents or guardians to children as they grow and interact within the family unit. Through everyday interactions, rituals, and routines that they live within, youngsters

learn how to handle social situations, develop interpersonal skills, and understand societal expectations (Schaffer and Schaffer, 1969; Schaffer, 1984). It was found during the study that everyday life has been changed especially for daughters from the past to the present. In the past, girls were taught to do all the household chores, rather than asking their mothers or other members for help. This was considered as a sign of being a good daughter. But things have changed over time.

The rise of capitalism is mostly responsible for such changing role of daughters in day-to-day activities. As capitalism systems expanded and the value of capital increased, significant changes were observed in many facets of daily life. This change affected social norms and expectations in addition to economic institutions (Thomas, 2000), which in turn affected how daughters interacted with and managed their daily schedules. In the changing dynamics of Newar society, moving from large joint families to smaller nuclear ones, an important trend has emerged. Research conducted in the area shows that Newar families are increasingly realizing the connection between educating their daughters and achieving stability in their social and economic lives. This shift in mindset represents a departure from traditional norms, as investing in girls' education is now seen as a key way to empower them, earn wealth, and ensure a better future for the family.

During the study, only 10 percent of the respondents answered that they would involve their daughter more in household chores. They view it as a characteristic of the ideal daughter. They must therefore participate in domestic tasks. Respondents who thought this way were all around 70 years old. Other respondents expressed a desire for their daughters to prioritize their academic pursuits. They do not want to involve their daughter more in household chores rather they believe that education is more important to ensure their daughter's future. They believe that the current situation is different from the earlier one. So, rather than having their daughters focus more on housework, they want them to be more active in education. Those who held this perspective were all below 55 years old. The majority of them are exposed to the outside world. Exposure to diverse ideas and viewpoints undoubtedly helps develop intellectual growth, encouraging critical thinking and broadening understanding of the world. In every circumstance, there are both positives and negatives. As exposure to the external world grows, the

everyday household chores that previously promoted deep connections among family members might disappear. This might cause future generations to place less value on family and the ties that bind them And, the idea of home and family may remain more focused on formal relationships, losing the deep emotional and psychological bonds they once had.

5. Changing Traditional Occupation

The Newars are often seen as a single caste group, however, they comprise various sub-castes within them. Each of these sub-castes is unique and traditionally associated with specific occupations. This system has not only determined the social hierarchy but has also prescribed the economic roles within the community. The Jyapu sub-caste, for example, with a distinct identity within the Newars is predominantly involved in agriculture, sustaining the food supply of the valley. Similarly, the Shakya, Tamrakar, Kansakar, and Nakarmi sub-castes are associated with metalworks related to gold and silver, copper, bronze and brass, and Iron respectively. These sub-castes have been associated with specific crafts and trades, reflecting their contributions to the socio-economic fabric of the society. Bajracharya are traditionally involved in religious functions. Mali, Napit, and Ranjitkar are traditionally involved in gardening, haircutting and dyer work respectively. Other sub-castes like the Chitrakar are known for their artistic skills, creating paintings and religious icons. Similarly, traditionally Manandhar sub-caste within the Newars is involved in oil production (Nepali, 1965).

The Khadgi sub-castes, have a distinct identity within Newar and are mainly involved in the meat trade. The Kapali, also known as the Kusle, has traditionally been associated with the profession of musicians and drummers. They play important roles in religious ceremonies, festivals, and cultural events, providing music that is integral to the Newar cultural expressions. Pore and Chamkhala castes within Newar are traditionally involved in guarding and protecting deities and sanitation respectively around the valley (Nepali, 1965). The origins of Newar people are also varied, with lineages traced back to different sources including Sino-Tibet, Kirant, Shakya, Koliya, and Licchhavi (Bista, 1996) . However, in the face of modernization, urbanization, and economic globalization, the Newar occupational sub-castes have witnessed a significant shift in

their traditional occupations. The transformation of occupational roles among Newar sub-castes can be attributed to several factors. After the introduction of democracy in Nepal in 1950 AD, Kathmandu Valley opened up new opportunities. With the advent of formal education and new employment opportunities in the valley, many Newars, especially the younger generation, have sought occupations outside their traditional roles. This process speeds up even more after the restoration of democracy in 1990 AD.

The liberal economic policy adopted due to the influence of globalization and modernization has led to a decline in demand for certain traditional crafts and services (Liechty, 2003). For instance, the rise of mass-produced goods has significantly impacted the livelihoods of artisan sub-castes, prompting them to diversify their skills or seek alternative employment and the growing emphasis on individual rights and equality has also facilitated social mobility. This has enabled individuals from various sub-castes to pursue careers based on personal interest and aptitude rather than caste-based prescriptions. Agriculture remains a significant occupation of the Jyapu sub-caste within Newar, however, many Jyapus have diversified into business, teaching jobs, real estate, foreign employment and others. In the study areas, most of the respondents were from the Jyapu castes, and all of them had more than one source of income. They are engaged in both agricultural work and other income-generating activities simultaneously. They lack sufficient land to cultivate and sustain themselves throughout the year. They have sold some of their land to finance their children's education and invest in potential alternative income sources. Likewise, members of the Shakya families in the study areas, who have historically been involved in gold work are found to be involved in the education sector, cooperative jobs and tourism sector. Nakarmi families in the study area have moved away from their traditional occupation. Instead, they are now working in fields like cooperatives, teaching, and foreign employment. One respondent from this sub-caste proudly shared that her son, after completing his engineering degree from Tribhuvan University, finished his PhD in the United States and has recently joined a university in the United States as a teaching faculty member. Some Nakarmi have incorporated modern techniques into their traditional work and have transitioned to heavy machinery and vehicle maintenance jobs. In the study area, the Napit, traditionally known for hairdressing, have

shifted to other income-generating activities like transportation services and foreign employment. This shift is also applicable to other Newar sub-castes in the study area.The shift from traditional to modern jobs has offered the Newar community both benefits and difficulties. It has facilitated economic growth, social advancement, and better integration of Newars into national and global spheres. However, it also threatens the continuation of their traditional skills, crafts, and cultural practices. The changing occupations among Newar occupational sub-castes reflect the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity.

6. Mother Tongue Practices

Defining one's mother tongue is a complex task. Typically, a mother tongue is considered to be the initial language a person acquires from birth, which implies that individuals might have more than one mother tongue (Gupta, 1997). The mother tongue holds significant sentimental value for individuals, as it is the language learned during early childhood within the family setting. It is the primary language of the community, acting as the natural mode of communication, thus establishing a profound connection between the language and a sense of communal identity (Kainla, 2062). Nepal is a multi-ethnic nation composed of various castes and religious groups, which contributes to its rich linguistic diversity. As reported in the 2078 census, Nepal is home to 142 castes and 124 distinct languages (NSO, 2021). These languages are related to different specific communities. Within these communities, in the majority of cases principle of one group and one mother tongue is prevalent, whereas in some cases a singular mother tongue often serves as a common language for different communities across the regions and locations. For instance, the Tharu, Rajvanshi, Newar, Gurung, Dhimal, and Darai communities predominantly speak their distinct mother language. In contrast, languages such as Maithili and Bhojpuri are the mother tongues for various communities in different regions (Yadav, 2006).

The majority of languages in Nepal are primarily documented but not actively spoken, and some face the risk of extinction. Languages without a written tradition are particularly vulnerable if their speakers do not continue to use them amidst the presence of numerous other languages. Nepal has a limited number of mother tongues with a long-standing written tradition. Key languages with

written records include Nepali, Maithali, Newari, Tibetan, Limbu, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, and Lepcha (Yadav, 2006)). These languages utilize various scripts, with Newari having several unique ones such as Bhujimo, Pachumol, Golmol, Rajjana, and Prachlit. However, respondents from the study area reported that they did not understand the scripts associated with their mother tongues. Currently, the Devanagari script is widely used for writing the Newari language. Commonly referred to as Nepal Bhasa, the Newari language originates from the Sino-Tibeto-Burman family. It has played a crucial role in forming Newar ethnic identity. Everyone who belongs to this community has emotional connections to the language, which serves as the primary foundation of their unity and identity. Therefore, if the language is overlooked, there is a significant risk that the affected community will become detached from the state's mainstream.

With the expansion of the Gorkha state, priority and protection were given exclusively to the Khas language which later became Nepali language. During the Panchayat era, the government promoted a "one nation, one language" policy. This action negatively affected the participation of communities speaking different languages than Nepali in multiple areas. Most Newar respondents, in the study area felt dominated by non-Newar individuals, particularly those from the Nepali-speaking community, because of their accent. To prevent their children from facing the same issues they experienced, they began speaking Nepali at home to help their children develop a better Nepali accent (Nakarmi, 2010). According to the majority of the respondents in the study area, most of the Newar family wanted their children to speak the Nepali language instead of their mother tongue. The Newars, who wanted to connect themselves with modernity, started using Nepali language in their daily life. To project a modern image and express pride in being Nepali speakers, many began speaking Nepali with their children at home. They hoped their children would speak Nepali fluently, like native speakers.

Although advocacy for the use of mother tongues in education and other areas was initiated during the Panchayat era, it was not fully acknowledged until the restoration of democracy. Subsequently, various political parties, non-governmental organizations and international organizations emphasized human rights and participatory democracy, leading to the recognition of

Nepal as a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual nation in the Interim Constitution of 2047. Similarly, the second popular movement of 2062/63 guaranteed the right to education in one's mother tongue at the basic level through the Interim Constitution 2063. The Constitution of Nepal 2072 continued this recognition, upholding the status of mother tongues as provided in the Interim Constitution. The movement of 2062/63 not only promoted the use of mother tongues but also encouraged individuals from various ethnic groups to get back to their own ethnic culture. Consequently, many ethnic communities have begun incorporating their mother tongues to varying extents in different contexts. This trend is also evident within the Newar community. One respondent in the study indicated that they have two children-a son and a daughter-whom they enrolled in Jagatsunder Bwonekuthi, a school offering instruction in Nepal Bhasa (Newari Language). This institution is recognized as the first school providing education in Nepal Bhasa (Newari Language). Similarly, 30 per cent of respondents in the study areas reported that they now use Newari as the main language for daily communication with their children at home. However, almost all respondents want their children to learn English because it is crucial for international communication and can improve their social and professional status, aligning with modernity. In total, 20 per cent of respondents reported that they frequently use English words and sentences with their children to help them learn the language.

7. Festivals and Rituals

Festivals bring the entire community together, providing a joyful break from their busy schedules. Various festivals are celebrated amongst the Newars, each with its unique significance. Some festivals carry deep religious sentiments and messages, others hold social and cultural importance, while some highlight the significance of the changing seasons. Regardless of their religious, socio-cultural, or natural significance, all festivals have become an integral part of the Newar community (Nakarmi, 2010). These festivals, along with the fairs and feasts associated with them, serve as a means to relieve fatigue, provide entertainment, and refresh the Newar people. Newar society and culture can not be understood by separating these festivals. Before modern entertainment options were available, festivals celebrated served as a primary source of refreshment for the Newars. Despite their differences, all these festivals rejuvenate

people, leaving them physically and mentally refreshed, and ready to face the days ahead. Different festivals celebrated within the Newars also help to maintain kinship bonds. For the Newars belonging to occupational castes, who are engaged in physical work throughout the year, the monthly festivals and fairs hold special significance. Apart from festivals, rituals connected to birth to death also entangle the Newars. Most of the festivals of the Newars are celebrated according to the lunar calendar.

The Newars customarily invite close family and friends to a feast during major religious and social festivals. This practice is known as Nakhtya Bonegu in the Newari language. Guests are first served a welcome dish, known as Kaula, followed by the main meal associated with the festival. These invitations are considered a matter of social prestige among the Newars. Traditionally, one or two days before the feast, all the household members are busy with preparations. They do not have time for other tasks. In the study area, majority of the respondents mentioned that they often have to take leave from the work for these preparations, which is not always practical. Consequently, they have started inviting fewer people to these events. In today's capitalist economy, it's important to learn how to manage these tasks according to one's time and the nature of the work (Nakarmi, 2010).

Bagh Bhairab Jatra (Bagh Bhairab Worship celebration) and Nhaygaa Jatra (Seven Village celebration) are the main religious village festivals of the study area. Bagh Bhairab Jatra is celebrated in the Kirtipur area only whereas Nhaygaa Jatra is celebrated in the seven villages of the south-western part of Kathmandu where the Newars are densely inhabiting. These villages include Nagaon, Panga, Satungal, Macchegaon, Boshigaon, Lhokot and Kirtipur (Maharjan, 1137 ns). The main Jatra celebration in Kirtipur under Nhaygaa Jatra (Seven Village Celebration) is the Jatra of Indrayan.i During these festivals, traditionally all the Newars of the Kirtipur area invite their relatives and friends to enjoy the celebration. One respondent shared that they used to invite all their close relatives and friends for the celebration. The married daughters and their families are mandatory guests in such celebration. This would result in hosting over 50 guests. However, they have now begun limiting the invitations to married daughters, their families, and a few close relatives. Newars now invite fewer guests to their Jatra festivals mainly for practical reasons. With modern work commitments,

many people find it challenging to take time off for the extensive preparations needed to host large gatherings. Consequently, they have started limiting the guest list to close family members and a few relatives, making the celebrations more manageable. Moreover, the demands of a busy lifestyle in a capitalist economy have made it necessary to balance cultural traditions with the realities of modern life.

Traditionally before social marriage, the Newar girls undergo two special rituals. The first, called Ehi or Bel fruit marriage, takes place when Newar girls are 7, 9, or 11 years old. The second, known as Barah or Gupha, is celebrated between the ages of 11 and 15, before the start of menstruation. These are the customs related to socializing a girl in the community and training them for life ahead. During Barah a girl is kept in a dark room for 11 days out of sunlight and male contact. She is served food and drink in the same room for 11 days. Many relatives, neighbours, and friends visit and feed corn flakes, beans, beaten rice, fruits, nuts etc. during the Barah period. The twelve-day Barah ritual concludes with a ceremony that signifies the girl's entry into adulthood. The majority of respondents shared that the traditional twelve-day Barah ritual is too demanding and they are looking for less complicated options. So as an alternative, these families prefer to send their daughters to Viharas (Buddhist Monastery) for a shorter, less restrictive period, often just three days. They are allowed to play in sunlight and meet everyone who comes to visit them, either boys or girls in Viharas. Girls staying at Viharas receive teachings on various aspects of life from their guru during their stay. After completing specific rituals within certain days, girls are sent back home with their parents and start a normal life. This is the Buddhist practice but these days it is becoming increasingly popular among Hindus as well in the study area due to the easy completion of cultural regulation in terms of time and money.

8. Conclusion

The world is constantly changing, and so are communities, societies, and cultures. Nepal has undergone a significant transformation from a highly traditional conservative society to more open and socially connected. Better access to education and healthcare, a growing road network, and more media and communication technologies have increased the aspirations of Nepalese people, driving social changes in the country. Nepal is one

of the most diverse countries in terms of population, ecology, culture, caste and ethnicity, religion, etc. People living in different parts of Nepal have their cultural practices, traditional systems, norms, values, beliefs, etc. However, we have witnessed changes in these practices since a few years back. The Newars, an indigenous inhabitants of Kathmandu Valley, are not exempt from such changes. It was found during the study that the everyday life socialization process has been changed especially for daughters from the past to the present. With the rise of capitalism, social norms and expectations have changed. As a result, the Newars are increasingly realizing the connection between educating their daughters and their future socio-economic lives. Similarly, the liberal economic policy adopted due to the influence of globalization and modernization has led to a decline in demand for certain traditional crafts and services. This has resulted in a shift from traditional occupations to career-based work, and similarly from using mother tongues to speaking modern Nepali and English, based on personal interests and skills amongst the Newars. The rise of the capitalist economy has also led to changes in celebrating festivals and rituals amongst the Newars in the study area.

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Exploring Identity in the Digital Age : Social Media on Self-Perception and Interpersonal Relationships

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Abstract

In the modern world it is characterized by technological advances in the use of the digital platform, use of social media transfigure how a person perceives him or herself as well as other people. This study attempts to reveal the effects of social media on self-esteem and inter-personal relationship of 47 samples of Kathmandu Ward no. 15. Employing quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews, the study aims at exploring how social networks impact the participants' self-concept and interactions with relatives, friends, and other people. These as well, portray a dual effect by showing not only benefit but also harm. Media programs present means of communication, expression, and connection and at the same time, present platforms of anxiety, shallowness, and indiscernibility of self. The incapacitating impacts of Social Media are summarized with guidelines for addressing potential inconvenient repercussions while promoting the positive usage of Social Media as instruments for boosting one's self-esteem and fortifying relational connection.

Keywords

Social media, Self-perception, Interpersonal relationships, Digital identity, Social consequences.

8

Exploring Identity in the Digital Age : Social Media on Self-Perception and Interpersonal Relationships

1. Introduction

The arrival of social media sites has brought about many challenges affecting self-identity processes and interactions with other people. Sites which include Facebook, Instagram, and twitter enable one to display the best part of themselves hence auto shaping the self-esteem and identity (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). Such dynamics forms the framework of this research study in which the use of social media as evident in Kathmandu Ward no. 15 impacts self-esteem and relations.

Friends' profiles have control over themselves and share pleasant, sometimes even idealized, images of themselves, which has the double effect on the Self. More positive feedback can be received via the use of such platforms; however, according to Gonzales and Hancock (2011), the adverse impacts that stem from comparison with others' apparently happier lives are also experienced. This duality is supported by Valkenburg, Peter, and Schouten (2006) who further argue that social media improve the self-concept clarity while, at the same time fragmenting the self-concept since the individual has to present multiple selves due to presentation pressure.

Furthermore, it can be noted that the nature of such dynamics is best defined by the social comparison theory. According to Festinger (1954), people always engage in self-estimations with other people; this scenario is worse when facilitated by social media (Chou & Edge, 2012). Such relative comparison often culminates in either low self-esteem or lack of self-esteem among the targeted population, which include adolescents and young adults (Oberst, Wegmann, Stodt, Brand & Chamarro, 2017).

Turkle (2011) elaborates on how social media interfaces alter human relations by isolating individuals even when they are connected; this aspect is referred to as being 'alone together'. This trend implies that, most of the social relations on Social media are not as personal, or sincere as live. In the same year, Hampton, Sessions,

and Her revealed that though social media allows for the development of weak ties, and therefore social capital, an individual's close, intimate relationships are undermined.

The theory of media multiplicity by Haythornthwaite (2005) could add more information to this, by stating that the closeness of a certain relation is evident by the number of media channels that are utilized in a relation. Nonetheless, the nature of such interactions is problematic, research says that use of technology can negatively impact depth of relationships (Kross et al., 2013).

Thus, one may examine the effects of the social media in the context of the cultural setting of Kathmandu too. This paper seeks to research on how the Nepalese society with compact and united family and social structure is changing with the help of youth going fully digital. Another study by Dahal (2018) and Thapa (2020) reveal that social media is gradually transforming social culture and interaction in the society primarily among youths within the urban echelon.

It signifies that it is on par with the global trends which show the clash between the traditional and modern world which is expanding in the digital frontier and establishing new forms of socio-cultural communication (Castells, 2011). Thus, it is important to grasp how these dynamics work in respect to the given community of Kathmandu for the better understanding of the wider significance of the social media in the formation of identities and relations in a traditional but in the same time introducing more and more liberal and technological society.

In the modern society which is greatly dominated by technological developments and extensive use of virtual applications, the use of social media constitutes a substantial factor that impacts interpersonal sensations and interactions. Thus, the social activities in the contemporary world involve the use of sites like Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, as the primary means of self-identification and communication (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). Reflection of the given works, this paper aims at analyzing the social media's influences to self-esteem and relationships of a certain sample of people from Kathmandu Ward No. 15.

It can be understood that the topic of identity in the age of the Internet is ambiguous and contains many layers. Social media creates a kind of real identity that people present online which is different

from the real-life persona which causes a split personality. While positive outcomes stem from social cues of an online interaction and the reception clients receive, negative self-appraisals arise from an endless comparison to the seemingly happier lifestyles of others in an online environment (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). Valkenburg, Peter, and Schouten (2006) similarly stress this dialethic aspect: On the one hand, social media can provoke self-clarification, on the other - the weakening of the self-concept.

The nature of these dynamics can be explained using the theory of social comparison. Festinger stated that people evaluate their abilities often in relation to the other people. This is made worse by social media through which people are always presented with selected aesthetics from their friends. Chou and Edge (2012) explain that relative comparisons lower self-esteem and produce adverse effects on individuals especially the youths. In support of this view, Oberst, et al. (2017) said that social media plays a major role in affecting self-esteem and mental health.

Furthermore, social media has deep meaning for interpersonal communication. According to Turkle (2011), the patients were all together but alone simultaneously, this is true because they were connected through their iPads and iPhones but were lonely in person. Backing this notion, Hampton, Sessions, and Her (2011) evidence how, despite the contribution of social media to the formation of weak ties and social capital, it is destructive to the close and intimate relationships. According to Haythornthwaite (2005) media multiplicity theory, closeness of a relationship is defined by the amount of media that are employed to reach the other party.

However, Kross et al. (2013) state that the quality of such interactions is poor and characterized by lower richness, which translates into infrequent and less substantive communication. One has to consider how identity and relations are affected by social media can be discussed within cultural frame of the country, namely, Kathmandu. In this regard, the Nepalese society that consists of closely-knit and bonded family systems is chin contemporary changes owing to the digital era especially young generation living in cities (Dahal, 2018; Thapa, 2020). These are allegations that depict a growing contradiction between the cultural ethos of the societies and the new culture synonymous with new technologies, as espoused by Castells (2011). These dynamics may help in understanding the

issues related to the use of social media in respectively traditional yet rapidly developed society such as Kathmandu and the impact on identity and social bonds.

2. Statement of the Problem

However, it is found that though there are paramount researches on the effect of social media globally, researches specific to the cultural impact of social media are few. The research topic for this study is therefore on the impact of social media on self-esteem and social relation among the residents of Kathmandu Ward No. 15. The first is to examine how the phenomenon in question affects the self-system and socially shared processes within a collectivistic and digitally emerging context. Using both questionnaires and interviews as the research tools and outcomes of this experiment, this work aims at presenting the reader with the doubled-edged outcome of social networking services - the fact that they can serve as helpful tools yet pose a great threat to people's perceptions of themselves and the others. It also results in a fairly specific analysis of the sociocultural consequences of social media in Nepalese community. Though this type of research is fundamental in identifying the general impact of social media, the following study aims at focusing more on the effects of social media on the aspect of self-esteem and inter-personal relationships among the people of Kathmandu Ward no. 15. However, the present paper focuses only on the localized studies as the effects of social media in different cultures cannot be fully understood through global research alone.

3. Research Questions

An attempt has been made in this paper to find out the answers of the following two questions:

1. How does social media usage affect self-perception among residents of the study area?
2. What are the consequences of social media on interpersonal relationships among these residents?

4. Objectives

Two-fold objectives of this paper are as under:

1. To explore the impact of social media on self-perception among the residents of the study area.

2. To examine the effects of social media on interpersonal relationships within this community.

5. Significance of the Study

Analyzing the present study's findings on social media usage and its effects on body image and interpersonal relationships in Kathmandu can be valuable for policymakers, educators, and social workers to develop and implement preventive measures to counter adverse ositive social media usage. It also helps to the further understanding of the sociological perspectives on digital identities and relations in the South Asian context.

6. Limitations of the Study

Thus, the present research shares the common limitations characteristic of studies conducted on a limited sample size and in a specific region, that is, Kathmandu, Nepal. However, cross-sectional studies, as the current research is, give a 'point-in-time' view rather than longitudinal outcomes of social media's impacts.

7. Research Design

This study therefore uses survey questionnaires alongside interviews in satisfying the objective of the research. Taking into account the findings for this study a total sample size of 47 respondents used the purposive sampling technique. This way the survey collects demographic information and assesses how often the participants use the social networks as well as evaluates the parameters of self-esteem and relationship satisfaction. The interviews help to get the qualitative data regarding the respondents' attitudes and subjectively felt changes in the result of active use of social networks.

8. Results and Discussion

Major results of this study have been presented in the following tables:

Table-1 : Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	22	46.8
Female	25	53.2

Age Group		
18-25	15	31.9
26-35	18	38.3
36-45	10	21.3
46 and above	4	8.5
Educational Level		
High School	12	25.5
Bachelor's Degree	20	42.6
Master's Degree	10	21.3
Doctorate	5	10.6

Source : Field Study, 2024.

The above demographic analysis indicated that a little more than half of respondents (53.2%) were female. The predominant age group, nearly four out of every ten (38.3%) was of 26-35 years, followed by little less than one-third (31.9%) respondents between 18-25 years. In terms of education, nearly four out of every ten (42.6%) of the respondents had a Bachelor's degree, almost one-fourth (25.5%) had completed high school, nearly one-fifth (21.3%) completed Master's degree and remaining almost one-tenth (10.6%) had Doctorate degree.

Table-2 : Social Media Usage and Self-Perception

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Percentage (%)
Social media improves my self-esteem	10	15	8	9	5	47	100
I often compare myself to others on social media	12	18	7	6	4	47	100
Social media makes me feel inadequate	9	14	10	8	6	47	100

Source : Field Study, 2024.

The data showed that a little more than half of respondents (53.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed that social media improves

their self-esteem. However, a little less than two-third (63.8%) often compared themselves to others on social media, and a little less than half (48.9%) felt that social media made them feel inadequate.

Table-3 : Impact of Social Media on Family Relationships

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Percentage (%)
Social media enhances my connection with family	8	13	10	9	7	47	100
Social media causes conflicts in my family	5	10	12	13	7	47	100
I spend less time with family due to social media	7	15	10	8	7	47	100

Source : Field Study, 2024.

The results indicated mixed effects of social media on family relationships. While less than half (44.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that social media enhances their connection with family, more than one-third (38.3%) felt that it causes conflicts. Additionally, again less than half (46.8%) acknowledged spending less time with family due to social media.

Table-4 : Impact of Social Media on Friendships

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Percentage (%)
Social media strengthens my friendships	11	17	8	6	5	47	100
Social media leads to superficial friendships	10	16	9	7	5	47	100
I prefer online inter-actions over face-to-face	9	14	10	8	6	47	100

Source : Field Study, 2024.

Data contained in the above table clearly showed that nearly six out of every ten (59.6%) of the selected respondents felt that social media strengthens their friendships. Conversely, more than half

(55.3%) agreed that social media leads to superficial friendships, and a little less than half (48.9%) preferred online interactions over face-to-face ones.

Table-5 : Overall Impact of Social Media

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Percentage (%)
Social media has a positive impact on my life	10	15	12	6	4	47	100
The negative effects of social media outweigh the positives	9	16	11	7	4	47	100
I am mindful of my social media usage	12	18	8	5	4	47	100

Source : Field Study, 2024.

The overall perception of social media revealed that more than half (53.2%) of respondents felt it had a positive impact on their lives, while the same proportion (53.2%) among them also agreed that the negative effects outweigh the positives. A significant little less than one-third (63.8%) stated that they are mindful of their social media usage.

9. Discussion

The result implies that even though social media leads to increased self-esteem, the end result is comparison and self-condemnation. This duality finds support in previous research claiming that social media may boost self-esteem as well as enhance numerous doubts. In the area of family functioning, the effect was less clear-cut. While a vast number of the respondents noted feeling closer to their families because of technology, several noted interference and lack of quality time with family. This is an implication, therefore, that though social media plays the role of connecting people and enhancing communication, it has an unpleasant way of intruding face to face and interpersonal relations thus contributing to family conflicts.

A multilateral effect on friendships was evident that according to the results. Thus, while social media was perceived regarding it as an environment to fortify friendships, it was at the same time regarded

as an arena of ''shallow'' connections. This division suggests that social media can enable people to stay plugged in to each other's lives while simultaneously eroding the quality of these mechanisms. As it can be seen from the preceding analysis, social media in general was felt to have positive as well as negative effects. Thus, the high level of mindfulness as to the usefulness of social media usage reflected in respondents' answers evades the negative implications of misuse but rather indicates a more or less reasonable approach to the incorporation of social media into one's life. In general, the study shows that though social media is beneficial in the aspect of such factors as connectedness and identity, it is associated with costs that have implications on psychological health and interpersonal relations. The awareness of respondents about their frequency of social media use showed a high level, thus suggesting that there is increasing recognition of such consequences.

10. Conclusion

Thus, this study contributes to an understanding of the impacts of social media regarding self-esteem and social relationships within Kathmandu Ward No. 15. The results highlight a dual impact : it is used effectively for communication and self-identity at the same time as it elicits social comparison in the process and superficial relationships. These results highlight the applicability of moderate use and precaution of the detriment social media poses.

It is useful for a localized presentation of the phenomenon, which would give an insight into how social networks are used in a certain cultural setting. The following conclusions may prove useful for policymakers and educators who want to manage the concept of social media and its negative impact.

Thus, further research should extend the range of investigations to cover longitudinal studies and samples comprising significantly more people that are represented by a diverse mixed population. Further, prevention strategies targeting the enhancement of information competencies might be useful in supporting people in coping with the challenges of social networking sites.

In conclusion, social media is still growing and thus, its effects on the social self and personality still relevant and important to study. Thus, people who are able to be conscious about communication in application, will be able to fill it a positive impact on their life and the life of other people, and do not get negative effects of it.

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A Devotee of Indian Art - Stella Kramrisch

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Abstract

Stella Kramrisch, a pioneering scholar of Indian art, profoundly influenced the global understanding and appreciation of Indian culture in the 20th century. Her academic journey, beginning in Austria and extending to India and the United States, led her to become a key figure in the study of Indian art, integrating its spiritual and cultural dimensions with scholarly rigor. This paper examines Kramrisch's early influences, particularly through her connection with Ananda Coomaraswamy, her scholarly contributions such as "The Hindu Temple" and "Indian Sculpture", and her curatorial achievements, most notably at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Her interdisciplinary approach, which emphasized the metaphysical underpinnings of Indian art and her respect for indigenous knowledge systems, reshaped Western perceptions of Indian aesthetics. Through her work, Kramrisch bridged Eastern and Western traditions, leaving a lasting legacy on art history, academia, and museum practices.

Keywords

Pioneering, Culture, Spiritual, Interdisciplinary, Perception.

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A Devotee of Indian Art - Stella Kramrisch

1. Introduction

scholars and advocates of Indian art and culture in the 20th century. Born in Austria in 1896, Kramrisch's fascination with Indian art began early in her life and grew into a lifelong devotion that would profoundly influence the understanding and appreciation of Indian art across the world. Her scholarship, curatorial efforts, and extensive writing provided a bridge between the East and the West, enabling a deeper comprehension of the richness, complexity, and spiritual dimensions of Indian art. This paper Stella Kramrisch 1 a name synonymous with Indian art history, is celebrated as one of the foremost explores Stella Kramrisch's life, her contributions to the field of Indian art, her unique perspective as a Western scholar deeply immersed in Indian culture, and the lasting impact of her work on art history.

2. Early Life and Academic Background

Stella Kramrisch was born on May 29, 1896, in Moravia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (now in the Czech Republic). She displayed an early interest in art and culture, which led her to study art history at the University of Vienna, where she received her doctorate in 1919. It was during her academic pursuit in Vienna that she first encountered Indian philosophy and culture through the lectures of Ananda Coomaraswamy, a prominent Indian art historian and philosopher. This encounter ignited her passion for Indian art, prompting her to delve deeper into its study.

Kramrisch's journey to India began in 1922 when she accepted an invitation to teach at the University of Calcutta. This move marked the beginning of a transformative period in her life, immersing her in the vibrant cultural and spiritual milieu of India. During her time in India, Kramrisch not only taught Western aesthetics but also engaged with traditional Indian art forms and artists, developing a unique cross-cultural understanding that would define her scholarly approach.

3. Contributions to the Study of Indian Art

3·1 Pioneering Scholarly Works

One of Stella Kramrisch's most significant contributions to Indian art is her extensive body of scholarly work. Her books, such as "The Hindu Temple" (1946) and "Indian Sculpture" (1933), are considered foundational texts in the study of Indian art. "The Hindu Temple" is a comprehensive exploration of the architectural, symbolic, and spiritual dimensions of Hindu temple construction. In this work, Kramrisch drew upon a wide range of sources, including Sanskrit texts, temple architecture, and iconography, to provide an in-depth analysis of the temple as both a physical and metaphysical construct. Her work was groundbreaking in its approach, combining art history, anthropology, and philosophy to offer a holistic understanding of Indian temple architecture.

In "Indian Sculpture", Kramrisch examined the evolution of Indian sculpture from ancient to medieval periods, emphasizing its spiritual and symbolic aspects. She analyzed the relationship between form and meaning, arguing that Indian sculpture should be understood not just as a visual art form but as a manifestation of religious and metaphysical ideas. Her writings helped to redefine the Western understanding of Indian art, shifting the focus from a purely aesthetic evaluation to an appreciation of its cultural and spiritual significance.

3·2 Curatorial Excellence and Exhibition Contributions

In addition to her scholarly work, Stella Kramrisch made significant contributions as a curator. After moving to the United States in 1950, she became a curator of Indian art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a position she held for over three decades. During her tenure, Kramrisch organized several groundbreaking exhibitions that brought Indian art to a Western audience in new and innovative ways. One of her most notable exhibitions was "Manifestations of Shiva"[2] (1981), which showcased the multifaceted nature of the Hindu god Shiva through a diverse range of artworks, including sculptures, paintings, and manuscripts. The exhibition was acclaimed for its scholarly depth and curatorial innovation, offering viewers a nuanced understanding of Shiva's complex iconography and symbolism. Kramrisch's curatorial approach emphasized the

spiritual and cultural contexts of the artworks, allowing audiences to engage with them on multiple levels.

3·3 Cross-Cultural Engagement and Advocacy

Stella Kramrisch's work went beyond academia and museums; she was a tireless advocate for Indian art on the global stage. Her cross-cultural engagement extended to fostering relationships with Indian artists, scholars, and institutions. She was instrumental in bringing Indian art to the attention of Western scholars and audiences, advocating for its recognition as a significant and independent art tradition rather than a derivative of Western aesthetics.

Kramrisch's lectures, writings, and exhibitions played a crucial role in reshaping Western perceptions of Indian art. She challenged the Eurocentric biases that often colored Western interpretations, arguing for an appreciation of Indian art on its terms. Her efforts helped to establish Indian art as a serious academic discipline in Western universities and museums, paving the way for future generations of scholars and curators.

4. Unique Perspectives and Methodology

4·1 Integration of Spirituality and Art

A distinctive feature of Stella Kramrisch's approach to Indian art3 was her emphasis on its spiritual dimensions. Unlike many Western art historians of her time, who focused primarily on formalist and stylistic analyses, Kramrisch was deeply interested in the religious and philosophical contexts of Indian art. She believed that to truly understand Indian art, one must engage with the spiritual and metaphysical ideas that underlie it.

Kramrisch's integration of spirituality and art is evident in her work on Hindu temple architecture, where she explores how the design, structure, and ornamentation of temples reflect complex philosophical concepts. Her approach was interdisciplinary, drawing upon art history, religious studies, anthropology, and philosophy to offer a holistic understanding of Indian art.

4·2 Respect for Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Another unique aspect of Kramrisch's methodology was her respect for indigenous knowledge systems. She was one of the few

Western scholars who placed significant value on traditional Indian texts and practices in her research. She frequently drew upon Sanskrit scriptures, local traditions, and oral histories to inform her understanding of Indian art. This respect for indigenous knowledge allowed her to provide a more authentic and nuanced interpretation of Indian art, which resonated with both Indian and Western audiences.

4.3 Impact and Legacy

Stella Kramrisch's contributions to the field of Indian art history are immense and far-reaching. She is widely regarded as one of the most influential scholars of Indian art in the 20th century, whose work continues to shape the field today. Her scholarship provided a foundation for future research, setting new standards for the study of Indian art by integrating its spiritual, cultural, and historical dimensions.

Kramrisch's work also played a vital role in establishing Indian art as a respected and independent discipline in Western academia. She helped to shift the focus away from a Eurocentric perspective, advocating for a more inclusive and holistic approach that recognizes the unique qualities of Indian art. Her efforts to bridge the gap between Eastern and Western art traditions have inspired generations of scholars, curators, and art enthusiasts to appreciate the depth and diversity of Indian art.

Furthermore, her curatorial work at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and her exhibitions, such as "Manifestations of Shiva," have left a lasting impact on the presentation and interpretation of Indian art in museums. These exhibitions not only increased public awareness of Indian art but also encouraged a more critical and informed engagement with its cultural and spiritual contexts.

5. Conclusion

Stella Kramrisch's dedication to Indian art was marked by a deep respect for its cultural and spiritual significance, a commitment to scholarly rigor, and a passion for cross-cultural understanding. Her work as a scholar, curator, and advocate helped to elevate Indian art to its rightful place in the global art historical canon. Through her pioneering research, innovative exhibitions, and cross-cultural engagement, Kramrisch has left an indelible mark on the field of

Indian art history, ensuring that its richness and complexity are recognized and appreciated worldwide.

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The Sociological Implications of Evolving Fertility Trends in Nepal

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Abstract

This research delves into the sociological aspects of fertility change in Nepal, drawing on data spanning two decades from 2001 to 2022. Fertility rate commonly referred to as the total fertility of a population, represents the average number of children expected to be born to a woman throughout her lifetime. The shifts in fertility rate trends serve as indicators of broader changes in social factors such as education, socio-economic status, alterations in gender dynamics, and the overarching social structure (Hirschman, 1994; Mills & Blossfeld, 2003; Anderson & Kohler, 2015). The paper meticulously analyzes the trajectory of fertility change in Nepal establishing connections with concurrent social changes. Notably, this research relies on the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), initiated in 2001 and most recently conducted in 2022, marking a substantial advancement from the 1986 Nepal Family and Health Survey in terms of fertility calculations. Utilizing quantitative data obtained from secondary sources, the paper conducts a qualitative analysis. The findings reveal a gradual decline in the total fertility rate. This sociological trend suggests that factors such as increased socio-economic status, elevated educational attainment, evolving gender roles beyond traditional family spheres, and a higher rate of migration contribute to the observed decrease in total fertility in Nepal.

Keywords

Fertility rate, Demography, Contraceptive, Ecological, Wealth quintile.

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The Sociological Implications of Evolving Fertility Trends in Nepal

1. Introduction

The sociological analysis of the fertility rate change holds significant implications within the realm of social study. It is intricately connected to various social factors, such as education, socio-economic status, shifts in gender dynamics, and the over-arching social structure (Hirschman, 1994; Mills & Blossfeld, 2003; Anderson & Kohler, 2015). Alterations in family composition and structure, notably the emergence of non-traditional family forms, are intricately linked to fluctuations in fertility rates. As women gain increased access to education and employment opportunities, there is a tendency to postpone childbirth and opt for smaller family sizes. Economic factors, including employment opportunities, income levels, and economic uncertainties, exert a substantial influence on decisions regarding fertility. Cultural beliefs and societal norms also play a pivotal role in shaping fertility behaviors. Sociologists delve into the impact of global economic trends, migration patterns, and cultural exchanges on perceptions of family, thereby influencing reproductive behaviors. In essence, the transformation in fertility rates bears clear sociological implications for analyzing broader social changes.

Fertility, one of the three fundamental components of population dynamics alongside mortality and migration, plays a pivotal role in shaping the size, structure, and composition of a country's population. Unlike other demographic processes, the study of fertility is notably intricate due to its susceptibility to various factors, encompassing both biological and behavioral aspects (Nepal Population Report 2021 : 19). Demographers employ distinct measures to analyze fertility, with the main four indicators being Crude Birth Rate (CBR), Age-Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR), Children Ever Born (CEB), and Total Fertility Rate (TFR). The Crude Birth Rate is defined as the number of live births per thousand persons in a specific area for a given year. Age-Specific Fertility Rates represent the ratio of children born to a particular age group of women relative to the number of women at risk of bearing children.

The Total Fertility Rate, a commonly used metric, is defined as the anticipated number of children a woman would bear during her childbearing years based on prevailing age-specific fertility rates. It provides an estimate of the average number of births a woman would have by the end of her reproductive period if she adheres to the prevailing age-specific fertility rates throughout her childbearing years (typically ages 15-49). The TFR is calculated as the average sum of ASFRs. This paper focuses primarily on the age-specific fertility rate and total fertility rate in Nepal, analyzing their trends using data sourced from the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) spanning from 2001 to 2022. The research utilizes secondary sources for quantitative data collection and conducts qualitative analysis, linking this data with various social factors.

2. Sociology of Fertility Change

The sociology of fertility change is a multifaceted field that examines the social factors influencing patterns of fertility within societies. This area of study has evolved over time, reflecting changes in demographic trends, societal values, and economic structures. The literature on the sociology of fertility change encompasses a range of topics, including family dynamics, gender roles, socioeconomic factors, and cultural influences. Early sociological approaches to fertility often adopted structural-functional perspectives, emphasizing the role of family and reproduction in maintaining social stability. Scholars like Talcott Parsons argued that societies have mechanisms to regulate population size and ensure the reproduction of social structures. Scholars have explored the relationship between family structure and fertility (Hirschman,1994 : 217). Changes in the composition and organization of families, such as the rise of non-traditional family forms, have been linked to variations in fertility rates. The transition from extended to nuclear family structures has been associated with lower fertility rates in some contexts, as individuals may have fewer social and economic reasons to have larger families. The empowerment of women and changes in gender roles have been identified as critical factors in fertility change (Anderson & Kohler, 2015 : 381). As women gain access to education and employment opportunities, they may delay childbirth and opt for smaller family sizes. Studies have investigated the impact of women's autonomy, decision-making power, and control over reproductive choices on fertility outcomes.

Economic conditions including employment opportunities, income levels, and economic uncertainty, play a significant role in fertility decisions (McLanahan & Percheski, 2008 : 260). Economic stability is often associated with delayed childbearing and lower fertility rates. Policies related to parental leave, childcare support, and work-family balance also influence fertility choices, reflecting the intersection of economic and social factors. Research in this area examines how socio-economic factors such as education, income, and occupation influence fertility decisions. High levels of education and economic stability are often associated with delayed childbearing and lower fertility rates. This line of research considers the impact of changing economic conditions on family planning.

Cultural beliefs and societal norms play a crucial role in shaping fertility behavior. Sociologists study how cultural values regarding gender roles, family, and fertility impact individual choices (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1988 : 9). Changes in cultural norms, such as shifts in attitudes toward gender equality, can have profound effects on fertility patterns. Societies with strong pronatalist cultural norms may exhibit higher fertility rates, while those with a more individualistic ethos might experience lower fertility. Religious doctrines often have implications for family planning and reproductive health practices, affecting fertility behaviors among adherents. The sociology of fertility also explores the gendered nature of reproductive decisions. Research in this area delves into how power dynamics between men and women, as well as societal expectations regarding gender roles, influence decisions related to family planning, contraceptive use, and childbearing.

Social networks and peer influence contribute to the diffusion of fertility norms and behaviors within communities (Bongaarts, & Watkins, 1996). Individuals may adjust their fertility decisions based on the actions and choices of their peers. The spread of new ideas and practices, such as the acceptance of smaller family sizes, can be traced through social networks. Globalization and urbanization have been linked to changes in fertility patterns. Globalization has led to increased mobility and interconnectedness, impacting fertility patterns. Sociologists examine how global economic trends, migration, and cultural exchanges influence ideas about family and impact reproductive behaviors (Mills, & Blossfeld, 2003 : 188). Urban environments often provide different opportunities and challenges for individuals and families, influencing their decisions about family

size (Martine, Alves & Cavenaghi, 2013). Massive urbanization in the developing world is one of the major structural shifts of the 21st century impacting on fertility behavior. The interconnectedness of societies in a globalized world can lead to the transfer of ideas, values, and practices related to fertility.

Fertility decisions are influenced by institutional contexts, including policies related to family planning, maternity/paternity leave, and childcare (Casterline, 2001 : 3). Sociologists analyze how these institutional factors shape fertility choices and contribute to cross-national variations in fertility rates. Government policies, including family planning programs, reproductive health services, and population control measures, can have a significant impact on fertility rates. The effectiveness and implementation of these policies vary across different societies. Advances in reproductive technologies, such as in vitro fertilization (IVF), have expanded individuals' options for family building. The intersection of technology and fertility raises ethical and social questions about access, affordability, and cultural acceptance.

As the sociology of fertility change continues to evolve, researchers grapple with the complex interplay of these factors and seek to understand how they shape fertility decisions across diverse social contexts. The interdisciplinary nature of this field involves drawing on insights from sociology, demography, anthropology, economics, and other disciplines to provide a comprehensive understanding of fertility dynamics in contemporary societies.

3. Analysis of Fertility Change in Nepal

Over the recent years, Nepal has witnessed a consistent decline in its total fertility rate. This rate exhibits variations across distinct time intervals, age groups, geographic regions, income levels, employment statuses, and educational backgrounds. The first table indicates a number of peculiarities and inconsistencies in the fertility trend in Nepal including both total fertility rate (TFR) and age-specific fertility rate (AGFR). In each survey, it seems declining in total fertility rate in every five years. After that period, the TFR has started to decline rapidly due to various reasons. Data shows that the total fertility rate decreases by at least two children over the years 2001 to 2022. Estimation of the first survey of 1981 has decreased by 3.7 in 2011 and continuously it becomes 2.6, decreased by 59.73 percentage points within three decades. This reduction in TFR indicates the

entire decline in fertility rates in rural, urban, ecological zone as well as development regions. Particularly, the education of women, female labour participation, urban residence, household wealth, cultural norms, and overall development has affected the fertility. The growth of contraceptive uses is also another important factor to decrease the fertility in which the contraceptive prevalence rate is 49.7 percent including both modern and traditional method (NDHS, 2022). To reduce the fertility rate and maternal mortality, government of Nepal has legalized the safe abortion in 2001. The change in the total fertility rate affects the population growth rate that is only 1.6 in 2011. The estimated Total Fertility rate of Nepal was more or less constant until mid-eighties and thereafter it started to decline. As the total fertility rate decreases gradually, the population growth rate also decreases to 0.92 respectively from 2001 to 2021 calculating in each population census (CBS, 2021).

Table-1 : Trends of Total Fertility Rate in Nepal

Age group	Year				
	2001	**2006**	**2011**	**2016**	**2022**
15-19 years	110	98	81	88	71
20-24 years	248	234	187	172	160
25-29 years	205	144	126	124	110
30-34 years	136	84	71	59	57
35-39 years	81	48	36	18	17
40-44 years	34	16	14	6	5
45-49 years	7	2	5	2	1
TFR (15-49 years)	4.1	3.1	2.6	2.3	2.1

Note : Age-specific fertility rates are per 1,000 women

Sources : Nepal Demographic and Health Survey of 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2022.

In the age specific fertility rate, the fertility rate of age group also decreases constantly. However, the fertility rate still is higher in the age group 20-24 and 25-29. It delineates that most girls are marrying at the age of above 20 to 29. This delineates the consistency in the early marriage of girl and improved fecundity due to better nutrition. In 2011, the fertility of the age group 15-19 has decreased which shows the decrease in early marriage and early motherhood. However, there ar still some evidences that some girls are still marrying at the early

age of 15 to 19. This also shows that these girls are marrying before completion of their studies. The adolescent fertility in Nepal is in declining trends. The decline is also observed among women in the prime reproductive ages (20-24, 25-29 and 30-34). It shows that they are more educated, economically busy and using contraceptives profoundly. The age group 30-34 and older, the trends in AGFRs are all downward. The age group 45-49 has more decreased rate than the other groups that shows elder women do not want children in the later years of survey. In the NDHS report of 2022, the TFR of age group 45-49 is only 1 which is minimum among the groups.

The Central Bureau of Statistics released its fourth Population Monograph in 2014, analyzing data from the 2001 Population Census. Due to the scarcity of reliable demographic data in the context of Nepal, estimates must be derived using indirect estimation methods (Karki, 2003). According to the data, the total fertility rate has decreased by at least two children between 2001 and 2022. The increased knowledge about contraceptive prevalence (Modern Methods) among men and women aged 15-49, as noted in the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS, 2022 : 141), has played a crucial role in this decline. The median age of women at marriage has progressively increased from 17.9 in 2016 to 18.3 years in 2022. Similarly, the median age of men at marriage has seen an upward trend, rising from 20.1 years in 2001 to 22.3 years in 2022. This shift towards later marriage for both women and men contributes to the reduction in fertility rates.

4. Fertility Differentials

The examination of differential fertility takes into account various factors such as residence, ecological zone, provinces, education, caste/ethnicity, and religion. This analysis, as suggested by Karki and Krishna (2008), enhances our understanding of the contextual elements contributing to fertility decline in Nepal. A new Table-2 has been created to facilitate a comparative assessment of each survey based on these background characteristics, highlighting the changes in each variable. A significant disparity in fertility is observed between urban and rural residences. In 2001, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) among urban women was 2.1, representing a noteworthy 2.3 children fewer than the TFR among rural women, which stood at 4.4-a difference exceeding fifty percent. Over the years, this gap has been consistently decreasing and narrowed to just sixteen percent in

2022. By 2011, the TFR for urban women (2.0) was merely 0.4 less than that of rural women (2.4), indicating a 42 percentage point difference (NDHS, 2022). This trend underscores a rapid decline in the total fertility rate in rural areas, attributed to the widespread impact of urbanization, increased education, and heightened awareness regarding contraceptive usage.

Table-2 : Fertility by Background Characteristics

Background Characteristics	Total Fertility Rate				
	2001	2006	2011	2016	2022
Residential Background					
Rural	4.4	3.3	2.8	2.9	2.4
Urban	2.1	2.1	1.6	2.0	2.0
Ecological Zone					
Mountain	4.8	4.1	3.4	3.0	2.7
Hill	4	3	2.6	2.1	1.8
Terai	4.1	3.1	2.5	2.5	2.2
Province					
Province no. 1	—	—	—	2.3	2.2
Madesh Province	—	—	—	3.0	2.7
Bagmati Province	—	—	—	1.8	1.6
Gandaki Province	—	—	—	2.0	1.4
Lumbini Province	—	—	—	2.4	1.9
Karnali Province	—	—	—	2.8	2.6
Sudur Paschim Province	—	—	—	2.2	2.3
Education					
No Education	4.8	3.9	3.7	3.3	3.3
Basic Education	3.2	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.3
Secondary	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	1.8
Above Secondary	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.6
Total	4.1	3.1	2.6	2.3	2.1

Sources : NDHS 2001, NDHS 2006, NDHS 2011, NDHS, 2016, NDHS, 2022.

The disparity in fertility across ecological zones has diminished when compared to the fertility levels observed in 2001. Initially, there was little discernible difference among the three ecological zones,

with fertility hovering around 4 across all of them in 2001. However, by 2022, fertility rates had decreased across the board. Specifically, the hill region witnessed a reduction to less than two, falling below the national average. This trend underscores the rapid progress in socio-economic development, shifts in gender roles, and advance- ments in education within the hill region. The remaining two zones still exhibit fertility rates exceeding two and surpassing the national average. Nevertheless, across each zone, the fertility trends consistently depict a decline in Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in every survey, supporting the overall reduction in the country's total fertility.

Among the seven provinces, Madesh and Karnali provinces stand out with higher Total Fertility Rates (TFRs) than the other regions. Nevertheless, there is a consistent downward trend in TFRs in these provinces, and the disparity with other regions is diminishing in each survey. In both Madesh and Karnali provinces, the TFR exceeds 2 and surpasses the national average, indicating the need for comprehensive development initiatives. Implementing programs to elevate socio-economic status, redefine gender roles, and enhance educational opportunities is crucial in these regions. Conversely, the Bagmati, Gandaki, and Lumbini provinces demonstrate fertility rates lower than the national average. This suggests positive trends, indicating an increase in the socio-economic status of households in these provinces, accompanied by rising education levels. Notably, gender roles are evolving, with women increasingly participating in work beyond traditional household roles. These findings underscore the nuanced regional variations in fertility and emphasize the importance of tailored development strategies for each province.

The results underscore an inverse relationship between education and the Total Fertility Rate (TFR), establishing education as a key factor in the decline of fertility rates in Nepal. The 2014 Population Monograph highlighted a negative relationship between education and fertility, emphasizing that women with no education tend to have higher Total Fertility Rates (TFR) than their educated counterparts (CBS, 2014). In 2001, Nepal's literacy rate was less than fifty percent, but by 2022, it had surpassed seventy percent (NSO, 2021). Concurrently, the women's literacy rate exhibited a similar upward trend. Educated women consistently display lower TFRs compared to their counterparts. Notably, illiterate women, who had the highest fertility rates, have experienced a declining trend. The

fertility rate for uneducated women in 2001 (4.8) decreased by thirty-two percentage points in 2022 (3.3), attributed to concerted efforts by government and non-government organizations in raising awareness and promoting contraceptive measures (NDHS, 2022). Furthermore, individuals with education levels above secondary education exhibit a notably lower TFR (1.6) in 2022 compared to other groups. This rate is twenty percentage points below the national average (2.1), highlighting the substantial impact of education on shaping fertility patterns and the success of initiatives promoting awareness and family planning measures, especially among the educated population.

Table-3 : Wealth Quintile and Total Fertility Rate

Wealth Quintile	Total Fertility Rate			
	2006	**2011**	**2016**	**2022**
Lowest	4.7	4.1	3.2	2.8
Second	3.6	3.1	2.5	2.4
Middle	3.1	2.7	2.5	2.1
Fourth	2.7	2.1	2.1	1.7
Highest	1.9	1.5	1.6	1.6
Total	**3.1**	**2.6**	**2.3**	**2.1**

Source : NDHS, 2006, 2011, 2016 & 2022.

Economic factor is important factor for the determination of fertility. The surveys show that the wealth has negative impact in the fertility rate. In Nepal, wealth quintile is making related to total fertility rate only after 2006 and started to include in survey. In wealth quintile, the lowest class has the highest TFR that is less by 2.8 in comparison with the highest wealth quintile (1.5) in 2006. The fertility of lowest quintile has sixty percentage more than highest quintile. The difference is decreased to just 2.1 in 2022. The TFR of the highest group of wealth quintile is 0.5 less than the national level that is twenty three percentage point less. The trend of fertility of each group of wealth quintile is declining from 2006 to 2011. The result shows that the wealth/economic activities of Nepalese women are increasing comparing the survey of 2006 and 2022and makes decline in fertility rate.

With over 10% of the population residing abroad for employment and remittances constituting more than 30% of Nepal's GDP,

economic factors significantly impact fertility rates. The majority of the total population, over 65%, is economically active according to the 2021 population census. Occupational differentials reveal that those engaged in agriculture tend to have higher fertility rates than those in other professions, even though agricultural engagement is decreasing in Nepal. These factors collectively contribute to the lower fertility rates observed in the country. The data suggests that the onset of fertility decline in Nepal likely began in the early 1980s. This fertility transition is typically accompanied by socio-economic changes, including the spread of education, improved health, income provision to the deprived, and exposure to modern ideas promoting fertility decline (Ahikari, 2010).

5. Conclusion

The analysis clearly indicates a decline in fertility levels in Nepal over the past two decades, spanning from 2001 to 2022. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has seen a notable reduction, decreasing from 4.1 births per woman in 2001 to 2.1 births per woman in 2022-a decline of two children over the past 20 years, equating to a fifty percentage point decrease. This places Nepal's TFR below the world average of 2.4. As discussed by sociologists, various social factors such as education, socio-economic status, shifts in gender dynamics, migration, and the overarching social structure impact the total fertility rate (Hirschman, 1994; Mills & Blossfeld, 2003; Anderson & Kohler, 2015). The declining trends in fertility rates indicate positive advancements in these social factors within Nepal. The diminished fertility levels in Nepal can be attributed to several factors that favor lower fertility, including the increasing age of marriage, evolving gender roles with women participating in work outside households, rising literacy rates for both men and women, and an overall improvement in socio-economic status. Improved health services and increased exposure to modern contraceptives have played a crucial role in promoting the decline in fertility in Nepal. These findings strongly support the need for continued investment in planning programs and other social development factors. However, challenges persist, particularly with higher fertility rates in rural areas, the Mountain and Hill regions, and among women with no formal education. Addressing these challenges requires additional efforts focused on family planning programs, increasing contraceptive prevalence, and enhancing educational opportunities along with economic activities.

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Colonization and Cultural Clashes: Irish Rage and Vampire Attack against Britishers in Bram Stoker's Dracula

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Abstract

This article discusses on colonization, cultural conflicts and power exercises of British authority that Irish people cannot bear easily. British colonial power supremacy and their hegemony during Victorian period is exposed in Bram Stoker's Dracula. The novel is structured in a journal form. It shows British's colonial power and suppression that is exemplified through different kinds of sufferings that people experience. The novel depicts the conflicting images of Victorian society when British colonized other countries and imposed its own cultural ideology. Objective of this paper is to show the Britishers' power exercise and Irish resistance against them. This paper is prepared in qualitative research method. Comparative study is made on the text and referential resources to know about the British and Irish cultures and so this paper analyses the text from a part of cultural study and resistance perspectives respectively. Finding of this paper is that power exercises of the colonizers brought cultural clashes. Irish people felt insulted by the colonizers. British control over their property and dominance in cultural identity guided them to go on resistance.

Keywords

Colonization, Clashes, Rage, Vampires, Revenge.

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Colonization and Cultural Clashes: Irish Rage and Vampire Attack against Britishers in Bram Stoker's Dracula

1. Introduction

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* raises the issues of colonization, cultural clashes and human sufferings. Irish citizens suffered of British colonization that distorted their artworks and cultural practices. Britishers tried to continue the spy to control over the Irish activities and resources. Colonizer's activities raised the rage among Irish citizens and they wanted to take a revenge against them for which Count Dracula tried his best. Stoker's *Dracula* looks like a journalistic work which exposes the mysterious birth and activities of Count Dracula. About Dracula, George Stade writes, "Dracula is already a reflection, a shadow, an apparition, a matter of mind rather than matter-and in any case, when we look for him in mirrors, our own faces get in the way. Nor can the light of day illuminate his murks, for until nightfall he likes to lie dormant in his coffin" (Introduction, p. v). Dracula looks like wolves, bats, rats, ghost or a spirit and his activities are mysterious. His shape and sizes dazzle the others. He says, "I love the shade and the shadow" (p. v). In this regard Dr. Abraham van Helsing notes that "Dracula's power ceases, as that of all evil things, at the coming of day" (qtd. in Stade, p. v). His birth was mysterious as he was born with red eyes, white mustache and grown hairs on the palms. Dracula and vampire activities in the present time also are terrific who disguise and terrify the enemies.

In addition to Dracula's mysterious activities, this paper analyzes the events of physical and mental attacks of the British character like Jonathan Harker, Mina Murray known as Mina Harker, Lucy Westenra and the others. Dracula and the other characters in the form of vampires (unnatural characters like devils or ghosts and Mephistopheles who eat the fleshes and drinks blood) try to attack the colonizers as a revenge that is shown in Stoker's *Dracula*. Mina Harker is also a dangerous character about whom Stade writes, "she has a man's brain........and woman's heart" (Introduction, p. ix). She disguises and makes the people suffer from her activities. Harker's

entry to Dracula's castle is suspicious where he wants to track Dracula and control his activities and so Dracula is furious against him. Harker is observing the castle from colonial eye and mindset that turns to the case of attack. Stoker writes:

........one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe. I was not able to light on any map or work giving the exact locality of the Castle Dracula, as there are no maps of this country as yet to compare with our own Ordnance Survey maps: but I found that Bistritz, the post town named by Count Dracula, is a fairly well-known place. I shall enter here some of my notes, as they may refresh my memory what I talk over my travels with Mina. (Dracula. p. 2)

Due to an unfair treatment and harassments of the Britishers to the Irish society, Irish people started to speak against the wrong practices of colonizing. Among the disputes, castle performances and cultural clashes are the major issues for which Dracula and vampires started attacking to the Britishers.

Harker worries seeing Irish anger, vampire attacks and merciless death there in the castle. It is a challenge to British society because the country was exercising super power during the colonized period. The novel, Dracula exhibits Victorian society when British was in power in the world. British colonization was in direct rule over countries. As a result, most of the countries around its periphery were politically dominated and so they had to protest against the colonization. Stoker writes, "There were dark, rolling clouds overhead, and in the air the heavy, oppressive sense of thunder. It seemed as though the mountain range had separated two atmospheres and that now we had got into the thunderous one" (Dracula, p. 10). Stoker's writing symbolically refers to the thundering position between British and Irish territory that brought the cultural, political and the other clashes. Dark rolling clouds refers to the spy activities and dominance of the Britishers that increased the Irish rage and turned towards the protest activities. British penetrated to the neighboring countries and imposed own cultural ideologies there. Even not having direct rule, it created power and imposed English way of living. Many countries were terrified by the power of England against which Dracula characters revolted. At the end of the century, British rule left its grip and power. The nationalist movement like Irish nationalism process gradually weakened British laws and that started their downfall.

The novel presents Irish protest against British colonization and shows disputes along with resistance by torturing British people. It presents Irish threat to British society in terms of cultural and ideological issues. The major character Dracula shows an anger against the British society, culture and people. He imprisons British representative character Jonathan Harker who visits to Irish representative character Count Dracula for some conspiracy. His activities are taken as "gloom of the night" (Dracula, p. 12). This research focuses on mainly two characters who represent British and Irish society respectively. The villainous character Dracula being vampire inflicts and exploits British gentleman and his family. It is a representative case which brings a clash between Irish and British society. As Dracula frightens Harker, vampires also try to expose their mysterious power to make him more frightening. Irish threatens British society during Victorian era when Irish people were unable to accept imposition of British power and culture.

2. Theoretical Underpinning

The novel, Dracula typically depicts Irish culture, society and tradition during Victorian period when British had practiced colonial power in Ireland. Irish people had nationalistic feeling of "exposing their own culture and ideology" (Louis, p. 246). Irish people hate the English culture therefore they begin cultural resistance against English culture. The novel introduces similar Victorian issue that shows Irish voices for political as well as cultural freedom. Thomas Boylan analyzes:

> The diverse range of Irishness and Britishness viewed as either fundamentally antagonistic or potentially complementary over the long period of Victorian's reign. The main issues addressed include the Victorian monarchy's attitude towards Ireland and reciprocal reactions of the Irish, the debates relating to Irish differences and integration and the different views of Ireland's place in the imperial world order. The implications of the cataclysmic impact of the great famine are given particular attention. More specifically the disruptive impact of the Great Famine is in Irish British relations in the Victorian period. (p. 209)

Due to the colonization, it created political hostility and enmity between Ireland and England. Ireland negatively responded to coercive power of British society. Irish people faced starvation and they started eating only the potatoes. Even in the production of

potato, a disease created a problem. There was a great devastation in the potato in Ireland that caused hunger and death that is known as potato famine.

The potato, which was the main source of food of Irish, was a relatively easy to grow in Irish soil in that time but it was ruined up to one-half that year. Farmers of Ireland were ruled as colony of Great Britain. In this regard, Irish people have hatred and negative feeling was developed toward English society. For Irish, being engaged in potato famine was their compulsion which happened due to British colonial power. One of the critics, Dean Braa explains:

> The Great Irish Potato Famine should be understood as primarily the result of British colonialism. While the failure of successive cops resulted from blight, the famine itself was the result of a historically created peasant dependence on the potato. This dependence was the direct result of the development of Ireland as a colonial holding. ("The Great Potato Famine........", p. 193)

After Ireland was colonized by British, they totally lost their right upon their own decision, land and other properties. The land's fertility rate also was decreased.

There was nothing on their hand and there was no other choice left except potato farming but even in this farming they have to bear the loss. Later on, they themselves started to dominate Irish behaving as lower level workers. In order to show the level of British domination, Stephen Greenblatt remarks:

> Compared to bread, the potato was antisocial; there was no structured division of labor, no fusion of foods from different sub agricultures. You could just dig them out of the ground and boil them. They also focus on how the fears of overpopulation were driven by the production of the potato itself like dumb, zombie like potato people rising up directly from the ground. (np)

As the bread was main food of British and potato was of Irish, British felt proud thinking that their food is pure and healthy which grows above the soil whereas potato is impure and low-level food which grows under the soil. They even compared Irish society with zombie and dumb where zombie refers to the creature that is disgusting and dreadful who is unable to think. Similarly, dumb provides the meaning like stupid and unable to speak. They viewed the Irish as "potato eaters" with disdain, describing them as coming from dirty holes in the earth like the tuber itself. The English took

Irish as "garbage" collected from the ground, least they too, become like the potato. These things guide the Irish people towards protest activities. Irish anger is the cause of British dominance that went ahead violently to threaten the Britishers.

According to the critics, Dracula shows a complex picture of Victorian society and discusses about several causes behind Irish hatred towards British society. The character, Dracula represents Irish society and Jonathan Harker represents British society. The major character of the novel is Count Dracula who belongs to Irish society. His character's roles are representative of Irish culture and nation. Major issue raised in the novel is British hegemony that is challenged through the Irish art, literature and cultural performances. This novel explores potato famine which was the cause of creating power in Ireland. By creating famine, British ruled over Ireland. British society had several influences upon Ireland and British were cause for suffering of the Irish people. British tried to control Ireland politically and culturally in the Victorian time. Irish had sense of resentment as well as revenge therefore, Count Dracula symbolically imprison British representative character Harker. Rodger Swift points out, "Urban life in Victorian Britain was for the Irish that was often harsh and disorientating experience because they were concentrated in towns and cities. The Irish stood out from the host population by their poverty, nationality, race and religion" ("The Outcast Irish in the British Victorian City....." pp. 264-65). From the beginning of colonization, Irish culture and society was dominated and English society imposed own social practices against which the Irish people fought.

During the colonization period British redefined and left political-cultural influence over Ireland. British rule established its political, cultural and economic influence over there. Ireland influenced British society but it was against Irish nationalism and culture against which Dracula, a representative Irish man, stood with revengeful feeling against British society and British representative character Jonathan Harker. With nationalist feeling of Irish, Dracula protests British man and scares them being vampire. Vampire is mysterious as it seems sometimes as a male but frequently as woman. During Victorian era, English culture was dominant in his colonized countries. Because of colonized culture, English culture had been dominant and impressive. Along with industrial revolution, the particular culture was dissected and at the end of nineteenth century,

British culture and its power gradually loosened political grip and started cultural revival. Not only in the Irish society, throughout the world cultural revival movement spread and nationalist revived their own culture, society and national identities. As a result, the novel presents threat for resistance of English culture and its influence increased in Ireland so that they wanted to oppose the British power as a revenge of their suffering. It represents people's voice of resistance in threatening them. William Harrison Woodward discusses:

> The victims of political crises at home were in the second half of the century who constantly exported to the island, as by Cromwell after his reduction of Ireland and of Scotland; those who survived the voyage and the hardships of their new life attained, after a period of service, both liberty and citizenship. Scotsmen, it was noted, proved more useful settlers than Irishmen. A system of kidnapping in the large English towns provided other elements of similar temporary white slavery. (p. 61)

British rulers exploited rest of the world during colonial period when they had power and mainstream culture. Even they unfairly interfered other's religion, culture and politics.

Dracula discusses on the issues of conflict between British and Irish culture. Colonial effect narrated in the text explains socio-cultural impact of the colonizer to the colonized people or country. It is an experience of colonized people who still find effect of colonizer's ideological presence in own country. In the same notion, Irish experienced similar colonial effect. During colonial period, English colonizers imposed their cultures to Irish people. Colonizers were able to train their ideology and English cultures.

3. Dracula's Power and Mysterious Activities

Count Dracula remains mysterious and makes incomplete expression. Though, showing respect and gratitude, he is not favorable to Englishman. He indirectly shows his invisible power in front of him to create a fear. His ultimate intention is to create a power against Englishman which threatens an entire English civilization. Harker comes as spy in Count Dracula's castle, he introduces his castle and surrounding which was a beautiful place but he but Dracula imprisons him there with his vampire power. Unlike Harker's expectation, Dracula shows his mansion and introduces him as a vampire. Harker had underestimated him but he

found him powerful as well as dreadful figure. Even Dracula indirectly despises English way of living by showing their formality and showy culture.

Harker represents the British society, maintains English formality and tries to create a standardization. He tries to create an impression to Dracula as a part of "English ideology and culture in mainstream" (Wilson, p. 62). Dracula intends to violate those formality and standard. In fact, he wants to demoralize English ego of Englishness. Along with their close familiarity, both of them discuss about their cultural differences. Harker tries to maintain his city life and hates rustic life by showing his physical personality, attitude and behavior. His perspective is city culture oriented and observes them from lower and uncultured perspective. His language is dominating to others. This conversation shows English's attitude and ego.

Harker explains cultural difference between English and others. English culture as they have certain standards and values from which they make judgments to other culture. Harker does not find what would have been in English culture. Therefore, he criticizes the room where he was living. On the basis of his practice, he makes judgment over there. He does not accept difference because his certain assumptions to look over things and the reality at all were different. As Harker criticizes Dracula's castle then Dracula also seems aggressive and attacks him. He does not like his blame to his cultural pattern and way of living. Dracula challenges him and his cultural pattern. English way of observing others' is misinterpretation for Dracula. Dracula discusses him about his mission. Dracula directly shows his interest to go London where he wants to "violate their culture" (Foucault, p. 27). In this respect, he informs him that he is able to speak English language. Though, not having humanity, loyalty and civilized culture, English is assumed them to maintain the standard position with civilization and the cultural integrity. Dracula does not accept his claim.

Valerie Mack, one of the critics describes English cultural pattern, value and standard during Victorian period as a "machinery work" ("Reputation and Social........", pp.112-23). As a powerful country, it created code of morals and formal cultural pattern which are forced to follow even in other countries. He further describes it on the basis of "certain rules and regulations" (Timothy, p. 28). It remains moral insanity with them and it always creates mindset in English people. In

order to make British attitude like so called trustworthy and civilized society failure, Dracula attacks the British people in London including women as vampire representatives. Podonsky M. Amanda has written in his research that, "Using enigmatic approaches to sustain power and control over the minds of his people Vlad Dracula (also known as Vlad the Impaler) punishes such minor sins as unfaithful wife by cutting out her sexual organs and skinning her alive" (p. 14). The intention of Dracula is to destroy so called civilized British society where such women are pure and devotees to their spouse.

Dracula makes most of the characters his slave. Firstly, he attacks the women characters and makes them impure sexually. He attacks them until they fall unconscious and makes the playful actions in their sexual organs. Similarly, he attacks the other male characters making vampires through women characters where vampire refers to deadly and uncivilized. Dracula threatens to Harker in his castle, Harker shows his formality. Being egoist about own British standard, he tries to convince to Dracula but he scares him not to free from the castle imprisonment. Dracula's intention was to mistreat him and take revenge by showing his power against British man.

4. Methods and Materials

This paper is prepared in qualitative research method. Comparative study is made to know about the British and Irish cultures. The study materials are Bram Stoker's Dracula, reviews and the referential materials. According to the reading resources, Dracula in fact takes revenge and demoralizes to Harker. Harker tries to expose his standard and show his own cultural practices. Harker does not understand other's culture and value. It is problematic for Dracula therefore; he misbehaves and mistreats to Harker as a British spy. Harker seems fearful when he communicates with his wife Lucy. Dracula does not accept his request then he "intends to torture him" (Moretti, 60). However, both of them do not find reason behind imprisoning. Harker gets surprised at his treatment. He investigates the nature of his confinement. Thus, the research paper presents power relation between colonizer and colonized and resistance against colonial power. It is also an allegorical representation of colonizer and resistance against it. Stoker has created a powerful and intellectual fictional character named Count Dracula who had played the allegorical role of colonizer and tried to make chaotic to the so called British civilized and cultural system. It also examines criticism

of British hegemony over Irish culture and society during Victorian society when British culture was considered as mainstream culture. During the period, British unfairly created existential horror through potato famine. Therefore, this is a qualitative research paper prepared with the help of different materials.

5. Results and Discussions

This paper brings out a result of Irish rage against the British. Among the multiple factors of this rage; colonization and cultural clashes are the major issues. Dracula's symbolic threat to Harker stands as a threat to entire British political, cultural and economic power exercises. The novel Dracula overviews Victorian context and presents English colonial power during the period. The major discussion of this research is on Irish resistance to British society. As English society imposed his power as a superior and stereotype for all countries and societies, it was gradually being resisted along with nationalist movements, cultural revival and identities. Thus, the novel depicts similar situation in which English and Irish cultural conflicts have been prime issues during the period. The protagonist of the novel Count Dracula resists British power and shows economic power along with his physical power. As he reminds potato famine against Irish people, Count Dracula takes revenge with British man Jonathan Harker. This symbolic case represents entire cultural and political clashes between British and Ireland.

Irish people had sense of revenge, anger and resentment; therefore, Dracula misbehaves to the Britishers. He threats and challenges them. The representative character of English society is Jonathan Harker who is a lawyer. It symbolically represents British "colonial power over rest of the people in the world" (Moretti, p. 259). During colonial period, England imposed its power over all countries along with its direct interference. The basic ideology is always centralized though English people. Count Dracula as a fearless and daring character treats others for the shake of Irish identity. Power exercises of English people in the name of political civilization tries to frighten them. Having knowledge of English civilization, rest of the countries were trivialized in terms of all sphere of life. The study particularizes a landmark of history which was an example of British colonization that is potato famine. Due to the famine, Irish people had sense of revenge against British people.

Count Dracula reminds past history of British which was unendurable for Irish society. As British behaved and exploited Irish, it was unforgettable for them. Count Dracula wants to take revenge against them by creating fear before coming Harker. Dracula reminds their past and he is furious against British society when they created famine to impose their power in Ireland. During the colonization period, British society mercilessly treated Irish people. He invites Harker in his castle and imprisons there. This research paper raises issue of famine and the cultural crisis which were in the heart of Irish people therefore; Count Dracula wants to torture British people to take a revenge against the colonization. Stoker recreates colonial perspective of colonizers to represent Irish culture and people. Stoker recreates knowledge and starts discourses to save the Irish identity which represents a picture of the country. Harker, an Englishman from England, represents a colonizer and he moves to Ireland with keeping colonizing mission. In course of living in Ireland, he exposes all kinds of negative images of the country in order to show the national inferiority. The colonizer's perspective represents Ireland as poor, uncivilized and backward country but in reality, it is different. He uses negative language and throws rude words to picturize the British activities. He tries to construct the national identity through the knowledge of nationhood.

Jonathan Harker visits Ireland being a representative of the British society to influence them on the British culture but he fails. Harker observes all cultural practices in comparison to English society. The novel through the perspective of colonized mentality shows its "reflection and representation on Irish culture and people" (Walter, p. 52). This study shows how colonizers represent others as Harker represents Ireland and its culture through a single perspective of colonizing. The journey to the castle is terrible and unexpected to Harker. Harker encounters physical and mental attack when he reaches in the castle. Dracula was in old castle where he lives for years. At first Harker had different perspectives however in the present, he finds him educated and civilized. Harker finds that the elderly Dracula is a well-educated and hospitable gentleman. Harker realizes that he is effectively a prisoner in the castle. In a sense, Harker visits Ireland and makes the political approaches. Harker reaches there in order to know about their culture and lifestyle.

Harker is a representative character of English society who understands Ireland as a poor country and claims that it is

"uncivilized and backward" (Glennis, p. 7). He represents a colonizer; he thinks from colonizer's perspective to capture and exploit colonized land and people. Stoker shows the people's resistance against the British colonialism. Colonizers have used stereotypical and dominant words to devalue the Irish arts, culture and the performances in the Victorian period and so they went on protest. About the colonizer's practices in Victorian period, Mack Valorie remarks:

> It is already established assumption in English culture who have created both good and bad practice in society. Even they wanted to make people follow similar pattern. On the basis of those cultural patterns, they find out civilization of others. English culture does not respect others' culture because along with physical colonization, they make compel people to assert cultural imposition. ("Reputation and Social Perfection......", p. 112)

Britishers do not respect the others and they do not value their identities. Harker's perspective as a representative of the British authority is rooted and set within British society. British cultures and policies are considered as best through which colonizers hate Irish culture and society. Harker does not find and understand others as different one. His rooted belief in set mind does not respect the others.

The colonizer's intention was to exercise their power and rule over the countries but they failed. Britishers tried to destroy Irish lives, culture and economic condition against which Count Dracula made a resistance. Dracula presents a kind of revenge against British society by creating deadly horror when Harker visits in Ireland with spy mission. The novel introduces two major characters Count Dracula and Jonathan Harker. Dracula represents Irish culture, society, civilization and thought and in the same way, Harker represents British society. As Harker visits Dracula's castle, it brings tussle and conflict between them. Dracula's intention is to terrify to Harker and wants to take revenge against colonized mentality. During colonized period British society imposed, influenced and forced on mindset and treated them as uncivilized citizens. Harker still shows his influence and observes from own perspective against which Dracula takes a revenge. He threatens and terrifies against dominance and underestimate of the others.

The major discussion of the research is on Irish resistance against British society. With the help of representative characters, it shows

horror and terror against Harker. Being vampire and prisoner, Dracula scares him and his fiancé. He even uses supernatural power as vampires to frighten Harker. In order to protest and resist British culture and ideology, he tries to symbolize resistance of British culture and colonized mind. Harker is an egoist, formal and self-centric in terms of British culture and his mentality is guided by colonized mindset. For this reason, he visits to the Dracula's castle. Dracula's treatment and power shocks Harker. Dracula shows his power, he terrifies and scares him. It is a kind of threat and challenge against British society. It is a challenge to British society because the country was super power during colonized period, however an unfair treatment and harassment to Irish society turned to be the cause of their downfall. Dracula being representative character of the Irish society dares to challenge the British society and their power.

Dracula is a mysterious man with fearless and daunting motive. He wants to challenge British people because of egoist feelings. As Dracula meets Harker, he does not honor him as an Englishman or a colonizer rather than he mistreats him. Dracula's mission behind dominating is to challenge English ego and sophisticated culture. Harker uses dominating language about mentioning the new place. As he thinks, Dracula's residence was new for him. He assumes that English can know all places around the world but the place is new for him to observe. Most of the places around the world are in the grip of his country and they can have knowledge about it. For this reason, he looks for the places in library where they have restored all information.

Jonathan Harker wants to meet Dracula and visits in his castle. When he moves toward the castle, he imagines his castle and changes his own perspective toward him. Having English intuitive knowledge, he always interprets things from English perspective. This intention of man itself shows ego of English society. Harker thinks himself as elite and sophisticated man therefore, he observes the others as peasant and rustic. Harker is with colonial eye and mindset when he visits in Dracula's castle, however, he warmly welcomes for the first time. Later on, he wants to frighten him to take a revenge charging that the English was dominant power and it had created terrible image in front of the people. Harker wanted to expose his dashing power in front of Dracula but now he is amazed in front of him.

The act of transforming Lucy and Mina into vampires is made by Dracula to tortures Harker physically and psychologically. This intention behind terrifying Harker is to take revenge against British people by threatening them. Thus, the research paper presents power relation between colonizer and colonized and resistance against colonial power. Stoker has created a powerful and intellectual fictional character named Count Dracula who had played the allegorical role of colonizer and tried to make chaotic to the so called British civilized and cultural system. It also examines criticism of British hegemony over Irish culture and society during Victorian society when British culture was considered as mainstream culture.

6. Conclusion

This paper on Dracula concludes that the colonizers in the Victorian period exercised for their power performance in Ireland but the Irish rage turned to be expensive to them. Major discussion to carry out the research conclusion is made on Irish resistance to British society. Britishers tried to impose their power as a best cultural performers and superior ruler but their dream is failed because of Irish resistance. Irish nationalist movements, cultural revival and identity politics of Count Dracula and the vampires resisted British power. Dracula exposes then Irish economic power through the castle performances along with his physical power. Dracula takes revenge with British man Jonathan Harker as a challenge to the entire Colonizer and their spy. Cultural and political clashes between British and Ireland seeks for the new way of identity politics.

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Women's Protests and Demonstrations for Democracy in Post-Coup Nepal

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Abstract

This study examines the political crisis triggered by King Mahendra's coup in 1960, which dissolved the democratically elected government of Prime Minister B.P. Koirala in Nepal. Driven by his desire to establish an autocratic rule, King Mahendra collaborated with opportunistic political figures like Dr Tulsi Giri and Vishwabandhu Thapa to arrest key political leaders and dismantle democratic institutions. With military backing, he launched a nationwide crackdown on political opponents, instituting the Panchayat system to replace the parliamentary democracy. While the king's regime suppressed opposition, many political leaders fled to India, where they organized resistance under Suvarna Shamsher at the Patna Conference. Despite early difficulties in mobilizing a rebellion, courageous leaders like Shailaja Acharya, Rashmi Shah, and Nona Koirala stood up against Mahendra's policies, organizing the Black Flag Demonstration Movement on February 7, 1961. This movement, spearheaded by women, represents a critical yet under-researched episode in Nepal's struggle for democracy. Through qualitative research, using both primary data from interviews and secondary sources, this article seeks to highlight the significance of this protest and its role in the broader resistance against King Mahendra's autocratic rule.

Keywords

King Mahendra's Coup, Black Flag Demonstration, Panchayat system, Nepali Congress Resistance, Autocratic Rule in Nepal.

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Women's Protests and Demonstrations for Democracy in Post-Coup Nepal

1. Introduction

King Mahendra, from the moment he ascended the throne, harbored a desire to rule with absolute power rather than as a constitutional monarch. He questioned the value of removing Rana's rule and establishing democracy if he remained bound by the constitution (Joshi, 2006). To fulfil his ambitions, he cultivated loyal supporters without aligning with political parties, forming strategic alliances instead. He identified opportunistic politicians like Dr. Tulsi Giri and Vishwabandhu Thapa, who helped conspire against the democratically elected government (Thapa, 2001). With their loyalty, King Mahendra consulted key figures, including his Chief Secretary Hanshman Singh and Military Secretary Sher Bahadur Malla, to arrest ministers, dissolve the government, and launch a nationwide crackdown (Gautam, 2011). As a result of King Mahendra's unconstitutional actions, everyone involved in the political landscape of the country, no matter how small their role, suffered. Many political leaders and activists were imprisoned, the capital was placed under military control, curfews were imposed, and guards were stationed at foreign embassies to prevent political leaders from seeking refuge.

The king, using military power to achieve his ambitions, overthrew the democratic government and established an autocratic regime. After invoking Article 55 of the Constitution, he favored those who supported him and turned the state press into an ally to justify his actions. As there was no immediate rebellion, he launched a propaganda campaign to influence international opinion (Manandhar & Sharma, 1996). Following the king's directives, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that, despite the government's dissolution, the parliamentary system was not abolished, and a general election would be held soon.

The royal palace announced that the king had no intention of ending the democratic system but caused confusion by stating that a new governance system would soon be introduced. After securing the

support of Dr. Tulsi Giri and Vishwabandhu Thapa, the king formed a cabinet under his leadership, signaling a shift away from the parliamentary system (Adhikari, 1998). With most Nepali Congress leaders imprisoned, the political opposition remained silent, leaving the country in a tense calm. Unable to counter the king's anti-democratic actions from within, several Nepali Congress activists fled to India, where they established contact with Suvarna Shamsher in Calcutta (Paramanand, 1982). Though Shamsher did not immediately respond publicly, he recognized that the king would not back down without resistance and focused on keeping the activists organized and pursuing diplomatic efforts.

Recognizing the threat of an organized rebellion, the King, with the Council of Ministers, shifted his focus to eliminating political parties and asserting his supremacy. Understanding the king's intentions, the Council unanimously agreed to ban political parties and establish a new system called the Panchayat, which would be non-partisan and directly led by the king (B. Thapa, Personal communication, March 14, 2013). After the decision, King Mahendra had Bishwabandhu Thapa announce the policy publicly, clarifying that political parties, active for the past decade, would no longer be allowed to hold meetings, rallies, or protests. The Panchayat system was presented as the foundation of democracy (Thapa, 2022).

After receiving the Council of Ministers' recommendation, King Mahendra announced the policy program and formally established the autocratic Panchayat system, overturning the gains of the 1951 revolution (Adhikari, 2001). Realizing that democracy would not return under the king's rule, Nepali Congress leaders and members who had fled to India regrouped and began organizing a resistance movement. On January 25, 1961, under Suvarna Shamsher's leadership, the Patna Conference was held, where he was appointed Executive Chairman. The conference decided to launch a resistance movement, entrusting all responsibilities to Suvarna Shamsher.

Despite preparing for resistance, the Nepali Congress could not immediately mobilize a rebellion, as many of the king's opponents in the country hoped he would eventually hand over the administration to them (Y.P. Upadhyaya, Personal communication, January 13, 2020). Even the youth, though angered by the king's actions, did not protest. With political forces unsure of their next steps, the Nepali Congress prepared for major actions. While large-scale protests were delayed, women leaders like Shailaja Acharya, Rashmi Shah, and Nona Koirala

bravely opposed King Mahendra's policies, successfully organizing a black flag demonstration. This event highlighted the courage and sacrifice of Nepali women. As there has been little study of these events, this study focuses on the key events leading to the Black Flag Demonstration Movement on February 18, 1961.

2. Method and Materials

This study employs a qualitative research design to examine the protests against King Mahendra's coup and his subsequent dictatorial rule in Nepal, which resulted in the overthrow of Prime Minister B.P. Koirala's elected government in 1960. Data collection spanned two months, followed by 20 days of writing. Primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews with participants and witnesses, including surviving protestors, political activists, and their relatives. These interviews captured personal narratives, focusing on their motivations, experiences, and involvement in the resistance. Semi-structured interviews addressed key themes such as challenges faced and the political climate of the time. To corroborate these accounts, archival documents, protest pamphlets, and personal letters from the period were reviewed, and visits to significant historical sites, including protest locations and prisons, were conducted.

Secondary data were obtained from published sources such as books, journal articles, biographies, and news reports that documented Nepal's political environment during King Mahendra's rule. Descriptive analysis provided a clear narrative of the coup and its aftermath, while deeper analysis explored patterns linking the king's dictatorial policies to political dissent and the broader social impact on Nepal's democratic movements. Ethical research practices were adhered to, including obtaining informed consent from interviewees and anonymizing data where necessary. By combining firsthand accounts with historical sources, this study offers a comprehensive understanding of the resistance against King Mahendra's regime and its significance in shaping Nepal's democratic history.

3. Result and Discussion

Despite heavy police presence, Shailaja Acharya, with help from Saroj Pradhan and Uma Sharma, secretly created her first pamphlet on December 28, 1960, at Tarini Prasad Koirala's house, Biratnagar. They then distributed the handwritten leaflets in busy areas like New

Road, sparking protests in the capital. The Nepali Congress opposed King Mahendra's anti-democratic actions, and subsequent pamphlets announced the formation of the Democratic Student Women's Committee. Despite increased government surveillance, the students managed to evade capture. Encouraged by their success, Rashmi Shah led the group in planning their next steps while temporarily pausing the pamphlet distribution.

3·1 Demonstration through Pamphlets

At just 16 years old, Shailaja Acharya witnessed King Mahendra's dissolution of Parliament on December 15, 1960, and was deeply outraged by the suppression of those who opposed the King's actions. Born in Biratnagar as the eldest daughter of Pinaki Prasad Acharya, Shailaja showed a sharp intellect and strong logical abilities from a young age (Gautam, 2014). Although not biologically related, she was very close to the Koirala family, especially B.P. Koirala, who treated her like a niece. She was also raised under the guidance of Sushila Koirala (U. L. Sharma, personal communication, March 4, 2013).

After B.P. Koirala became Prime Minister, Shailaja lived at the Prime Minister's residence in Tripureshwar and was present during King Mahendra's unconstitutional actions. On the day the king dissolved Parliament, Shailaja had invited her friends for lunch. Though not politically aware at the time, she went to Thapathali, where she saw B.P. Koirala being taken away in a military jeep (Acharya, 2001).

After returning to the Prime Minister's residence, she stayed there for a while as security personnel refused to let her friends in. When King Mahendra's takeover was announced on the radio, Shailaja left with her mother, Indira Koirala, and Rosha Koirala, heading to Tarini Prasad Koirala's house. Upon arrival, the sight of soldiers and search operations in the capital fueled her anger. Reflecting on the king's assault on democracy and the elected government, Shailaja became determined to find ways to stop his oppressive actions (Duwal & Naharki, 2008). Many of her acquaintances and relatives in Kathmandu, fearing the political situation, stopped recognizing her or were too afraid to speak, with some even hesitant to open their doors when she visited.

Rashmi Shah, born into the Rana family and married to Jagat Prakash Jang Shah, was deeply aware of Nepal's political landscape. Active in Nepali Congress politics, she developed close ties with key

leaders like B.P. Koirala and Suvarna Shamsher. On December 15, 1960, Rashmi warned B.P. Koirala and others that King Mahendra would not easily give up power (N. P. J. Shah, personal communication, January 1, 2019). Through Rashmi, Shailaja Acharya learned about King Mahendra's unconstitutional actions and ambitions. Outraged by the king's undermining of democracy and imprisonment of his relatives, Shailaja resolved to protest, even if alone. While staying at B.P. Koirala's brother Tarini Prasad Koirala's house in Naxal, which was under police surveillance, Shailaja, without informing her family, began organizing a resistance with friends Uma Sharma and Saroj Pradhan under Rashmi's guidance (U. L. Sharma, personal communication, March 4, 2013).

Despite the police siege, Shailaja and her team produced and distributed handwritten pamphlets on December 28, 1960. They secretly carried the leaflets and distributed them in busy areas like New Road and front of Ranjana Cinema Hall. Shailaja and other students continued to protest against the king's regime (S. Adhikari, personal communication, March 4, 2013).

In a city where a heavy security presence created an eerie calm, the efforts of female students sparked significant unrest. The Nepali Congress strongly opposed King Mahendra's actions to dismantle democracy (Gautam, 1997). The first pamphlet distributed by the Nepali Congress condemned the King's decision. Two days later, on December 30th, another pamphlet in red ink highlighted the threat to fundamental rights and announced the formation of the Democratic Student Women's Committee (N. P. J. Shah, personal communication, January 1, 2019). Recognizing the impact of these daily-distributed pamphlets in busy areas, the government swiftly increased surveill-ance to catch the pamphleteers, but their efforts were unsuccessful. New pamphlets soon appeared, depicting King Mahendra as a villain and urging people to protest against his anti-democratic actions (B. Thapa, Personal communication, March 14, 2013).

Despite intensified searches and raids on the homes of prominent Nepali Congress members, the government failed to capture any of the daring female students behind the pamphlets. Unable to prove any charges, they remained clueless. Encouraged by their success, Rashmi Shah advised the group, including Shailaja Acharya, to plan their next major action while temporarily halting the pamphlet-eering. The students, pleased with their ability to operate undetected,

took a few days to prepare for their next move and assess public opinion.

3·2 Protests through Black Flag Displays Against the King

Shailaja Acharya was dissatisfied even after Rashmi Shah suggested pausing further actions to protect the Antila girls due to escalating tensions in the capital and arrests of Congress families following three stages of pamphleteering (Pokharel, n.d.). On January 5, 1961, King Mahendra, seeking to consolidate his power, banned political parties and introduced the Panchayat system, indicating his determination to suppress political leaders (Gautam, 2021). Concerned that the king might further tighten his control, Shailaja, Uma Sharma, and other students, following Rashmi Shah's advice, decided to move their activities outside Kathmandu.

Rashmi Shah, whose husband Jagat Prakash Jung Shah was imprisoned in Nuwakot Palace and dismissed from his position as Deputy Director of Radio Nepal due to his Congress affiliations, sought to spark rebellion. She reached out to her son, Navin Prakash Jung Shah, for advice as directed by her husband (Baral, 2022). With support from friends in Bharatpur, Chitwan, and hopes of assistance from Calcutta, Shailaja and the students eagerly prepared. However, their plans to leave Kathmandu were thwarted when the administration denied them passports, citing the government's policy of restricting movement in and out of the capital.

The 16-year-old students, new to college, were dissatisfied with the lack of action from political parties and leaders. Eager for more significant efforts, Shailaja Acharya and Rashmi Shah, with guidance from Nona Koirala, decided to organize a student-led rally in Kathmandu (Gautam, 2010). Nona, who had previously sent her sons as liberation commanders during the 1951 revolution, encouraged them to persevere despite potential challenges (Acharya, 2023). They agreed to hold a women's protest in the capital and began secret preparations, planning to involve women from surrounding areas.

Jagat Prakash Jung Shah, who had a strong political presence in the Dhading-Nuwakot region, was defeated by Bharat Shamsher in the 2015 general election for the Dhading North constituency. In response, Rashmi Shah decided to protest King Mahendra's actions by mobilizing women from that area to Kathmandu (Prasai, 2000). She sent her son, Navin Prakash Jung Shah, to Nuwakot with letters

concealed in the soles of his shoes. Navin successfully delivered the letters and returned with confirmation of the plan.

While Rashmi, Shailaja, and Nona were organizing the protest, Nona received a newspaper, Dharmayug, containing a hidden message from Calcutta, India, based on Suvarna Shamsher's plan. After passing on the message and receiving further instructions, Nona left her sick son and travelled to Calcutta to relay the information to B.P. Koirala (Gautam, 2020). By the time she returned with Suvarna Shamsher's strategy, Rashmi Shah had organized a women's march in Kathmandu on February 23, 1961, including women from Nuwakot and Dhading.

As Rashmi Shah and the women prepared for the march, the Nepalese government announced the celebration of Democracy Day on February 18, 1961. This event, attended by King Mahendra who had imposed autocratic rule by dismantling democracy and imprisoning leaders without trial would also include foreign diplomats. The revolutionaries, following Suvarna Shamsher's advice, saw this as an opportunity to stage a public protest that would be visible to international observers (U. L. Sharma, personal communication, March 4, 2013). They planned to involve students from Kathmandu Valley campuses in a demonstration by displaying black flags in front of the king at Tundikhel, the state-organized venue.

With support from student leaders, members of the Tarun Dal, and party families who had evaded arrest, they secretly organized the protest. Black flags were distributed with instructions to wave them during the event (N. P. J. Shah, personal communication, January 1, 2019). When King Mahendra arrived, all invitees were present, and the Democracy Day program began as planned. Government employees, teachers, students, and others participated in a disciplined procession, dressed in prescribed attire and carrying banners. The king observed the procession, but the boys assigned to display the black flags, noticing the heavy security and high vigilance, began to retreat. The Thon police, suspicious of their actions, started to monitor them closely (Giri, 2017). Alarmed, the boys left the program without displaying the flags.

At that moment, Shailaja Acharya, positioned in the last row, made a decisive move and signaled to her friends. Shailaja, who had been responsible for the final preparations for the February 23, 1961, event, had attended the program wearing a black chunni over her

kurta-salwar, ready to inform Rashmi Shah and others about the unfolding situation (U. L. Sharma, personal communication, March 4, 2013). Uma Sharma, a leading student, had also arrived at the venue with her younger sister, Bhuvan, both dressed in black.

When Shailaja saw that the boys assigned to display the black flags had fled, she realized the plan would fail unless they acted quickly. She signaled her close friends and, in a bold move, raised her black chunni while shouting protest slogans. Following her lead, Uma Sharma, Saroja Pradhan, Vijaya Baral, Gauri Rana, Kamala Chitrakar, and others also raised their black chunnis and shouted slogans, startling the audience.

The female students near the stage, in front of King Mahendra, began chanting slogans such as "Nepali Congress Zindabad", "Death to Dictators", "Protect Democracy", and "Release Our Leaders". As they displayed their black flags, police quickly surrounded them and attempted to control the situation (Subedi, 2017). The police used batons to beat the protesters, leading some students from Trichandra and Padmakanya Colleges to resist. In the ensuing chaos, they managed to seize the batons from the police and used umbrellas for protection. When the students surrounded and chased away Kundan Sharma, the army also intervened with force.

From the stage, Ministers Tulsi Giri and Vishwabandhu Thapa ordered the protesters to be beaten, while Ministers Hrishikesh Shah and Anirudraprasad Singh urged restraint (Basnet, 2017). The female students were subjected to violence, with boots pressed against their chests, and later locked in a cold, dark room (Subedi, 2017). It was reported that Sani Baini Bhuvan, who had come with her sister Uma Sharma, tried to grab her sister's hand to join her in the police car but was unsuccessful as the car drove away.

Although it is reported that the police detained him at Hanuman Dhoka without providing food or water, he was never taken to court (Gautam, 2019). He was permitted only limited visits from relatives and friends, while the police prepared the charge sheet. He endured harsh conditions for about one and a half months until a written plea was heard following an order from Commissioner Vishnumani Acharya. He was imprisoned only after attempts at torture (Basnet, 2017). Confined in a foul-smelling room with loose cattle, prostitutes, and other miscreants, the police aimed to demoralize him. Despite this, the revolutionary female students maintained their courage and

resolve. They survived on food brought by friends and family, demonstrating their resilience.

While the media and publications within Nepal reported only on the government's activities, foreign journalists and diplomats present at the event took photographs and reported the protest against King Mahendra. Consequently, some countries, including India, reported that a group of female students had displayed black flags and chanted slogans against the king (D.R. Subedi, personal communication, June 9, 2011). The bravery of these students inspired other youths and political activists, reinforcing the fight for democracy. Despite widespread feelings of helplessness due to King Mahendra's suppression of democracy and the imprisonment of political leaders, the students' courage reignited hope. Revolutionary figures from the Nepali Congress, such as Rashmi Shah and Nona Koirala, began final preparations to ensure the success of the program on February 23, 1961.

4. Conclusion

The news that sixteen- and seventeen-year-old daughters of Nepal, like Shailaja Acharya, who had just started college, had revolted and shown a black flag to King Mahendra created a stir across the villages and settlements of Nepal. This event inspired the youth of the country, from students to political activists, to align with the Nepali Congress, which was preparing for an armed struggle after the Patna conference, and to resist the king's anti-democratic measures. In retaliation, the administration expressed its anger by torturing and prosecuting several women and democratic activists from Kathmandu who had supported the female students' protests. Despite repeated attempts by Commissioner Vishnumani Acharya and the police chief to pressure them into writing letters of apology claiming they had made mistakes, were misled by others, and would focus only on education in the future-the women stood firm and refused to bow down.

Frustrated by their unwavering resolve, the authorities resorted to a temporary judicial process, sentencing them to one year of imprisonment and fining them Rs. 500. In the Janana Jail, which lacked even basic facilities, they were subjected to harsh treatment, placed with mentally ill individuals, and denied proper food, including meals brought by their friends and relatives. Despite the administration's cruel tactics, Shailaja Acharya, Umalakshmi

Sharma, and the other female students fearlessly opposed the oppressive regime, embodying the role of soldiers for democracy. Their courage and resistance became the foundation of the history of women's awakening in Nepal and made a significant contribution to shaping the path of the democratic movement.

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Inter-Caste Hierarchy and Relations in a Multi-Caste Madhesi Village in Nepal

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Abstract

Vertical hierarchy, caste endogamy, caste-based occupation, and commensality are fundamental characteristics of caste society. All the basic features except the endogamous marriage system of the caste have been gradually changing in the Madhesi village. Because of penetration of civil politic and weakening of caste Panchayat (Jat Samaj), people transgressed traditional cultural codes and practices. Many of the middle caste/ ethnic groups ideally maintained their hierarchy but their interactions raised questions of caste/ethnic boundary. Among the Dalits and middle castes, each caste claimed superiority. New generation showed dual behaviors while dealing with issues of inter-caste commensality, hierarchy and occupation. I have collected data different visits from 2006/07 to 2022. Based on ethnographic study in Golbazar Municipality, I explain transgression , changes, and contested hierarchy of the inter-caste settlement. Participant observation, key informant interview (KII), and informal conversation are tools of data collection. I have employed my PhD fieldwork data to compare continuity and change inter-caste relations over the time in a multi-caste settlement, Lalpur Golbazar.

Keywords

Caste, Hierarchy, Civil politics, Dalits, Relations, Transgress.

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Inter-Caste Hierarchy and Relations in a Multi-Caste Madhesi Village in Nepal

1. Introduction

The Nepal Madhes is the most heterogeneous settlement in terms of caste/ethnic composition. Dahal classified central Madhesi caste/ethnic groups in broader five categories (Dahal, 2002). Plain castes, plain ethnic, Muslim and hill migrants are major categories of people. In terms of plain caste hierarchy, Maithili (Tarai) Brahmin, Rajput, Kayastha and Yadav are dominant hindu caste group. Kumhar, Baniya, Kushanhawa, Halwai, Malaha, Dhanuk, Kewat, Rajbhar, Kanu, Kurmi, Dhobi, Sudhi, and Teli are considered socio-culturally middle caste in Madhes. Tharu, Dhimal, and Danuwar from plain and Tamang, Magar, Newar and Rai from hill origin are known as ethnic communities. Among the Tarai Dalits, Khatwe, Musahar, Dushad, Chamar and Dom/Halkhor are still considered untouchables castes (Dahal, 2002). Other religious groups like Muslim, Sikh and merchant groups like Marwaria and Bengali are also lived in the Madhes. This study tries to understand caste/ethnic heterogeneity and hierarchy in one village of the Madhes.

Lalpur is a unique village where many Madhesi castes and hill caste ethnic peoples have been settled relatively long time. Some of caste/ethnic groups have been living before 1950 and others migrated to the village after the 1960s/70s (Regmi, 1972). In terms of the history of migration, Musahars, Tamang, Magar, Chamar and Chhetri claimed that their own community was the first settler of the territory. The Musahar claimed that their ancestors made arable land by cutting and clearing forests and soil (Jhoda Phadane). Tamang and Magar argued that their ancestors migrated from Kavrepala- nchok and Sindhuli to avoid caste rule and heavy taxation in hills during Rana regime. Their stories of migration from hill to Madhes are similar to the migration of hill ethnic from eastern Nepal during Rana regime (English, 1985). Yadav, Teli, Sudhi, Hajam, Koiri, Dom, Chamar, kalwar and other plain castes also claimed that their ancestors migrated before and after the Rana regime. Regmi noted that some landlords were encouraged and provided tax-free land to settle

people across the border (Regmi, 1972). Newar, Rai, some plain castes, Muslims and hill Dalits have a relatively short history in the village. The plain caste and Muslims were migrated in the village from the southern villages of Nepal. The flexibility and rigidity of caste and ethnic codes depend on the number of specific caste/ethnic households and their politico-economic status in the village. Each caste/ethnic groups have certain codes of interaction, commensality, cooperation and exchange in the village. Caste/ethnic codes were rigid till 1990s when Jat Samajs of each caste were dominant decision makers. Now, the administrative and judiciary power of the Jat Samaj of plain castes are almost defunct and remain on the level of ritual performance, caste unity, and identity. my field Observations showed that when they crossed the territorial boundary of the village, they transgressed caste/ethnic codes and rules of commensality.

There are broadly two communities: Hill caste/ethnic groups and plain castes. Within the plain caste, there are Plain middle castes (Hajam, Yadav, Ray, Barahi, Mahto, Teli, Sudi, Kalwar), and Plain Dalits, (Dusadh, Chamar, Musahar and Dom). Among the hill caste ethnic groups, Chhetri, (Bhandari, Bohara,), Magar, Newar, Rai, Tamang, and Dalits (Biswokarma). They (Both Dalits and Non-Dalits) have been living in a mixed settlement for many decades. Caste ethnic diversity is manifested in the domains of traditional occupations, commensal hierarchy, intra-caste divisions, and endogamous marital practices. Many of the listed plain castes, both dalits and Non-Dalits perceived superior ranking than other castes. Despite caste ethnic differences, they were united in village contexts like inter-caste Panchayati (public decision making assembly), marriage, rituals, festivals and territorial deity worshipping.

Hajam, Barhi, B.K. (Blacksmith), and Dom continued their traditional caste based occupational. They have been providing their caste specific services to village client circle on the basis of either piece work or annual grain paid that was locally called khan system. Rest of other Plain castes—Teli, Sudi, Yadav, Mahto, Ray, Paswan and Mushar had left caste based occupation and started caste-neutral occupations like hill castes and ethnic groups. The larger division of commensal hierarchy observed between non-Dalit and Dalit. However, non-Dalit castes have relinquished their previous hierarchical commensality in cooked food and water sharing among themselves. The Dalits maintained food commensality in the village. They treat Dom as the most defiling caste. Hill ethnic groups

maintained their intra-group divisions (vertical or horizontal) that played significant role to regulate endogamy. To maintain caste identity and hierarchy in normative rules, Plain castes have formed caste Panchayat (jat samaj). Jat Samaj has no legal statu therefore it was not only difficult but also illegal to enforce traditional caste order in the village (Giri, 2018a). In the community they followed rules of own Jat Samaj but when they moved out of the village they did not follow commensality.

2. Objective of the Study

Gerald Berreman argued that inter-caste interaction among the plain castes is limited when caste hierarchical differences are great (Berreman, 1960). He compered plains and Pahari inter-caste interactions and claimed that mostly single caste group lived in a village and there were fewer opportunities for intensive inter-caste contracts (Berriman 1960 : 785). There are many caste-based pollution barriers and rigid commensality of child socialization. Consequently, most social interactions on the plains occurs within the caste and this frequently involves interactions across village lines. I am interested to explain intensive interaction among the various castes within the village. What are contexts of Dalits and Non-Dalits interactions in the village in Madhes? What are contexts of maintaining hierarchy and commensality in the village and out of village? How do they interpret changes of inter-caste interactions and commensality? What are the village contexts of their unity and social harmony? How do they maintain caste/ethnic boundaries in the multi- caste/ ethnic village?

3. Methodology

I carried out fieldwork for my PhD dissertation in 2012 AD. I stayed in the village for a year. After the long term field study, I followed the village in 2015, 2018, 2020 and 2022. During these subsequent visits, I documented changes of caste system and inter-caste relation in the village. I employed ethnographic method to collect data. Observation and key informant interview (KII) are main tools of data collection. In my initial visit, Lalpur was typical agrarian village of the Madhes where multi-caste society maintained certain levels of caste based occupation and larger orientation of caste neutral livelihood. The pain caste people speak Maithili whereas hill caste/ethnic people speak Nepali as well as Maithili. The most of the public interactions were held on Maithili. Initially, I had linguistic

constraints and employed a boy from the village as language translator. He translated field notes and public ineractions. Gradually, I developed linguistic competence on Maithili. I used data from different time. Translated data are again translated into English by myself. Out of coded data, I generated theme and thematic analysis pattern applied in this writing.

4. Findings

4·1 Differences and Divisions in the Village

The heterogeneity of the settlement was clearly observed at drinking water well and life-cycle ritual feasts where people gestured their caste ethnic commensality. Their open, masonry well was situated in the heart of the hamlet where Musahar, Magar, Chamar, Mallaha, Teli, Tamang, Chhetri, Yadav, and Mahato came to fetch water for cooking and household use. Public well was identified with the people who take water from them, not only because the water nourishes but also because women and men gather to bathe, wash clothes and scour their cooking pots by the well. A number of men were busy for cleaning and carrying water. Musahar, Tamang and Magar filled their vessels at the same time without caring about pollution by physical touch. Musahar, Tamang, and Magar youths could eat cooked food and tea by sitting together at everyday life but on the occasion of the feasts they could not sit together. Santosh Thapamagar said that Musahar boys used to carry drinking water for his family and there was no restriction for the Musahar to enter his house. I have observed that a boy (13 years old Musahar) working at the Tamang's home, where I often stayed, usually entered the kitchen and drank water but at the time of rice eating, he sat outside. There was no restriction to enter into the dining room. If plain castes observed the entrance of the Musahar in Magar, Tamang, and Rai's houses, plain castes hesitated to share water and food from hill ethnic groups. Moreover, hill ethnics were considered lower in hierarchy because they eat water buffalo. Rest of above mentioned community did not allow Musahar, Chamar, Dushadh, and Dom to touch water and entrance their homes. It did not mean that there was no commensality problem among the Musahars with the Magars and the Tamangs but it was true that the Magars and Tamangs were the most liberal on commensality. I have not observed Musahar and Chhetri, Musahar and other plain castes

together in the public well boundary. The food and water commensality of Musahar differed person to person and family to family of the Magar and Tamang. Rest of the communities strictly practiced commensality at least in public spheres with plain and hill Dalits. The Musahars also did not accept food and water from the rest of the Dalits. There is no uniform practice of caste commensality among particular castes and ethnic groups because some of them have shown their private-public duality. In comparison to plain middle castes, hill ethnic groups were observed far more liberal in commensality. Kapil Sada worked as wage labour at Tamang's farm. He entered his master's house and kitchen, but when there was family gathering in the Tamang house, a Mallaha woman was called for kitchen chores including cooking. When Musahar, Teli and Yadav met in Kathmandu, they shared food and water without hesitation. But, in the village, they could not think eating together. Jogindra Yadav said that all castes people ate food-water together when they were not observed by village people but in the village and public spheres (feast), both hill and plain Dalits were not allowed inter-dine with other castes.

The broader and clearly visible division was plain caste and hill caste ethnic groups. Despite their mother tongue in own community, and Nepali language, all hill origin people speak Maithili language at plain and hill people participated public spheres. their dress, physical make up and cultural and ritual practices are observable differences. Brahmin and Chettri of the hill and plain castes believed on the Hindu but their interpretation and practices are quite different. Hill castes claimed that they were the authentic Hindu whereas plain castes claimed that they maintained religious ideology and practice on the line of North India. Celebration of festivals like Dashain (Dasara at plain), Tihar, Teej, and Holi and their importance in the community found different. Somana Sada (55 years old, village leader) said that he felt easy to communicate with the plain origin people because they shared similar facial structure, dress, language and food. He again told that plain caste people were more orthodox and rigid in terms of hierarchy and commensality. The lines of integration were different when there were civil political gatherings. Somana argued that it was easy to communicate with Maithili speakers though he spoke many hill-people's languages. Their origin stories and migration history in the village divided their broader category. Hill origin and plain origin people are clearly noticed.

4·2 Village Caste Hierarchy

Differences and hierarchy among the plain origin and hill castes were realized when I observed everyday food, water, marital exchange and micro politics. The clearly visible categories of the people in the settings were plain and hill origin. The differences were realized through language, dress, physical make up and everyday politics at local institutions. Hill people said that plain castes were new settlers and they have recently entered in this village. On the other hand, plain castes commonly shared that hill immigrants encroached their antique civilization- "Madhes". Anti-hill origin movement in 2007, called Madhes Movement, was strong articulation of the deep-rooted thought of the plain castes. After the movement, many hill-origin caste/ethnic groups migrated from core Madhes (present Madhes province) to hill areas. There were collectively told multiple claims of place-people belongingness. In terms of geographical belongingness, Golbazar-Lalpur was cultural border in between hill and Plain-Madhes. Homi K Bhabha (1994) argues that a border is not that at which something stops but the border is that from which something begins its presence (Bhabha, 1994 : 4). He argued that borders were not binary like black and white rather borders were plural cultural settings. In this sense Bhabha termed border as 'thirdspace' (Bhabha 1990) like liminal space of Victor Turner in ritual performance (Turner, 1986). Lalpur is a multiethnic community because the plain castes and hill caste/ethnic groups articulate their legitimacy of the place as the first settler. Madhesi communities claimed that all plain land from Gangetic plain to Chure hill is in Madhesi cultural landscape. Das and Poole (2004) argued that people of margins were considered insufficiently socialized in the eye of the law and order of the state. Therefore, state attempts to manage the populations of the margins through both force and a pedagogy of conversation intended to transform subjects of the state (Das & Poole, 2004 : 9). So, there were undeclared antagonisms developed among the plain and hill castes before Madhes Movement in 2007. After the movement, the antagonism was materialized and many hill castes migrated either to safer parts of Plain or in Kathmandu.

Other broad visible categories among the people were articulated in the name of touchable and untouchable castes. In terms of everyday livelihood, most of the caste communities engaged in similar kinds of work. Amar Mahato argued that the underlying

make up of the categories of caste was rooted in Muluki Ain. He pointed to the old legal code 1854 (Höfer, 1979). The hierarchy and differences of castes were best observed at a feast organized by a Madhesi 'touchable' caste. The host felt social and psychological torture on breaching caste codes. There were micro hierarchies and differences among both the touchable and untouchable groups. Among the touchable, there were Brahmins, who traditionally did not allow inter-dining with Tamang, Magar, Rai and other touchable castes of plain. In plain caste ritual feast, the Brahmin and Chhetri sent junior members of their family as guest of Madhesi host. The junior members shared the kitchen and food with other touchable castes of hill and plain. There were separate kitchens for previously untouchable castes of plain and hill. Among them, plain dalit castes did not share food, water and physical proximity with rest of other untouchable castes. For instance, the entire Musahar guests should eat together in one or two turns. The food servers maintained physical distance when they were serving food to the guests. The Musahar guest did not eat with the Dushadh, Chamar, BK and Dom communities. An interesting observation was when Hutilal Sada invited Chamar, Dushad and Tali guests on the occasion of Bhandara . There was a fenced kitchen out of the house and two cooks were appointed from Thakur (plain Brahmin) community. All kitchen materials were provided by the host. Invited guests were served not only in different place but also by different servers. Hutilal Sada said that separate kitchen and service for each caste was main burden to invite inter caste guest among the Madhesi communities.

Jogindra Mahato said that youths under 20 from did not maintain traditional codes of commensality and hierarchy. So-called upper caste youth inter-dined with Dalits in public spheres. Old Brahmins were still found orthodox in terms of commensality. Among the touchable castes, though they shared food and water but they did not share marital relations among the touchable. Hareram Thakur said that marriage was the most sensitive issue of observing hierarchy among the plain castes. They precisely analyzed the genealogy of both sides before establishing matrimonial relations. If there would be mistake of hierarchy, their traditional Jat Samajs penalized materially as well as socially on the basis of degree of violation of traditional code (Giri, 2018a). The Samaj was powerful institution and it controlled system of purity of the particular caste. On the basis

of binding ties and grouping, I observed 5 broad groups of caste people at Lalpur.

Brahmin, Rajput, Takuri-Chhetri and Sanyasi (group-1) from hill to plain origin castes constituted ritual apex of the village. They were numerically in minority. Hill origin high castes specifically were found reluctant on everyday decision making in public spheres in Lalpur. Though they did not hold much land to name them landlord but their family genealogies were linked to political leadership and landlordism. Tamang, Rai, Newar and Magar (group-2) constituted politico economically relatively dominant group at Lalpur. They controlled adequate land, natural resources and social position in the village. Some of them involved agro forestry resource mobilization. They still have very good political economic holds in the society and local institutions.

Yadav, Mahato, Teli, Sudi and Plain middle castes (group-3) constituted emerging dominant category in the village. They controlled local market, land resources, everyday politics and government institutions. Yadav, Teli, Sudhi, Ray and Mahato were key decision makers in everyday life. The group was considered powerful competitor in the village. Their economy was profited by market, land and remittance. Koiri and Yadav have very good grip over agricultural production and local economy.

There were very few hill Dalit caste (Kami and Sharki) groups in the area. They did not accept food and water from plain Dalits. All Plain Dalits (Musahar, Chamar, Khatwe, Dom, Dusadha) constituted last rung of caste (group-4). There was wide gap not only between hill Dalits and Plain Dalits but also within Plain Dalits. Plain Dalits considered that Hill Dalits were inferior to them because they eat buffalo and dead ox meat. On the contrary, hill Dalits considered that Musahars, Khatwe, Doms and Chamars were inferior. The superiority and inferiority debates were observed when plain Dalit boy got married with hill Dalit girl. The Jat Samaj of the boy tried to penalize him. Because of his powerful political linkage, the Jat Samaj tolerated the inter-caste marital issue of the Musahar boy. Within plain Dalits, strong sense of caste discrimination is practiced. The Dushadha put themselves in superior position to Chamar, Musahars, Doms and rest of Dalits. The Musahars also considered that they were at the apex among the rest of the plain Dalits. Ramlal Sada (70 years Musahar male) shared a popular anecdote of the superiority of

plain Dalits. He said, "If a Chamar touches you, it pollutes your skin (outer layer of your body). If a Dushad touches you, it pollutes your bone (deep pollution). If a Dom touches you, It pollutes your whole family." The anecdote was differently articulated by the Dushad, Chamar and Dom. Among the plain Dalits, Musahar were considered closer with other hill and plain middle castes. Ramlal argued that a long history of Haruwa-Charuwa livelihood practices of the Musahar cultivated relative proximity of the Musahar with hill and plain castes.

When shared stories of caste purity, most of the plain castes were proud of their identity, regardless of textual traditions placing them on the 'purity-pollution' hierarchy (Dumont, 1972). 'Caste patriotism' (Gupta, 2005) like Gujars, Ahirs and Jats in India was implicitly practiced among Tamang, Magar, Rai, Mahato, Khabtwe, Musahar, Dom, Dushad, Bharman-Chhetri, Yadav, Teli-Sidhi, and rest of minorities castes in Lalpur. Ramlal and Jogindra argued that placing people on 'low, middle and high' caste would be misleading because none of the castes put themselves as inferior in any essential sense. The Musahars and Dom were poorer, they were less powerful, and less literate, but not always accept inferiority in society. The same is the case of Dushadha, Chamar, Khatwe, and other so-called middle castes in the village. Further, all the castes always valued themselves highly, they mostly hierarchized "other", howsoever idiosyncratic such formations may appear to be. Self-claimed Dalits (both hill and plain) denied their lowly status. However, they continued to believe that other castes were indeed polluting. Caste hierarchy and superiority claim by linking themselves to heavenly origin, bravery, and purity was common story of all caste in plain (Giri, 2018b).

On the basis of food and water commensality at Lalpur, elders of village had divided previous plain castes in two major touchable and untouchable groups, and five categories in general. In group-1, Plain Brahmins shared water and cooked food. They believed that there were intra and inter caste vertical hierarchy among hill and plain Brahmins. The group-2 mutually shared water and cooked food. They practiced ethnic endogamy except in the cases of elopement and love marriage. They believed that there was no hierarchy among themselves. There were many horizontal categories within Tamang, Rai and Magar but they placed culturally equal status. The second group was liberal in terms of commensality and marital practices. The

group-3 (Plain castes) shared water but not cooked food and marital relations. But the second group accepted cooked food, marital relations and water from the third group but not vice versa. There was still hierarchy and a strong sense of caste differentiation. There were various intra and inter caste hierarchies among Yadav, Teli, Sudhi, and Mahato . Last, the group-4, untouchable hill castes also practiced commensality among themselves. They accepted water and cooked food from each other but they refused to exchange marriage. Hill Dalits did not accept water and cooked food from plain Dalits and vice versa. Plain Dalits considered hill Dalits inferior and vice versa. The group of plain Dalit castes belonged neither horizontal nor vertical order because Musahars, Khatwe, Chamars and Dusadhs did not accept each others' food, water and marital relation. All of them claimed that they were superior to other castes. But the degree of flexibility and practice varied from person to person and household to household among the caste-ethnic groups. Outgoing youths and social workers were flexible regarding commensality and traditional caste codes. Senior people above 50 years and women were found rigid in terms of commensality and caste codes. The educated youths started campaigns to reduce caste-based commensality and civil politics. They argued that caste-based hierarchy and discrimination were obstacles to the perpetuation of social evils and crimes.

4·3 Inter-Caste Rituals Contexts

4·3·1 Marriage Feast

The marriage invitations to inter-caste guests was valied when the host family called either by giving pieces of betel nut or a paper card. The invitations are usually two types. if single person of a family is invited to join marriage occasion, it locally said hakaar and if all family members are invited, it is chulilebar. Kapuleshwar Thakur (48 years) said that higher frequency of invitation from other castes came on their girl's marriages rather than boys. According to him, the host was profitable to invite more households because every participant has compulsion to contribute money for girl marriage called dali. He said that invited guests consumed feast (bhoj) free of cost during boy's marriage.

Ramlal and Jogindra shared that inter-caste guests were invited during ritual feast of arranged marriages. Because of multi-caste society, guests were not only touchable caste ethnic groups, but also between Dalits and non-Dalits. At the occasion of feast (bhoj), guests respect each other's caste commensality. Jogindra Yadav invited

Dalits and non-Dalits guest during his daughter's marriage. The Dalit guests shared food cooked by non-Dalits. One of the non-Dalits served food in a separate row of plain and hill dalits guests. They did not touch each other during eating. When Non-Dalits were invited by Dalit host, host family provided uncooked food materials and touchable castes cooked by themselves. Usually, Brahmins cooked and shared feast among non-Dalits caste-ethnic guests of the host family. The cooking place for touchable caste ethnic groups was out of Dalit host's home. It was usually compound or uncontaminated place of non-Dalits field. Kishanalal B.K. had invited all his neighbour castes: Yadav, Ray, Sudi and Sada during his daughter's marriage. Being only three households of B.K (hill Dalit) in the village, it was difficult task to manage various caste/ethnic people from the village and the coming marriage procession of the groom. He asked to non-Dalit castes to prepare food for themselves and the members of the upcoming marriage. According to the request, Thakur prepared the food, while they distributed to the marriage guests. Meantime, four households of touchable caste of neighbourhood had refused to take food because they blamed some people of upcoming marriage of touching the water pot. To please these four neighbouring households, Kishanalal had again provided cooking materials for their caste cook. Krishnalal commented dual behaviours of the non-Dalits of the village. He claimed that they shared food and water with Dalits at Golbazar and out of village.

4·3·2 Death Feast

Death procession and ritual feat was another occasion of inter-caste gathering. The death procession locally said kathayari. Male were allowed as death procession to go cremation center. Women used to go half of the way. They waited when death procession returned. Although, no man of other caste even diyad (village) or kutumb (close relative) join in death procession without the invitation of dead's family. Such inter-caste participations, Dalits and non-Dalits death rituals were frequent occurred in the village. When family member died, the family must invite own kutumb or diyad. Family reputation and economic strength also determined the number of guests invited during death feast.

During my stay, I got an opportunity to join death procession of long cancer diseased Mahato man who hanged himself nearby own cowshed. His jat samaj people had unanimously declared it natural death. On the way to the cremation center, I observed, no other caste

participants of death procession touch corpse. Other caste people provided their company. At the cremation center they assisted together with diyad piling up wood sticks and sat around till the corpse had turned to ashes. All procession returned together but moved to their own houses. The bhoj to other castes (Teli, Sudi, Ray, Yadav and Magar) was organized at fourth day of cremation by the deceased person's family. The fourth day death ritual is called chhorjhappi. The specificity of this fourth day death feast is that other caste participants have not taken salt containing food items. The mourner household offered them rice pudding or beaten rice, curd and sugar, or sweets (jeri, puri) and curd. If any of procession participants left to invite on the fourth day, they were invited on the 12th day death feast called Pitarpachha. The commensality and hierarchy was like marriage ritual feast. Dalits and Non-Dalits were served food from acceptable caste servers.

Jagdish Ray shared that he invited his neighbors of various caste ethnic groups: Rai, Tamang, Magar, Yadav, Teli, Sudi, own diyad, kutumb and close relation households of Dusadh. At the time of the feast, he said that the food was not cooked for all participants of castes in one kitchen because the participants were large and it was hard to manage. So, plain castes cooked for themselves in one place, Magar and Tamang managed kitchen at Tamang's house compound. Similarly, Dalits were served by the plain castes by arranging them caste-wise grouping.

4·4 Fictive Kinship (Dosht) Without Hierarchy

Some men and women have made their inter-caste ritual friends called dosht. Male has a male and Female has a female dosht. They articulated a higher attachment with dosht than the ordinary circle of friends. The local people made a distinction between friend and dosht like "friend can be of the same caste but dosht always belong to a different caste." Doshts are considered as member of the same family. They frequently visit each other's family with gifts to maintain the relation intact. Further, at the occasion of their boy or girl's marriage on the part of each dosht has obligatory responsibility to pay his tribute (bhar) to the dosht. The dosht gifted cloths, cosmetics, husked rice and curd during ritual feast. In return, host also offered money or clothes. They were different castes but behaved like their own caste people. Dosht must invite each other on occasions of death, birth, marriage, household god worshipping and other 'pujas'. If one dosht belongs to Dalit caste, the Dalit respects

other caste's commensal rule. however, it does not mean he gets lesser respect in dosht family. It has been an established rule about ritual friends that man can only make man and woman to woman. Regarding commensality and avoiding rule, no dosht can touch the body of his dosht's wife and vice-versa.

4·5 Village Territorial Deity and Temple

Despite caste ethnic and commensality among the Dalits and non-Dalits, Dhamini puja (territorial deity worshiping) was the best way to manifest a sense of unified community. Each caste has to separately as well as collectively worship Dhamini before rice cultivation. The rational behind this yearly celebration of Dhamini puja was to please the village God for providing sufficient rain for paddy cultivation and for the safety and betterment of village dwellers from danger, natural calamity, and diseases. However, senior people argued that villagers were not interested in maintaining villagers and human-god relations intact. Because of education and civil political orientation, many youths doubted on worshiping and rain-god. Seniors remembered that there was certain rainfall either on the same day or the second day of Dhamini puja. In Lalpur, there were three such Dhamini temples but only two were used by inter-caste groups for yearly worshipping. The first one was made by the Teli, Sudi, Magar, Dusadh, and Dom, collectively. They worshipped collectively. And the second was made by the Rai, Tamang, Yadav, Mahato, Ray, Newar, Bhandari, Bohra, Teli, Sudi, B.K., Musahar and Dusadh. In the first group, Dushad and Dom are Dalits and the rest are non-Dalits. In the second group, BK, Msashar and Dushad are Dalits. In both temple making group found mixed of Dalits and Non-Dalits castes/ethnic groups. They have been performing Dhamini puja in different temples but the process of worshipping and processes of sacrificing (goat and bird) were same.

A week before puja, some active people gathered at village tea shop and formed a five members inter-caste committee to accomplish worship with allocated responsibilities. They raised donation (money collected) to purchase he goat (uncastrated), she-goat (chaste), pigeons, cocks, hens, lawa (fried husked rice), and other indispensable offering items. At the same day, two boys below 10 years were chosen to collect worshipping items from the village households.

To sacrifice goats and birds, committee appointed any young male who carried out all sacrifices on the occasion. Nonetheless, all Gods and Goddesses of Dhamini temple preferred sacrificial blood.

Local deities named Dhamini Mata, Dihwar, Kohelni, Jungle Dhami, Jhakri, Bhimsen, Simebhume, Gaiya, Aghori preferred sacrificial blood of she-goat, he-goat, she-goat, pigeon, cock pigeon, swan egg, and he-goat respectively. After sacrifice, body of offered are distributed among all the participant caste/ethnic groups. Some of the offered birds and animals were roasted at the site and distributed among the participants.

Sacrificed goats are distributed among the inter-caste participants in Lalpur. Photo credit : Janak B Shahi

After the completion of the sacrifice, the members of organizing committee distributed heads of sacrificed goats and birds. They were allocated according to existing norm, in which one head of goat to committee, one head of the goat to the main Pujari, one head of the goat to slaughter man and other functionaries of the worshipping. After distribution of heads, the participant youths carried sacrificed bodies in the village. Then, they shared parts of goat meat according to the equal number of participant households. However, sharing part of meats must be balanced by the sight of mixing flesh quality. Even Dalit castes contributed equal money and participated like non-Dalits. Non-Dalit castes equally contributed money for buying pig though they did not eat pork. In 2006, they made an agreement to replace pig by goat because goat meat was not a taboo for all caste people.

5. Discussion : Caste Council and Civil Politics

Language, origin story, religion, region, kinship, culture and caste/ethnic belongingness are primary units of grouping in Lalpur village. Own kins and caste/ethnic people were considered the primary circle of the invited list. Caste councils of the plain people were active agency to maintain traditional caste codes, particularly

marriage and commensality. If any member of the caste council violated the codes, the authority of the council penalized and organized feast to feed own caste people. After the revival of democracy and a series of civil society movements after 1990s and 2000s, caste councils became weak, and civil politics emerged as dominant agency of decision-making and law prosecution (Giri, 2018a). Therefore, caste-based hierarchy and commensality found in village as private issue. They did not want to share caste discrimination and commensality issues with outsiders. They said that certain traditional values of the caste should be maintained otherwise other villagers will deny to exchange marriage with them.

I observed that Dushadh, Chamar, Mallaha, Teli, Yadav, Sudhi, Mahato and Musahar shared language and similar styles of dress but they did not share food, water and other political economic activities. Their migration stories, language, culture, blood ties, kinship network political belongingness and economic activities conversed with hill origin people. When observed village grouping and alliances among the hill origin and plain castes, primordial sentiments found organizing glue. Clifford Geertz (1973) argued that primordial sentiments like culture, race, language, kinship ties, and origin stories have strong capacity of making alliance though civil politics officially practiced in south Asian societies. Similarly, Berriman (1960) argued that Pahari and hill castes have different rules of hierarchy and commensality. Their language, origin stories and culture strengthened territorial grouping rather than same caste of Pahari and plain (Gaize, 1975). Gaize, Berriman and Geertz concluded that primordial sentiments have strong cultural glue rather than civil political ideology (Berriman, 1960; Geertz,1973). The duality of caste behavior manifested because of the penetration of civil politics. The old civil code called Muluki Ain, 1854 enforced caste-based hierarchy, marital relations, and commensality among different caste/ethnic groups in Nepal (Hofer, 1979). Violation of the caste code was considered a serious crime. The caste code was legally implemented until the amendment of the code in new name called the New Civil Code in 1963. Though the new civil code eliminated caste hierarchy and untouchability, people practiced caste hierarchy on the patronage of the kingship in Nepal (Burghat, 1984).

I have discussed some social and cultural domains of inter-caste interactions. Though, there was no Jajmani system (Dumont, 1972) as

such, people exhibited rigid as well as flexible caste hierarchy in Madhes. In the village, both civil political rights and primordial sentiments based caste hierarchy and commensality prevailed. My relatively long observations from 2006 to 2022 indicate decreasing authority of hill high caste and plain caste codes and increasing governance of Madhesi people and civil politics. Among the Madhesi castes, issues of commensality and inter-caste marriage were critical. Caste based code transgressors left the village because their community did not entertain them. After 2006, caste-based hierarchy and commensality gradually changed in the village because many Dalits and marginalized communities organized civil-political movements against caste and socio-economic domination. Large number of NGOs set their programs to eliminate caste based discrimination and untouchability (Shah, 2008). Civil society and political parties prioritized unity and harmonious relations among different caste/ethnic and regional groups in Nepal (Giri, 2018b). The Madhes movements, political party movements, school education, and civil society mobilization activated civil, political rights and identity of the marginalized communities. Caste/ethnic, linguistic and regional identity remained mostly talked and discussed issues in the village. People formed and transformed their caste/ethnic, linguistic, and regional boundary (Barth, 1969) while social relations were intensive. F. Barth (1969) argued that ethnic boundaries were maintained not in isolation from other groups but rather flow of people and frequent inter-ethnic social interactions. Palin and hill caste/ethnic groups exhibited both unity and differentiation in different social contexts.

6. Conclusion

The article explains the continuity and changes on caste hierarchy and commensality over the times. Hill origin and plain caste articulated their differentiation in terms of mother tongue language and original inhabitant of the village. The discourse of the first settler manifested during the movements. Hill origin peoples were condemned during Madhes Movement in 2007. Plain castes claimed that they were the first settler and legitimate owner of the land. Some of the hill people migrated and settled before arrival of the plain people in foothill of Chure hills. Language and culture are other instance of separation of plain and hill peoples. Among the plain castes, hierarchy and commensality manifested during rituals and feasts. They did not still shared kitchen and exchange of marriage.

Among the non-Dalits, hierarchy and commensality observed during marriage and family rituals. Many of them claimed their superiority. Dalits maintained their caste commensality and endogamous marriage practices. The Musahar claimed that they were superior than the rest of other Dalits. They do not share food and marriage with other Dalits. Similarly, Dushad, Chamar, and BK claimed their own superiority. They also segregate other Dalits in food and marriage.

Despite everyday interactions among the different caste people, certain village functions and rituals revealed unity and differentiation of caste people in the village. Inter-caste guest are invited during marriage and death rituals but their proximity and commensality are maintained. Invitations and everyday exchange of food, labor, and cash maintained inter-caste harmony. Village rituals, market and periodic functions provided contexts of unity and differentiation based on caste, language, and region.

The traditional legacy of caste council remained defunct but people maintained certain caste specific codes of commensality, hierarchy and sexuality. Mostly dual nature on commensality and sexuality was observed. They denied to share food with dalits and inter-caste marriage in the village. They did not mind eating with Dalits out of the village and illicit sexual relations with other castes. Civil politics and caste codes are not only contradictory but also illegal. Caste-based discrimination and practice of untouchability are forbidden by the Constitution 2015. The tensions between civil and political rights and primordial sentiments compelled people to redefine inter-caste relations in the village. Therefore, a rapid decrease of caste codes and increase of caste/ethnic identity observed among the villagers. Civil and political governance could not control the caste and cultural life of the people. Civil politics and caste codes have partial governance and authority in the village. A recent dilemma among the villagers was the continuity of caste codes and the application of democratic and recent human rights principles.

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Juvenile Justice and New Criminal Laws in India

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Abstract

Juvenile justice in India has experienced notable changes over the years. The legal framework tailored to address juveniles in conflict with the law reflects a deeper understanding of the distinctive needs and vulnerabilities of young individuals. Recent amendments to criminal laws, particularly following high-profile incidents, have stirred discussions on finding a balance between the rehabilitative justice for juveniles and the demands for public accountability and deterrence. This paper delves into the progression of juvenile justice in India, analyzes the latest legislative developments, and explores how these new laws are influencing juvenile offenders.

Keywords

Juvenile justice, Juvenile offenders, Legal framework, crime, JJB, CWC, Rehabilitation, Punishment, Judicial interpretation, Mental health, BNSS, BNS, BSA.

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Juvenile Justice and New Criminal Laws in India

1. Introduction

India's juvenile justice system has long been guided by the understanding that children differ significantly from adults in terms of emotional and cognitive development. As a result, they require a system that not only addresses criminal behavior but also emphasizes their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The underlying philosophy of juvenile justice hinges on the belief that younger individuals, given their age, can be reformed and should not face punitive actions designed for adults.

However, recent increases in serious crimes committed by juveniles have led to shifts in public opinion, resulting in substantial amendments to the laws governing juvenile justice. Among the most significant changes was the introduction of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. This paper will explore the evolution of juvenile justice in India, highlighting recent legislative changes, and examining the tensions between a rehabilitative versus punitive approach to juvenile offenders.

2. Evolution of Juvenile Justice in India

The Indian juvenile justice system has its roots in colonial legislation, such as the Reformatory Schools Act of 1897, which focused on providing separate facilities for juveniles. The Children Act of 1960 was one of the first comprehensive post-independence laws for juvenile justice, dealing with both delinquent juveniles and children in need of care and protection. However, the most significant shift came with the Juvenile Justice Act of 1986, which aimed to align India's juvenile justice system with international standards, particularly the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing Rules).

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 further refined the framework, raising the age of juveniles to 18 and introducing more child-centric approaches. This law reflected India's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the

Child (UNCRC), which emphasizes the protection, care, and rehabilitation of juveniles.

However, a turning point in the Indian juvenile justice system came with the 2012 Delhi gang rape case, where one of the offenders was a juvenile. This case led to widespread public outrage and demands for harsher penalties for juveniles involved in heinous crimes. Consequently, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 was enacted, allowing for juveniles aged 16 to 18 involved in heinous crimes to be tried as adults.

3. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

The Juvenile Justice Act of 2015 introduced significant changes to the way juveniles in conflict with law are treated in India. One of the most contentious provisions was the classification of offenses based on their severity: petty, serious, and heinous offenses. Juveniles aged 16 to 18 involved in heinous offenses could now be tried as adults, depending on the assessment of their mental and physical maturity by the Juvenile Justice Board.

This shift marked a departure from the earlier rehabilitative approach to juvenile justice, introducing a more punitive framework for serious crimes. The law defines "heinous crimes" as those that attract a minimum punishment of seven years under the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Some key features of the 2015 Act include:

- Differentiation of Crimes: The act categorizes crimes into petty, serious, and heinous offenses. Petty and serious offenses continue to follow the juvenile justice process, while heinous crimes may result in juveniles being tried as adults.

- Juvenile Justice Board (JJB): The JJB assesses whether juveniles involved in heinous crimes should be tried as adults based on factors such as their maturity level and the nature of the crime.

- Child Welfare Committees (CWC): The CWC addresses the needs of children in need of care and protection, separating their cases from those of juvenile offenders.

While the 2015 Act aimed to address public concerns regarding serious juvenile offenders, it also raised questions about its adherence to the principles of juvenile justice. Critics argue that trying juveniles as adults contradicts the reformative goals of the juvenile justice system.

4. New Criminal Laws and their Impact on Juvenile Justice

India's criminal justice landscape has also been shaped by new laws and amendments that affect juvenile offenders. Key developments include the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018, which introduced stricter punishments for crimes such as rape, including the death penalty for rape of minors. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 also plays a significant role in addressing sexual offenses against children.

While these laws aim to protect children and deter crime, they also have implications for juveniles accused of committing serious offenses. The introduction of the death penalty for certain crimes has reignited debates about the ethics of severe punishments for young offenders, especially when psychological studies show that adolescents are more likely to engage in impulsive behavior.

4·1 Key Issues and Challenges

⧽ **Rehabilitation vs. Retribution :** The move towards treating juveniles as adults for certain crimes challenges the rehabilitative ethos of juvenile justice. Rehabilitation has traditionally been the cornerstone of juvenile justice, but recent amendments reflect a shift towards retribution, especially for heinous crimes.

⧽ **Judicial Interpretation :** Courts in India have had to balance the constitutional rights of juveniles with societal demands for justice. In several cases, courts have highlighted the need for proportionality and have ruled that the purpose of sentencing should remain rehabilitative rather than punitive.

⧽ **Mental Health Considerations :** The mental and emotional maturity of juveniles plays a crucial role in determining their treatment under the law. The 2015 Act requires the JJB to assess the maturity level of juveniles in heinous cases, but questions remain about the effectiveness and fairness of these assessments.

4·2 Recent Case Laws

The famous case of Shilpa Mittal vs. State of NCT of Delhi (2020 SCC OnLine SC 42), has dealt with the classification of offenses under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. The Supreme Court examined whether

an offense that did not fall under the categories of "heinous" or "serious", but still carried a maximum sentence of more than seven years, should be tried as a heinous offense. The Court ruled that such offenses should be treated as "serious" offenses and not "heinous", ensuring that juveniles involved in these crimes would not be tried as adults. The decision reinforced the importance of maintaining a rehabilitative approach for juveniles.

In another case, Salil Bali v. Union of India (2013 7 SCC 705), the Supreme Court dealt with a public interest litigation challenging the constitutional validity of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, which set the age of juvenility at 18. The petition was filed in the aftermath of the 2012 Delhi gang rape case, where one of the accused was a juvenile. The petitioner argued that the age limit should be lowered for juveniles involved in heinous crimes. The Court upheld the constitutional validity of the Act, stating that juveniles, even when involved in serious offenses, should not be deprived of the opportunity for reform. This case was significant in maintaining the rehabilitative ethos of juvenile justice, even in the face of public outrage.

5. Impact of the Three New Laws on Juveniles : Bhartiya Nyaya Sahita, Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sahita, and Bhartiya Saksha Adhiniyam

The recent introduction of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sahita (BNS), Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sahita (BNSS), and Bhartiya Saksha Adhiniyam (BSA) marks a significant overhaul of India's criminal justice system, aiming to modernize the legal framework and address contemporary challenges. These laws replace the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively. Their impact on juveniles, particularly in conflict with the law, is critical, as these laws incorporate several provisions related to child protection and the treatment of young offenders.

Bhartiya Nyaya Sahita (BNS) : The BNS, which replaces the IPC, introduces specific provisions focusing on reformative justice for juveniles. It emphasizes the differentiation between juvenile offenders and adult criminals, recognizing the need for a distinct approach to juvenile offenses. The law continues to support the principle that juveniles should not be subjected to the same punitive measures as adults, aligning with the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, but

with added emphasis on rehabilitation, psychological support, and skill-building programs for young offenders. However, the BNS also reinforces harsher penalties for heinous offenses committed by juveniles in the 16-18 age group, reaffirming that they may be tried as adults if their crime falls within this category.

Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sahita (BNSS) : This law, which replaces the Criminal Procedure Code of 1973, introduces several procedural reforms that aim to streamline justice delivery, including the treatment of juveniles. The BNSS emphasizes child-friendly procedures during trials involving juvenile offenders. It ensures that juveniles are entitled to legal representation, are informed of their rights, and that their mental and emotional well-being is considered during the judicial process. Additionally, the BNSS reinforces that the detention of juveniles should only be used as a last resort, and community-based alternatives such as counseling, probation, and diversion programs should be prioritized.

Bhartiya Saksha Adhiniyam (BSA) : The BSA, which replaces the Indian Evidence Act, introduces reforms in evidence collection and admissibility, with specific provisions for handling cases involving juveniles. It emphasizes the protection of juvenile witnesses and victims, ensuring that they are not subjected to retraumatization or intimidation during the evidence-gathering process. The law also strengthens the confidentiality of juvenile proceedings, prohibiting the public disclosure of information related to minors involved in criminal cases. Additionally, it simplifies the burden of proof for juvenile offenders by giving greater weight to reformative intentions rather than punitive actions.

The introduction of the BNS, BNSS, and BSA reflects a continued commitment to balancing juvenile justice reform with accountability for serious offenses. These laws aim to enhance procedural fairness, child protection, and rehabilitation, ensuring that juveniles in conflict with the law are treated with dignity and afforded opportunities for reintegration into society. However, challenges remain, particularly with balancing public demands for harsher penalties in cases of heinous crimes committed by juveniles.

6. Comparative Analysis with International Juvenile Justice Frameworks

India's juvenile justice system has evolved in alignment with international standards, particularly the Beijing Rules and the

UNCRC. However, the introduction of laws that allow for juveniles to be tried as adults raises concerns about compliance with international norms, which emphasize the need for a separate system for juveniles.

Countries like the United States and the United Kingdom have also faced similar debates. In the U.S., several states allow juveniles to be tried as adults for serious crimes, while in the U.K., the Youth Justice System focuses on rehabilitation but does not shy away from imposing harsh penalties for serious offenses. India's approach mirrors these international trends but also reflects unique challenges related to its socio-economic context.

7. Conclusion

The juvenile justice system in India is at a crossroads, with the introduction of new criminal laws pushing it toward a more punitive framework for serious juvenile offenders. While these laws address legitimate public concerns about the rise in heinous crimes committed by juveniles, they also risk undermining the foundational principles of juvenile justice, which emphasize reform and rehabilitation.

Recent case laws, such as Shilpa Mittal and Salil Bali, underscore the need for a balanced approach that respects the rights of juveniles while addressing public concerns about accountability. Moving forward, it is crucial for policymakers to strike a balance between ensuring justice for victims and providing juveniles with the opportunity to reform. Strengthening rehabilitation programs, improving mental health assessments, and ensuring that juveniles have access to legal representation are essential steps in ensuring that the juvenile justice system remains true to its reformative goals.

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Stigma and Social Exclusion : The Marginalization of Women Drug Abusers in Punjab

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Abstract

This study explores the experiences of stigma and discrimination faced by women who abuse drugs in Punjab, India, and examines the impact on their healthcare-seeking behavior. The rising number of female drug abusers is a growing concern, yet their struggles often remain underreported due to societal stigma. This research aims to shed light on how gender, drug abuse, and cultural contexts intersect to marginalize women, limiting their access to appropriate care. This study uses a qualitative approach, relying on secondary data from reports and studies incorporated to support findings. A thematic analysis is employed to identify key barriers, such as societal stigma, lack of gender-specific facilities, and financial constraints. The theoretical framework of Erving Goffman's stigma theory guides the study, focusing on how societal labeling of female drug abusers as "tainted" affects their identity and limits healthcare access. The study emphasizes the need for gender-sensitive addiction treatment programs and reducing societal stigma to ensure better healthcare access for women battling drug addiction in Punjab.

Keywords

Women drug abusers, Stigma, Discrimination, Healthcare-seeking behaviour, Punjab.

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Stigma and Social Exclusion : The Marginalization of Women Drug Abusers in Punjab

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1. Introduction

The widespread issue of drug abuse poses a pressing problem globally, impacting nearly all countries with varying severity. India is no exception to this issue, with an increasing number of drug addicts noted daily. Particularly in Punjab, the problem has taken a dire turn among the youth, prompting grave concerns. This problem contributes to a host of societal issues including family discord, violence, crime, productivity loss, disease transmission, overuse of healthcare resources, and domestic violence. However, an underreported aspect of this issue is the increasing prevalence of drug abuse among women. This overlooked issue has far-reaching implications, especially as it's compounded by the social stigma attached to women addicts.

2. Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the present study are two-fold :

1. To explore the experiences of stigma and discrimination faced by women who abuse drugs in Punjab.
2. To examine the impact of stigma and discrimination on the healthcare-seeking behavior of women drug abusers.

3. Methodology

The methodology involves a systematic review of key documents, including reports from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), studies by the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), and surveys conducted by various organizations like the Society for Promotion of Youth and Masses (SPYM). Additionally, media sources such as reports by NDTV and the Hindustan Times are utilized to examine the societal discourse surrounding female drug abuse.

The analysis focuses on synthesizing findings from these diverse resources to identify patterns and challenges faced by women who

use drugs, particularly concerning stigma, discrimination, and access to healthcare. Through thematic analysis, the study highlights critical issues such as the lack of gender-sensitive treatment facilities, financial barriers, and the cultural stigmatization of women drug abusers, providing a robust understanding of the structural and social challenges influencing their lives.

4. Theoretical Perspective

Erving Goffman's theory provides valuable insights into the experiences of women drug abusers and the discrimination and stigma they face. Goffman defined stigma as a deeply discrediting attribute that reduces the person "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one." Women drug abusers are often stigmatized, reducing their social identity to the status of 'drug abusers'. This stigmatized label tends to overshadow all other aspects of their identities, causing social rejection and discrimination. It's this "spoiled" identity that is seen by society, rather than their complete self. Goffman's idea of impression management refers to how individuals try to control how others perceive them. In the case of women drug abusers, they might attempt to hide their drug use to avoid the stigma associated with it. They may lead a sort of "double life", presenting a socially acceptable front to the world while hiding their drug use. Our self-identity is largely shaped by the way society sees us. Thus, the stigma and discrimination faced by women drug abusers can significantly impact their self-perception and self-esteem. The internalization of this stigma can lead to a host of negative psychological effects, such as guilt, shame, and low self-worth.

5. Review of Literature

The severity of the problem can easily be accessed through the different studies conducted in this area. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the number of women arrested for drug-related offenses in Punjab increased from 332 in 2010 to 848 in 2019. This represents an increase of over 150% in just nine years as is evident from table-1 which depicts data provided by NCRB for Crime in India from 2010 to 2019) on the next page.

The above mentioned table provides an insight into the rising number of women drug abusers. The total number of drug abusers arrested in the year 2019 was 23,770 and among these, 848 were women. It is also shocking to get from this table that among 1609

drug abusers who are under the age of 18 years, 112 are girls. This is a big number, which shows that drug addiction among the younger generation is increasing day by day and girls are not far behind. However, it is important to note that the data only captures drug abusers who have been arrested and reported to the authorities. The actual number of drug abusers in Punjab may be much higher, as many drug abusers do not come to the attention of law enforcement.

Table-1 : Age and Gender Distribution of Drug Abusers arrested in Punjab in 2019

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
Under 18	1497	112	1609
18-30	12,235	526	12,761
30-45	7,351	169	7,520
45 and above	1,799	41	1,840
Total	**22,882**	**848**	**23,730**

Source : *Crime in India 2019-Statistics*, National Crime Records Bureau.

A study conducted by the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) found that women accounted for approximately 5% of all drug abusers in Punjab. The study also found that women were more likely to use injectable drugs, which can lead to serious health problems such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C. (Drug Abuse in India - National Survey: 2018). Another study conducted by the Society for Promotion of Youth and Masses (SPYM) in 2016 found that approximately 10% of all drug abusers seeking treatment in Punjab were women. The study also found that women who used drugs were more likely to experience mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, and were at higher risk of overdose and other health complications.

Previous research on stigma and discrimination against women drug abusers has provided valuable insights into this area. Studies have indicated that women who use drugs often face multiple layers of stigma due to their gender, drug use, and social context. They experience various forms of discrimination, including exclusion from family and social networks, limited access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities, and moral judgment from society. The stigma and discrimination faced by these women have been found to have detrimental effects on their mental health, self-esteem,

and overall quality of life. Women with drug addiction face unique challenges and barriers in accessing addiction treatment services.

A March 2018 study (PGIMER) revealed that out of 3.2 million people dependent on any substance, a staggering 0.1 million are women. Another PGIMER study found that 1% of the women surveyed were opioid dependents. The true extent of this problem is likely to be much higher as these numbers only represent those who sought treatment.

The limited availability of exclusive facilities, coupled with societal stigma, and a state of denial, often discourage women from seeking help. In government-run de-addiction centers, women often face long waiting times and judgemental stares, creating a hostile environment for them to seek help. An insightful study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) underlines that female drug use often goes undetected, resulting in a lack of tailored treatment facilities. As social expectations vary for men and women addicts, treatment progress also differs.

Women are more likely to seek help from private centers, where privacy is better maintained. Private rehabs like Hermitage De-addiction Home for Women, established by Dr. Bhatia in Amritsar, have seen an alarming increase in the number of women addicts seeking help. A 2001 study by the Institute for Development and Communication exposed that the consumption of poppy husk was most common among women. Similarly, Navjivan Rehabilitation Private Centre at Daulatpur in Patiala reported frequent inquiries about treatments for female addicts.

Different researchers have highlighted the Challenges and barriers in providing access to addiction treatment services for women in Punjab. Kaur (2020) found that stigma and discrimination, lack of gender-sensitive care, and financial constraints were the most significant barriers to accessing care. Sharma et al. (2018) used a cross-sectional design to examine the healthcare access and utilization patterns of women who use drugs in Punjab. The study found that lack of financial resources, lack of transportation and lack of awareness about available services were significant barriers to accessing healthcare. Dua et al. (2021) explored that stigma and discrimination, lack of awareness about available services, and lack of social support were significant barriers to accessing care.

A study conducted by the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) in 2018 found that drug addiction among women in Punjab

was on the rise. The study found that women were increasingly turning to drugs due to stress, depression, and other psychological issues. Another study published in the Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment in 2017 found that women in Punjab faced unique challenges in accessing drug treatment services. The study found that women often faced social stigma and discrimination when seeking treatment for drug addiction and that many treatment facilities were not equipped to provide gender-specific care. It recommended the development of specialized treatment programs for women, as well as efforts to address social stigma and improve access to care, should be initiated. A study published in the Indian Journal of Psychiatry in 2016 found that women in Punjab were more likely to use opioids and other prescription drugs than men. The study also found that women who used drugs were more likely to experience mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, and were at higher risk of overdose and other health complications. The study recommended that efforts to address drug addiction in Punjab should prioritize the needs of women and address the unique challenges they face.

These studies highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions to address drug addiction among women in Punjab. Such interventions should prioritize the unique needs and challenges faced by women and should be designed to promote gender-specific care and address social stigma and discrimination.

In addition to the above data, PGIMER, Chandigarh has also conducted several studies related to drug addiction in Punjab, with a focus on women drug abusers. A study titled "A Profile of Women Substance Abusers Seeking Treatment in North India" was conducted at PGIMER in 2019 to understand the characteristics and treatment needs of women with substance use disorders. The study found that the majority of women seeking treatment for substance use disorders in North India were married, employed, and had children. The study highlighted the need for gender-sensitive treatment services that address the unique needs of women with addiction. Another study (2021) conducted at PGIMER titled "Gender Differences in Substance Use among Treatment-Seeking Adults of Punjab" explored the patterns of substance use among men and women seeking treatment for addiction in Punjab. The study found that women were more likely to report the use of opioids and prescription drugs, while men were more likely to report the use of alcohol and tobacco. Another study conducted in 2022 on the

prevalence of substance use disorders among women living in rural Punjab found that women in rural areas were at a higher risk of substance use disorders due to factors such as lack of education, poverty, and limited access to healthcare services.

6. Discussions and Analysis

These studies highlight the complex and multifaceted reasons for drug use among women in Punjab, the importance of addressing social, cultural, economic, and mental health factors in addressing the issue of drug addiction, and highlight the need for gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate addiction treatment services for women in Punjab. These studies also underscore the importance of addressing the unique barriers and challenges faced by women with addiction, including stigma and discrimination, lack of awareness about available services, and financial barriers, and highlight the significant challenges, that women with drug addiction face in accessing addiction treatment services in Punjab, and the need for gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate interventions to improve access to care.

NDTV India aired a heart-wrenching story about a drug-addicted girl from Amritsar who was kept in chains by her mother in an attempt to control her addiction. She was sent to de-addiction centers multiple times but was always sent back within a few days, sparking her mother's skepticism about the efficacy of these centers. Another report by NDTV 'Every Life Matters', unveiled the harrowing reality of women addicts in Punjab. The report brought to light the societal stigma that dissuades women from seeking help at rehabilitation centers. It further exposed the grim reality of female addicts becoming trapped in a vicious cycle of dependence on male friends or family members for drug supply. In more extreme circumstances, low-income girls are lured into prostitution and drug peddling. These vulnerable girls become easy targets for exploitation, often surrendering themselves to the drug peddlers who take advantage of their desperation and despair.

6·1 Root Causes of Drug Addiction among Women in Punjab

Based on the studies, the following reasons can be cited for the problem of drug addiction among women in Punjab:

- ⇥ **Male Partner Influence :** The foremost reason for drug addiction among women in Punjab is the influence exerted by

male partners. As in many societies, women often conform to the habits of their partners. Unaware of the catastrophic consequences, they may be coerced into trying drugs, eventually leading to addiction.

- **Relationship Issues :** Failed relationships or emotional trauma resulting from broken bonds can make women vulnerable to seeking solace in harmful substances. The resultant emotional distress often prompts them to use drugs as an escape mechanism, allowing them to temporarily evade the harsh realities of life.

- **Broken Marriages :** Broken marriages often leave women feeling emotionally devastated, isolated, and filled with despair. In a bid to numb their pain, they might resort to drug abuse, viewing it as a form of self-medication that offers fleeting relief from their agonizing heartache.

- **Domestic Violence :** Victims of domestic violence carry deep emotional scars that can lead to mental health issues like depression and anxiety. In their search for relief from their constant emotional torment, they may turn to drugs. The temporary euphoria offered by these substances provides a dangerous respite from their daily suffering.

- **Health Problems :** Severe or chronic physical pain can lead to the misuse of prescription drugs, notably opioids, leading to addiction. Women suffering from painful health conditions may fall into this trap, with their search for relief inadvertently leading them down the path of drug dependence.

- **Alcohol Addiction :** Alcohol addiction can often act as a gateway to drug abuse. Women who are heavy drinkers might find themselves more inclined to try illicit substances, and the co-use of alcohol and drugs significantly increases the risk of addiction.

- **Peer Pressure :** Peer pressure is the most common reason for drug abuse. The desire to fit in or to escape feelings of rejection can drive women to experiment with drugs. What starts as casual use in social settings can swiftly escalate to regular use and eventual addiction.

- **Poverty :** Women living in poverty are often caught in a cycle of despair and hopelessness, making them vulnerable to drug addiction. The lack of resources and access to quality healthcare

can exacerbate their plight, causing them to resort to easily available, low-cost illicit drugs as a form of self-medication.

6·2 Barriers in the way of Female Drug Abusers accessing Treatment in Punjab

Women drug abusers in Punjab face several challenges that make it difficult for them to overcome their addiction and seek treatment. Some of the challenges they face include:

» **Stigma :** Women drug abusers in Punjab face stigma and discrimination due to their drug use. They may be judged by their family, community, and healthcare providers, which makes it difficult for them to seek help or access services. Women may also face barriers to care due to social and cultural norms that limit their mobility and autonomy.

» **Lack of access to treatment :** These women may have limited access to drug treatment services, particularly if they live in rural or remote areas. This can be due to a lack of healthcare facilities, trained healthcare providers, or financial resources.

» **Gender-based violence :** Women drug abusers may be at risk of gender-based violence, including sexual assault and domestic violence. This can make it difficult for them to seek help or access services, particularly if they fear retaliation or further violence.

» **Childcare responsibilities :** They may have childcare responsibilities that make it difficult for them to seek treatment or attend support groups. They may also face challenges in finding affordable and reliable childcare options.

» **Lack of social support :** These women lack social support, particularly if they have lost touch with friends and family due to their drug use. This can make it difficult for them to recover and maintain their sobriety.

» **Dual diagnosis :** Women drug abusers in Punjab may be more likely to have co-occurring mental health disorders such as depression or anxiety. This can make it more difficult to treat their addiction and may require specialized care.

» **Economic challenges :** Women drug abusers in Punjab may face economic challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to education and job training. These factors can make it difficult for them to access appropriate treatment and support for their addiction.

Stigma and discrimination against women drug abusers in Punjab are significant barriers to their well-being and access to essential services. The discussions arising from this critical analysis highlight the importance of a multidimensional approach in addressing stigma and discrimination against women drug abusers in Punjab. Many drug treatment programs in Punjab are not designed to meet the specific needs of women. This can include issues such as childcare, pregnancy, and menopause, as well as gender-specific trauma and mental health issues. While interventions and policies should aim to reduce the social stigma associated with drug abuse, they must also address gender inequalities and cultural norms that contribute to the marginalization of these women. Moreover, healthcare providers and support services need to be sensitized and trained to provide non-judgmental and gender-responsive care. Creating safe and inclusive spaces where women feel comfortable seeking help is crucial to overcoming barriers to healthcare access. By taking a gender-sensitive and intersectional approach, policymakers and healthcare providers can work towards ensuring that women with drug addiction in Punjab have access to the care they need to achieve recovery and improve their overall health and well-being.

7. Conclusion

Addiction is a pervasive disease that transcends social, economic, and political boundaries. The politicization of drug abuse, particularly in the case of women has resulted in further stigmatization and created a hostile environment where victims hesitate to seek treatment. Women often conceal their addiction, and their families either deny or ignore the issue. Sometimes, the addiction is rationalized away as being 'haunted by evil spirits or ghosts', rather than acknowledging the reality of drug dependence.

Women battling drug addiction are more isolated from society than their male counterparts, largely because of inadequate treatment facilities, societal stigma, and a lack of understanding of their unique needs. They are especially susceptible to the pernicious cycle of drug dependence and are often underrepresented in both conventional drug surveys and treatment centers, making them a hard-to-reach population.

The weight of familial responsibilities often demotes their personal needs to a lower priority, leaving their drug dependence untreated. Societal disapproval, fear of exposure, lack of support,

and numerous other issues complicate their path to recovery. The fact that a significant number of these women are victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence only adds to their struggle, causing self-esteem issues and depression.

The government should take definitive action to increase the number of de-addiction and rehabilitation centers and ensure they are equipped with recreational facilities tailored to the needs of these women where they can receive treatment in a sensitive and respectful environment while maintaining their privacy. It's crucial to establish effective connections between health workers, community leaders, religious leaders, and educators to plan and implement comprehensive drug abuse prevention and rehabilitation activities.

The role of parents and other family members cannot be overlooked in this problem, as their acceptance, understanding, and support can greatly facilitate the recovery process. However, societal challenges and stigmatization can make the journey towards sobriety a daunting one. Not only is there a dearth of suitable treatment facilities, but these women also grapple with societal backlash and character assassination. Their pleas for help often go unheard, their needs ignored, leading to a further decline in their health.

The escalating problem of drug addiction among women in Punjab is an urgent issue that requires immediate attention. With women from all societal sections falling prey to drug abuse, often initiated by male friends or family members, it's evident that this problem is much more layered and needs a comprehensive, sensitive, and immediate solution.

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An Empirical Analysis of the Distribution of Consumption Expenditure among Farmers in Cotton Belt of Rural Punjab

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Abstract

The consumption of goods and services is a primary component of economic wellbeing. An average farmer household spent ₹115555 on food items, while the spending on non-food items amounted to ₹317295. The marginal farmer households allocated a considerable proportion of 37.61 per cent on food items, whereas this proportion decreased to 21.19 per cent among the large farmer households. On the other hand, the consumption expenditure made on non-food was 62.39 per cent among the marginal category households, while the share rose to 78.81 per cent among the large farm-size categories. The highest APC was found among the marginal farm-size category. The bottom 20 per cent of households of all the farm-size categories taken together appropriated only 7.14 per cent, whereas the top 20 per cent appropriated 44.11 per cent of the total average consumption expenditure. The distribution of per household as well as per capita consumption expenditure was highly skewed among the different farm-size categories.

Keywords

Consumption Expenditure, Non-food items, APC, Farmer households, Inequality.

JEL Codes : D12, Q11, Q12,

16

An Empirical Analysis of the Distribution of Consumption Expenditure among Farmers in Cotton Belt of Rural Punjab

1. Introduction

Adam Smith stated "Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer." Consumption expenditure is the value of consumption goods and services used or paid for by a household to directly meet its needs (OECD, 2013). Consumption is an integral part of all living human beings who nourish and sustain their lives (Pradhan, 2012; Basumatary, 2015). The mental and physical health of a person depends on his consumption pattern to a large extent (Devi, 2017). The consumption of goods and services is a primary component of economic wellbeing, and the standard of living of a household can be understood from the consumption pattern (OECD, 2013; Pradhan, 2012). Everything else being equal, a person with a higher level of consumption is regarded as having a higher level of economic wellbeing. A household is considered poor if its consumption level is below the poverty norm. In India, the welfare profile is usually measured using the consumption expenditure of the households because income represents potential but not actual consumption (NABARD, 2018).

However, human wants are scarce and dynamic, which gives consumption a dynamic character. Variations in consumption can be seen among different societies as well as individuals based on differences in environmental, social, economic, and cultural contexts. Per capita income, the standard of living, and the level of consumption are the main determinants of the economic status of a society. While the increase in per capita income and per capita consumption expenditure are some of the macro-level indicators of development, the distribution of household expenditure is a micro-level indicator (Basumatary, 2015). Ghosal (2014) observed that the consumption pattern of any individual is influenced by many factors like price of the commodity, the relative prices of the

commodities, the level of income, tastes and preferences of the individuals, geographic and climatic condition of the society where the individual lives, nature of the occupation of individual, and also by some structural factors like degree of urbanization, the distribution pattern of income, level of infrastructure like marketing, roads, the role of media, etc. Any change in these factors over time will bring about noticeable changes in the consumption pattern of society.

Economic development is usually accompanied by improvements in a country's food supply and the gradual elimination of dietary deficiencies, thus improving the overall nutritional status of the country's population (WHO, 2003). The analysis of consumption patterns of households growing food crops is of particular interest to agricultural policy-makers. Because the changes in agricultural price policy affect farm income, which alters the household consumption of commodities produced and the demand for other consumer goods supplied by the non-farm sector (Farooq et al., 1999). Income, prices, individual preferences and beliefs, cultural traditions, and geographical, environmental, social, and economic factors all intersect in a complex manner to shape the dietary consumption patterns (WHO, 2003). Analyzing consumption patterns over time would help design appropriate policies related to food production and its distribution (Devi, 2017).

The standard of living of any household or any person can be understood from the levels and patterns of consumption expenditure as well as the qualities of the consumption budget. The food consumption pattern of a household is an essential barometer of individual welfare and wellbeing in any region. Consumption contributes to human development when it enlarges the capabilities and enriches people's lives without adversely affecting the wellbeing of others (Pradhan, 2012).

One can meet consumption needs either through the spending of income, through the running down of wealth, or through borrowings. The existing literature on levels and patterns of consumption expenditure among the farmers in Punjab indicated that the family consumption expenditure of a farmer household is mainly influenced by the ownership of assets, level of income, education of the farmers, and size of the family. Punjab is an agricultural developed State of the country and a star performer during the heydays of the green revolution. Agriculture has always been an essential source of livelihood, and farm business income is the prominent income source

for the State's farmer households. However, over time, increased cost of farm inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, etc., and higher labour wages have led to an increase in the cost of production, thereby squeezing farmers' income.

In the present era, farm income is not only low and decelerating; it is highly unequal among different categories of farm households. The income of the large and medium farmers is relatively higher than the income of the marginal and small farmers. On the other side, the consumption expenditure has been increased beyond the farmers' pockets. As a result, there are wide variations in the food as well as non-food consumption expenditure in different categories of farmer households. The farmers with marginal and small holdings are unable to meet the essential demands of education, health, and other basic needs of the family (Government of Punjab, 2013; Chakravorty et al., 2019). To deal with the income-consumption gap, which is developed due to shortages of income levels and rising consumption expenditure, farmers have to incur debt.

Therefore, it is important to study the consumption expenditure pattern of farmer households in the cotton belt of rural Punjab, which suffered substantial income losses due to repeated cotton crop failure in the last decade which will help understand the standard of living of the farmer households.

2. Objectives of the Study

The present paper is based on the following specific objectives:

1. To study the levels and pattern of consumption among farmer households;
2. To study the inequality in the distribution of consumption among farmer households; and
3. To suggest policy measures to improve the standard of living of farmer households in the cotton belt of rural Punjab.

3. Data Sources and Methodology

Both primary and secondary data has been used in the present study. Secondary data has been collected from various journals, books, magazines, reports, dissertations, theses, web-sites, etc. Primary data has been collected through a well-structured schedule from selected farmer households using a multi-stage stratified random sampling technique for the period 2016-17. *Firstly*, four

districts, Mansa, Bathinda, Sri Mukatsar Sahib, and Fazilka, have been selected purposely out of 9 districts of the cotton belt of rural Punjab. *Secondly*, all 23 developmental blocks of the selected districts have been chosen for the sample. *Thirdly*, one village from each block has been picked up for the study. *Fourthly*, out of the total number of the farmer households of different categories found in each selected village, 10 percent of the farmer households from each category and of each village were randomly selected. In this way, 520 sampled farmer households of different farm-size categories consisting of 118 marginal, 126 small, 134 semi-medium, 115 medium, and 27 large have been selected for the survey purpose. *Finally*, descriptive statistical tools such as averages, percentages, Gini coefficients, etc., have been used to analyze the results of the present study.

4. Results and Discussion

This section deals with the average consumption expenditure, per capita consumption expenditure, average propensity to consume and distribution of the consumption expenditure among farmers in the cotton belt of the rural Punjab.

4·1 Average Consumption Expenditure of Sampled Farmer Households

The mean values of per annum consumption expenditure are given in Table-1. The data highlights that the annual consumption expenditure of an average farmer household was ₹432850. An average family of a marginal farmer household spent as much as ₹170150 annually. In contrast, the consumption expenditure for the small, semi-medium, medium and large farmer households had been recorded at ₹277293, ₹402179, ₹764941, and ₹1077951, respectively. The consumption expenditure showed an increasing trend with the size of the farm. The consumption expenditure of the large farmer households was 6.34, 3.89, 2.68, and 1.41 times higher than that of the marginal, small, semi-medium, and medium farmer households, respectively.

Out of the total consumption expenditure, an average farmer household spent ₹115555 on food items, while the spending on non-food items amounted to ₹317295. However, there were considerable differences in consumption expenditure levels across different farm-size categories in the cotton belt area of rural Punjab. The perusal of Table-1 showed that in absolute terms, the

consumption expenditure on both food as well as non-food items was the highest among the large farmer households. In contrast, these expenditures were the lowest among the marginal farmer households. However, if we look at the relative terms, the marginal farmer households allocated a considerable proportion of 37.61 percent to food items. In contrast, the respective proportions decreased to 30.82, 28.44, 23.05, and 21.19 per cent among the small, semi-medium, medium, and large farmer households. On the other hand, the consumption expenditure made on non-food was 62.39 per cent among the marginal category households. At the same time, the share rose to 69.18, 71.56, 76.95, and 78.81 per cent among the above-mentioned respective categories.

Table-1 : Per Household Consumption Expenditure of Farmer Households

(Mean Values in ₹ Per Annum)

Consumption Components	Marginal	Small	Semi-medium	Medium	Large	All Sampled Households
Food Items						
Cereals	13781 (8.10)	15129 (5.46)	17578 (4.37)	2174 (2.84)	28694 (2.66)	17622 (4.07)
Pulses	5136 (3.02)	5638 (2.03)	6269 (1.56)	7635 (1.00)	10292 (0.95)	6370 (1.47)
Vegetables	5136 (3.02)	6766 (2.44)	9506 (2.36)	12859 (1.68)	16611 (1.54)	8961 (2.07)
Fresh & dry Fruits	952 (0.56)	2895 (1.04)	5458 (1.36)	19037 (2.49)	25526 (2.37)	7860 (1.82)
Milk & Milk products	23907 (14.05)	36317 (13.10)	51877 (12.90)	75865 (9.92)	95981 (8.90)	49355 (11.40)
Edible Oils	2354 (1.38)	2960 (1.07)	3927 (0.98)	7126 (0.93)	9714 (0.90)	4344 (1.00)
Sugar & Jaggery	4718 (2.77)	5378 (1.94)	6145 (1.53)	8206 (1.07)	10536 (0.98)	6319 (1.46)
Condiments & Spices	3253 (1.91)	3853 (1.39)	4535 (1.13)	6968 (0.91)	8667 (0.80)	4831 (1.12)
Meat, Fish, Egg	373 (0.22)	619 (0.22)	1105 (0.27)	1997 (0.26)	3033 (0.28)	1118 (0.26)
Beverages, Refreshments, etc.	4385 (2.58)	5920 (2.14)	7969 (1.98)	14851 (1.94)	19412 (1.80)	8775 (2.03)
Sub-total (Food Items)	**63993 (37.61)**	**85476 (30.82)**	**114369 (28.44)**	**176291 (23.05)**	**228466 (21.19)**	**115555 (26.70)**

Non-food Items						
Intoxicants	5313 (3.12)	5927 (2.14)	8743 (2.17)	9828 (1.28)	8704 (0.81)	7520 (1.74)
Fuel & Light	21598 (12.69)	23782 (8.58)	26258 (6.53)	40903 (5.35)	51322 (4.76)	29141 (6.73)
Mobile & Internet Bills	1591 (0.93)	1883 (0.68)	2337 (0.58)	7366 (0.96)	10991 (1.02)	3619 (0.84)
Clothing & Footwear	6587 (3.87)	12401 (4.47)	20285 (5.04)	45457 (5.94)	58037 (5.38)	22793 (5.27)
Washing & Toilet Articles	4630 (2.72)	5557 (2.00)	6870 (1.71)	11167 (1.46)	15493 (1.44)	7442 (1.72)
House Construction/ addition of rooms & major repairs	11780 (6.92)	40294 (14.53)	69231 (17.21)	95000 (12.42)	216667 (20.10)	59854 (13.83)
Household Transport Vehicles	2011 (1.18)	3434 (1.24)	7752 (1.93)	7713 (1.01)	29593 (2.75)	6528 (1.51)
Durable Goods	3041 (1.79)	5264 (1.90)	7802 (1.94)	55827 (7.30)	83161 (7.71)	20641 (4.77)
Education	9213 (5.41)	18730 (6.75)	28276 (7.03)	93843 (12.27)	112963 (10.48)	4059 1(9.38)
Medical	12436 (7.31)	20849 (7.52)	29507 (7.34)	41704 (5.45)	51111 (4.74)	27343 (6.32)
Conveyance	4339 (2.55)	8494 (3.06)	12612 (3.14)	20965 (2.74)	29000 (2.69)	13343 (3.08)
Marriage & Socio-religious Ceremonies	22805 (13.40)	43184 (15.57)	65026 (16.17)	151052 (19.75)	172741 (16.02)	74771 (17.27)
Others*	814 (0.48)	2018 (0.73)	3109 (0.77)	7824 (1.02)	9704 (0.90)	3709 (0.86)
Sub-total (Non-food Items)	**106157 (62.39)**	**191818 (69.18)**	**287810 (71.56)**	**588650 (76.95)**	**849485 (78.81)**	**317295 (73.30)**
Grand Total	**170150 (100.00)**	**277293 (100.00)**	**402179 (100.00)**	**764941 (100.00)**	**1077951 (100.00)**	**432850 (100.00)**

Source : Field Survey, 2016-17.

*includes entertainment, services of tailoring, beauty parlour, etc.

Among the food items, milk and milk products were the first essential component and an average farming household spent 11.40 per cent of the total consumption expenditure on this item. On the hand, cereals were the second most crucial non-durable item for the farmer household; they accounted for 4.07 per cent of the total consumption expenditure. This result of the study was in accordance with the findings of Farooq et al. (1999), Kaur et al. (2016), Singh et al. (2019), and Kaur et al. (2023). However, the same result opposed by

the findings of the studies of Sharma (1997) on the pattern of consumption expenditure of tribal and non-tribal farmer households in Himachal Pradesh and Devi (2017) on the pattern of consumption expenditure of rural households in Haryana, which stated that in the food consumption items, cereals had the highest share of expenditure followed by milk and milk products.

A marginal farmer household spent ₹23907 on milk and milk products, while the spending by the small, semi-medium, medium, and large farm-size categories rose to ₹36317, ₹51877, ₹75865, and ₹95981, respectively. However, in proportionate terms, the consumption expenditure on milk and milk products among the marginal, small, semi-medium, medium, and large farmer households were 14.05, 13.10, 12.90, 9.92, and 8.90 percent, respectively. Similarly, the marginal farmer household spent ₹18916 on cereals and pulses, and expenditure increased to ₹20767, ₹23847, ₹29383, and ₹38986 among the small, semi-medium, medium, and large farmer households, respectively. The consumption expenditure on cereals and pulses in proportionate terms was 11.12 for marginal farmer households, followed by 7.38, 5.93, 3.84, and 3.62 among the small, semi-medium, medium and large farmer households. It revealed that milk and milk products and cereals and pulses have a positive relationship with the size of the farm in absolute terms. In contrast, in relative terms, these components were negatively related to the size of farm holdings.

An average farmer household incurred expenses of ₹8961 on vegetables and ₹7860 on fresh and dry fruits annually. The share for the respective items was 2.07 and 1.82 per cent of the total consumption expenditure. The percentage of consumption expenditure allocated to vegetables decreased along with the size of farm holdings. In contrast, the share of fresh and dry fruits increased with increased farm size except for the large farmer households. Similarly, the share of expenditure incurred on edible oils, sugar & jaggery, condiments & spices, beverages, refreshments, etc., decreased as the size of the farm rose. However, the share of expenditure incurred on meat, fish, and eggs increased directly with the size of the farm. The result of the study was as per the findings of Sharma and Jain (2011). Their study revealed that the share of expenditure allocated to food tended to decline as income increased. Still, the composition of food expenditure also changed as households devoted a smaller percentage of the food expenditure to

grains and other starchy staples and a larger share towards milk, egg, fish, meat, fruits, vegetables, and processed and prepared foods.

Among non-food items, the most considerable amount of ₹74771 was incurred on marriages and socio-religious ceremonies, which accounted for 17.27 per cent of the consumption expenditure. Following articles in order of importance were house construction or addition of rooms and major repairs, education, fuel & light, medical, clothing & footwear, and durable goods for which an average farmer household allocated ₹59854, ₹40591, ₹29141, ₹27343, ₹22793, and ₹20641, respectively. The proportionate share of respective items was 13.83, 9.38, 6.73, 6.32, 5.27, and 4.77 per cent. While, expenditure on mobile and internet bills, household transport vehicles, washing and toilet articles, intoxicants, conveyance, and others ranged between 0.84 to 3.08 per cent. The percentage share of expenditure on items such as house construction or addition of rooms and major repairs, household transport vehicles, and durable goods exhibited a positive relationship with the size of farm holdings. The expenses share of ₹40591 was spent on education by an average farmer household. An absolute expenditure on education was the highest (₹112963) among the large farmer households and the lowest (₹9213) among the marginal farmer households. A similar pattern was observed in the studies by National Sample Survey Office (2005), National Sample Survey Office (2014) and Singh et al. (2018). At the same time, the percentage share spent on education was the highest (12.27 per cent) among the medium farmer households and the least (5.41 per cent) among the marginal farmer households. However, the share of medical expenditure was higher among the marginal and small farming households and lower among the larger farm-size categories. The percentage of spending on intoxicants, fuel & light, and washing and toilet articles exhibited inverse relationship with the size of the farm.

The study presented similar results as Singh et al. (2019), which highlighted that the consumption expenditure on non-durables, durables, services, marriages, and other socio-religious ceremonies tended to increase from the marginal farmers to large farmers. The above analysis apparently connoted the results to the Engle's law of consumption, according to which as income increased, the proportion of expenditure incurred on food fell, even if the absolute expenditure on food rose up. The present study clearly picturised the

scene that as farm size increased, the proportion of consumption expenditure on food items fell. Though, absolute spending on food consumption was found to be increased with the increase in the size of farm holdings. On the other hand, the consumption expenditure on non-food items increased with the size of farm holdings both in absolute and relative terms. The studies conducted by Phulke and Maske (1990), Thakur and Singh (2006), Kaur et al. (2015), Kaur et al. (2016), and Hamsa and Umesh (2020) were also as per the findings of the study. Phulke and Maske (1990) found out that as income increased, the percentage expenditure on food items decreased while the percentage expenditure on recreation, travelling, festival, and social function increased with an increase in income. According to Kaur et al. (2015), as the family's income levels increased, the proportion of income spent on subsistence declined, while the amount spent on comforts and luxuries like clothing, education, traveling, etc., increased. Hamsa and Umesh (2020) observed that percentage of spending on various items varied with the category of farmers. With the increase in income, there was an increase in expenditure on non-food items. The present study also noticed a similar consumption pattern, having a subsistence nature, among the marginal, small, semi-medium, and medium farmer households as they had a higher share of consumption expenses on food items. However, the medium and large farmer households' consumption pattern was somewhat different as they spent more on durables and luxuries. The consumption pattern of large farmer households, incurring the maximum spending on almost all the items of consumption, indicated that land ownership was a significant factor determining the levels of living of the farmer households.

4·2 Per Capita Consumption Expenditure of Farmer Households

Due to the variations in the average size of the family among the different farm-size categories, it became necessary to look into the levels of per capita consumption expenditure of different farm-size groups. The average size of the family was 4.57 in the case of the marginal farmer households, whereas it was 4.97, 5.58, 6.13, and 7.43 among the small, semi-medium, medium, and large farmer households, respectively. The average size of the family was found to be 5.74 when all sampled farmer households were taken together.

Table-2 represents the per capita consumption expenditure of farmer households per annum on next page.

Table-2 : Per Capita Consumption Expenditure of Farmer Households

(Mean Values in ₹ Per Annum)

Consumption Components	Marginal	Small	Semi-medium	Medium	Large	All Sampled Households
Food Items						
Cereals	3015	3044	3150	3548	3862	3070
Pulses	1124	1134	1123	1245	1385	1110
Vegetables	1124	1361	1704	2098	2236	1561
Fresh & dry Fruits	208	583	978	3105	3436	1369
Milk & Milk products	5231	7307	9297	12376	12918	8598
Edible Oils	515	596	704	1162	1307	757
Sugar & Jaggery	1032	1082	1101	1339	1418	1101
Condiments & Spices	712	775	813	1137	1166	842
Meat, Fish, Egg	82	125	198	326	408	195
Beverages, Refreshments, etc.	960	1191	1428	2423	2613	1529
Sub-total (Food Items)	**14003**	**17198**	**20496**	**28759**	**30749**	**20132**
Non-food Items						
Intoxicants	1163	1193	1567	1603	1171	1310
Fuel & Light	4726	4785	4706	6673	6907	5077
Mobile & Internet Bills	348	379	419	1202	1479	630
Clothing & Footwear	1441	2495	3635	7415	7811	3971
Washing & Toilet Articles	1013	1118	1231	1822	2085	1296
House Construction/ addition of rooms & major repairs	2578	8107	12407	15498	29161	10427
Household Transport Vehicles	440	691	1389	1258	3983	1137
Durable Goods	665	1059	1398	9107	11193	3596
Education	2016	3769	5067	15309	15204	7072
Medical	2721	4195	5288	6803	6879	4764
Conveyance	949	1709	2260	3420	3903	2325
Marriage & Socio-religious Ceremonies	4990	8689	11653	24641	23249	13026
Others*	178	406	557	1276	1306	646
Sub-total (Non-food Items)	**23229**	**38595**	**51579**	**96028**	**114332**	**55278**
Grand Total	**37232**	**55793**	**72075**	**124786**	**145081**	**75409**

Source : Field Survey, 2016-17.

*includes entertainment, services of tailoring, beauty parlour, etc.

The data depicted in table-2 show that annual per capita consumption expenditure was found to be ₹75409. The per capita expenditure among the marginal farmer households was obtained as ₹37232 annually. In contrast, the small, semi-medium, medium, and large farmer households had been recorded per capita consumption expenditure amounting to ₹55793, ₹72075, ₹124786, and ₹145081, respectively. Furthermore, the per capita consumption expenditure showed an increasing trend with the size of the farm.

An average farmer household incurred per capita consumption expenditure amounting to ₹20132 on food items, whereas spending on non-food items amounted to ₹55278. There were wide variations in the per capita consumption expenditure of different farm-size categories. In the case of food items, the per capita consumption expenditure followed a positive relationship with the size of farm holdings. Food expenditure was the highest among the large farmer households, i.e., ₹30749, and the lowest, i.e., ₹14003, among the marginal farmer households. Among the food items, the highest per capita consumption expenditure was incurred on milk and milk products amounting to ₹8598, followed by ₹3070 on cereals, and so on. As far as different farm-size categories were concerned, the per capita consumption expenditure was similar for most of the food items. As we moved from the marginal to the large farm-size category, food expenditure rose up.

Among the non-food items, an average per capita consumption expenditure of ₹13026 was spent on marriages and socio-religious ceremonies, which was the highest for the large farmer households, i.e., ₹23249 and the lowest, i.e., ₹4990 for the marginal farmer household. An average amount of ₹10427 per capita was spent on house construction or addition of rooms, and major repairs by all the sampled farmer households. While the amount spent differentiated across the different farm-size categories, such as the marginal and the large farmer households, spent ₹2578 and ₹29161, respectively, on the same. An average amount of ₹7072 and ₹4764 was spent on education and medical, respectively. One could find a positive relationship between the per capita expenditure on these services and the size of the farm.

The patterns of both the per capita consumption expenditure and the household consumption expenditure were almost similar among the different farm-size categories. However, since the family size varied from one category to another, there were differences in the per

capita consumption expenditure and the per household consumption expenditure of the farmer households. The family size increased along with the increase in the size of farm holdings, so the consumption expenditure of the medium and large farm-size categories remained higher than the others. The per household consumption expenditure of the large farm-size categories was 6.34 times higher, and the per capita consumption expenditure of the larger farm-size categories was 3.90 times higher than that of the marginal farmer households.

4·3 Average Propensity to Consume of Farmer Households

An average propensity to consume is the percentage of income spent on consumption expenditure rather than saved. It is calculated by dividing the average consumption by the average income.

Table-3 : Average Propensity to Consume of Sampled Farmer Households

Farm-Size Categories	Average Consumption (AC)	Average Income (AY)	APC=AC/AY
Marginal	170150	124278	1.37
Small	277293	234314	1.18
Semi-medium	402179	355294	1.13
Medium	764941	758006	1.01
Large	1077951	1267604	0.85
All Sampled Farmer Households	432850	409988	1.06

Source : Field Survey, 2016-17.

Table 3 represents the average propensity to consume of the sampled farmer households. An average farmer household had an APC of 1.06. The marginal farmer households were found to have the highest APC of 1.37, and it declined as the farm size moved up. Only the large farmer households had an APC of less than one, which was 0.85. It indicated that all other farm-size categories had deficit income except the large farmer households. As a result, an average farmer household incurred a deficit of ₹22862 annually. The deficit was largest in case of the semi-medium farmer households of ₹46885, followed by ₹45872, ₹42979, and ₹6935 among the marginal, small, and medium farm-size categories respectively. However, the large farmer households had a surplus budget of ₹189652 per annum.

This result of the study was as per the findings of the Keynesian psychological law of consumption, according to which, as income

increases, the level of consumption increases but not as much as the increase in income. First, he suggested that consumption was a positive function of an absolute level of current income. Secondly, he pointed out that as income increased, the consumption expenditure also increased but not in the same proportion. Finally, he argued that the average propensity to consume fell as income increased. The same case was found in our study, which showed that APC fell as we moved up from the marginal farmer households to the large farmer households. The study by Singh (2013) also observed the similar findings.

4·4 Distribution of Consumption Expenditure of Sampled Farmer Households

Table-4 depicts per household distribution of consumption expenditure of the farmer households in the cotton belt of rural Punjab. The data reflected that the bottom 10 per cent of the farmer households accounted for only 3.09 per cent of the total consumption expenditure. In contrast, the upper 10 per cent of the sampled farmer households incurred 27.43 per cent of the total consumption expenditure. A similar kind of picture could be seen across different farm-size categories. Since, the bottom 20 per cent of the marginal farmer households claimed 10.69 per cent of the total consumption expenditure. In contrast, the corresponding figures for the small, semi-medium, medium, and large farmer households were 9.84, 10.61, 11.66, and 9.19 per cent, respectively. On the other hand, the figures for the top 20 per cent for respective categories were 42.14, 41.07, 38.76, 39.38, and 38.88 per cent, which indicated the vast disparities prevailed among the farmer households in the cotton belt of Punjab.

Table-4: Percentage Distribution of Consumption Expenditure of Farmer Households by Decile Groups

Decile Groups of Households (%)	Marginal	Small	Semi-medium	Medium	Large	All Sampled Farmer Households
0-10	4.91	4.61	4.99	5.79	3.25	3.09
10-20	5.78	5.23	5.62	5.87	5.94	4.05
20-30	5.90	6.45	6.20	6.81	7.09	4.79
30-40	7.00	6.79	7.43	6.81	6.10	5.85

40-50	7.62	8.15	7.63	7.98	9.83	6.54
50-60	8.22	8.81	8.86	7.84	10.28	8.26
60-70	9.12	8.71	9.57	9.19	10.81	10.80
70-80	9.31	10.18	10.94	10.33	7.82	12.51
80-90	12.99	11.82	13.50	14.91	15.67	16.68
90-100	29.15	29.25	25.26	24.47	23.21	27.43
Bottom 20 %	**10.69**	**9.84**	**10.61**	**11.66**	**9.19**	**7.14**
Top 20%	**42.14**	**41.07**	**38.76**	**39.38**	**38.88**	**44.11**
Gini Coefficient	**0.293**	**0.293**	**0.269**	**0.256**	**0.266**	**0.363**

Source : Field Survey, 2016-17.

The Gini coefficient was the highest among the marginal and small farmer households; it was 0.293 for both the categories, whereas the Gini coefficient was the lowest among the medium farmer households, which is 0.256. It depicted that consumption inequality was one of the highest among the marginal and small farmer households. The Gini coefficient was found to be 0.363 among all the sampled farmer households, which indicated that the concentration of the consumption expenditure was higher than within the individual farm-size categories.

5. Conclusion

In a nutshell, the data highlights that there were wide variations in per household as well as per capita consumption expenditure among different farm-size categories. As farm size increased, the proportion of consumption expenditure on food items fell; on the other hand, the consumption expenditure on non-food items increased with the size of farm holdings. The study results were in corroboration with the Engle's law of consumption. The study noticed a subsistence consumption pattern among all the sampled farmer households except the large farmer households, who spent more on the non-food items. The consumption pattern of farmer households indicated that land ownership was a significant factor determining the levels of living of the farmer households. Also, per household distribution of consumption expenditure of the farmer households were highly unequal in the cotton belt of rural Punjab.

The above analysis indicated that the average annual income of farmer households was lower than their consumption expenditure and the value of average propensity to consume was greater than one

across all the sampled farm-size categories except for the large farm-size category in the cotton belt of rural areas of Punjab, so the public distribution system should be fairly implemented for all these categories. Thus, all the food items must be provided at subsidized prices in adequate quantity. If possible, it should be distributed free of cost among marginal, small, and semi-medium farmer households. Effective measures should be introduced to improve the efficiency of the public distribution system. Food prices have been increasing day by day, which has also emerged as one reason for higher consumption expenditure among farming households. It has been examined during the survey that the poor marginal and small farming households resorted to consuming fewer vegetables, fruits, and other nutritious items. In order to meet both ends met, poor farmers have to depend upon borrowings. Thus, the minimum support prices of the different crops and consumer price indices should be fixed in such a manner that enables farmers to meet their essential needs of food, shelter, clothing, education, healthcare, and a clean environment. The study highlighted that the farmer households spent a significant share of their consumption expenditure on education and health care. To reduce such expenditure, concessional education should be provided to all, and skill development training centers need to be inaugurated for helping the farming households. Along with this, proper health infrastructure should be developed in the rural areas, and free health insurance should be provided to the poor strata of the farming community.

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