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EDITORIAL

A New Dawn for Interdisciplinary Research

As we embark on the second volume of the *Southwestern Research Journal (SRJ)*, we are filled with a renewed sense of purpose and excitement. The inaugural volume marked a significant milestone, that incorporated the scholarly works by the researchers from various disciplines and institutions including Southwestern State College.

In this second volume, we continue to celebrate the power of interdisciplinary research. By transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries, we unlock new insights, foster innovation, and address complex global challenges. The articles featured in this issue exemplify the diverse range of topics and methodologies that define interdisciplinary scholarship. From the discipline of Humanities, Management and Science, our contributors delve into critical issues such as cultural preservation, educational pedagogy, business strategy, environmental sustainability, health, and social justice.

As we look forward to the future, we envision the *SRJ* as a leading platform for disseminating cutting-edge research. We invite scholars from around the world to submit their work and contribute to the ongoing scholarly dialogue. By fostering a vibrant intellectual community, we can collectively shape a better future.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude and sincere acknowledgments to our authors, reviewers, and editorial board members for their invaluable contributions. Their dedication and expertise have made this volume possible. We are very much thankful to the entire management team of Southwestern State College for their unwavering support to this publication.

As promoting research culture for fostering knowledge is our ultimate mission, let us continue to explore the frontiers of knowledge, challenge conventional wisdom, and strive for excellence. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the world.

Editorial Board

STUDY ABROAD TREND AND ITS IMPACT ON ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN NEPAL: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Daman Bahadur Singh^{1*}

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Abstract

There have been significant effects on the academic and economic structures of Nepal as a result of the exodus of students choosing to pursue higher education overseas. This systematic assessment aims to examine the underlying causes of Nepalese students' propensity to study overseas and assess the impact of that decision on the country's educational authority, particularly about acceptance and competition rates at universities. Using the PRISMA approach, the study collated qualitative and quantitative literature published between 2017 and 2023 based on the migration of international students, push and pull forces, and their effects on domestic education systems. One of the main incentives for Nepalese students to travel abroad for further education is the availability of top-notch international degrees, better career possibilities, and improved educational standards. Outmigration has resulted in a substantial decline in enrolment in public universities, a decline in academic achievement, and a worsening of the brain drain, particularly in the fields of teaching, information technology, and healthcare. The report also identifies systemic issues that are present in local institutions and that contribute to this mass departure, such as a lack of funding or academic infrastructure. Despite significant efforts to reform, the Nepalese academic system continues to confront obstacles because of the country's strong interest in international studies, which limits innovation in higher education and impedes development initiatives.

Keywords: Brain Drain, Nepali Student Migration, Push-Pull Factors, Higher Education in Nepal, International Student Mobility

Introduction

Nepalese students are choosing to pursue higher education abroad more and more frequently these days. The growing number of NOCs granted to students pursuing higher education abroad serves as strong evidence for this. According to a Ministry of Education report, between 2010 to the present, 416,000 students departed Nepal to pursue their education abroad (Ministry of Education, 2022). Australia, Japan, the USA, and the UK are among the most preferred destinations for these students, as noted by Upadhyay (2023).

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There are multiple reasons for this pattern. For instance, because of issues with Nepal's higher education institutions, many students constantly search for better opportunities far from home, despite the country's outdated course materials and limited infrastructure.

Pull factors also urge students to go above and above and enroll in colleges abroad (Thieme, 2017; Rai, 2022). These could be things like having access to internationally recognized credentials, having access to cutting edge facilities, and having better working and learning environments. They are also motivated by a desire to relocate to wealthier nations with higher standards of living (Timsina, 2022).

There are some ramifications for local educational institutions, like those in Nepal, from the increased desire in studying away from home. Local public universities like Tribhuvan University find it challenging to compete with international universities since they offer more sophisticated services and resources. When it is discovered that a large number of brilliant and motivating academics have departed Nepal's higher education system, the issue gets worse (Chalise, 2019; Khatri, 2021). This also contributes to "brain drain," another human capital flight. Here's where educated people who may have gone back to Nepal fear returning because there aren't many jobs that will use their degree of training (Maharjan, 2022).

Nepal's academic institutions are closing as a result, and policymakers and educators need to address the push and pull factors that are causing this trend to cease. Reduce the impact of student outmigration on the local education system by strengthening local institutions through curriculum modernization, infrastructure renovations, and the provision of internationally competitive programs, as advised by (Bhattarai, 2021; Upadhyay-Dhungel et al., 2013).

Objectives

1. To examine the main factors that influence Nepali students' decision to pursue higher education overseas and evaluate the impact they have on the country's educational institutions.
2. To evaluate how student movement affects Nepal's higher education institutions' general expansion and viability, paying particular attention to how competitive these colleges are regarding academic achievement and admissions overload.

Research Questions

1. What motivates Nepali students to pursue international education abroad, and what obstacles stand?
2. How much has the practice of studying abroad affected Nepal's higher education institutions' enrolment and academic performance?
3. How much do Nepali academic institutions encourage students to continue their education abroad, and how much do they oppose this behavior?

4. What proportion of the brain drain is brought on by overseas students, and how does this affect the nation's educational and economic growth in the long run?

Methods

Using the PRISMA approach, the current study will analyze the literature on the trend of studying abroad and how it has affected Nepalese academic institutions. PRISMA, the well-defined process for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses, enables systematic reviews to be conducted in an open, thorough, and repeatable manner.

The majority of the data is derived from academic articles published between 2017 and 2023. Students who are traveling abroad and those enrolled in study programs with Nepalese students are eligible to apply for inclusion. However, ten references from each list must be in the final references list.

Examine subjects that center on the pull and push of students, the effects on domestic educational institutions, and social and economic concerns.

We will consider studies that combine qualitative and quantitative methods.

Exclusion

1. Pieces unrelated to the migration of students.
2. Research concentrating on foreign students from nations other than Nepal. non-English books.
3. Repeated research.

Search Strategy

1. Items unconnected to the student migration.
2. Studies focused on international students from countries other than Nepal. non-English literature.
3. Consistent investigation.

The Kathmandu University e-Library, Academia.edu, their official portals, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, JSTOR, and other databases will also be included in the search. Furthermore, the following expressions and terms were used: "global student mobility," "brain drain from Nepal," "push pull factors," "student migration from Nepal," "Pakistan's viewpoint on studying overseas," and "effects of foreign education in Nepal." Two terms will then be accommodated for a specific expected result set by applying AND and OR. For instance, "Push-pull factors AND Nepali students" and "Nepali students migration OR brain drain."

Data Extraction

To obtain important data from every included study, a standardized data extraction form was created. Included in the extracted data were the study authors, the year of publication, and the title. Research questions and study objectives, Methodology (mixed-

method, qualitative, quantitative). The pull-out factor's key conclusions could be viewed as the most significant issues facing education. But university-based reasons that draw them back are also evident, and the impact is not limited to those studying overseas. A further important push and pull aspect is the impact of the student population on educational quality. However, further innovations are being brought about by the change in IT education in addition to

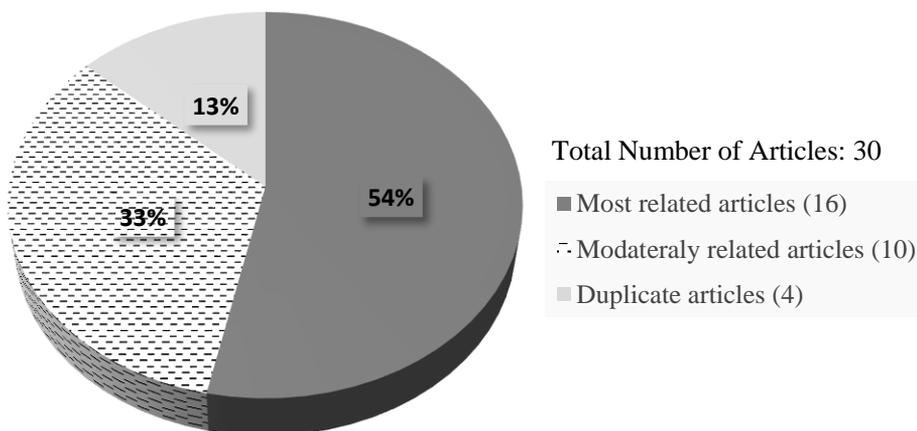
Information Fusion

It will use a theme analysis to integrate the data from qualitative research; the main themes of motivation will be looking into why people choose to study abroad and how student mobility affects local educational institutions. Research data types use quantitative data sets to provide information on things like the number of worldwide migrations, the nations where students end up, and the financial impact on nearby educational institutions. In addition to evaluating the impact of student migration trends on Nepal's educational system through enrolment rates and brain drain statistics, meta-analysis will be conducted wherever possible.

Reporting

The PRISMA flow diagram will display the research selection process, including the number of articles that were located, filtered, reviewed, and eventually included in the final analysis. To make informed judgments, the PRISMA guidelines, primary result, training, and review will, at the very least, wear the results of the systematic analysis in an understandable and organized manner. This will offer a concise justification of the study's shortcomings along with suggestions for more investigation.

Figure 1
Presentation of screenings of the articles in Pie-chart



Results

What motivates Nepali students to pursue international education abroad, and what obstacles stand?

The study highlighted several push factors that contributed to students choosing to study overseas, including limited access to postsecondary education in Nepal, perceived low quality of education, a lack of research facilities, and slim employment prospects following graduation (Bhatta, 2019; Chalise, 2019). Better educational resources, more diverse professional opportunities, and exposure to other countries are pull factors (Tamang & Shrestha, 2021; Joshi, 2017). Economic incentives like as scholarships and the potential for post-study employment abroad serve to motivate more students (Kandel, 2019; Kharel, 2020).

Disincentives Major deterrents cited by the writers included high living expenses, stringent immigration laws, and the psychological toll of being away from one's family and home (Joshi, 2017; Rai, 2022). This study emphasized the need for higher academic standards and the importance of exposure to knowledge on a global scale (Bista, 2018; Sharma, 2020). Students think that degrees from other countries are more marketable and recognized in Nepal's employment market than degrees from home (Dahal, 2018; Maharjan, 2022). In addition, there's no denying the importance of professional and personal development in a cutting-edge setting (Ghimire, 2018; Poudel, 2019). However, societal pressures and cultural differences across borders can demotivate people (Regmi, 2017; Upadhyay, 2023). Furthermore, students worry about potential difficulties adjusting to new living and educational environments abroad (Thapa, 2022; Tamang, 2020).

In their research, Bhatta (2019) Bhatta highlights how the inadequate and outdated nature of Nepal's existing higher education system is caused by a lack of specialized subject options, an antiquated curriculum, and inadequate finance. Due to the irregular postgraduate programs, many Nepali students are compelled to pursue their studies overseas. This is a result of their desire to receive an education that meets worldwide standards and makes them employable anywhere (Adhikari, 2021; Baral, 2018).

Though strongly motivated to leave their home country, these students face both financial challenges while studying abroad (Adhikari, 2021; Baral, 2018).

and uncertainty about future employment prospects. Furthermore, a major concern for these would-be immigrants is that the intense rivalry for jobs upon their return from overseas would make it impossible for them to find employment domestically. Joshi claims that attractive modern educational institutions, the possibility of high income overseas, or the promise of greater employment prospects following the acquisition of an international degree are all important motivators. Motivation is also provided by the social prestige associated with obtaining an education abroad.

However, hazards include the high expense of living overseas, the potential for underemployment following graduation, and issues integrating into the labor market of

the host nation (Karki, 2019; Tamang & Shrestha, 2021). When skilled labor is in demand, many students have brought up the issue of brain drain when they leave Nepal (Kandel, 2019; Khatri, 2021).

Tamang and Shrestha (2021) point to the pull forces of aspiration as the main causes of student exodus from their nation. According to their publications, students are pursuing independence and freedom, which are uncommon in Nepalese society, and occasionally their parents' connections lead them astray. The main motivator is the high ambitions for employment prospects and permanent residence overseas. Even yet, there are several administrative obstacles, such as the protracted visa application procedure, which can take nine to twelve months, and the significant social and emotional costs associated with being away from one's family for an extended period (Thieme, 2017; Khatri, 2021).

These studies reveal several recurring themes about the factors that encourage and discourage. One of the main drivers is the desire for better educational standards and access to specialized fields of study that are unavailable in Nepal (Maharjan, 2022; Poudel, 2019). Students think that having an international degree will greatly increase their earning potential and employability, both inside and outside of Nepal (Joshi, 2017; Ghimire, 2018). Studying abroad offers cultural awareness, personal development, and international networking opportunities, which draw in a lot of students (Thapa, 2022; Sharma, 2020).

In Nepali society, receiving an education from abroad is frequently seen as more prestigious and elevates one's social status (Regmi, 2017; Rai, 2022). A student's possible debt, living expenses, and the high cost of tuition can deter some from going overseas for their education (Bhatta, 2019; Timsina, 2022). Getting visas and fulfilling the requirements of international universities can be very difficult (Thieme, 2017; Tamang & Shrestha, 2021). The main deterrents are being cut off from family and community and worrying about adjusting to a new culture (Joshi, 2017; Upadhyay, 2023). Although a lot of students aspire to work overseas in better jobs, job insecurity It is generally accepted that studying abroad provides an opportunity for better education, career development (Bista, 2018; Chalise, 2019), and personal growth for which reason students in Nepal are highly encouraged to do so (Shrestha, 2020; Pokharel, 2020). Nonetheless, these options have been limited by financial restrictions, bureaucratic barriers, and emotional costs (Kharel, 2020; Maharjan, 2022) Decisions regarding foreign education for students depend primarily on balancing such encouraging and discouraging factors (Karki, 2019; Poudel, 2019).

How much has the practice of studying abroad affected Nepal's higher education institutions' enrolment and academic performance?

Sharma's (2020) case study of Kathmandu University indicates that enrolment rates have dropped significantly, primarily as a result of the growing tendency of Nepali students to travel abroad to further their education. Many students have chosen to attend universities abroad instead of higher education institutions in Nepal because they believe

the degrees from these institutions are more prestigious and of higher quality than those from local universities. This study found that academic performance at Kathmandu University had decreased as a result of academically competitive students choosing to study overseas. The university struggles to keep up high standards in its academic programs since the brightest minds are moving abroad to further their education (Sharma, 2020). Ghimire's (2021) analysis indicates that student enrolment has significantly decreased in Nepal, particularly in private and public universities. Formerly residents of domestic universities, students from the middle and higher classes are now emigrating in pursuit of better possibilities. Universities now have more financial strain because tuition, which was once their main source of funding, is no longer as high. Universities in the United States are finding it harder to come up with innovative ways to maintain their competitive academic programs as a result of student migration abroad. Many scholarship recipients also bemoaned the underfunding of research facilities and high-quality educational resources, which they claimed was the reason for their lower productivity and performance levels when compared to their international counterparts (Himire, 2018).

Chalise (2019) explained how simple access to study abroad for students has contributed to a decline in public university enrolment over the past ten years, particularly at Tribhuvan University. As a result, many seats in public institutions are unoccupied and more Nepali students are leaving for other nations including Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Due to declining enrolment, many colleges are receiving fewer resources, which has resulted in subpar facilities and lower-than-expected educational standards. The issue of not being able to keep exceptional performers on staff is made worse by the fact that the majority of gifted faculty members choose to leave public colleges, the majority of which are pricey and struggling financially. The issue of not being able to keep exceptional performers on staff is made worse by the fact that the majority of gifted faculty members choose to leave public colleges, the majority of which are pricey and struggling financially.

Adhikari (2021) notes that the state of public universities in Nepal is declining and that study abroad programs are becoming more extensive. According to this survey, enrolment percentages at universities like Tribhuvan University and Pokhara University have drastically decreased because study abroad programs are now viewed as a preferable alternative. Fewer students at public universities indicate that the government and commercial sectors are investing less in these institutions, which lowers the quality of education there. He contends that well-known public colleges compete significantly less to draw bright minds, deserving students, and foreign collaborators—factors that ultimately lower academic standards. Research by Kharel (2020) examined the macro-level aspects of Nepal's education system, including the contributions and effects of Nepalese students migrating abroad to pursue higher education, particularly university enrolment. Private universities are especially impacted since they must dismantle the allure of international colleges and rely more heavily on student fees.

Kharel (2020) has observed that even though a small number of domestic colleges have made an effort to modify their operating procedures to boost student retention rates, the tendency has a detrimental effect on educational outcomes. Such losses of staff and students are harmful because they weaken the school's intellectual foundation and lead to lower-quality research and other forms of output. One thing that is evident from all of the research is that enrolment in Nepal's private and public universities has been impacted by the trend of studying abroad. Being a public university with a significant number of open seats and a consistent annual decline in enrolment, Tribhuvan University experiences the issue most acutely. But because they served as a source of revenue for local colleges through fees, it has been felt most acutely by middle-class and upper-class students who have been moving abroad to further their education. After these students graduate, other domestic universities face financial difficulties.

The practice of expanding by sending exceptional students abroad has persisted in harming local institutions' academic performance. The brightest minds within the institution are now leaving for other colleges, while the remaining students remain less competitive. The university now receives less financing for faculty, research, and academic programs offered by TA as a result of this decline. Particularly in terms of academic and research quality, public universities have struggled because of decreased funding and government support. Due to their lack of professional growth in Nepal and their desire to pursue employment prospects abroad, faculty personnel are also victims of brain drain in addition to students. Additionally, this has led to a drop in research and education levels across the nation's universities.

The enrolment of Nepalese higher education institutions as well as the academic performance of students in these institutions have been severely impacted by the circumstance where the number of Nepali students attending universities abroad has increased dramatically. The country's academic integrity and quality education are decreasing as a result of declining student enrolments and brain drain; state universities are the worst affected by general financial instability and declining enrolment. These ramifications lead to the conclusion that, in the absence of significant reforms to Nepal's higher education system, the trend of studying abroad will continue to deteriorate home academic institutions.

How much do Nepali academic institutions encourage students to continue their education abroad, and how much do they oppose this behavior?

As a result, Thieme's (2017) research shows an increase in educational advisors recommending studying overseas to Nepali students. These consultants, who are connected to potential international colleges, offer placement services, help with visa applications, and scholarships, and help with standardized test preparation, such as for the TOEFL and IELTS. They also promote studying overseas as a way to travel the world and obtain better professions. The study also shows that even if there are a tonne of established techniques that are full of information about choices for studying abroad,

learners may be discouraged by things like high expenses and cultural adaptation. However, they frequently focus more on the advantages, which makes studying abroad more alluring than it is. According to Shrestha's (2020) study, several Nepalese HEIs unintentionally encourage student migration by providing inadequate resources, opportunities for independent study, and curricula that are current. Students seek out better opportunities abroad due to a lack of competitive postgraduate programs and specialization. Additionally, universities without international collaborations or student exchange programs encourage their students to seek out experiences and possibilities outside of Nepal. Nonetheless, only a small number of colleges in Nepal have started putting retention techniques into practice. These include improving academic connections and infrastructure, developing more competitive programs, and creating opportunities for research and internships in Nepal. All of these steps are taken to guarantee that the number of students traveling abroad to pursue higher education is kept to a minimum.

The research done by Dahal identifies a few key problems with Nepal's higher education system that unintentionally encourage students to pursue studies elsewhere. Lack of government financing, the employment of antiquated teaching methods, a lack of research facilities, and subpar career placement services are just a few of the reasons why students are expelled. Furthermore, because colleges do not adhere to worldwide quality and innovation norms, it encourages students to search for better educational opportunities outside. Dahal (2018) outlines changes being done by a few Nepali universities to buck this trend, including bettering the use of instructional technologies, enhancing faculty qualifications, and forming joint degree program partnerships with international universities. By aligning with international norms, these institutions hope to make Nepal's education more appealing and competitive on a worldwide scale, hence preventing students from emigrating.

According to Tamang's (2020) analysis, Nepal's socioeconomic climate makes it typical for students to pursue their education elsewhere. Due to the perceived shortcomings of Nepal's higher education system and the scarcity of post-graduation job possibilities, students are choosing to further their studies abroad. Additionally, students are encouraged to study abroad by their families' and communities' expectations since they view degrees from foreign countries as prestigious. To buck the trend and deter students who might otherwise drop out due to financial hardship, some universities are expanding their financial assistance and merit-based scholarship offerings. Government initiatives aimed at reducing the economic push factors that drive people to study abroad are also having an effect by creating more opportunities for graduates.

One of the main factors influencing student mobility in Nepal is the professionalization of educational consulting services. Consultants actively support foreign education by offering all-encompassing assistance and emphasizing the advantages of studying abroad, including increased exposure to other cultures, improved employment opportunities, and academic status. Systemic Problems with Domestic Institutions: Nepal's universities frequently lack the resources—financial, academic, and

infrastructure—needed to compete with international universities. Students are compelled by these shortcomings to look overseas for better educational possibilities. Limited Specialisation Options: Due to the lack of a broad choice of advanced or specialised degree programs offered by many Nepali universities, students are forced to look outside of their country for more extensive educational opportunities. Perceived Prestige of Foreign Degrees: Students are under pressure to pursue education overseas since society views foreign degrees as more important and respectable.

Nepal's educational establishments have the power to directly and indirectly influence students' decisions to pursue international studies abroad. However, systemic issues in the local universities and educational consultants generally anticipate that students will shift to studying abroad; however, new developments, improved curricula, and financial incentives are gradually being implemented to protect the locals and lessen their losses. The social standing of foreign education and the prospect of international prospects, however, continue to inspire a lot of students.

What proportion of the brain drain is brought on by overseas students, and how does this affect the nation's educational and economic growth in the long run?

Kandel (2019) identifies one of the main reasons for Nepal's brain drain as student mobility. More and more students who study overseas choose to stay in their host countries since they have greater career chances there. As a result, many competent and experienced experts have left the field, particularly in IT, engineering, and health services. The study notes that Nepal's academic climate is weakened by the exodus of gifted pupils. Local universities struggle to retain the brightest faculty and students, which hurts research output and innovation. Additionally, because Nepalese schools lack established, competitive academic programs, it is difficult for them to meet global standards. The loss of competent graduates has left a gap in the economy, particularly in disciplines linked to research, technology, and engineering. Nepal's economic progress is impeded in the absence of highly skilled specialists in various industries due to a shortage of human resources necessary for industrialization and technological advancement. According to Rai's (2022) qualitative research, a lot of students are motivated to study abroad by expectations from society, better education, and employment prospects overseas. This is a result of the fact that most students never plan to return to Nepal after completing their education, which adds to the brain drain. Academic institutions in Nepal are seeing a decline in intellectual energy and innovation due to the departure of aspirational and accomplished students. Higher education is stagnating as a result of the lack of changes in research, instructional strategies, or cooperation with foreign scholars.

Rai (2022) claims that because brain drain occurs mostly from wealthy families, leaving behind a workforce with lower skill levels, Nepal's economic disparity is exacerbated. Long-term effects include a greater reliance on remittances rather than the growth of regional enterprises. Regmi (2017) asserts that studying abroad helps Nepali students grow both personally and professionally, but it also frequently leads to permanent

migration. Many of the experiences and skills that students gain while studying abroad go unused since there aren't enough opportunities in Nepal, which contributes to brain drain. The migration of skilled personnel has created an unaffordable gap that negatively impacts both research production and teaching capacity in Nepalese universities. According to Regmi (2017), if these students decide to return home after finishing their studies, they could play a significant role in establishing connections between domestic and international academic institutions and halting some of the effects of the so-called brain drain. This study shows that most graduates who opt to reside outside of Nepal do not return home with an abroad degree, even though doing so can aid promote economic growth among other things. It affects not just the generation of jobs but also the growth of entrepreneurship and the country's general competitiveness in global markets.

In his research, Maharjan (2022) explores the subject of reverse migration. Many Nepali students studying overseas wish to stay there, while others return home with more advanced degrees and globally marketable talents. The former to latter ratio is still biased in favor of out-migration, though. This essay demonstrates how returnees could revolutionize Nepal's educational system by introducing cutting-edge teaching strategies and global information sharing. Once more, there are continuities in the form of brain drain because most deserving students migrate and do not return to fill the void in the country's educational foundation due to distance. Returned migrants bring several advantages to their home nations, whether they work in the high-tech industries of banking, agriculture, or the economy as a whole. However, there are so few returns that it is unable to even begin to make up for the loss of the additional students who would have been studying overseas.

According to Pandey's (2016) empirical analysis, the quality of higher education, especially in other countries, is one of the main reasons people are urged to leave Nepal. People who travel abroad tend to have higher living standards and more employment options, which deters them from returning home and increases the likelihood of brain drain in the nation. Based on the results, it is evident that international institutions have outperformed Nepalese institutions in terms of infrastructure, academic expertise, and research. As a result, there exists a vicious loop whereby the majority of talented kids receive an education, but those who stay in the nation are unable to acquire the skills required to bring about constructive changes to the educational system. Sadly, a substantial portion of Nepal's educated population departs the nation in quest of greater returns on their educational investments, which impedes the country's economic progress.

According to Poudel (2019), globalization has increased Nepali students' access to overseas education while also contributing to brain drain. Students who travel in quest of international job prospects will never set foot in their hometown again. Students who travel abroad are to blame for the national education systems in their native countries being undermined. There will be fewer possible professors in Nepal as a result of the concentration of these students in other nations, which will lower the amount of intellectual capital required for academic research, innovation, and university expansion.

Poudel contends that migration brought on by globalization lessens Nepal's dependence on initiatives for self-sustaining economic growth and instead favors remittances, or payments received from overseas. Industrialization and economic progress are hindered by a lack of skilled workers, particularly in industries like science and technology.

According to Bhattarai's (2021) research, a significant contributing cause to Nepal's brain drain is student movement abroad. The removal of competent people resources from Nepal results in a knowledge deficit that impedes the country's growth. Bhattarai claims that as a result, there is a loss of talent and a deterioration of academic excellence in Nepalese institutions. As a result, there are fewer inventions, which lowers academic competitiveness worldwide. Economically, brain drain causes a shortage of qualified workers, which hinders the nation's development, particularly in technology, education, and healthcare. Because of this, Nepal is forced to rely on foreign workers or import trained labor, which raises costs and decreases the effectiveness of economic development. Among other things, social pressure, greater employment prospects, and academic chances all play a big role in the decision to study abroad. Because most students never return to Nepal after studying overseas, this has caused a severe brain drain. The majority of industries, including IT, healthcare, and education, are greatly impacted when highly educated students decide to settle in Nepal due to a shortage of skilled labor (Kandel, 2019; Maharjan, 2022).

Reduced academic advancement in Nepal is partly ascribed to the exodus of students seeking education abroad (Rai, 2022) Domestic institutions will stagnate if they are unable to sustain both foreign research cooperation and high levels of instruction. Indeed, this is among the factors that contribute to Nepalese universities having fewer resources at their disposal, receiving less funding as a result, and having faculty members of lower caliber than those on other campuses across the world, making it difficult for these universities to compete globally or draw talent home. Better academic opportunities, potential employment opportunities, and prevailing social standards all play a role in the decision to study abroad. Regretfully, this has resulted in a significant population decline, as the majority of young people choose not to return home after pursuing their studies abroad. Numerous industries, including technology, healthcare, and education, are severely suffering from the fact that these organizations typically select competent workers who live outside of Nepal rather than there, which results in a shortage of these services (Tamang & Shrestha, 2021; Pokharel, 2020).

The small number of students who pursue higher education abroad hinders domestic academic advancement. National institutions will eventually stagnate if they are unable to maintain high standards of instruction other than by collaborating with foreign institutions on research projects. Some of its symptoms include inadequate funding for Nepalese universities along with subpar faculty compared to other international institutions, which makes it challenging for these organizations to participate internationally or retain staff domestically (Ghimire, 2018; Bista, 2018).

Long-term effects of brain drain on the economy include the exodus of knowledgeable and qualified workers, which slows development in vital industries like technology, healthcare, and education for Nepal. Remittances from citizens working outside are increasingly dependent upon by Nepal, leading to economic volatility and a lack of sustainable growth, rather than the development of industries at home. Lack of trained professionals impedes the creation of high-value enterprises, which over time reduces Nepal's potential for economic innovation and growth because you are not the ones who develop high-value industries. It is impossible to overstate the long-term detrimental impact of brain drain—students leaving Nepal to pursue education overseas—on the country's academic and economic progress. While studying abroad, students often pick up valuable skills, but many of them stay put permanently, depleting the pool of available human resources. This has a detrimental effect on Nepal's schools' competitiveness and quality, which impedes the development of several businesses.

Discussion

Both the academic community and the national economy have been significantly impacted by the outflow of Nepali students who are studying abroad. The research papers that are cited provide a thorough analysis of the several push and pull variables that affect student migration, the challenges that Nepal's higher education institutions face, and the ramifications for the country's economy as a whole.

The aforementioned studies have determined the primary drivers of students' study abroad decisions. Some of the most frequent motivations for such actions include the desire for higher academic standards and future employment chances, access to specialized fields not available in Nepal, and the social status that comes with foreign qualifications (Upadhyay, 2023; Joshi, 2017; Tamang & Shrestha 2021). According to Upadhyay's analysis, Nonetheless, there are considerable disincentives within the realms of finance, administration, and emotions that counteract these motivation factors (Thieme 2017; Bhatta 2019). According to Bhatta (2019) and Thieme (2017), studying abroad is too expensive for many students. The bureaucratic setbacks involve acquiring visas or fulfilling requirements imposed by foreign universities. Some students are also hampered from following their dreams of international education due to emotional variables including feeling lonely after leaving one's family and having to adjust oneself in a different cultural environment. According to Dhungel et al. (2013), educational advisors actively encourage student migration by offering comprehensive services and emphasizing the advantages of international experience and improved career opportunities.

Nepali students are increasingly choosing to pursue higher education overseas, a trend that is having a significant impact on domestic universities, particularly public ones like Tribhuvan University. Research has usually concluded that our local schools would struggle to draw in new students in the event of such a student exodus, especially those

from wealthy families who provided financial support (Ghimire, 2018; Chalise, 2019). According to Sharma (2020) and Adhikari (2021), migration is mostly to blame for the reduction in funding for professors, infrastructure, and educational programs, which lowers academic quality in Nepalese institutions.

Brain drain further restricts academic advancement in those universities. Bhatta (2019) and Kharel (2020) claim that the movement of our top students abroad creates a shortage of talented academics for the local universities, which lowers academic performance both in the classroom and in research output. Due to this, domestic institutions are stuck in a vicious loop where they can't improve their academic program or raise the bar at all, which encourages students to leave the nation in search of better opportunities elsewhere.

Student migration has a significant, long-term negative impact on Nepal's academic industry. Regmi (2017) and Maharjan (2022) note that academic stagnation and a lack of international collaboration are caused by the departure of the best students. Academically gifted Nepalese students frequently never return to their home country and live abroad for the rest of their lives, negatively impacting the academic environment.

Economically, this brain drain phenomenon has led to talent shortages in the most important fields, including education, health care, and technology advancement (Kandel, 2019; Rai, 2022). According to this data, a large number of international students never go back home, which results in a major loss of human resources for Nepal. As a result, the Nepali economy lacks trained personnel, particularly in high-value sectors that are essential for the advancement of technology and industrial growth (Pandey, 2017; Poudel, 2019). Bhattarai (2021) claims that this circumstance has increased dependency on remittances from other nations, which only provide short-term funding and do not support long-term economic development.

In reaction to the student exodus, some local institutions and legislators implemented policies aimed at retaining students. They consist of scholarships, combined degree programs with foreign universities, and infrastructure development, according to Dahal (2018) and Shrestha (2020). However, it's possible that these initiatives won't be able to reverse the circumstances that have forced students to leave their home countries. Many students continue to believe that degrees from other countries are more prestigious than those from home, which makes them more likely to pursue them (Tamang, 2020; Rai, 2022).

This massive student migration out of Nepal is being driven by people who have access to better educational options. Such widespread migrations still have a significant impact on Nepal's economy and educational system. Consequently, there has been a rise in the number of undergraduates leaving university early, a decline in the caliber of higher education, and a flight of professionals from the nation. As a result, these institutions' expansion as well as economic progress have been impeded. But even with the recent government initiatives to keep students in their home countries, the exodus of students

continues. This means that Nepal must prioritize improving its educational system to attract more graduates and prevent brain drain in the future.

Conclusion

The academic and economic landscape of Nepal has been profoundly impacted by the exodus of Nepali students who choose to pursue their studies elsewhere. The local higher education system has faced numerous challenges as a result of students migrating abroad in quest of better educational possibilities, employment prospects, and the prestige that comes with earning a degree from a foreign university. Public university enrolment has significantly decreased, academic standards have declined, and there has been a brain drain as brilliant staff and students have left for other countries. Therefore, development rates necessary to preserve or enhance Nepal's academic innovation potential have been hampered by lower levels of academic creativity and invention, especially in high-value sectors like technology, education, and health care. Once more, despite reform initiatives such as offering incentives to deter others from leaving, these individuals are unable to stop "studying abroad."

Implication

There are numerous ramifications for this trend. Nepal's Public universities face threats to their long-term existence in the academic field due to a drop in student enrollment and teacher retention. Because of this, Nepal may never be able to compete on a global scale or provide high-quality education for its future generations due to its declining research and educational standards. However, from an economic standpoint, brain drain hinders the growth of primary industries by restricting access to trained workers and increasing reliance on remittances. This drain has the potential to perpetuate cycles of economic underdevelopment in the country and weaken the education system if it is not addressed by significant policy and institutional adjustments. These results highlight the need for officials and others in charge of education to raise the standard of instruction in Nepal to prevent pupils from dropping out of school. Improving infrastructure, offering a greater variety of specialized academic programs, and forming partnerships with foreign universities to boost competitiveness are a few recommendations for necessary government improvements. If the brain drain is to be stopped and economic sustainability is to be encouraged, there also have to be financial incentives designed to entice people to remain in Nepal.

Recommendations for Further Study

Future studies can focus on the following topics to close current knowledge gaps and advance understanding:

The Role of Return Migration: Research on the experiences of Nepali students who return home after studying abroad and how they impact the country's educational

systems, professional fields, and economy should be conducted to determine how return migration contributes to reducing brain drain.

Comparative Analysis of Reforms: Additional research can examine how well Nepal's higher education reforms work with other developing countries that have gone through similar student exodus situations. This will help identify successful strategies for retaining students and enhancing regional educational systems.

Long-term Socioeconomic Impact: More thorough research is needed to determine the long-term effects of brain drain on several important industries, including education, technology, and health care. This will assist decision-makers in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the issue so they can develop clever solutions.

Function of Industry and Private Sector Cooperation: To create academic programs that would meet Nepal's industrial needs and both retain students in the nation and fill the skills gap, future studies might be conducted on the collaboration between private industry and domestic colleges.

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ASSESSING FINANCIAL DETERMINANTS OF MARKET PRICE IN NEPALESE COMMERCIAL BANKS

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Abstract

This study is designed to identify the effect of interest income, interest expenses, net profit, earnings per share (EPS), retained earnings, dividend payout and book value per share on market price per share (MPS). Out of twenty-six commercial banks, five commercial banks including one governmental bank were selected on judgmental basis. Financial tool and statistical tools are considered to find the result showing the relationship between the dependent variable that is MPS and independent variables that are interest income, interest expenses, net profit, EPS, retained earnings, dividend payout and book value per share. The correlation results shows that MPS have positive relationship among net profit, EPS, dividend payout and book value per share however, MPS have negative relationship with interest income, interest expenses and retained earnings. Among the positive relationship MPS have strong positive relationship with dividend payout. Furthermore, the regression analysis showed shown that only two independent variables have significant impact on MPS and other variables have insignificant impact on MPS. EPS and dividend payout has significant positive relationship with MPS. The EPS and dividend payout has positive coefficient with the MPS. This study shows that the investor gives more priority to EPS and dividend payout of the bank before investing in the shares of the commercial bank. And it can also be inferred that if the company is able to make more profit and declare dividend payout; the market price of the company will be higher.

Keywords: Book value per share, dividend payout, EPS, interest income, market price per share, net profit, retained earnings.

Introduction

The security market is the medium which is helpful to mobilize the savings and to channel those savings for investment which helps in the development of industry and commerce in Nepal. However, the Nepalese securities market is still in growing phase with increased investors recently. The secondary capital market plays a crucial role in mobilizing financial resources in Nepal. Furthermore, share transactions have a notable

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and positive influence on the NEPSE Index, highlighting their significant impact on the Nepalese secondary capital market (Chalise, 2020). The stock price behavior can be predicted either through fundamental analysis or through technical analysis.

The price of the stock is considered to be as a function of anticipated market capitalization rate. In Nepal, the major companies of the Nepalese securities market are the shares of Bank and financial Institution which comprises of commercial banks, development banks, finance company and microfinance institution. Financial metrics such as dividend payout ratio, net interest margin, net profit margin, and capital adequacy ratio exert a substantial and favorable impact on shaping the stock price trends of commercial banks in Nepal (Chalise, 2021). Hence behavior of these factors of commercial banks affects the Nepalese Securities market.

Market Price per Share (MPS) represents the current trading price on the Nepalese Stock Exchange, influenced by factors like interest income, interest expenses, and overall bank profitability. Investors' decisions to buy or sell are influenced by MPS, which, in turn, is affected by supply and demand dynamics. Pesik and Prochazkova (2022) concluded that financial indicators such as net profit, retained earning affect the valuation of the company. Similarly, Niroula (2021) concluded EPS have favorable effect on the market price of the share. However, Wagle (2020) shows that the demand and supply of stock affects the stock current price and it also state that various internal and external factors affect the stock price of the company.

Dividend is the return on investment to investor of the bank and dividend payout is the total amount of paid dividend to the shareholders of the bank in relation to the total amount of income generated by the bank. These factors may directly or indirectly affect the market price of the bank's share. In this study, analysis is done to determine whether market price is significantly affected by dividend payout. Sharif et al. (2015) show significant negative relationship between dividend yield and MPS. Also, Yet, et al., (2017) concluded negative relationship between Dividend Payout ratio of firm and Stock price volatility. However, Darami, et al., (2022) shows that the stock price movement can affect by the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of the company and market price per share does no effect by the dividend payout of the company.

Price earning refers to bank's share price to its earnings per share; it is simply the price multiple. Market to Book value ratio is the market price per share which is divided by its corresponding book value of the bank. In this study the analysis of price earnings ratio and market to book value will be done to identify its relationship. Sharifl, et al., (2015) concluded there is positive and also significant relationship between Book value per share and PE as they play and important determinants to shape market price of shares of the company. However, Darami, et al., (2022) shows that the stock price movement is affected by the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of the company and market price per share is not affected by the dividend payout of the company.

Sharif, et al., (2015) analyzed factors influencing stock prices on the Bahrain Stock Exchange by examining data from 41 companies listed between 2006 and 2010. They focused on eight key variables, including return on equity, earnings per share (EPS), book value per share, dividend per share (DPS), dividend yield, price-earnings ratio, debt-to-assets ratio, and firm size. The study explored how these company-specific variables impacted the market price of shares. The findings indicated that return on equity, book value per share, DPS, dividend yield, earnings, and firm size were significant determinants of stock prices on the Bahrain Stock Exchange.

Al-Shubiri (2010) analyzed the various factors that influence the market price of share of the commercial banks that are listed and traded publicly in the Malaysian stock exchange market, between the period of 2011 until 2020. The study concluded that the variables namely dividend yield, EPS and PE ratio were of the significant elements to determine the market price of the share of commercial banks that are listed in the Malaysian stock exchange market.

Hadhood (2022) concluded that traders and the investors of the market uses their previous experience on the stock exchange to determine the stock price movement of the market price of the share. The study also concluded that stock price of the securities previously traded were used as a tool to determine and forecast the price behavior of the stock in the future. For this researcher used the deep learning model for forecasting the stock price behavior.

In Fam's 1995 research, an investigation into Stock market price random walks was conducted. The study's findings indicated that the random walk theory poses challenges for both fundamental analysts and technical analysts. For fundamental analysts, it necessitates demonstrating more complex methods than a straightforward random selection approach. Meanwhile, for technical analysts, it demands more than just selecting a security; they must provide evidence that the chosen security will outperform others.

Wong and Kwong (1984) carried study on the Hong Kong stock market efficiency. The study was based on the two statistical tests such as the serial correlation analysis and runs tests. The study used the daily prices of shares of 28 major Hong Kong situated companies traded in the stock exchange for the period of 4 years from 1977 to 1980. The study could not conclude as the study find the evidence to be mixed and hence it did not provide its support for the efficient market hypothesis.

Kim, et al. (2012) analyzed the stock price behavior for a small capital market in the Greek stock exchange market. The study concluded that the stock price behavior of the stock market index is significantly related with the alternative investment opportunities available and also is dependent on the social and the political factors as rather than dependent on the company's profitability and related economic activity of the company.

Agwu (2022) adopted various econometric tools to identify the diverse perception of the investors of the capital market and the behaviors of the return of capital market all around the world. This study analyzed the daily historical data from May 18, 2015 to June

6, 2022, from the capital market from each continent of the world. The sampled were from United Arab Emirate, Nigeria, USA, Germany, South Africa and China. The Results of the analysis concluded that no any market of the above has followed the random walk theory to determine the price behavior. Hence the study determine that the investor can follow the technical analysis that is using the past data and information form the market to forecast the stock price behavior of the stocks.

Pesik and Prochazkova (2022) contributed to the fundamental analysis of the stock price behavior. The study attempted to compare the various financial indicators and their importance to the investors of the stock exchange. The study used financial data of 100 companies that dominants the stock exchange from the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations and New York Stock Exchange. The study analyzed the significance of the financial indicators on the market price of the stock. The study used the statistical approach for evaluation of data using panel regression model and the machine learning model. The study identified the how the sectoral structure of the companies matches the cluster structure and the worth of the companies from the financial perspectives.

Khanji and Siam (2015) examined the cash flow effects in the market price of the share of the Jordanian commercial banks which has been listed and traded in Amman stock exchange. The study measured the effect of the cash flow from operating activities, investing activities and financing activities either individually or jointly market price of the share of sampled twelve Jordanian commercial banks. The study concluded that there is limited effect of the cash flows from the operating, investing and financing activities on the market price of the share of the commercial banks of Jordanian. More concern is required for conducting the cash flow behavior of the commercial banks on the market price of share assessment.

Niroula (2021) examined the stock price behavior of the commercial banks in Nepal for five year that started from fiscal year 2015/16 to 2019/20 of 18 commercial banks and the study indicated that a positive and significant relationship on the market price of share with the size of banks, earning per share and price earnings ratio however adverse connection between Return on Assets (ROA) and Earnings Per Share (EPS) with the capital structure (Debt/Equity). Conversely, there was a favorable association between ROA and EPS with the company's size, as measured by total assets was found by Chalise and Adhikari, (2022).

Shrestha and Subedi (2015) analyzed the determinants of the performance of the stock market in Nepalese economy which used the data on monthly basis starting from the period of August mid, 2000 to July mid, 2014. The study concluded that investors of shares consider the equity instrument as the hedge instrument to mitigate their loss and opportunity cost due to inflation. Further the study suggested that the investment in stock to be alternative for investing in the financial instrument and provided the impromptu liquidity from the sale of the shares and the low interest rate provided by the bank and financial institution on deposits encouraged the better performance of the Nepal stock

exchange market. Also, capital market was found to react to changes in political condition of the economy significantly and the policy, guidelines issued by Nepal Rastra Bank from time to time.

In the study on the Stock Price Behavior of Nepalese Commercial Banks, various financial variables are examined. Market Price per Share (MPS) is considered as the dependent variable, while several independent variables are investigated for their impact on MPS. These independent variables include interest income, interest expenses, net profit, earnings per share (EPS), retained earnings, dividend payout ratio, and book value per share.

This study aims to:

1. Examines how interest income and interest expenses impact MPS.
2. Evaluates whether the profitability and earnings plays the significant roles on market price of the stock.
3. Analyzes effects of profitability of the company on the stock price.

Methods

Population and sample

The target population for this study comprises the commercial banks listed on the Nepal Stock Exchange. The study spans a period of 10 financial years, from 2011/12 to 2020/21 AD, and focuses on a sample of five commercial banks. Out of the total 20 commercial banks in Nepal, three are government-owned, and 17 are privately owned. For the sample, four private banks (Everest Bank Limited, Kumari Bank Limited, Machhapuchchhre Bank Limited, NIC Asia Bank Limited) and one government-owned bank (Agriculture Development Bank Limited) were selected.

This research relies on a range of statistical tests and analytical methods. To achieve this, E-views 10 software and Microsoft Excel were employed to scrutinize and make sense of the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were utilized to compute the mean and standard deviation for the variables in question. Additionally, the research involved conducting correlation and regression analyses as part of the investigation. The findings, interpretation and analysis have been presented through different table when necessary.

Sources of data

The data for this study is drawn from secondary sources, collected from a range of publications and reports. Key sources include Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE) publications, annual reports retrieved from the websites of the sampled commercial banks, and bulletins and publications from the Securities Board of Nepal (SEBON).

Method of analysis

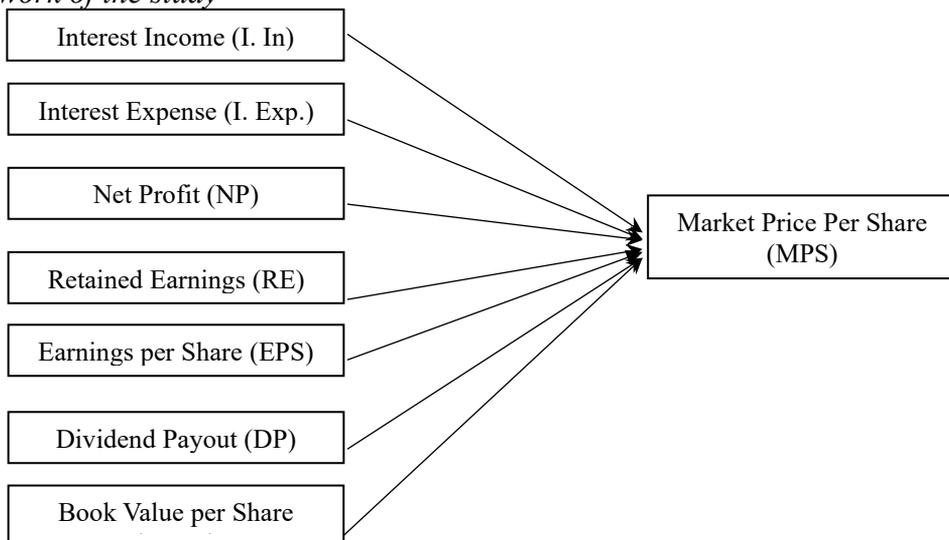
This study employs statistical tests and analysis as its primary method. Financial tools are mainly used for the analysis, focusing on examining the relationship between various independent variables and the dependent variable through statistical tests such as

correlation and regression analysis. The collected data have been organized, tabulated, processed, and analyzed using a combination of financial and statistical tools, as outlined below.

Research framework

The research framework illustrates the expected relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. Research framework defines the relevant objectives of the research purpose and map out how the variables come together to draw coherent conclusion.

*Figure 1
Framework of the study*



Results

Descriptive statistics of variables

Descriptive statistics summarizes the characteristics of given set of data that can either be the representation of the entire population or of sample of population. Descriptive statistics are broken down into measures of central tendency and measures of variability. In our study the sampled commercial bank data are measures using central tendency and measures of variability of mean, maximum, minimum, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. The table 1 presents summary statistics of major dependent and independent variables.

Table 1
The Descriptive statistics

	MPS	I. In	I. Exp	NP	RE	EPS	DP	BVPS
Mean	640.13	81.95	46.30	16.33	8.57	33.59	22.73	204.46
Max	3,385.00	235.62	143.35	41.92	36.55	91.88	70.00	444.47
Min	107.00	19.26	14.20	0.38	(10.04)	1.54	-	106.83
SD	620.73	53.17	33.34	10.67	9.88	22.32	15.65	82.66
Skew	2.75	0.88	1.10	0.59	0.91	1.23	1.07	1.09
Kurt	11.07	3.20	3.52	2.42	3.41	3.64	4.09	3.54

Table 1 compares the characteristics of commercial banks of Nepal using balanced panel for period of 2012 to 2021. As per descriptive statistics presented in Table 4.9, the mean value of MPS is 640.13, which range from 3,385 to 107 with standard deviation of 620.73. Independent variable interest income accrued ranges from 19.26 to 235.62 and mean value of 81.95 with the standard deviation of 53.17. Second variable used as interest expenses has average value of 46.30 with standard deviation of 33.34 and ranges from 14.20 to 143.35. Third variable net profit ranges from 0.38 to 41.92 value with mean of 16.33 and standard deviation of 10.67. Fourth variable retained earnings have mean value of 8.57 which range from (10.04) to 36.55 with standard deviation of 9.88. Fifth variable EPS has mean value of 33.59 and deviation of 22.32 which ranges from value of 1.54 to 91.88. Sixth variable dividend payout mean is 22.73 which range from 0 to 70 with standard deviation of 15.65. Seventh, and the last variable book value per share has ranges from 106.83 to 444.47 with an average of 204.46 and standard deviation of 82.66.

Correlation analysis

To evaluate the correlation between the dependent and independent variables and to determine whether multicollinearity exists due to the relationships among variables, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated. The results are presented in the form of a correlation matrix in Table 2.

Table 2
Correlation analysis

Correlation probability	MPS	I. In	I. Exp	NP	RE	EPS	DP	BVPS
MPS	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest income	(0.11) 0.44	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest expenses	(0.18) 0.21	0.97 0.00	1	-	-	-	-	-
Net profit	0.06 0.67	0.83 0.00	0.68 0.00	1	-	-	-	-
Retained earning	(0.11) 0.45	0.77 0.00	0.74 0.00	0.77 0.00	1	-	-	-
EPS	0.63 0.00	(0.03) 0.84	(0.18) 0.21	0.33 0.02	0.02 0.87	1	-	-
Dividend payout	0.71 -	(0.24) 0.09	(0.30) 0.04	(0.01) 0.97	(0.13) 0.38	0.61 0.00	1	-
BVPS	0.41 0.00	0.16 0.28	(0.02) 0.88	0.51 0.00	0.31 0.03	0.80 0.00	0.36 0.01	1

Result of correlation is called correlation coefficient. Correlation has value that falls between -1 to +1. When the value is -1 there exists perfectly negative relation between dependent and independent variables and when the value is +1 there exists perfectly positive relation between dependent and independent variables whereas if there is 0 value then this implies no linear relationship among variables. Results of correlation analysis between explanatory variables and dependent variable is presented in Table 4.10. According to the result MPS have positive relationship among net profit ($r = 0.06$), earning per share ($r = 0.62$), dividend payout ($r = 0.71$) and book value per share ($r = 0.41$) however, MPS have negative relationship with interest income ($r = -0.11$), interest expenses ($r = -0.18$) and retained earnings ($r = -0.11$). MPS have strong positive relationship with dividend payout as it is near to 1. Positive correlation means any increase in explanatory variable causes increase in MPS and decrease in explanatory variable causes decrease in MPS. Similarly, in case of negative correlation it is vice versa that is increase in explanatory variable decreases the MPS.

Regression analysis

The general model which has employed in thi study to test the hypothesis has been stated as follows:

$$\text{MPS} = Y_0 + Y_1 \text{I. In} + Y_2 \text{I. Exp} + Y_3 \text{NP} + Y_4 \text{RE} + Y_5 \text{EPS} + Y_6 \text{DP} + E$$

Table 3
Regression results

Variable	Coefficient	Std. error	t-Statistic	Prob.
Interest income	9.687179	12.7202	0.761559	0.4505
Interest expenses	-8.107017	16.32585	-0.496576	0.622
Net profit	-24.07142	25.85837	-0.930895	0.3571
Retained earning	-3.017548	12.95994	-0.232837	0.817
Eps	10.64604	4.324746	2.461656	0.0179
Dividend payout	21.41532	5.184286	4.130814	0.0002
Y ₀	-203.9125	170.1317	-1.198557	0.2373

R-squared = 0.589005, Adjusted R-squared = 0.531657, F-statistic = 10.27071, sig (F) = 0, Durbin-Watson stat = 0.917328

Table 3 displays the regression results concerning the factors influencing the share price of commercial banks and the associated independent variables. The R-square value is 0.589, and the adjusted R-square is 0.532, indicating that the model explains 53.17% of the variation in market price through the independent variables. The F-significance value, being less than 0.01, confirms that the model is statistically significant and well-fitted. The coefficient for each independent variable indicates the magnitude of its effect on the dependent variable, while the sign (positive or negative) shows the direction of that effect. Out of six independent variables only two variables have significant impact on MPS and four variables have insignificant impact on MPS. EPS has significant positive relationship with MPS as the p-value is less than 0.05. The coefficient is 10.64604 which shows there is positive relationship between EPS and MPS, the greater the increase in EPS will eventually increases the MPS. Similarly, dividend payout has significant positive relationship with MPS as the p-value is less than 0.05. The more the value of R-squared and Adjusted R-squared then the model is more fit for result. So, considering R-squared, the independent variables cumulatively explained 58.90 percent fit of dependent variable. Similarly, considering Adjusted R-squared, the independent variables cumulatively explained 53.17 percent fit of dependent variable. If the Durbin-Watson statistics is near to 2 then there is positive auto correlation and if Durbin-Watson statistics is greater than 2 then there is negative auto correlation and if Durbin-Watson statistics is equal to 2 then there is no auto correlation. In this study it can conclude that the independent variables are positively auto correlated as per Durbin-Watson statistics as it is less than 2.

Discussion

The study offers a comprehensive analysis of the attributes of Nepalese commercial banks from 2012 to 2021, utilizing balanced panel data. Descriptive statistics reveal variability in essential variables, including MPS (mean 640.13), interest income accrued (mean 81.95), interest expenses (mean 46.30), net profit (mean 16.33), retained earnings (mean 8.57), EPS (mean 33.59), dividend payout (mean 22.73), and book value per share (mean 204.46), indicating diverse financial performance and distribution patterns among

the banks. The value of R-squared, the independent variables cumulatively explained the greater fit of dependent variable. Similarly, considering Adjusted R-squared, the independent variables cumulatively greater fit of dependent variable. Study model is truly represents since the F-significance in the model. The correlation analysis reveals that MPS have positive relationship among net profit, EPS, book value per share and dividend payout. MPS found strong positive and significant relationship with dividend payout. However, MPS have negative relationship with interest income, interest expenses and retained earnings. These findings are in line with the finding of Indriawati, (2018). Regression results have shown that out of six independent variables only two variables have significant impact on MPS and four variables have insignificant impact on MPS. The study reveals that EPS and dividend payout has significant positive impact with MPS (Singh, & Tandon, 2019) and in contrast to finding of Jain, and Rastogi, (2020). The EPS and dividend payout has positive coefficient with the MPS.

Conclusions

This study attempts to determine relative importance of interest income, interest expenses, net profit, retained earnings, EPS, book value per share and dividend payout in determining market price per share. There does not exist any predicted trend in the MPS of the commercial bank. This research concludes that the major determinant of MPS is EPS and dividend payout of the commercial bank. Another conclusion of this study is that the investor gives more priority to the EPS and dividend payout of the bank before investing in the shares of the commercial bank.

From this study it can be inferred that if the company is able to make more profit and declare dividend payout; the market price of the company will be higher. The study shows a predominant influence of earning per share and dividend payout on the market price per share. The Market price are found relatively more attractive among Nepalese stockholders.

A higher level of market price may result from an effective strategy of the bank along with higher level of earnings and dividend payout results. When effective strategies are developed and implemented, they help to achieve expected financial results that provides flexibility to achieve additional calculated initiatives. Investor will know the factors affecting the share price movement of the commercial bank and to take the right decision either to buy or sell or hold the shares of the commercial banks.

Moreover, this study is equally important to the commercial bank to know the factors affecting the share price which will ultimately affect the market capitalization of the commercial banks in Nepal. Commercial bank shall be more concerned of the factors affecting the stock price behavior of commercial bank.

This study suggests that future researchers expand the sample size and include additional factors to enhance the generalizability and robustness of the findings. Moreover, the model can be applied to different sectors, such as development banks,

finance companies, and insurance companies, to examine whether the results hold across various industries. Researchers could also explore stock price behavior using data collected at different intervals, such as daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly, for a more detailed analysis. Additionally, employing diverse analytical tools and techniques in future studies could help validate and further refine the results of this study.

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APOCALYPTIC REFLECTIONS IN DERRICKSON'S *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL*

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Abstract

This article makes an analysis of Scott Derrickson's movie, The Day the Earth Stood Still, from eco-critical perspective focusing on the movie's representation of apocalyptic future world as resulted by human encroachment into nature. Set against the backdrop of the contemporary New York City, the movie juxtaposes urban development with the natural world, highlighting the conflict between the two. Borrowing the eco-critical insights from Lawrence Buell, Val Plumwood, Keelin McNab, and Timothy Luke, this article explores how Derrickson critiques anthropocentrism. Derrickson, through his nature-loving protagonist Klaatu, advocates for the reconsideration of human attitudes towards nature. This article examines how Derrickson presents Klaatu advocating for nature conservation, warning humanity the possible dangers about to take place in the environment due to their anthropocentric treatment over nature, and appeals for human-nature reconciliation as it is the urgency of the world today.

Keywords: Anthropocentrism, apocalypse, coexistence, deep ecology, eco-criticism, extraterrestrial

Introduction

This article makes a critical examination of Scott Derrickson's movie, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* from the perspective of eco-criticism, highlighting the movie's exploration of anthropocentrism and its possible catastrophic consequences. Set in New York City, USA in the early 21st Century, the movie brings together the postmodern metropolitan environment with the influx of an extraterrestrial visitor to the earth named Klaatu, whose mission is to warn humanity about the possible dangers of environmental degradation as resulted by human encroachment into nature.

The protagonist of the movie, Klaatu, starred by Keanu Reeves, comes to the earth to convey a stark message for humanity that people's massive exploitation of nature threatens not only the earth but the entire universe. However, the short-sighted anthropocentric humans from the earth never take his warning and suggestion with any interest and seriousness. Derrickson critiques anthropocentrism throughout the movie

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presenting apocalyptic condition of the environment as resulted by human action over nature. Through the portrayal of the protagonist Klaatu as his mouthpiece of the movie and his companion, Dr. Helen Benson facing adversative effects of ecological dilapidation, Derrickson makes a sincere appeal for human reconciliation with nature. Klaatu's act of temporarily shutting down all the electrical systems of the Earth metaphorically implies for the urgency of freedom from anthropocentrism and embracing a more balanced coexistence with nature. The movie highlights the urgency of adopting strategies for sustainable future while it challenges its audience to reflect on their roles in the environment. Derrickson further presents the destructive consequences of human actions over the environment, and appeals for human-nature reconciliation for the sustainable future.

This article explores how Derrickson critiques anthropocentrism through his depiction of ecological dilapidation, and his appeal for the need for human-nature reconciliation as a commitment to ecological balance. While doing so, this article borrows theoretical insights from the ecocritical thinkers along with Lawrence Buell, Val Plumwood, Keelin McNab, and Timothy Luke, and seeks to illuminate the urgency of environmental awareness in contemporary society.

Review of Literature

Derrickson's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* is a highly discussed movie among scholars and critics in the academic community. Critics from various of school of thoughts have discussed the movie from various perspectives and interpretations exploring its multiple themes and technical aspects. Exploring the theme of religious symbolism in the movie, Torry (1991) compares Klaatu to Jesus Christ, highlighting his role in the probable salvation of humanity in his article, "Apocalypse Then: Benefits of the Bomb in Fifties Science Fiction Films." Torry argues that the film "exploits the religious resonances of a visit from above by a wise, powerful, and concerned alien intelligence" (Torry, 1991, p. 12). For Torry, Klaatu resembles Christ as he faces similar betrayal, death, and resurrection, along with his message to humanity. This allegorical interpretation of Torry appeals the audience to reflect on the moral implications of the movie. Gabbard (1993), also interprets the movie from the similar angle showing similarity between Klaatu and Christ in his article, "Religious and Political Allegory in Robert Wise's *The Day the Earth Stood Still*." Gabbard argues, "The most obvious aspects of the Christ allegory in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* involve Klaatu's death and resurrection. Like Jesus, he is killed by soldiers carrying out the orders of the political and military authority" (Gabbard, 1993, p. 152). Gabbard argues that Klaatu's death is similar to that of Christ's resurrection. He explores the theme of Christianity in the movie highlighting its exploration of sacrifice and redemption.

On the contrary, Leong (2010) explores the themes of ethnicity and multilingualism in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* in his article "Forms of Asian Americanness in

Contemporary Poetry.” Leong observes that the film presents a scene where these issues intertwine with the extraterrestrial, highlighting how Asianness in America has been associated with the foreign and threatening. Leong (2010) argues, “There is a curious scene in Scott Derrickson's 2008 remake of the sci-fi classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still* in which issues of race, foreignness, linguistic difference, and the extraterrestrial entangle” (Leong, 2010, p. 135). He further suggests that the film underscores the historical and ongoing association of Asianness with duplicity or danger in American society (Leong, 2010, p. 136).

Muñoz (2016), in his article, “The Alien as a Vehicle for Cosmopolitan Discourses: The Case of *The Day the Earth Stood Still*,” highlights over the theme of cosmopolitanism since it addresses the transnational challenges. Muñoz claims that the movie “presents cosmopolitanism as a perspective and way of acting that develops as a response to specific transnational challenges” (Muñoz, 2016, p. 123). By this, Muñoz claims that the movie addresses the issues which are not only local or of national concerns but the universal ones. Muñoz further supports this idea discussing how science fiction presents spatiotemporal issues through the metaphors for transnational connections and the global impacts of environmental dilapidation. Muñoz argues that *The Day the Earth Stood Still* explores key elements of globalization—technology and borders—while visualizing the transnational effects of environmental harm (Muñoz, 2016, p. 126). Muñoz stresses that the movie presents the scenes that depict global reactions to the alien’s transnational visits, reinforcing the universality and relevance of its message (Muñoz, 2016, p. 133).

The aforementioned critics have interpreted the movie, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, from various perspectives and angles. However, a much-detailed study of the movie from eco-critical approach is significant which this article attempts to. Through an eco-critical approach, this article aims to demonstrate how the film implicitly addresses the human-animal relationship through an ecological lens, thereby highlighting Derrickson's environmental consciousness.

Methods

This article follows library-based discourse analysis as a research method. It examines both primary and secondary data sources from the approach of critical discourse analysis. Primary data source includes Derrickson’s, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* while secondary data sources include reviews of the movie, books, articles and documents on eco-critical theories, and documents. It examines how information is constructed through language through thematic analysis of the movie borrowing theoretical insights from the critics and scholars of environmental literature.

Textual Analysis

Environmental awareness is usually the key point of environmental literature, motivating readers to take care of nature. In this argument, Buell, Heise, and Thornber (2011) stress that there is this indispensable connection between the environment and literary study.

They argue that eco-criticism or environmental criticism in literature and environmental studies is a large and interdisciplinary project. Its primary goal is to examine the environmental dimensions of literature. They argue:

Literature and environment studies—commonly called 'eco-criticism' or 'environmental criticism' in analogy to the more general term literary criticism—comprise an eclectic, pluriform, and cross-disciplinary initiative that aims to explore the environmental dimensions of literature and other creative media in a spirit of environmental concern not limited to any one method or commitment.

(Buell, Heise, & Thornber, 2011, p. 418)

Eco-criticism does not only concentrate at the place theory, instead, eco-critical thinking is identical to humanist geographers who view the sense of a place as a sum of individual affection, social construction, and physical geography. Nevertheless, the eco-analysis of critical issues in its practical approach often does not have the same human criterion for realignment from personal to communal experiences in the case of places. The diversity itself shows the open nature of both literary and environmental studies that accommodate multiple perspectives and methodologies when analyzing the ecological aspects of creative works.

In her essay “Anthropocentrism: Are Humans the Centre of Existence?” McNab (2010) argues that a significant portion of the global population subscribes to an anthropocentric worldview, rooted in the belief that humans are inherently “self-centered” and need not prioritize the well-being of other creatures. McNab states:

Anthropocentrism is supported by a large percentage of the world's population, as a result of the idea that human beings are self-centered and do not need to concern themselves with the well-being of other creatures. The reality of the situation lies within the borders of numerous countries that have experienced the effects of war, either through internal conflict or through the training of soldiers for future engagements.

(McNab, 2010, p. 113)

According to McNab, this anthropocentric perspective is prevalent in various countries that have faced the consequences of war, whether due to internal conflicts or military preparations. Many individuals worldwide actively endorse this viewpoint, asserting that humans are self-centered and that concern for other creatures is unnecessary. This belief is particularly entrenched in regions that have experienced the impacts of war, either through internal strife or the training of soldiers for future conflicts.

In the context of the movie *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, Regina Jackson, portrayed by Kathy Bates, exemplifies this anthropocentric attitude. As a commander in the American military, Jackson asserts human dominion over Earth, declaring, “This is our planet” (Derrickson, 2008, 0:34:15) during her encounter with Klaatu, who has arrived to rescue all living creatures from the impending apocalypse. This scene powerfully illustrates the anthropocentric mindset that places humanity at the center of existence, often to the detriment of the broader ecological community. The scene

illustrates the human tendency to view the Earth as their exclusive possession, disregarding the reality that humans are merely temporary inhabitants of the planet. This moment exemplifies ethical hubris, as it highlights the mistaken belief that the Earth belongs solely to humanity, despite the fact that humans depend on the Earth for shelter and sustenance.

To be recognized as a true human being, there must be a profound unity between an individual's personal 'self' and their 'selves' within the broader context of nature and culture. This perspective emphasizes that authentic selfhood is achieved only when individuals establish a deep sense of oneness with nature, acknowledging their interconnectedness with both other human beings and the nonhuman elements of the natural world. The "human self" is thus not an isolated entity but an integral part of the complex web of life, encompassing both the human species and the natural environment.

This perspective also suggests that our understanding of nature is partially shaped by projecting idealized human qualities onto the natural world. This process "humanizes" various elements of nature—such as rocks, bacteria, trees, clouds, river systems, and animals—allowing us to perceive and realize their intrinsic essence as intertwined with our own. In defining authentic selfhood, Luke (1997), in his work *Ecocritique*, argues that genuine selfhood emerges through the mutual participation of humans and nature. Luke states:

"Real selfhood, it is claimed, derives from human unity with nature, realizing our mature personhood and uniqueness with all other human and nonhuman forms of being. Humanity must be 'naturalized'; that is, the 'human self' is not an atomistic ego, but a species-being and a Nature-being as a self-in-self, 'where Self stands for organic wholeness. Here, the essence of Nature, to a large extent, would appear to be a projection of an idealized humanity onto the natural world. Nature is 'humanized'...rocks, bacteria, trees, clouds, river systems, animals—and permits the realization of their inner essence."

(Luke, 1997, p. 15)

Luke argues that achieving the "human self" requires the boundaries between humanity and nature to blur and merge into a singular entity. Culture begins to take shape as a distinct identity when people acknowledge their relationship with and connection to their natural surroundings. Being cultured, then, implies being "naturalized" and recognizing this profound interdependence between humanity and the natural world. This perspective underscores that true human selfhood is realized when individuals embrace their intrinsic connection with nature, leading to a more holistic understanding of themselves and their place within the larger ecosystem. Additionally, it highlights the role of culture in shaping this understanding, as culture reflects how individuals perceive and relate to their environment.

In the context of the movie, the American military's efforts to prevent the aliens from entering Earth—under the assumption that the planet belongs exclusively to humans—further exemplify this anthropocentric attitude. This scene vividly portrays the

human-centric mindset that prioritizes humanity's interests above all else, even in the face of potential interspecies coexistence.

Figure 1

American Army Trying to Stop the Aliens from Entering Earth



(Derrickson, 2008, 0:18:43)

Source: The Researcher's Screenshot

Figure 2:

Alien Entering the Earth



(Derrickson, 2008, 0:23:28)

Source: The Researcher's Screenshot

In Figure 1 taken from *The Day the Earth Stood Still* reflects humanity's attitude of rejecting the arrival of alien beings on Earth. Despite the potentially benevolent intentions of these extraterrestrial visitors, humans respond with military force, demonstrating a refusal to accept ideas or entities that challenge their dominion over the planet. This reaction exemplifies the human rejection of organic unity with other beings, as they resist anything perceived as a threat to their control. However, in the face of these powerful alien entities, humanity's influence is diminished. Klaatu's security measures are so advanced that his mere presence incites horror and panic across the globe, prompting people to flee in fear for their lives.

Figure 2 depicts the alien's entry to Earth, which they undertake to deliver a message of rescue for all creatures from an impending disaster. However, humanity's refusal to accept advice from non-human entities ultimately leads to apocalyptic consequences. In line with this narrative, William Grey, in his essay "Environmental Value and Anthropocentrism," asserts the necessity of rejecting instrumentalism, urging the recognition of nonhuman entities as intrinsically valuable and their inclusion in moral discourse, "It is necessary to reject instrumentalism, that is, to acknowledge that nonhumans are intrinsically valuable, and to include them in the universe of moral discourse" (Grey, 1993, p. 98). Grey emphasizes the importance of moving beyond an instrumental view of nature, advocating for the inclusion of nonhuman entities in our ethical considerations.

In "Anthropocentrism: Are Humans the Centre of Existence?", McNab (2018) critiques the anthropocentric attitude of humans, which positions them as the supreme beings of the world. McNab argues, "When human beings place themselves in positions of superiority, they view the world as nothing more than a collection of objects, each amenable to study and control" (McNab, 2018, p. 115). McNab highlights how this mindset leads to the objectification of all other creatures, reducing their worth in the eyes of humanity. The scene involving Klaatu, a being with beneficial intentions, illustrates how humans perceive him as a threat rather than a helper, due to their entrenched anthropocentric views.

Plumwood (2002), in her essay "The Blindness of Centrism and Human Self-Enclosure," offers a comprehensive critique of anthropocentrism. She describes it as a fundamental structure shaping human rationality and belief systems, which normalizes various forms of self-centeredness and dispossession. Plumwood argues, "The centric structure accomplishes this by promoting insensitivity to the others' needs, agency and prior claims, as well as belief in the colonizer's apartness, superiority and right to conquer and master the other" (Plumwood, 2002, p. 118). Plumwood extends her critique to encompass Eurocentric, ethnocentric, and androcentric frameworks, illustrating how these centric structures perpetuate domination and exploitation, often justifying the subjugation of non-human entities and natural resources. Her analysis connects these patterns of dominance and hierarchy in human thought to the way nature is marginalized, despite humanity's dependence on it.

Figure 3:

Klaatu Telling His Purpose of Coming to Earth to Dr. Helen



(Derrickson, 2008, 0:46:04)

Source: The Researcher's Screenshot

In Figure 3, Klaatu reveals to Dr. Helen that his purpose for coming to Earth is to help its creatures avoid a forthcoming disaster. Dr. Helen is the only character in the film who responds positively to Klaatu's sentiments.

Grey (1993), in his essay "Environmental Value and Anthropocentrism," argues that certain expressions of deep ecology, while emphasizing the harmonious organization of all creatures, lack practical guidance for our judgments regarding the state of the world. Grey contends, "Deep ecology (in some of its formulations) attempts to prescind altogether from human concerns, and when this happens, it is difficult to see how anything useful can be said about praxis, or practical choice" (Grey, 1993, p. 100). Grey suggests that without the inclusion of recognizably anthropocentric elements, deep ecology struggles to provide a framework for evaluating what constitutes a better or worse state of affairs. He critiques the idea of adopting a purely "planetary perspective," which might render mass extinctions as mere biological occurrences, lacking practical implications for human decision-making.

In the context of the movie, the Earth and all its living organisms are on the brink of extinction, a situation Klaatu seeks to prevent. The following scene, set in Central Park, USA, depicts a new formation of the Earth, where all species and plants are rescued to preserve their existence.

In Figure 4, the film portrays the aliens' genuine effort to create a new Earth with the goal of preserving all life forms from an imminent catastrophe. This initiative is met with widespread approval from various species who recognize the necessity of such a drastic measure for their survival. However, human resistance emerges as a significant obstacle. Despite the looming threat of apocalypse, some humans resist the aliens'

mission, leading to conflict. This resistance highlights a dramatic tension between the aliens' noble intent and the opposition from the very species they aim to protect.

Figure 4
Alien-formed New Earth at Central Park, New York



(Derrickson, 2008, 0:48:49)

Source: The Researcher's Screenshot

Plumwood (2002) argues in her essay, "Towards a Dialogical Interspecies Ethics," that addressing ecological issues requires moving away from the tendency to 'Other' non-human entities. Instead, she advocates for a self-critical approach, termed "studying up," to uncover the origins of our ecological conflicts. Plumwood asserts, "An important corollary for knowledge gathering orientation is that the rationality of Othering our planetary partners must be countered by an alternative self-critical rationality of 'studying up' to find the source of our problems and difficulties with nature" (Plumwood, 2002, p. 167). This perspective urges us to shift from marginalizing non-human entities to engaging in introspection to understand the root causes of our ecological dilemmas. It calls for questioning our actions and beliefs that contribute to the antagonistic relationship between humanity and the environment.

A key conversation between Dr. Helen and Klaatu underscores the planet's peril due to human activities. Klaatu's statement, "This planet is dying. The human race is killing it." (Derrickson, 2008, 01:01:48–01:52) and his concern for Earth's survival highlight the severe environmental risks posed by human actions. Dr. Helen asks him, "So you've come here to help us." (Derrickson, 2008, 01:01:53–01:54), Klaatu says he did not come here to save only humans, a single species, but to save the entire Earth:

Klaatu: I said I came to save the Earth.

Helen: You came to save the Earth from us.

Klaatu: We can't risk the survival of this planet for the sake of one species.

Helen: What are you saying?

Klaatu: If the Earth dies, you die. If you die, the Earth survives. There are only a handful of planets in the cosmos that are capable of supporting complex life.

(Derrickson, 2008, 01:01:55–02:29)

This exchange emphasizes Klaatu's mission to save the Earth as a call for collective responsibility to ensure the planet's well-being, even if it means confronting human interests.

Buell (1995) contends that “Apocalypse is the single most powerful master metaphor that the contemporary imagination has at its disposal” (p. 285), emphasizing the profound impact of apocalyptic themes on modern environmental discourse. This idea is vividly illustrated in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* when Klaatu warns humanity about the dire consequences of their actions, stating, “If the Earth dies, you die. If you die, the Earth survives” (Derrickson, 2008, 01:17:50). This moment in the film encapsulates the essence of apocalyptic imagery by highlighting the potential extinction of humanity due to environmental degradation, which aligns with Buell's assertion that the apocalyptic metaphor is a powerful tool for conveying the urgency of ecological crises.

Figure 5:

Klaatu and Dr. Helen in a Conversation



(Derrickson, 2008, 01:01:49)

Source: The Researcher's Screenshot

In Figure 5, Klaatu warns Dr. Helen about the imminent apocalypse, attributing the planet's peril to human activities. Klaatu's assertion that Earth's survival is paramount, even at the expense of human interests, emphasizes the urgent need for change. This

dialogue illustrates that the jeopardy facing the planet is a direct consequence of human actions and highlights the necessity for collective responsibility.

Rueckert (1996) critiques the anthropocentric worldview, emphasizing the dangers of human dominance over the natural world. He argues, “Human beings are signs of environmental threat due to their dominance over the earth, their anthropocentric vision, and their desire to conquer, domesticate, violate, and exploit natural things” (p. 113). This critique is poignantly reflected in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* when Klaatu declares, “I’m here to save the Earth... from you” (Derrickson, 2008, 00:59:27). Klaatu’s words mirror Rueckert’s argument by emphasizing the destructive consequences of human domination and the urgent need to reconsider humanity’s role in the natural world.

Rueckert’s observation further reveals that human attempts to control and exploit nature pose a significant threat to environmental stability, as humanity often overlooks the consequences of its destructive actions. Rueckert’s warning resonates strongly with the themes explored in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. In the film, the character of Gort visually represents this idea. Standing as an embodiment of extraterrestrial justice, Gort intervenes when humanity fails to recognize the limits of its technological prowess and environmental destruction. The image of Gort (Figure 6) with glowing eyes, prepared to act, symbolizes the response of the natural world—or an external force representing it—against human exploitation.

Figure 6:
Gort Ready to Intervene



(Derrickson, 2008, 0:48:25)

Source: The Researcher’s Screenshot

Figure 6 captures the critical moment when Gort prepares to unleash his power, reflecting nature’s retaliation against human arrogance and exploitation. The light emitting from

Gort's eyes signals impending action, underscoring the environmental message of the film that humanity's dominance and disregard for ecological balance will lead to dire consequences. The scene highlights the vulnerability of human existence in the face of nature's retribution, reinforcing Rueckert's critique of anthropocentrism and its destructive impact on the planet.

Glotfelty (1996) expresses deep concern about the ongoing conflict between humans and the environment, stating, "Human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support system" (p. xx). This concern is echoed in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* when Klaatu confronts humanity about their destructive behavior, saying, "Your planet? This is not your planet. No one owns the planet" (Derrickson, 2008, 00:48:52). This dialogue underscores the film's critique of anthropocentrism and highlights the devastating impact of human activities on Earth's ecosystems, resonating with Glotfelty's warning about the degradation of the planet's vital systems.

Chapaux, Mégret, and Natarajan (2023) discuss the increased focus on anthropocentrism in relation to global issues like species extinction and climate change. They note that the study of anthropocentrism has gained prominence across disciplines, emphasizing the need for ethical and sustainable approaches to environmental challenges: "The study of anthropocentrism has of late gained prominence in the context of the mass extinction of species, climate change, and environmental degradation" (Chapaux, Mégret, & Natarajan, 2023, p. 1).

Figure 7:

A City Being Destroyed by Metallic Swarms



(Derrickson, 2008, 01:31:39)

Source: The Researcher's Screenshot

In the film, this concept is depicted as mass extinction occurs despite advanced military efforts, with metal swarms consuming the world due to human hubris. The Figure 7 depicts a city being obliterated by swarms of metallic entities, symbolizing nature's retribution against human technological prowess. This powerful scene from the movie highlights the vulnerability of human infrastructure and innovation in the face of nature's retaliation. It serves as a dire reminder of the devastating consequences that can arise when humanity disregards ecological warnings and persists with environmentally destructive practices.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has attempted to justify the movie, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* as an ecocritical movie that critiques anthropocentrism presenting ecological and environmental issues through its cinematic expression. This article has examined how Derrickson, through the movie, underscores the possible dangers of anthropocentric worldview vividly depicting the destructive consequences of humanity's disrespect for ecological imbalance and environmental sustainability.

Borrowing the ecological insights from the ecological scholars Val Plumwood, William Rueckert, and Barry Commoner, and others, this article examines how the film articulates the dangers inherent in prioritizing human interests above all other forms of life. The narrative employs the character of Klaatu and the apocalyptic imagery of metallic swarms to illustrate the broader ecological principle of interconnectedness, which emphasizes the interdependence of all life forms and ecosystems.

Klaatu's mission and the ensuing destruction depicted in the movie serve as a potent reminder of the consequences of environmental negligence. The film highlights the urgent need for a paradigm shift away from anthropocentric perspectives toward a more eco-centric worldview that recognizes and respects the intrinsic value of all components of the natural world.

In presenting these themes, the movie not only critiques anthropocentrism but also acts as a cautionary tale about the potential for ecological disaster resulting from humanity's continued environmental exploitation and indifference. The cinematic portrayal of nature's retaliation underscores the critical need for responsible environmental stewardship and ethical considerations in our interactions with the planet.

Ultimately, this research affirms that *The Day the Earth Stood Still* effectively uses its narrative and visual elements to advocate for transformative change. It urges viewers to reconsider their environmental practices and attitudes, promoting a more holistic and respectful approach to coexistence with the natural world. Through its integration of philosophical insights and its dramatic depiction of ecological consequences, the film contributes meaningfully to the discourse on environmental ethics and sustainability.

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NEOLIBERALISM AND CLASS FORMATION: ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Nepal has experienced changes in socioeconomic characteristics within the past couple of decades. Neoliberal economic policy was adopted after 1990, which has impinged in many aspects of Nepali society. This article explicates the consequences of politieconomic practices of neoliberalism and globalization, which have changed different variables of social structure with the changes of socio-economic characteristics with the mode of production. It has to be analyzed critically and explicate the consequences of neo-liberalism and globalization that has to assess the extent of change through the anthropological perspective. This study is prepared based on historical materialist perspective and neo-liberalism. The article is based on an ethnographic study of the urbanizing society of multicultural and diversified individuals located in the inner-Tarai mid-Nepal, where indigenous groups and the ethnicities of inland migrants have been residing since time immemorable. This paper is prepared for evaluating the period before and after the implementation of neo-liberalism based on the qualitative primary data taken myself. I have analyzed how the landholding system and pattern of landownership are changing; how most of the workforce have changed their occupation from traditional to non-traditional; how the class structure is changing from peasant to labor; how the mode of production is changing from feudalistic to capitalistic; and what are the driving factors of change in societies. I have concluded that due to the socio-economic practices of neo-liberalism and globalization, independent peasants have become proletarians in the single system of the global economy, though they seem like the middle class in the domestic context.

Keywords: Globalization, Landownership, Mode of production, Neo-liberalism, Proletarian

Introduction

Nepal has experienced rapid changes in its socioeconomic characteristics in the last 75 years. There have been rising political movements and bearing facing counter-revolutionary activities in a parallel way. The last uprising became viable and ended with

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revolutionary changes. Those uprisings have brought great revolutionary changes in the political sphere and it has been concealed by economic changes.

Nepali society has been shifting one step forward; its feudal characteristics has terminated, basically, and capitalism is inflowing and growing. It is supposed that the juridic-political superstructure i.e., "the legal and political system, which orders and regulates society, usually in the direct interests of the social groups that are economically dominant" (Wilk, 1996, p. 86) being changed due to the gradual socio-political movements of seven decades, though the ideological superstructure i.e., "system of ideas, including religion, philosophy, and cosmology, that rationalizes and explains the economic system and convinces both the haves and the have-nots that the way the society works in 'natural" (p. 86) is not changed. It can be seen that the elected representatives from the people have attained to the top of the government in place of feudal monarchy and feudalist rulers.

Capitalism was penetrated at least two hundred years before, not only in the capital city but even in the countryside of Nepal (Mikesell, 1999; Liechty, 2010; Mishra, 2007, p. 12). However, its characteristics can be understood as mercantile capitalism. However, it is debatable whether "mercantilism itself is the characteristic of capitalism?". Here, we know that the comprador bourgeoisie are those who are "closely tied with the world and regional capitalism" (Mishra, 2007, p. 106) as its characteristic, mercantilism hinders indigenous capitalism or hinders capital formation. However, there was "India- China trade across Nepal and Tibet which had been going on for more than a millennium" (Frank, 1998, p. 89).

Since the 1930s, when world capitalism was facing a great depression, capitalism penetrated Nepal, which started the establishment of some industries like Biratnagar Jute-Mill, Raghupati Jute-Mill, The Juddha Match Factory in the 1930s, and Nepal Bank Ltd., also established in 1937. Since then, capitalism has been emerging gradually in place of feudalism. Though capitalism was penetrated at least 200 years ago, for example, Mikesell, 1999; Liechty, 2010; Mishra, 2007. Capitalization has "further increased since the 1950s and expanded and intensified since the 1980s" (Mishra, 2007, p. 12).

Neo-liberalism was introduced in the economic policy in the late 1980s however, Nepal was facing an absolute monarchy and closed economy until 1990. After the political uprising of 1990, the Nepal government adopted neo-liberalism as the state's economic policy, however, neo-liberalism is "a theory of political economic practices rather than a 'complete' political ideology" (Harvey, 2005; Hoffman, DeHart, & Collier, 2006). For the implementation of key values of neoliberalism like, "primacy of the individual; options and freedoms for choice; market security; minimal government; and laissez-faire economic policy" (Putnam, 2010, p. 5, C.f. Lerner 2000) the "World Bank structural adjustment program" was implemented with the tools of "IMF stabilization loan" that have been utilized even in Nepal for making market-led development mostly initial stage of neo-liberalization in the state. Once neoliberalism is implemented, favors a more efficient private sector and less the government's role in delivering public goods

and services to the public. On the issue of the policy recommendations of neo-liberalism, those are "concerned mainly with dismantling what remains of the regulations welfare state" (P. 34). However, "Nepal has seen a wide range of development theories and flavors articulate with its local historical geographies and since the advent of democratic consciousness in the 1980s (... 1990 in particular) has seen various neo-liberalisms at work" (Putnam, 2010, p. 8).

On the other side, globalization is to be understood "as part of the experience of neo-liberal capitalist modernity in which global cultural, political, and economic forces intersect with the powerful realities of local histories, cultural sensibilities, and social projects" (Liechty, 2010, p. 23). As a result of the interaction between the neoliberal capitalist modernity and historical process, culture, and social projects, social structure especially class structure might have changed with the changes of socio-economic change which has to be studied.

Whether, neoliberalism calls for the free movement of "goods, services, capital, and money across national boundaries" (Kotz, 2000, p. 2) and contemporary globalization is taken as the flow of "trade, finance, culture, ideas, and people" (Lewellen, 2002, p. 7), then those variables might have changed in various components of the society. Thus, this article explicates the consequences of neoliberal globalized capitalism vis-à-vis class and culture. Specifically, it focuses on:

1. how has the socio-economic characteristics of the society been changing with the changes of post- 1990 economy?
2. how are the people alienated from their means of production? and how is the class forming in the context of socio-economic practices of neo-liberalism?

Theoretical Framework

Historical materialism is such a theory that views society through the perspective of the mode of production. It measures the socio-economic condition (i.e., the stage of human evolution) of society in a broad framework. On the other side, neo-liberalism also applies a secondary perspective, as neo-liberalism is a "socio-economic practice" of the present society. Thus, this article is based on the perspectives of "historical materialism" and "neoliberalism".

Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to critically analyze and explicate the changing process of the socio-economic characteristics and class formation of Nepali society in the context of implementation of the neo-liberalism. However, the specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. to analyze the socio-economic characteristics of society as it was before and after 1990, and
2. to analyze consequences of neo-liberalism and class formation process in urbanizing society.

Methods

Research design identifies "the strategic plan of the project that sets out the broad structure of the research" (Brewer, 2005, p. 57). As neoliberalism was implemented after the 1990s, recently after the establishment of multiparty democracy in Nepal which was supposed to influence to the semi-urban and urbanizing society, like Ratnanagar in Chitwan, thus the study bears the descriptive research designs as it covers the study of two different periods it was before the period of 1990 and after the implementation of neo-liberalism (the present day).

However, my research asks for two types (historical and present) data to fulfill my research objective. I took historical data from the informants and secondary sources. I have applied subjectivism as a way of collecting factual data. From the informants, I obtained subjective knowledge from the objective reality embedded in the society. I have applied the purposive sampling method to select participants as the informants from the selected sites. Thus, it has been based on the ethnographic approach method.

In this way, the article is based on the qualitative primary data collected by myself in 2017/18 however, I have utilized some secondary data specially produced by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and other institutions, as well. This data was taken from different villages from Ratnanagar municipality of southern mid-Nepal which is an urbanizing society.

Study Locale

The ethnographic study is based on the site of Ratnanagar municipality in the Chitwan district of southern mid-Nepal. Chitwan is located between Mahabharat and Chure hill with the first national park (Chitwan National Park) inhabited by different wild animals and birds. Due to this reason many tourists have been visiting Chitwan; so, it is the third popular touristic hub of Nepal. Most of the tourist hotels are located in Sauraha which lies in Ratnanagar municipality. In the middle part of Ratnanagar, there is the second largest and one of the primogenital cities of Chitwan which is known as Tandī bazar.

When I first visited Chitwan, I saw people working on the land most of the time. The villagers had a couple of oxen power to till their lands. Most of the young men used to plough their land themselves or some of them were ploughing at the landlord's land either as the wage worker or the tenant farmer. Women used to work either in the field or indoor jobs. In summer season peasants used to plough and herding their oxen to the field or the jungle nearby. I had seen, ox-carts were carrying various materials especially, Agri-produces either from the land to home or from home to market place. Now, we neither see oxen power nor carts in the villages.

In the marketplace, in Tandī bazaar, there were some groceries, cloth stores, utensil stores, and a few numbers of other shops like watch and radio. There were one or two very small groceries in villages where they used to sell biscuits, confectionary, matches,

cigarettes, tobacco, salt, and kerosene. In Tandi bazaar, there was only one bank (Nepal Bank Ltd) where a few people used to do their transactions of money, some of the villagers used to pledge their ornament (gold) and landownership certificate as security and get a certain amount of money as loan. There were some lenders who used to lend money to the villagers instead they used to take paddy (grain) as interest. During the harvesting, they used to collect paddy as the interest of the year.

During 40 years, characteristics of the society have changed; rural villages have been urbanizing with various facilities. The profession, occupation, working culture and ultimately the social structure have dramatically changed in 30-40 years in Nepali society. So, I choose Ratnanagar as I have seen its various characteristics for four decades. And, it is notable that Chitwan is the valley that was developed about 65 years ago. After the "Rapti Valley Multipurpose Development Agreement", between Nepal and the USA in April 1956, the government implemented Rapti Dun Bikas Pariyojana (Rapti Valley Development Project) in 1956, then it had started cutting trees and leveling the land and eradicated malaria then hill people migrated to Chitwan district where limited number of indigenous groups, like: "Tharu, Danuwar, Bote, Majhi" (Subedi, 2021, p. 701) including Darai and Kumal were inhabited since the centuries.

Ratnanagar was declared a municipality in February 1998 and elaborated to 68.67 square kilometers in 2017 during the state restructuring after the declaration of the new constitution when the total population was 68951. Now, census data 2021 shows that the population of Ratnanagar municipality is counted as 90978 where 44120 males and 46858 females reside in 19901 households with 22670 families (CBS, 2022). In Ratnanagar, people of different castes and ethnicities, like Brahman, Kshetry, Tharu, Tamang, Newar, Magar, Sanyasi, Gurung, Darai, Kumal, Bishwakarma, Pariyar, Mijar, Majhi and Chepang comprise other ethnic groups are residing. As per the Census report 2021, the Brahman population occupies the largest section of people with 33.5 % where Tharu people occupy 15.2 % which is less than half of Brahman but it is the second largest in number. However, they are the native inhabitants of this area. Kshetry also occupies the third number with 12.8 % then Tamang 6.3 %, Newar 6.1 %, Magar 3.7 %, Bishwakarma 3.3 %, Gurung 3.1%, Musalman 2.1%, Pariyar 2.0%, Mijar 1.8%, Darai 1.2%, Kumal 1.1% comprises many other ethnic groups. From the above data, Ratnanagar can be introduced as a "multicultural society" (Pokhrel, 2018, p. 57).

Now, there are dozens of branches of banks and financial institutions in Tandi bazar where there only one before 1990. Those branches of Banks and Financial Institutions (BFI) flow money around and surrounding of the municipality area. There are more than 150 hotels, dozens of restaurants, pubs, and shops in Sauraha. A number of hotels and restaurants, trade houses and shops and other business activities have been functioning in this municipality. Those business activities have produced money that flows in the villages through the wages of labor power and others. On the one side, due to being the tourist hub, the community forests also collect revenue, and on the other side about 33 percent of the area of Ratnanagar has been declared as the buffer zone of the national park

which gets a certain portion of amount from the income of national park. These are the agencies for funding for local development except the governmental grants to the municipality.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economy of Society before 1990: Characteristics of Feudalism

The mode of production is an aggregate of two each component of the base and superstructure of society. Within the base there exist forces of production (labor with tools, technologies and the skills) and relations of production (relations between workers and ownership on the production); similarly, within the superstructure, there exist juridical-political superstructure and ideological superstructures. Thus, it represents the relation between forces of production and ownership it. Briefly, "the mode of production in material life determines the general characteristics of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life (Marx 1904, p. 11, *C.f.*, Wilk, 1996, p. 85.). Thus, mode production is not only the modality of production and distribution but it is a set of the socio-economy and culture as a whole.

Landlord and Peasants in Feudal Society

There were some feudal landlords also in Ratnanagar, though landlordism was already abolished through the "Land reform policy" in 1964. During the landlordism, peasants/serfs had no right to the land, it was under dual ownership: to the landlord and the serf. They had some *Haruwa*²-*charuwa*³ for their help in their domestic works. At that time, not only the landlords but also rich or middle-class peasants had couples of *Haruwa* and *Charuwa* for serving them. They used to collect land-tax as an agent of the government until 1964. Here, many writers describe that Nepali society was under the semi-feudal modes of production during 1970^s and 80^s, for example: Blaikie, Cameron, & Seddon, 2014; Mishra, 2007; Mishra & Sharma, 2007.

There was no property right to the peasants, especially, the tenant farmers; the land could be handed over by the feudal landlords of the *Mauja*⁴ from one person to another. In European society, however, Marx saw, that "the serf belongs to the land and turns over to the owner of the land the fruits thereof" (Tucker, 1978, p. 205). In the Nepali peasantry, there was no security of tenants before 1964 until the Land Act 2021 BS was not implemented. One of my informant's lands was also handed over to another tenant by the local landlord. Due to that reason, his family became landless and went to *Haruwa-Charuwa*. The Lands Act- of 1964, emphasized security for tenant farmers and put a ceiling on landholdings (NLC, 1964).

2 Haruwa = wage labor who used to plough; servant.

3 Charuwa = wage labor who used to work as cattle herding, servant.

4 Mauja = village/locale

Among the indigenous people, there was no class hierarchy for marriage. The landlord used to let their daughter marry a servant and bring their daughter, too. Son-in-law to their household was usual among the indigenous community however, one of my informants reminds me of stating landlord's words, a "Tharu" landlord of Narkatiya village offered him as servant saying "you are always remaining as a servant wherever you go; So, come to be my servant; instead, I will give my daughter's hand to your son". It was usual that the landlords used to provide their girl's hand to the servant as they seek for workers where they had no any restriction to marry with upper- and lower-class family. But the cases did not match to Brahman-Kshetry community. These cases are closely concerned with working manpower. They had scarcity of working of manpower as per the amount of land holding. They used to occupy a large area of land so that they had to have number of working manpower. If they take own son-in-law as "Haruwa" then they could be permanent.

The wages of males and females were vast differences, too. During 1970 or 80s *Haruwa* (male servant) used to get 200 kg paddy but a female servant got 100 kg per year. They used to buy clothes themselves, feed their children, and nurture them from that amount of paddy.

Kind to Cash Wages

Two of my informants were serfs (i.e. Laborers) before 1985 or 1990. They used to get grains not money for the wages of their labor power, in villages as mode of payment was good. Workers themselves needed grain as they instantly prepare food if they had taken cash, they used to go to somewhere buy food; on the other side, the landlord also wanted to pay the wages through grain otherwise they had to sell their grain to the market. The flow of money was insufficient either. At that time, the landlords used to use their food for their expenses as the market economy was not formed, that can be taken as a sign of a feudalistic society.

Here, the general typology of an economic system that Polanyi (1957) proposes for a pre-capitalist mode of production as Godelier (1977) cites are three types: economies regulated by mechanisms of 'reciprocity' which depends on kinship relations or other institutions, is characteristic of primarily classless societies; economies regulated by mechanisms of 'redistribution' where goods being received from the units of local production in the form of tribute or other prestation, which can be found in many societies characterized by rank, caste or class, subject to some sort of chiefship or state; and economies 'integrated' by functioning of an institution 'disembodied' from social, political, religious or kinship relations – 'the market' (Godelier, p. 21, c.f. Polanyi). From this view point, Nepali society before 1990 was pre-capitalist as its dominant characteristics was chiefship, caste hierarchy and class differentiation.

Source of Revenue

Land tax was the major source of revenue before 1990, i.e., the total estimated budget of Nepal in 1951 was NPR 305 lakhs, whence 94 lakhs of income was from land revenue, 30 lakhs from forest resources, 73 lakhs from customs, 9 lakhs from contracts, and 99 lakhs from miscellaneous. Revenue from the land and forest increased in the second and third budgets. It was 123 lakhs from land revenue and 32 lakhs from forest products in 1952/53 and 131 lakhs from land revenue and 29 lakhs from forest products in 1953/54, respectively (Pant, 1956, p. 468). Actually, the land reform policy was held in 1964, when the land tax was the major source of income for the government; it was the dominant source of revenue before 1990. But now, the tax has not been counted as the income of the federal government for decades. Thus, declining their status, the feudal landlord has become a rich peasant in course of time. And the second major source of revenue was the forest products. Though forest products used to be sold to the Indian government, it had to be the higher amount as equal to the land revenue.

"Partly Due to lack of proper knowledge of the existing forest resources and partly to the anachronistic feudal system of land tenure, especially the Birta system in various parts of the country which recognizes the individual ownership of forest resources" (Pant, 1956, p. 468). It is clear that one of the reasons for the meager yield from the forest was to anachronistic feudal system of land tenure (p.468).

Feudalism depends on land revenue and traditional agro-products in gross domestic production (GDP) mapping. In 1974, 70 percent of GDP was measured from the agriculture sector which had been in diminishing order; it had declined to 50 percent in 1984/85 (Pokhrel, 2014, p. 2) when the socio-economic system of neo-liberalism had yet to be influenced in Nepal. Now, the total contribution of agriculture to GDP is 32 percent in 2019, while the service sector and other sectors except agriculture have been increasing (CBS, 2019).

From the GDP perspective, 'the contribution of the agriculture sector to the GDP has declined from 61 percent in 1981 to 31 percent in 2011, while the contribution of the service sector has increased from 27 percent to 48 percent during this period' and the contribution of the service sector in GDP is increased by 21 percent in 30 years (CBS, 2014, p. f). There can be many causes for decreasing GDP to 30 percent during the 30 years. One of the major reasons of decrease agriculture's contribution to the GDP is that the working population being absent in this sector. It means the population of Nepal is shifting their occupation rapidly. This, obviously shows that Nepali society is shifting from agrarian to a capitalist society. However, Nepali agriculture has been taken as traditional, then the characteristics of society until the 1990^s was pre-capitalist as per the measurement of GDP, in terms of source of revenue.

Shifting the Occupation

Nepali serfs became liberated when they used to choose different jobs either handicraftsmen or tertiary workers then they became free from the feudal lord or rich peasants though they had been dependent on wages from world capitalist society.

How could the bonded labor and serfs become independent? In my case, when their descendants initially choose another job (either meson or carpenter or anything else other than serf) and later worked as a migrant worker and sends some remittance to their home then their family became independent from the landlord or rich peasants. Engels's argument was that:

The serf liberates himself in one of three ways: either he runs away to the city and becomes a handicraftsman; or, instead of products and services, he gives money to his lord and thereby becomes a free tenant; or he overthrows his feudal lord and himself becomes a property owner. In short, by one route or another, he gets into the owning class and enters into competition (Engels, 1947, p. 7).

Nepali serfs (peasants) shifted their occupations either become meson, or carpenter or plumber or other and mostly went abroad for employment. In this way, they become independent from the landlords but become labor power to the international bourgeoisie. Actually, they do not independent, yet.

Hence, in terms of the landholding system, in terms of labor power, in terms of uses of goods as the means of exchange the society remained feudal or semi-feudal characteristics; or the mode of production of Nepali society was feudal. And, if we put the general characteristics of feudalism in the standard of the theory of the mode of production within the historical materialist method, the feudal regime is not only declining but also deposed, now.

Neo-liberal Capitalism: Producing New Social Class

"Social class" can be understood as a group of people who occupy a common position in the production system and that is the historical phenomena which had originated historically and coincides with the state. In this section, I discuss some issues and depict findings based on my data. Then, this section draws some instances of "how the new social classes have been forming in Nepali society" as the society is interconnected with international capitalism. From the cases, the characteristics of present Nepali society can be known as capitalist as it has crossed the stage of the feudalistic mode of production.

After the people's movement of 1990, multi-party democracy was established. Then, neo-liberal policy was also implemented the state policy though it had already been introduced in Nepal's financial policy.

Implication of Neo-liberalism

Neo-liberalism can be understood as an ideology of current globalized capitalism which has guided the social, political, economic, and cultural life of men. It is an ideology of

current globalized capitalism which has become as like the "development mantra" (Upreti, 2021) of the state affairs as well as international relations. Thus, neo-liberalism is the latest theory of socio-economic policy and practices that preserves and provokes individual freedom, limited government, and globalization within the current world system (Pokhrel, 2018, p. 36).

There were mainly three commercial banks (two commercial and one development) in Nepal before the 1980s. Among them one of the commercial banks had the full-fledged governmental ownership and other one was with a part of private owner, and the development bank was also under the ownership of government with a minimal part of public.

There was only one bank in Tandi bazar before 1990, but after then private banks also opened their branches in this city. It became a milestone for the cash flow in this area. In the meantime, there established some cooperatives that collected cash from the market and lent it to them. They had a scarcity of money to provide loans to the general public. The general public was unable to take loans without higher excess (source-force) or bribe. But during the 1980s when neo-liberal policy introduced then the government licensed some banks to the private sector along with the foreign investors. Then, banks became accessible to the people.

Nepali youth have been going abroad for more than two hundred years, they used to go to the British Army. They were recruited through a special agreement between British-India and Nepali autocratic rulers. After the independence of India, the Indian army also recruited some Nepali youths. But the general public had no excess to other countries except India, individually.

Nepali society became more open after 1990, then, Nepali youth started to go abroad for employment. The government provided licenses to brokers for job placement outside the country so that many youths took their step abroad to whom cooperatives and financial institutions provided loans. Once villagers went abroad, they sent remittances to their homes. On the other side, due to the migration for employment, villagers were facing insufficiency of labor power for farming; facing lack of labor for plowing; and felt difficulty holding oxen for plowing. As a result, they opted for tractors for plowing land. Nepali working force mostly were peasant before 1990 but gradually they became the industrial labor or other type of labor under the international capitalist class. This way, foreign employment became one of the reasons to change the class structure of Nepali society.

In this way, neoliberal economic policy especially "laissez faire economic policy" became the milestone to flow the money to the urbanizing cities and villages. Now, remittance has become the major source of foreign currency and it is contributing 26.24 percent to the GDP in 2018/19 (CBS, 2019). Migrant workers did not bring only the remittance but brought foreign culture as well. So, foreign employment became the dominant component to flourish neoliberal modernity in Nepal.

Foreign Employment and Its Consequences

There have been various social classes in Nepali society, but people who work as industrial laborers are few in number, whereas people who work outside the country in the global capitalist market and in the tertiary sector are a huge number. During the period before the 1980s and the first 10 years of implementation of neo-liberal policy social structure of Nepali society experienced changes in some indicators. CBS (2014) shows, the proportion of the employed population in the primary sector, mainly in agriculture, is gradually declining. But the proportion in the tertiary sector has increased from 6% in 1981 to 24% in 2011. Sixty percent of the employed population reported agriculture as their main occupation. Among the employed population 27% were employees, 2% were employer and 66% were own account workers, while 4% of the employed population reported that they had only worked for less than 3 months.

Households engaged in own account activities in the non-agricultural sector have declined 6% during 10 years, from 20% in 2001 to 14% in 2011. The trend is similar in both rural and urban areas. Of households engaged in own account activities other than agriculture 39.65 % engaged in service activities, 42.31% in trade 10.18% in cottage-type industries, 3.56% in transportation, and 4.30% in other sectors (CBS, 2014, p. 50).

The above data shows, on the one side that the population, engaged in the agriculture sector has decreased by 31 percent (91.39 in 1981 to 60.43 in 2011) in 30 years; and the production sector has also declined 6 percent in the last 10 years, and on the other side employed population in the tertiary sector is increased to 18 percent during the 30 years period. Those data clearly show that the population is isolated from their means of production. Active working population: 31 percent from the agriculture sector and about 18 percent from the non-agriculture sector (that means those were artisans, tailoring masters, meson and carpenters, small businessmen, and others) are missing their jobs in 30 years. Among them, 18 percent are engaged in tertiary jobs in Nepal and those are engaged in different sectors and the remaining 31 percent of the active population have gone for foreign employment.

Nepali workforce flew abroad to sell their labor power; the Nepali peasantry which was dependent upon traditional tools and technology experienced a scarcity of workforce. When young men fled abroad, there felt scarcity of workforce in agriculture, cultivation, and especially for plowing the land.

Relation to Land

Due to foreign employment, there became a scarcity of labor in the villages. Day by day, people sold their oxen and depended upon modern agro-machinery. Banks and financial institutions provided loans for buying tractors. Rich peasants brought tractor for tilling the land or plow which became the tool for cultivation to the medium class peasants and small-holders, as well. Neighbors who plowed by tractor were happier than they who had oxen to plow. Some of the villagers started to get remittance from their young men,

they paid tractor fare and labor and bought something that they needed, they seemed happier than the farmer whose son had not gone abroad. Then the other villagers also sent their young men abroad.

In 1994-95, the rate of tractor plowing was approximately Rs. 240/hour. During that time, it was not so big amount as they used to get more or less Rs. 1000.00 for 100 kg paddy. That is, during that time, per hour rate was equal to 24 kg paddy, but in 2017 it has differed; per hour tractor rate was about Rs. 1,500. and the rate per 100kg paddy was Rs. 2,000.00 to 2,200.00 during the harvesting. Thus, during 2017-18, per hour rate of tractors was 70-75 kg paddy. In June 2022 rate of tractor plowing became Rs. 2,000.00 and the rate of paddy (produced in the same season or *Chaite Dhan*) is not more than Rs. 2000.00. This shows that the per hour tractor plowing rate is equal to 100 kg paddy. The rate of tractor plowing is increased but the production is constant, even decreased due to the scarcity of fertilizer.

In the course of time, the rate of the tractor was increasing, the rate of labor power became higher, the rate of fertilizer became expensive, and everything became more expensive than before but the rate of produced items did not increase rather decreased sometimes. Farmers are bearing a deficit in their farming. My informants tell:

The rate of tractor plowing is very high; fertilizers are so expensive; insecticides are much expensive; similarly, labor power is expensive and even difficult to find. Hence, everything is expensive to cultivate but the selling price of our crop is not raised. So, farming is un-profitable, now. In this way, the peasants were poorer and poorer. Agro-technology like tractor has become means of production but it became, eventually, the tools for exploitation as well.

I calculated the income and expenditure of paddy cultivation. It takes 4 months except the nursery (breeding) period, if it is included, it takes 5 months to harvest 1500 kg rice from a plot of 10 kattha (0.33 hectare) of land. They spend more or less 28 thousand and generate about 40 thousand hence they save just 12 thousand rupees.

Table 1

Income and Expense on Paddy Cultivation in 2017 in Chitwan

Particular	Income	Expense
Seed purchase 25 kg @ 45.		1,125.00
Nursery preparation		500.00
Tractor fare for three times plough 3 Hours @ 1,500.		4,500.00
Labor for implantation (3+ 1+ 8+1) 13@ 500.		6,500.00
Fertilizer (DAP-30 kg@ 50. = 1,500., Urea 40kg @24 = 960., Potas 10kg @ 30= 300.)		2,760.00
Insecticides, vitamin		1,000.00
Fertilizer spread and insecticides and vitamin spray Labor		1,200.00
Labor to remove weeds 5 @ 500.		2,500.00
In-crop by machine- 45 minute @ 5000.		3,750.00
Transportation into house- Rs. 1000. + labor 2 @ 600.		2,200.00

Particular	Income	Expense
Snacks for labor 20 @ 50.		1,000.00
Canal cleaning		500.00
Miscellaneous Expenditure		500.00
Selling of paddy 1500 Kg @ 22.00	33,000.00	
Selling of Straw	7,000.00	
Total	40,000.00	28,035.00
Surplus (43,000.00 - 28,035.00) = 11,965.00		

(Source: Household survey 2017)

In Chitwan, land is fragmented into small parcels. In this district, average household has 1.9 parcels (CBS, 2015, p. 102) or approximately 2 plots of land; and the 85 percent people have less than 0.5 hectare of land. If there is a small plot of land, then it takes comparatively more time to plow. Due to the high payment, income becomes less.

Farmers could not earn from traditional farming; they were being compelled to bear huge losses in traditional farming. Neither could they shift modern farming replacing traditional one nor could they return back to hold oxen. It was natural that modern technology and techniques replace traditional ones. On the one hand, peasants have been facing losses in their farming; so, they find it easy to go abroad to sell their labor power instead of loss-making farming. In this situation, people from different classes even from the former *Jimidar*⁵ and rich peasants also have gone abroad for selling their labor power.

My informant who was coming from a landlord background said, "If my son sends money, only then we can manage our farming". It means remittance is the source for managing their overhead expenditure. The life of remittance earners and others find differences in villages. Farmers cannot cultivate crops without remittance which raises a big issue "how our socio-economical life is impinged by neoliberal globalization". People have their land but it is not used for the means of production which was the major means of production in Nepali society, now it has become a commodity (Pokhrel, 2018, p. 36). Thus, being fruitless in farming, people indifferent to their land while it was the major means of production for some years. In this situation, there appear some land brokers in the villages, also in the villages, they buy and sell land and some others are making connection to the landowner and buyer. Both types of brokers negotiate land property. In this way, land becomes a commodity. The commodification of land can be taken as a sign of capitalism. So, people were isolated from their land and tightened with being a labor of the world capitalist class.

Isolation from Means of Production

First and foremost, one of the characteristics of the capitalist mode of production is isolation of workers from their means of production and then making them proletariat. For the origin of the capitalist mode of production Mandel (1990) views,

5 *Jimidar* = landlord, who was the tax collection agent of government before 1964.

They lie first of all in the separation of the producers from their means of production. Subsequently, it is the establishment of these means of production as a monopoly in the hands of a single social class, the bourgeoisie. And finally, it is the appearance of another social class which has been separated from its means of production and therefore has no other resources for its subsistence than the sale of its labor-power to the class which has monopolized the means of production (pp. 19-20).

More or less the same way, peasants have been isolated from their means of production, as they have sold their oxen and plough, and gone for searching a job in the international capitalist market. Ultimately, the Nepali workforce has become the cheap labor to international capitalism. Not only the lower class but also the middle-class peasants have been isolated from their means of production. In this view, however, capitalism is deepening, at the same pace, village people are proletarianizing.

National data shows that the total population of working age is 20,744,000 among them 7,994,000 are recorded as working force to whom 7,086,000 are employed and 908,000 are unemployed. Among the working-age population, 15.4 percent are employed in the formal sector and 84.6 percent employed in the informal sector (NLFS, 2019).

As I investigated, my informant's family (formerly they were either rich or middle peasant) used to sell their produce to the market and get money which he utilized for household expenses, before 1990. It can be said that there was commodity- money-commodity (C-M-C) (Marx, 1990, p. 200) circulation. Later, young man of his family has gone abroad and sends remittance which his family utilizes for school fees, vegetables and meat, clothes, medicine and other that is household expenses. It can be said that there is Commodity (labor power)- money- commodity (C-M-C) circulation. Before 1990 farm produce was their commodity to sell, but now, labor power is the commodity to sell. This is the evidence of process of shifting the mode of production from feudalism to capitalism. And it inaugurates another truth that people isolating from their property and lose their means of production. However, a few of them became richer with the new tools and technology.

Thus, there are various reasons to depose the feudalism. Revolutionary movements like the Jhapa struggle-1971, the student movement and referendum of 1979/80, the people's movement in 1990, the armed struggle in 1996-2006, peaceful revolt in 2006 led by the political parties have arisen the different socio-political movements including women's movements, peasant movements, worker's movements have the principal role for political change which intervened the superstructure of the mode of production (Pokhrel, 2014). On the other side, the direct and indirect influence of globalization, and neo-liberal modernity, especially the direct influence of neo-liberalism has a key role in declining feudalism and rising capitalism.

Conclusion

Most of the components of the mode of production of Nepali society have shifted from feudalism into capitalism. Though the ideological superstructure has not changed, the juridical-political superstructure has changed due to the socio-political movements. This concludes that the base of the mode of production has changed due to the socio-economic practices of various components of neo-liberalism as well as globalized modernity brought by the "sophisticated technology of communications" (Lewellen, 2002, p. 7) which have been practiced at least for three decades in Nepal. Nepal's political economy has become a part of "global political economy that must be taken into account that deeply disjunctive relationship among human movement, technological flow, and financial transfers" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 35).

However, neoliberalism has many impinge in society; exclusively, it has produced a new class who depends to the wages from global capitalists though they have land in their homeland. That is a class which is proletarian in the view of global political economy but they can be seen as middle class in the view of domestic political economy. Formerly, they were either peasants or independent artisans but now they have become cheap labor of international capitalism.

Finally, it is remarkable that a new social class is producing rapidly in the society. And, it is no doubt that those are the proletarians who are working as wage labor in different formal or informal sectors whether they might have a parcel of land in their village. And, in a similar way, those large number of workers who are spoiling their sweat to the world capitalist community outside the country though they might have some property in any places of Nepal. So, the finding concludes that:

- i. As neo-liberalism is the socio-economic practice, it strengthens the mercantile capitalism in the society;
- ii. Due to the neoliberal economy, there emerged a new class, in a way they are proletarians and in other they are independent middle class.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF ARMED CONFLICT VICTIMS: A STUDY OF KALIKOT DISTRICT

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Abstract

This study examines the socio-economic and cultural impacts of the armed conflict in Kalikot District, Nepal, and evaluates the effectiveness of post-conflict recovery efforts. The research focuses on the experiences of displaced populations, including changes in their socio-economic status, educational outcomes, and cultural practices. Data collected from 115 respondents reveals that 47% attribute their hardships to both Maoist insurgents and state forces, with 42% specifically blaming the state's actions. Despite significant disruptions, 45% of respondents believe their social status has improved especially among those who supported or aligned with the Maoists. Educational status showed a decline, with only 22.6% rating it as "Good" after displacement, compared to 80% before. Cultural practices also suffered, with only 22.6% viewing them as "Good" post-displacement, down from 80% previously. Support from local NGOs, INGOs, and government agencies has been vital in addressing immediate needs through projects in peace-building, human rights, education and infrastructure development. However, while short-term recovery efforts have been impactful, there is a need for sustained, long-term strategies to fully address the complex and enduring effects of the conflict. This study underscores the importance of integrating both immediate relief and comprehensive development plans to support lasting recovery and resilience in post-conflict communities. There is a big challenges to uplift the socio-economic status and to enhance the livelihood of the armed conflict victim peoples in Kalikot district. Dialogues are necessary among the stakeholders in order to create the lasting peace. The real victimized people are need to be identified properly and there is need to have psycho-socio and economic support to create the lasting peace in order to create social harmony.

Keywords: Armed conflict, displacement, economic crisis, Maoist insurgency, resilience

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Introduction

Armed conflict has long-lasting impacts on the socio-economic fabric of affected communities. In regions where conflicts have occurred, the consequences can be severe and multifaceted, affecting individuals and communities long after the violence has ceased. Kalikot District, located in the mid-western region of Nepal, has experienced significant disruption due to armed conflict, particularly during the Maoist insurgency that lasted from the late 1990s to the early 2000s. This study aims to explore the socio-economic status of victims in Kalikot District, providing insights into their current conditions and the enduring impacts of the conflict (Pyakurel, (2007).

Kalikot District is characterized by its rugged terrain and limited infrastructure, which complicates access to resources and services. The area has a history of socio-economic challenges, including poverty, limited educational opportunities, and inadequate healthcare facilities. The armed conflict exacerbated these issues, disrupting local economies, displacing populations, and causing widespread trauma.

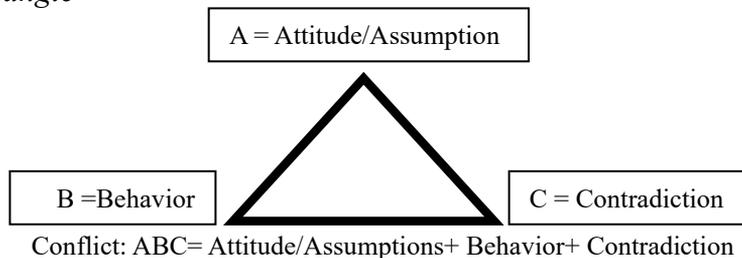
The Maoist insurgency, which sought to overthrow the monarchy and establish a people's republic, deeply affected Kalikot District. The conflict led to violence, property destruction, and displacement, leaving many individuals and families in precarious situations. Despite the official end of the conflict in 2006, its impact on the socio-economic conditions of the population remains a pressing issue. Policy Development: Accurate data on the conditions of conflict victims can inform government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in designing effective rehabilitation and support programs. Resource Allocation: Insights from the study can help in the equitable distribution of resources and aid, ensuring that those most affected receive the necessary support. Long-Term Recovery: Assessing current socio-economic conditions can help in evaluating the long-term recovery and resilience of conflict-affected populations, guiding future interventions.

This violence is one of not most important obstacle to development in Nepal. It destroys human, physical, social, and natural, capital, making it difficult to create wealth and compromising the quality of life. There is to come out a clear definition of internally victim's more peoples by the government of Nepal other organization agencies. However, UN guidance principal on conflict victim's is taken as working definition conflict victims in their place internally displace person are person or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged threat to flee to leaves their homes or place of habitual residence in particular as a result of or in order to avoid conflict situation of generalized violence.

The armed conflict in Kalikot District, Nepal, has left a profound impact on its victims, particularly among displaced families, children, and women. Displaced families, often moving from rural to urban areas, face dire living conditions marked by unsanitary environments and inadequate access to resources. Children in these situations suffer from severe educational barriers, with many unable to attend school due to

financial constraints. Those who end up living on the streets are at high risk of exploitation, including sexual abuse and child labor, and frequently experience malnutrition and psychological trauma from witnessing violence. Women, especially in rural areas, face heightened vulnerability, with many being driven into prostitution and struggling with limited economic opportunities and low literacy rates. The conflict has exacerbated these challenges, deepening existing socio-economic disparities and impeding the long-term recovery and development of these affected populations. Understanding these issues is crucial for designing effective interventions and support systems to address the ongoing needs of these vulnerable groups (INSEC, 2004). “Conflict happens when two or more people or groups have, or think they have, incompatible goals”. According to Galtung, the conflict structure consists of three parts: Attitudes, behavior and situations that interact and create conflicts between actors.

Figure 1:
The conflict triangle



Conflict has many meanings in everyday life. To some it refers to behavior or action. There is conflict when a trade union goes on strike or an employer locks out its employees. It is also conflict when two states are at war with one another and where battlefield events determine their relations. The actions constitute the conflict. If this were all however, it would mean that a conflict would end once this behavior ended. Few would agree to this. A cease-fire is not the end of a conflict. Even verbal statements, non-violent actions, the mobilization of petitions, demonstrations, boycotts and sanctions may only indicate that there is an interlude in the conflict. Actions may resume at some later stage. There may still be dissatisfaction. Obviously, conflict is more than the behavior of the parties alone (Upadhyay, 2006).

Armed conflict in Kalikot District, significant changes have occurred in the region's socio-economic structure. Many victims, displaced from their homes, sought refuge in safer areas with the aid of local governance, NGOs, and INGOs. As these individuals began returning to their original homes, they faced considerable challenges in rebuilding their lives. The study will explore the current status of these returnees, assessing how many have successfully resettled and examining their post-conflict daily lives. The conflict's aftermath left a legacy of violence, including looting and family disruptions, which continues to impact their recovery. Socio-economic stability is

crucial for human well-being, and the conflict's impact has had a ripple effect on national economic stability. Despite the importance of understanding these impacts, there is limited research on the socio-economic and cultural effects on victims. This research aims to investigate the ongoing negative effects on the livelihoods of these individuals, identify unresolved issues, and explore solutions for their resettlement and sustainable livelihood, with cooperation from both local and national authorities.

Objectives

This study aims to assess the socio-economic situation of victims' people due to ongoing political turmoil that led to the people in the path of critical situation.

Methods

The basic purpose of this study is to explore the reality and nature of socio-economic conditions of victim's people. Therefore, both exploratory and descriptive research designs are used to the real facts of the current issue of victims. As mentioned in the proposal, District Headquarter is selected the highly effect the conflict party of research site. The other research site is the place named Malkot, Chhapra, Daha, and Sukatiua of Kalikot.

The study is based on both qualitative and quantitative information data collected from both primary as well as secondary sources. The primary data were based on information gained through interaction in the selected sites whereas the secondary source will be based on different articles, journals in daily newspapers, books, reports and articles published by different researchers, various INGO's and NGO's.

Primary data are collected from household/individual survey, observation methods, unstructured interviews, group discussions and questionnaire. A collected through the major people in the Headquarter like Maoist area political leader, CDO, DSP, LPC local reporters, teachers and workers of NGOS, INGOS conflict report in Karnali and human right organization.

For this study a well- knitted questionnaire had been developing for the studies. Most of the questions were pre-coded and the questionnaire was also pre-tested and then required modifications were made before the fieldwork.

The secondary data are collected from articles, books, journals, magazines, newspapers, reports prepared by different organization. All the related document, reports, and articles, strategy papers, books were reviewed in order to gain better and effective information about the topic of the study.

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis is conducted on the basis of reviewing of existing rules and regulations, available documents and related studies of victim people. Similarly, socio-economic changes and reason for being a victim's people has been analyzed. Finally, discussions and suggestions are made on the basis of existing policies and program to protect these people from victim. The quantitative data obtained from structured questionnaires has been processed through validation, editing and

coding. After that, these data are presented in the tabular form and then interpretation is made. The analyzed data were interpreted in order to establish relationships between the variables of the study.

Results and Discussion

Demographic and Socio-Economic Status of the Respondent

The demographic and socio-economic status of respondents reflects the profound impact of the armed conflict on their lives. According to the study, 47% of respondents feel that their socio-economic structure was severely disrupted by the conflict. They report that the Maoist insurgency and military actions devastated their livelihood patterns, leading to a significant decline in their quality of life. The threat and insecurity during the conflict prevented them from living peacefully and hindered their freedom of movement for social and economic activities. Consequently, many were forced to relocate from their original homes, which further diminished their livelihood opportunities. In contrast, 38% of respondents believe that their social and economic conditions have remained unchanged since before the conflict, while 15% feel that their situation has improved. This data highlights the varied experiences of conflict-affected individuals with a significant portion experiencing considerable setbacks and a smaller segment perceiving some degree of improvement in their socio-economic status.

Caste/Ethnicity

In the place of origin there was dominance of particular caste/ethnicity in particular area but in the place of destination it is found that people are bound to live in different mix-up caste/ethnicity environment area.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents by caste/ethnicity

Caste/ Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total	
	%	%	No	%
Thakuri	26.5	6.7	38	33.2
Chhetri	22.3	4.3	31	26.9
Brahmin	15.5	3.6	22	19.13
Dalit	10.7	1.4	14	12.1
Other	7.2	1.8	10	8.6
Total	95	20	115	-

Source: Field survey, 2023

Table 1 shows that, the demographic distribution of respondents by caste and ethnicity reveals notable variations. Among the 115 respondents, Thakuri individuals

constitute the largest group, representing 33.2% of the total, with 26.5% being male and 6.7% female. Chhetri respondents follow, making up 26.9% of the total, including 22.3% males and 4.3% females. Brahmin respondents account for 19.13%, with 15.5% males and 3.6% females. Dalit respondents represent 12.1% of the total, with 10.7% males and 1.4% females. Lastly, individuals from other caste or ethnic groups make up 8.6%, comprising 7.2% males and 1.8% females. This distribution highlights the diverse caste and ethnic composition among the respondents, reflecting the broader demographic landscape in the study area.

Education Status

Education is one of the main necessities of present people basically for children and young. This study shows a peculiar impact of the conflict on education. Education percentage of the people increases after victims is presented in flowing table.

Table 2

Educational status before and after situation of victims

Educational Status	Before displacement		After displacement	
	No.	%	No.	%
Good	28	24.3	33	28.6
Normal	42	36.5	57	49.5
Bad	45	39.1	25	21.7
Total	115	100	115	100

Source: Field survey, 2023

Above table shows that, the educational status of the respondent's family members before conflict period is found the educational status of respondents before and after displacement shows significant changes. Before displacement, 24.3% of respondents rated their educational status as "Good," while 36.5% considered it "Normal," and 39.1% rated it as "Bad." After displacement, there is a noticeable shift: 28.6% of respondents now describe their educational status as "Good," and 49.5% view it as "Normal." However, the proportion of those rating their status as "Bad" has decreased to 21.7%. This shift indicates an overall improvement in educational status following displacement, with more respondents now reporting better or average conditions compared to before.

Effects of Conflict in the research area

The study reveals that in Kalikot District, the impact of the armed conflict is perceived differently among respondents. According to the findings, 30% of respondents believe they were most affected by both the Maoist insurgents and the army. A significant 42% attribute their hardships primarily to the state, which includes

the army, armed police forces, and local police. Additionally, 38% of respondents feel that the Maoists were the main source of their suffering. This data indicates that the state's actions had a substantial influence on the population, contributing to ongoing feelings of insecurity and fear. The high percentage of respondents attributing their difficulties to the behaviors of the army, Maoists, and general threats underscores the complex nature of the conflict's impact, which has been a major driver of migration in the area.

Effect on Social Status

The impact of the conflict on social status in Kalikot District shows a divided perception among respondents. According to the study, 55% of respondents believe that the conflict has not improved their social status, while 45% feel that their social standing has been enhanced to some extent due to the conflict. This close divide indicates that opinions on the conflict's impact are nearly balanced. Those who perceive an improvement in their social status are often individuals who either became affiliated with the Maoists or supported their cause. For these respondents, the conflict has led to a sense of political empowerment and increased social awareness, which they attribute to their elevated social status. Consequently, the significant minority who believe their social status has been positively impacted reflects how the conflict has benefited certain groups, highlighting a complex and nuanced view of its effects on social structures.

Effect on Cultural Practices

Nepal is a place where we can find variety of culture and religion. Every single people celebrate their own culture and religion. When the conflict victims have compelled to displace them to leave their place of origin, so to find out the differences in their culture and tradition in comparison to before and after change the social norms and value of culture in the victims people, this sector cultural and traditional practices status is studied. The cultural and traditional practices status is presented in flowing table.

Table 3

Cultural and traditional status before and after of victims

Cultural & traditional practices status	Before displacement		After displacement	
	No.	%	No.	%
Good	92	80	26	22.6
Normal	20	17.3	66	57.3
Bad	3	2.6	23	20
Total	115	100.0	115	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2023

Table shows that, the status of cultural and traditional practices in Kalikot District shows a notable shift before and after displacement. Before displacement, 80% of respondents rated their cultural and traditional practices as "Good," reflecting a strong adherence and positive perception of these practices. However, after displacement, only 22.6% of respondents view these practices as "Good," indicating a significant decline. In contrast, the percentage of respondents who consider their cultural and traditional practices as "Normal" has increased from 17.3% before displacement to 57.3% afterward. Additionally, those rating their practices as "Bad" rose from 2.6% before displacement to 20% after displacement. This data illustrates that while cultural and traditional practices were largely valued before displacement, the upheaval has led to a deterioration in their perceived quality and adherence, with more respondents now viewing them as either normal or problematic.

Support to NGO/ INGOS, GOV and other group

In the aftermath of the conflict in Kalikot District, various actors have played crucial roles in post-conflict peace-building efforts. Humanitarian interventions have traditionally prioritized meeting the immediate biological and material needs of conflict-affected populations. However, local NGOs and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) have also been actively involved through a range of project interventions aimed at sustaining peace and improving living conditions. These projects include initiatives focused on human rights, education, health and sanitation, food security, livelihoods, and physical infrastructure development, benefiting numerous impoverished and vulnerable rural communities.

Specifically, some NGOs have implemented Peace Building and Accountability Promotion initiatives in Kalikot, striving to enhance local awareness and encourage active participation in human rights and peace-building processes. These efforts aim to foster long-term peace and community resilience. While these initiatives contribute to immediate recovery, many focus on short-term development goals. The involvement of these various actors highlights the multifaceted approach required to address the diverse needs of post-conflict communities, encompassing both immediate relief and longer-term development and policy reforms.

Conclusions

The aftermath of the armed conflict in Kalikot District has had deep and multifaceted impacts on its socio-economic and cultural landscape. This study has provided a comprehensive examination of how the conflict has shaped the lives of the affected populations, revealing a complex interplay between the destruction caused by the conflict and the ongoing efforts to rebuild and recover.

The findings indicate that a substantial proportion of respondents 47% believe they were most affected by both the Maoist insurgents and the state, with 42% attributing their hardships primarily to the state's actions, including those of the army

and police. This perception underscores the profound influence of state and insurgent actions on the lives of individuals in the district, contributing to ongoing feelings of insecurity and mistrust. Despite this, a significant 45% of respondents feel that their social status has improved to some extent due to the conflict, particularly among those who supported or became involved with the Maoists. This improvement reflects a sense of political empowerment and social awareness experienced by some individuals, highlighting the varied impacts of the conflict on different segments of the population.

In terms of educational outcomes, the study reveals a notable shift from before to after displacement. While 80% of respondents initially rated their educational status as "Good," this figure dropped significantly to 22.6% post-displacement. Conversely, the percentage of those rating their educational status as "Normal" increased markedly, indicating that while educational conditions have generally improved, they have not fully recovered to pre-conflict levels. The rise in those considering their educational status as "Bad" post-displacement further reflects ongoing challenges in this area.

Cultural and traditional practices have also suffered as a result of displacement. Prior to displacement, 80% of respondents viewed their cultural practices as "Good," but this figure plummeted to 22.6% afterward. The increase in those considering these practices as "Normal" and "Bad" highlights the erosion of traditional practices and the challenges of maintaining cultural continuity in the wake of conflict and displacement.

Support from local NGOs, INGOs, and government bodies has been crucial in addressing the immediate needs of conflict-affected populations. Various projects aimed at sustaining peace, promoting human rights, improving education, health, and sanitation, and enhancing food security and livelihoods have made a significant impact. These initiatives have been instrumental in supporting the recovery and development of the region. However, while short-term relief efforts have been beneficial, there is a critical need for sustained focus on long-term development and policy reform to ensure comprehensive recovery.

The study highlights that the post-conflict environment in Kalikot District remains fraught with challenges, despite the efforts of various support organizations. The conflict's long-lasting effects on socio-economic conditions and cultural practices emphasize the need for ongoing and multifaceted support strategies. Future interventions should aim to address both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development goals to foster resilience and sustainable recovery. By balancing short-term relief with long-term planning, stakeholders can better support the affected communities in their journey toward recovery and stability.

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PRACTICE OF PESTICIDE USE AND ITS HEALTH EFFECTS AMONG FARMERS IN BHAKTAPUR: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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Abstract

The global rise in pesticide usage is a concern in the agricultural sector, with Nepal experiencing a steady annual increase in pesticide application. This study aimed to assess the pesticide use, health effects, and associated factors among farmers in Bhaktapur, District. A cross-sectional analytical study was conducted from June to December 2019, involving 320 farmers in Bhaktapur selected through a simple random sampling method. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews utilizing pre-tested semi-structured questionnaires. The statistical analysis was performed via SPSS Software version 16.0. Additionally, the Chi-Square test was applied to assess the associations between independent variables and health effects among farmers. Most of the farmers used herbicides (40%), insecticides (29.7%), and Fungicides (22%). A total of 64.2% of the respondents complained of discomfort immediately after spraying pesticides. The most common complaints reported by farmers were skin rashes and burning sensations (72.5%), headaches (27.3%), nausea (46.7%), dizziness (41.6%), and respiratory issues (8.3%). Health effects were more prevalent among farmers with over five years of pesticide use and those lacking training. Farmers' knowledge of health impacts and their use of personal protective equipment (PPE) were strongly linked to the health effects they experienced. Even though farmers are knowledgeable about pesticides, many still practice unsafe methods when using them, resulting in health problems. To address this, the government should offer regular refresher training on the safe use, handling, and disposal of pesticides, ensuring farmers can apply their knowledge safely and effectively in the field.

Keywords: Farmers, Health effects, Nepal, Occupational safety, Pesticide

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Introduction

Pesticide exposure leads to both acute and chronic health effects, with acute poisoning being the most widely recognized form of effects. (Brown et. al., 1989). Among the global consumption of pesticides, about 20% is accounted for utilization in developing countries and this percentage is on the rise. (Zyoud et. al., 2010) Every year, around 25 Million cases of mild pesticide poisoning are reported by agricultural workers in developing Asian countries (Thapa et. al., 2021). The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Environment Programme report that annually, approximately 3 million agricultural workers in developing countries suffer from severe pesticide poisoning, with around 18,000 fatalities resulting from these incidents (Zhang et. al., 2021) The Department of Agriculture (DOA) was established in 1952 AD in Nepal. More than 66% of Nepalese individuals are working in the agricultural sector (Alavanja et. al., 2004). To maximize agricultural production, most farmers use pesticides in their fields. Therefore, pesticide use has been steadily increasing annually in Nepal. Nepal, like many other countries, faces issues with the misuse, overuse, and improper application of chemical pesticides in agriculture.

Over the past five decades, pesticide use has dramatically boosted agricultural production. However, using highly toxic chemicals has increased health risks, particularly among farmers in low-income countries like Nepal (Giri, 2010). In many developing nations, including Nepal, the lack of proper training for agricultural workers in pesticide use and management has seriously affected human health and the environment (Brown et. al., 1989). Bhaktapur is one of the districts located in Bagmati Province where a significant number of people have been farming for many years to produce significant quantities of food and vegetables. Farmers are using pesticides to increase their agricultural production. Even though the application of pesticides has contributed to increasing the productivity of vegetables in Bhaktapur, the successes have unfortunately often been accompanied by the problem of mishandling pesticides (Toledo et. al., 2023) Despite being a small-scale study, this research offers valuable insights into farmers' knowledge and practices surrounding pesticide use, as well as the health issues they face. This study aimed to reveal the health effects experienced among agricultural farmers and the factors associated with health problems.

Methods

The researchers conducted a community-based cross-sectional study involving the farmers from Ward No. 1 of Suryabinayak Municipality in Bhaktapur District, who regularly used pesticides on their farms. The study took place between June and October 2019. A Semi-Structured questionnaire was prepared concerning various research papers and supervisors. Approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Committee of Nobel College. Permission was obtained from the colleges, and informed consent was obtained from the participants before data collection. The study involved

farmers aged 20 and above who had experience handling pesticides, either on their farms or on land they worked for others. A total of 320 farmers were selected for the study, based on sample size calculations that considered the prevalence of skin problems (26.6%) among vegetable farmers in Bhaktapur. The study used a 95% confidence interval and accounted for a 6% nonresponse rate. Data were gathered through face-to-face interviews during door-to-door visits using semi-structured, pretested questionnaires. This covered demographic information, knowledge of pesticide health impacts, pesticide handling practices, and self-reported health effects. The questionnaire was pretested with 30 farmers (10% of the total sample) using a non-probability sampling method in the Kathmandu District. Data were collected, and the collected data were expressed as frequencies and percentages. Sociodemographic characteristics were assessed. Knowledge and experience were assessed. Data entry and analysis were performed using SPSS version 16. The Chi-square test was used to assess associations, with a significance level set at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$.

Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Farmers

Table 1 depicts the socio-demographic characteristics of the farmers. The majority of farmers 73.1% were between 30-59 years followed by those older than 60 years 18.6%. Similarly, 59.7% of farmers were male, whereas 40.3% were female. The majority 80.9% of the farmers 51.3% were literate. The majority 67% of the farmers had been using pesticides for more than 5 years.

Table 1
Sociodemographic characteristics of farmers

Characteristics	Number (n=320)	Percent (%)
Age		
20-29 years	42	13.1
30-59 years	234	73.1
≥ 60 years	44	13.8
Sex		
Male	191	59.7
Female	129	40.3
Educational Status		
Illiterate	61	19.1
Literate	259	80.9

Farmer's Profile

Table 2 depicts the profile of the farmers involved in the study. More than three-fourths of farmers 77% use pesticides. Approximately 34.6% of the farmers had received formal training on how to handle pesticides. The majority 67% of the farmers had been using pesticides for more than five years.

Table 2

Farmer's profile

Profile of Farmers	Number (n=320)	Percent (%)
Years in Farming		
<5 years	58	18.2
5-10 years	219	68.4
>10 years	43	13.4
Use of Pesticide for Farming		
Yes	246	76.9
No	74	23.1
Years of Pesticide Use(n=246)		
<5 years	79	32.1
5-10 years	95	38.6
>10 years	72	29.3
Trainings on handling pesticide(n=246)		
Yes	85	34.6
No	161	65.4

Farmers' knowledge and understanding of pesticide

Table 3 illustrates the farmer's knowledge and understanding of pesticides. The majority of farmers 61% believe that pesticides are used to kill pests. This study shows that 58.9% of the farmers know the pesticide names they are using, and most of them primarily rely on herbicides which is 40% followed by insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, bactericides, etc. The workers frequently associated the toxicity of pesticides with the chemical odour of the substances, believing that stronger, more intense smells indicated higher toxicity. Most people have little understanding of the scientific colour code system. Approximately 59.7% of the farmers were aware of different colors (blue, red, green, and yellow) in the pesticide container. More than half of the farmers 62.2% knew that pesticides affect human health.

Table 3

Farmer's knowledge and understanding of pesticides

Perceived Knowledge	Number (n=246)	Percent (%)
Reason for using pesticides		
Destroying pests	150	61.0
Increase agricultural production	74	30.1
Others	22	8.9
Know the names of pesticides used for crops.		
Yes	145	58.9
No	101	41.1
If yes (n=145)		
Insecticide	43	29.7
Fungicide	32	22.0

Perceived Knowledge	Number (n=246)	Percent (%)
Herbicide	58	40.0
Others	12	8.3
Meaning of the color of the pesticide container		
Yes	146	59.5
No	100	40.7
Knowledge of the health impact of pesticides		
Yes	155	62.2
No	91	37.8

Practice Regarding Pesticide Use

Table 4 illustrates that 65.9% of the farmers used to read the label on the pesticide container. Almost half of the farmers had 49.2% sprayed pesticides. Five to ten times in the previous six months. The majority of the farmers 75.2% used to determine the wind direction first and spray the pesticide. The majority of the farmers 69.9% used protective measures, whereas 62.8% of the farmers covered their noses, either by wearing a mask or tying a piece of cloth around it, 59.3% wore long sleeve shirts, 58.8% wore long pants, 43.6% wore long boots, 38.4% wore gloves, 21.5% wore goggles, 25.6% wore hats, and 30.2% wore all of the above protective measures. This study revealed that the majority of farmers 67.5% used bare hands while mixing pesticides. The majority of the farmers 63.8% used to wash their hands immediately after spraying and 62.2% of the farmers used to mix the pesticide outside their houses.

Table 4
Practice regarding pesticide use

Practice regarding pesticide use	Number (n=246)	Percent (%)
Read the label		
Yes	162	65.9
No	84	34.1
No. of spraying time in the last 6 months		
<5 times	59	24.0
5-10 times	121	49.2
>10 times	66	26.8
Determine wind direction first and spray		
Yes	185	75.2
No	61	24.8
Use of Personal Protective Equipment While Spraying Pesticide		
Yes	172	69.9
No	74	30.1
If Yes (n=172) *		
Mask	108	62.8
Boot	75	43.6
Long sleeve shirt	102	59.3
Long pant	96	58.8
Goggles	37	21.5

Practice regarding pesticide use	Number (n=246)	Percent (%)
Gloves	66	38.4
Hat	44	25.6
All of the above	52	30.2
Mix Pesticide Solution		
By bare hand	166	67.5
By wearing gloves	80	32.5
Personal hygiene measures after Spraying		
Wash hands immediately after spraying	157	63.8
Take a bath after spraying	89	36.2
Mixing place		
In the living house	7	2.8
Outside the house	153	62.2
In the field	41	16.7
Beside a water source	19	7.7
Distance from well or open water	26	10.6

* Multiple response

Self-reported Health Problems of the farmers

Table 5 depicts the self-reported health problems of the farmers. Among the 246 farmers, 48.8% experienced health problems due to pesticides. Approximately 72.5% of the farmers complained of skin rashes and burning sensations, followed by 70% with headache, 46.7% with nausea, 41.6% with dizziness, 8.3% with respiratory problems, and 8.3% with other symptoms (weakness, abdominal pain)

Table 5

Self-reported health problem related to felt problems and symptoms of that health problem due to pesticide

Self-reported health problem	Number (n=246)	Percent (%)
Felt any health problems due to pesticides in the past		
Yes	120	48.8
No	126	51.2
If Yes (n=120) *		
Skin rashes/ burning sensation	87	72.5
Headache	84	70
Nausea	56	46.7
Dizziness	50	41.6
Respiratory problem	45	37.5
Other	9	8.3

* Multiple response

Associations between Independent variables and health effects among farmers

Table 6 shows the association between training on pesticides and years of pesticide use and health effects on farmers. Farmers who had no training in pesticides and more

than 5 years of pesticide use had a high proportion of health effects. There was a significant association between the mixing of pesticides and health effects. Compared with farmers who used gloves, those who used bare hands had a higher proportion of health effects. Similarly, the use of PPE was associated with health effects. There was a high proportion of health effects among farmers who did not use PPE.

Table 6

Associations between Independent Variables and Health Effects among Farmers

Independent Variables (Characteristics)	Health Effects			p-value
	Yes Number (%)	No Number (%)	Total Number (%)	
Training on pesticide handling				
Yes	26(30.6%)	59(69.4%)	85(34.6%)	<0.002
No	94(58.4%)	67(41.6%)	161(65.4%)	
Years of pesticide use				
Less than five years	27(34.2%)	52(65.8%)	79(32.1%)	<0.001
Five to ten years	45(47.4%)	50(52.6%)	95(38.6%)	
More than ten years	48(66.7%)	24(19%)	72(29.3%)	
Knowledge of health impact				
Yes	44(28.4%)	111(71.6%)	155(63%)	<0.001
No	76(83.5%)	15(16.5%)	91(37%)	
Mixing the pesticides				
By wearing gloves	17(21.2%)	63(78.8%)	80(32.5%)	<0.002
By bare hands	103(62%)	63(30%)	166(67.5%)	
Use of PPE				
Yes	75(43.6%)	97(56.4%)	172(69.9%)	<0.013
No	45(60.8%)	29(39.2%)	74(30.1%)	

Discussion

The results of the study show that the majority of the farmers 73.1% were in the 30-59 years age group, followed by those older than 60 years 13.8% which is somewhat similar to the findings of previous studies 59.7% males and 40.3% females. (Oesterlund et. al., 2014).

In terms of the profile of the farmers, 18.2% had less than five years of farming experience which is in line with the study conducted in Palestine.(Zyoud et. al., 2010). In this study, 65.4% of the farmers did not receive any training related to pesticide use and handling. In a similar study conducted in Dhading 93.3% did not receive any training on pesticide use. (Karunamoorthi et. al., 2011).

In this study, most farmers understood that pesticides are used to kill pests and increase agricultural production. While they were generally aware of the health risks associated with pesticide use, they often neglected safety measures, leading to greater exposure to pesticide poisoning. This finding aligns with a similar study conducted in Nepal. (Kafle et. al., 2014). It shows that only (n=146, 59.3%) of the farmers knew about

the meaning of different colors (blue, red, green, and yellow) on the pesticide container. Similarly, 48.4% of the farmers knew that pesticides affect human health. In a similar study done in Palestine 57.7% of the respondents reported that pesticides affect human health. (Zyoud et. al., 2010).

While purchasing, approximately 65.9% of the farmers carefully looked for pesticide labels on the container, showing their alertness and attentive nature toward safe handling. Many farmers do not care about the importance of safe handling of pesticides. Our study revealed that 51.9% of the farmers used their bare hands while mixing pesticides. Similarly, a study conducted in the Dhading District found that almost all farmers did not consider looking for pesticide labels. The study also reported that farmers continued to use 16.7% highly hazardous and 50% moderately hazardous pesticides, with half of them using their bare hands while mixing the chemicals., this study revealed that farmers who used their bare hands were more likely to be at risk than those who wore gloves while mixing pesticides. (Shrestha et. al., 2010).

In our study, 49.2% of farmers reported spraying pesticides five to ten times in the last six months. Additionally, almost 75.2% of them applied pesticides without considering the wind direction. This oversight could increase their inhalation of pesticides and skin contact. Even those who were aware of wind direction often did not postpone spraying on windy days. A similar study conducted in Sunsari District found that 35.4% of farmers sprayed pesticides five to nine times per year. Furthermore, 71.7% of the farmers in that study checked the wind direction before applying pesticides. Studies have shown that farmers who do not consider wind direction when spraying are at a higher risk for health issues. Specifically, those who ignore wind direction are 2.25 times more likely to report health problems. These findings highlight the need for better awareness and safety practices among farmers regarding pesticide application. (Lamichhane et. al., 2019)

Our study revealed that farmers were not using adequate personal protective measures (PPE) when applying pesticides, mainly because they weren't in the habit of wearing it and found it too costly. A similar study showed that 66.6% of farmers did not use any form of PPE due to a lack of knowledge. Lack of habit of wearing such protective measures and poor affordability. (Kafle et. al., 2014). This finding is in line with our findings which showed that face masks were the most popular PPE worn by farmers 62.8%. Ironically, the purpose of using a face mask was not to prevent pesticide exposure but to eliminate bad odour. Similarly, 59.3% of the farmers reported using long-sleeved shirts, and 58.8% used long pants during spraying.

The majority followed the practice of washing hands immediately after spraying pesticides which was found to be a basic precautionary measure followed by the farmers. It showed that the study showed that most farmers followed safer practices, reducing their risk of pesticide poisoning. Similar to research conducted in Nepal, Oman, Ethiopia, and Bolivia but highly skewed from Cambodian findings which reported that 97% of farmers washed their bodies after spraying (Aryal et. al., 2016). This statement is supported by our study results.

The preferred mixing pesticide area was a place far from the living house which is the most accepted site but 7.7% of farmers mix pesticides beside a water source, which is not a good sign. Pesticide use brings about various environmental issues since they are a major leading cause of water pollution. Some pesticides are considered persistent organic pollutants, contributing significantly to environmental contamination (EPA, Safe & Effective Handling of Pesticides). With high environmental contamination. This kind of behavior may lead to accidental poisoning of domestic animals and humans. Very few had chosen the living room as a place for mixing pesticides. Only those farmers had no spare area except a roomed house and mixed pesticides in the same living room.

The study showed that the most commonly self-reported symptoms of pesticide toxicity were skin rash 72.5%, headache 70, nausea 46.7%, and dizziness 31.6%. This is similar to a study done among farm workers in the West Bank, Palestine, where self-reported symptoms of pesticide toxicity included skin rash 37.5%, headache 37%, excessive sweating 24.9%, and diarrhea 21.3% (Dey, 2010). The differences between the two studies may be due to variations in pesticide use practices and the safety precautions taken during application (Zyoud et. al., 2010).

The study found that the most commonly reported symptoms of pesticide toxicity were skin rash 72.5%, headache 70%, nausea 46.7%, and dizziness 31.6%. These findings are in line with a study conducted among farm workers in the West Bank, Palestine, where common symptoms included skin rash 37.5%, headache 37%, excessive sweating 24.9%, and diarrhea 21.3% (Dey, 2010). The differences between the two studies may be due to variations in pesticide use practices and the safety precautions taken during application.

This study showed associations between socio-demographic characteristics and health effects. It was found that gender, marital status, training on pesticides, and years of pesticide use were significantly associated with health effects among farmers (p -value <0.05). A similar association was shown in a study performed among farmers in Uganda.(Kiwango et. al., 2018). It was found that knowledge of health impacts was significantly associated with health effects among farmers (p -value <0.05), which was similar to the findings of a study conducted among farmers in northwestern Jamaica (Ncube et.al., 2011). Similarly, consulting shopkeepers or specialists, mixing pesticides, and using PPE were associated with health effects among farmers (p -value <0.05), Which was similar to the findings of a study on farm workers on the west bank, of Palestine. (Zyoud et. al., 2010).

Conclusions

The majority of the farmers were older males and more educated than they were five years old. The majority of farmers used pesticides; the duration of pesticide use was more than five years; and training on pesticide use and hygiene practices among farmers was limited. Farmers were aware that pesticides affect human health and the color code of pesticide containers. Farmers read labels on pesticides; however, farmers use bare hands to mix

pesticides. Farmers determine the wind direction before pesticide use. The use of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is prevalent. Half of the farmers had health problems; skin rashes and headaches were major health problems. Training on pesticides and years of pesticide use were associated with health effects among farmers which means that there was a significant association between training on pesticides and years of pesticide use with the health effects of farmers. Farmers who had no training in pesticides and more than five years of pesticide use had a high proportion of health effects. Unhygienic practices of pesticides and the use of PPE were significantly associated with health effects among farmers, and there was a significant association between the mixing of pesticides and health effects. Compared with farmers who used gloves, those who used bare hands had a higher proportion of health effects. Similarly, the use of PPE was associated with health effects. There was a high proportion of health effects among farmers who did not use PPE.

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APPLIED LINGUISTIC TRENDS: USE OF AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT) IN SECONDARY CLASSES 11–12

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Abstract

The current educational system's primary objective and goal is to enhance the innovative, scientific, and student-centered nature of the teaching-learning process. A wide variety of strategies are employed in the teaching-learning process. These days, more and more people are turning to audiovisual tools, which combine visuals with spoken word to help students learn. Several studies have shown that employing audiovisual tools to educate improves recollection. One of the smartest and most significant stages in educating pupils of various levels and domains is to choose suitable educational medium. Several types of audiovisual aids are used, including overhead projectors (OHP), power point presentations (PPT), white or black board teaching, and flip charts. These medium offers both advantages and disadvantages. There are certain strategies for making them more effective. Audiovisual aids assist in the consolidation of long-term memory of previously taught material. Incorporating a variety of media into lessons at the same time may have numerous positive effects on students.

Keywords: Audio-visual aids; media; teaching methods; ELT; learning.

Introduction

Several approaches have been explored by professionals and educators in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Among these, audiovisual aids are increasingly employed to improve the effectiveness, engagement, and impact of the teaching-learning process. A visual aid assists students in understanding concepts more clearly by using diagrams, drawings, and other visual representations (Daniel, 2013). Media, which are instructional tools, convey knowledge, information, and ideas in various forms. These media can be categorized into three groups: visual aids, audiovisuals, and audio resources. Visual aids include tools such as slides, chalkboards, maps, models, posters, and pictures, while audiovisual resources encompass television, videotapes, computers, and films. Audio resources involve tools such as radios, tapes, and language laboratories (Ojowu, 2014).

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Audiovisual aids are particularly effective in enhancing the teaching and learning process. The term "audio" refers to hearing, while "visual" relates to what is seen. Together, these tools engage multiple senses, making learning more interactive and impactful (Mamun & Abdullah, 2014). The integration of audiovisual aids has been shown to provide numerous benefits, including increased student interest, motivation, and retention of information (Waad & Younus, 2022). Moreover, these tools allow students to experience abstract concepts in a more tangible and understandable way, fostering better comprehension and academic performance (Khan et al., 2020).

Research has demonstrated that audiovisual aids significantly enhance English language instruction at various educational levels. Studies conducted at the primary and secondary levels have found that these tools improve student performance and make the learning experience more engaging and effective (Singh et al., 2021). Audiovisual aids offer direct sensory experiences, which help students grasp abstract concepts more easily (Sofi, 2017). At the tertiary level, audiovisual tools have been found to support the development of language skills for both teachers and learners (Mamun & Abdullah, 2014).

In conclusion, the use of audiovisual aids has been widely recognized as an effective means to enhance the teaching-learning process across different educational contexts. These tools not only improve the clarity of instruction but also significantly impact student motivation, engagement, and academic success. So, any such tools that attempt to make information plain to us via our senses are referred to as audiovisual aids. Using audiovisual aids has several benefits, including:

1. capturing audience attention,
2. keeping their interest,
3. efficiently communicating with a large audience,
4. providing a more clear, illustrative, and elaborate explanation of facts, ideas, and processes,
5. making it easier to remember what has been learnt,
6. presenting information in an organised and systematic way, and
7. boosting the presenter's confidence and enthusiasm.

Learning memory depends on several types of presentations. This study found that visual and verbal teaching methods, such as audiovisual and participative, are connected with improved memory in participants. As a result, audiovisual and participative teaching approaches would outperform all other methods.⁷ Criteria for choosing acceptable instructional medium. As previously said, there are several audiovisual aids available; nevertheless, the presenter or instructor must pick those that best complement the presentation. So, before selecting media, consider the following things (Persico 2006).

1. Media feasibility.
2. Audience demographics
3. Material accessibility
4. Audience attitudes and beliefs regarding media and methods.

Research Purpose

The primary goal of the research was to investigate instructors' and students' views about the usage of audiovisual resources in EFL courses.

Research Questions

What is the perspective of EFL instructors in Nepalese EFL classrooms regarding audio-visual materials?

What is the perspective of EFL instructors in Nepal on the use of current technologies in ELT?

Literature Review

In the classroom, English is taught as a foreign language, and it is rarely encountered outside of it. Research suggests that early language acquisition may lead to increased fluency and effectiveness (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010, p. 428). Not many schools use the opportunity to teach English to students in grades kindergarten through four, even though the Ministry of Education has given the green light to do so. Furthermore, the manner in which English is taught to young students is critical. Teachers must consider children's cognitive growth and abilities at their age (3-5). In his article from 2005, Linse makes the observation that "teachers of young learners have two jobs: to provide care and to provide instruction." To provide effective teaching, educational experiences should be tailored to each child's developmental stage.

Ur (1991) argues that teachers' abilities to effectively explain new ideas to their students may have a significant impact on the success or failure of a session. This is because teachers typically need to provide specific descriptions or definitions of concepts or processes when presenting new material. (p. 16)

Clear instructions are crucial for successful learning outcomes. This action study focusses on a particular method of instructing younger EFL learners. Ur (1991) defines instructions as "the directions given to introduce a learning task that requires some measure of independent student activity" (p. 16). Nunan (1991) emphasises that "teacher talk is central in the language class for classroom organisation and for the process of acquisition" (p. 189), given that instructions are provided by the teacher. Language learning requires clear input and directions (Linse, 2005; Liruso & Villanueva de Debat, 2003). Instructions should be clear, concise, and diversified (Linse, 2005; Nunan, 2010), including visual aids, concept checking questions, and pre-task demonstrations. This study's use of audiovisual elements aligned with existing literature. Audiovisual resources give clear instructions, pre-task demos, and crucial terminology.

Given that many younger learners lack literacy abilities (Pinter, 2006), effective teaching and task demonstration may enhance language learning outcomes. According to Dörnyei (quoted in Ellis, 2002), assignments should be presented in a motivating manner for pupils. According to Ellis (2002), encouraging students to watch a model of a task

might help them focus their attention. According to Coffey (2013), modelling happens when a teacher shows an activity for pupils to undertake independently. According to Haston (2007), teacher modelling for student imitation may be effective when utilised effectively (p. 26). Teachers should use visual, aural, kinaesthetic, and tactile methods to demonstrate key parts of a task (Intel Corporation, 2012). Providing learners with extra input during modelling enhances their comprehension of instructions. Prioritising student attention is crucial before beginning a task (Musthafa, 2010; Ur, 1991).

Modelling should be used into classroom routines, particularly for younger learners to foster familiarity. According to Kang Shin (2006), young learners thrive in regulated environments where they may repeat routines and activities. Basic procedures in the classroom might assist to manage young students.

An audiovisual materials-based teaching strategy may improve EFL young learners' understanding of instructions (p. 5). Furthermore, Touhill (2012) argues that "all children need a measure of routine and predictability in their day [for] it provides a significant sense of certainty and security" (p. 1).

When using visual aids, it's crucial to consider the learning styles of young students. Scrivener (2011) explains that some individuals learn better via visuals, while others prefer tactile experiences (p. 85). According to Nunan (2010) and Pinter (2006), the primary learning style of younger learners is visual, as described by Silverman (2005). According to Silverman (2005), visual learners, sometimes referred to as visual-spatial learners, have a strong visual sense. As noted by Hindal (2014), "through the visual learning system, the learner recognises objects, distinguishes sizes and shapes, perceives depth, notes colour, and uses visual-spatial awareness to estimate where he is" (p. 557; emphasis added). Visual learners, such as these younger learners, find it easier to recognise and correlate images with crucial language due to their visual nature.

In addition, younger students nowadays may belong to the group that has 60% visual or visual-kinesthetic learners (Jukes et al., 2010). Similarly, Kričelić and Skledar Matijević (2015) assert that "modern students reside in a world that is predominantly visual, characterised by an abundance of digital stimuli, technology, and media" (p. 110).

As a result, it makes sense for instructors to include a variety of visual elements into their courses.

Younger learners who do not comprehend English as well as their mother language may have challenges in the classroom.

The exposure of these learners to audiovisual materials, which are more realistic, will result in improved learning from them. According to Ciara (2016), audiovisual tools appeal to both visual and aural learning styles. However, they must be utilised cautiously in the classroom.

Aids must fulfil the classroom and curricular goals. As Daniel (2013) notes, audio-visual aids:

1. Assist in avoiding excessive, vacuous, and pointless verbalisation when teaching

2. English. Assist students in developing clear, correct English ideas.
3. Make teaching and learning more effective.
4. Add variation to your teaching.
5. Provide interest and inspiration.
6. Clarify the issue.
7. Conserve time and energy. (p. 3811)

Research Methods

The research paradigm, which is impacted by the study goal and questions, is a collection of assumptions and worldviews that shape the researcher's actions. Based on my research objective and questions, I employed the interpretive research paradigm and a case study research technique for the study. Interpretivism posits that different individuals have distinct views and see social reality from various angles. Interpretive research is non-statistical and focusses on subjective perceptions, personal constructs, negotiated meanings, and situational definitions. Interpretive scholars believe in the truth of people's subjective experiences with the world, and the ontology is therefore socially created. To investigate instructors' opinions regarding teacher-directed and student-directed translanguaging methods in Nepalese EFL classrooms, a case study, a qualitative research approach, was employed in this study.

Research Participants

The participants were two secondary-level English instructors from Parshuram Municipality. Model schools, which are recognised by the Ministry of Education for their quality education and well-equipped infrastructure, are defined as schools that are well-resourced and performing. They were specifically selected based on factors relevant to the current study's objectives. The criterion used to choose the participants were EFL instructors who had direct expertise with ICT and were willing to contribute their own opinions and experiences using multimedia in their EFL lesson. Three participants had less than 10 years of teaching experience, while one senior instructor had been teaching English for almost ten years. All participants spoke at least four languages, including English, Hindi, Nepali, and their own indigenous language, such as *Doteli*, with varying ability.

Research Instruments

Data was collected using three methods: observation, questionnaires, and interviews. The observations were carried out four times: once for each participant's class. The surveys were divided into two portions and included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The first component was meant to expose teachers' identities, linguistic backgrounds, and language competency, whilst the second half was primarily geared to study instructors' views regarding the use of audiovisual materials in ELT in the context of classes 11 and 12.

In the second segment, open-ended questions were used to elicit more explanations of participants' sentiments, beliefs, and intentions towards audio-visual resources, as guided by both instructors and students. Finally, four individuals took part in semi-structured interviews to check what they had indicated in the questionnaires and to elicit further information.

Research Procedures

First, the participants were watched once during their EFL lesson. The researcher then concentrated as a passive observer on monitoring, documenting, and noting the whole teaching and learning process, particularly during classroom language practice. Following that, the instructor participants were required to complete the previously specified questionnaires and undergo oral interviews.

The researcher used interview guidelines based on the completed questionnaires to allow participants to communicate their experiences without regard for the researcher's viewpoints or previous study results. The interview time and location were chosen to be convenient for both the researcher and the participants. The interview was recorded, transcribed, and analysed.

Data analysis

The data gathered from classroom observations, questionnaires, and interviews were analysed and organised into the following activities: (1) data condensation, (2) data presentation, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification. During the first activity, keywords and phrase analysis were used to classify participants' attitudes as positive or negative based on verbal expressions of emotions (affect), beliefs (cognition), and intentions. A phrase or argument that did not include a positive or negative evaluative word was classified as mixed. The findings of the study were presented in tables that included data analysis from surveys and interview transcriptions of the four instructors.

Results and Discussion

Teachers' attitudes about teacher-directed instruction. Table 1 depicts the instructors' attitudes regarding teacher-directed audio-visual tools for instruction.

Table 1

Teachers' Attitude Towards Teacher- oriented teaching

Respondents	Affect (Feeling / Emotion)	Cognition (Belief / Knowledge)	Conation (Intention / Behavior)
T1	Mixed	Positive	Positive
T2	Positive	Positive	Positive
T3	Negative	Positive	Positive
T4	Negative	Positive	Mixed

Most instructors have a good attitude towards teacher-directed audio-visual instruction, as shown by the eight positive remarks included in the table. There are also two bad remarks, and two additional comments are mixed.

Affect

Each participant has a varied reaction to the teacher-directed audio-visual elements utilised in instruction. Teacher 1 has conflicting feelings. Teacher 1 describes the teacher's usage of Nepalese and Doteli as typical rather than identifying specific feelings that might be classified as good or unpleasant. "I believe that is reasonable given the pupils' class. In class Xi, I used Nepali and Doteli more often, but in grades Xii and upwards, it has steadily decreased as pupils have gotten more conversant with English."

Unlike Teacher 1, Teacher 2 has a more optimistic outlook. She confesses that she is comfortable using languages other than English in class. "Using Nepali or Doteli in addition to English makes teaching more engaging and exciting. Most of the pupils in my class attended government elementary schools and had a weak command of English. Even if they are in grade Xi now, I believe I still need to utilise Nepali and Doteli to ensure that everyone understands the material." Teacher 2 believes that integrating Nepali and Doteli, as well as English, in her EFL lessons helps her meet the requirements of students with diverse linguistic backgrounds and English ability.

Discussion

Results indicate minor improvements, even in some sessions. Touhill (2012) suggests that familiar activities may offer participants with a feeling of confidence and assurance, leading to improved performance. These results were achieved when learners were exposed to videos, which were more appealing and engaging. Students accurately followed instructions, possibly due to clearer instructions provided through audiovisual materials. The technique improved learners' ability to follow instructions and speed, indicating a beneficial impact on performance. Gemalli Ulloa Salazar & Claudio Díaz Larenas Furthermore, this method got ingrained in the teachings. Learners took their time becoming comfortable with the method at first, but by the end of the session, they understood exactly what they needed to do for each activity. According to Krashen (1982) and Martínez Rincón (2014), learners who feel calm and confident in their English classes are more likely to study and acquire the language. According on the Likert scale results, learners saw this teaching technique as favourable to the quality of their own projects as well as those of their peers. Unnan (2010) says that kids this age worry more about themselves than anyone else. However, when asked about their peers and their work, most of them were able to give an answer. They seemed to be aware of not just their own work and how it had improved as a result of the usage of audiovisual resources, but also that of their classmates. It follows that participants likely considered this method to be beneficial for their personal learning as well as for the teachings. Regarding the students' various learning and working rhythms, it can be stated that the technique enabled them to work

equally, with no major disparities in performance. The six sessions included a wide range of instructional tools designed to meet the needs of students with varying learning styles. This technique addressed the variety of these children by providing instructional assistance. As Nunan (2010) points out, variety may be a strength: "if you can draw on diversity, then your teaching, and the consequent learning opportunities of the students, will be all the richer" (p. 11). If we desire an inclusive classroom, we must prepare and teach while considering all of our kids' needs, which will ultimately lead to more meaningful learning.

Conclusions

This study aimed to explore secondary-level English instructors' attitudes towards the use of audiovisual aids in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Parshuram Municipality. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the overall attitude of the participants toward teacher-directed audiovisual instruction is generally positive. Cognitive responses were overwhelmingly favorable, with all instructors recognizing the pedagogical benefits of using audiovisual tools to enhance student engagement, comprehension, and retention. The positive belief in the value of audiovisual resources suggests that instructors acknowledge their role in facilitating effective teaching and learning, particularly in linguistically diverse classrooms.

In terms of affect, the emotional responses were more mixed. While some instructors expressed positive feelings, particularly regarding the use of local languages (such as Nepali and *Doteli*) alongside English, others showed hesitance or negative emotions toward the challenges of using multimedia in a multilingual classroom setting. This variation in emotional response indicates that while instructors see the value in audiovisual aids, their emotional comfort levels in using them are influenced by factors such as language proficiency and student needs.

Regarding conation, or behavioral intentions, most instructors indicated a willingness to continue incorporating audiovisual tools into their lessons, reflecting their belief in its effectiveness. However, one participant exhibited a mixed response, suggesting that while the intention to use such tools exists, there are situational factors that may hinder full integration.

In conclusion, while the cognitive and behavioral attitudes of the instructors towards audiovisual aids are largely positive, their affective responses show that more support or training may be necessary to help educators feel more confident and comfortable in utilizing these tools in a linguistically complex classroom. Future research could further explore the factors influencing these affective responses and develop strategies to better support instructors in implementing audiovisual aids effectively.

Limitations of the Study and Future Studies

Because this is a context-specific action research study, the findings cannot be generalised. It is the reader's responsibility to choose the discoveries that will contribute

to his or her particular educational setting. Finally, kids with special needs should be kept in mind, since there was no assessment in this research to determine whether or not the method benefited this group of pupils. Further research might be undertaken on particular situations to examine how learners with special needs perform and react to this method. It would also be beneficial to do this research with a group of psychologists and special education instructors.

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INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CONSUMER'S BUYING DECISION OF FASHION PRODUCTS IN KATHMANDU

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Abstract

The objective of study to examine the relationships between key factors—Informativeness, E-WOM, Ad Perceived Value, Entertainment, and Consumer Buying Decisions. It focuses on how these factors influence consumer choices when buying fashion products online. The research targeted individuals who have used social media platforms for online shopping in the Kathmandu Valley, with a sample size of 282 participants. Convenience sampling was used to select participants. The study used correlational and causal-comparative research designs, gathering primary data through a survey questionnaire. Hypothesis testing and regression analysis were applied to understand the relationships between the factors influencing consumer buying decisions. The regression model revealed a moderate positive correlation between the predictor variables and consumer buying decisions, showing that these factors together explained a significant portion of the variation in buying decisions. The results indicate that Perceived Value of Ads and Entertainment have a moderate positive effect on consumer buying decisions. Participants who found ads valuable and entertaining were more likely to make a purchase. E-WOM and Informativeness also showed statistically significant, but slightly weaker, correlations with buying decisions. These findings emphasize the importance of creating advertisements that are both valuable and entertaining, providing useful insights for marketing strategies aimed at influencing consumer behavior.

Keywords: Consumer Buying Decision, Informativeness, E-WOM, Perceived Value of Ads, Entertainment

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Introduction

The rise of the internet and web-based platforms has transformed the business sector, significantly affecting traditional marketing methods (Ertemel & Ammoura, 2016). In the past, consumers primarily shopped in physical stores (Hsiao, 2009), but now social media platforms have become key shopping destinations. Social media, including popular sites like Facebook and Instagram, allows users to connect and interact, with Facebook and Instagram being particularly dominant in global usage (Steinfeld et al., 2007).

In Nepal, as of early 2022, Facebook had 12.3 million users and Instagram had 2.3 million users, reaching significant portions of the population (Kemp, 2022). This study focuses on the Kathmandu Valley's online retail fashion market, examining how social media marketing on platforms like Facebook and Instagram influences consumer behavior, especially in purchasing fashion items. Research shows that social media marketing plays a major role in shaping consumer decisions in the fashion sector, with strategies such as user-generated content, product demos, and influencer marketing being particularly effective (Shrestha & Karki, 2020).

While the impact of social media marketing is clear, challenges remain. Overuse of social media marketing can lead to customer fatigue and make it harder for brands to stand out in a crowded market (Wang & Chen, 2018). Additionally, social media may present an idealized image of fashion products that doesn't always align with reality, potentially misleading consumers (Shrestha & Karki, 2020). Despite these drawbacks, social media continues to be a crucial tool for fashion brands, offering broad reach, enhanced brand awareness, and the ability to influence consumer purchasing decisions.

The growing role of social media in consumer interactions has led brand managers to recognize its importance in engaging with customers effectively (Wiertz et al., 2013). With platforms like Facebook and Instagram playing a key role in marketing, businesses must adapt to constantly changing consumer preferences and behaviors (Eroglu, 2014). However, despite the significant investment in social media marketing by businesses aiming to influence purchase intention and foster loyalty (Ceyhan, 2019), research has found that the true impact of social media on customer purchasing decisions remains unclear (Neupane, 2019).

Organizations are struggling with shifting consumer behaviors, competitive pressures, and uncertainty about how to effectively interact with customers, leading to concerns about customer loyalty (Cetina et al., 2013). As a result, businesses are increasingly investing in consumer research to better understand the effects of social media marketing on purchasing decisions (Calder et al., 2010). However, there is still a lack of clarity regarding the specific elements that drive purchase intentions and brand loyalty. The primary issue here is the gap in knowledge about how social media marketing influences consumers' decisions to buy fashion products. This research aims to address

that gap by identifying the key factors that affect consumers' purchasing choices in the context of social media marketing.

Following are the questions which were answered by this research.

1. What is the status of social media marketing variables and consumer buying decision of fashion products?
2. Is there any relationship between social media marketing variables and consumer buying decision making variable of fashion products?

The general objective of this study is to understand social media marketing influence on consumer buying decision of fashion products in Kathmandu valley. In line with this, the specific objective are as follows:

1. To evaluate the status of social media marketing variables and consumer buying decision of fashion products.
2. To analyze the relationship between social media marketing variables and consumer buying decision making variable of fashion products.

Methods

The research is based on quantitative approach following the descriptive and causal research design. The information was obtained by creating a survey and distributing it to every fashion product buyer in the Kathmandu Valley who had ever made an online purchase. The results were solely dependent on the information and facts supplied by the sample population because the questionnaires were self-administered.

The research focused on individuals in the Kathmandu Valley who use social media for online fashion shopping. Since it's impossible to count all social media users, the population was considered unlimited. From this population, 385 questionnaires were distributed, and 282 complete responses were collected using judgmental sampling to ensure accuracy. Convenience sampling was used for selecting the sample.

The primary data for this study was collected through a survey, using a structured questionnaire with two sections. The first section gathered demographic information (age, gender, income, and education level), while the second focused on respondents' agreement with items representing the study's dependent and independent variables, using a five-point Likert scale. In addition to primary data, secondary sources were also reviewed, including previously published articles from online marketing journals.

The primary data for this study was collected using a survey questionnaire, which was developed based on relevant prior research (Gaudel, 2019). The questionnaire had two sections: the first collected demographic information, while the second asked respondents about their views on key independent and dependent variables. The questionnaires were distributed in multiple formats, including hardcopy, mail, messenger, and Instagram. Respondents who received a printed questionnaire filled it out manually, while those who received the digital version completed it via Google Forms.

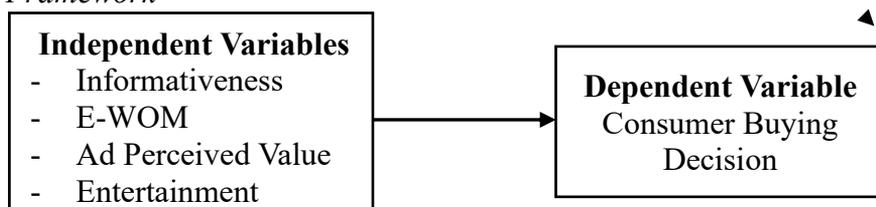
A total of 282 valid responses were collected for analysis. The questionnaire included both categorical and numerical variables. In the demographic section, questions on gender, age group, income, and education level used ordinal scales, with gender being a nominal variable. The second section consisted of ordinal-scale items based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess agreement with various statements

In this study, the instruments used to measure variables were statistical tools, as the research followed a quantitative approach. A survey questionnaire was the primary data collection method, and statistical techniques were applied to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics, including tables, were used to summarize the data (e.g., frequency percentages, mean, median, and standard deviation). For inferential statistics, regression analysis and hypothesis testing were employed to examine correlations between the justice dimension variables and customer satisfaction. These methods allowed for predictions and deeper insights from the data.

The reliability of the survey items was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha test, which is widely used to assess reliability (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The test was conducted using IBM SPSS version 26. The Cronbach alpha values for the variables were as follows: Consumer Buying Decision (0.933), Informativeness (0.941), E-WOM (0.895), Perceived Value of Ads (0.807), and Entertainment (0.886). As all values exceed 0.70, the data is considered reliable, with ratings above 0.80 indicating good reliability, as per Churchill Jr. (1979).

This study intended to explore various factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions in the context of Nepal's online retail fashion industry, with a focus on social media marketing. The objective is to offer valuable insights to organizations and strategists by identifying the most significant factors that Nepalese customers consider when making purchasing decisions. These key factors, derived from the literature review on the online retail fashion sector in Nepal, guided the research framework for the study.

Figure 1
Research Framework



Source: Gaudel (2019)

Results and Discussion

Data was gathered through a self-administered questionnaire targeting fashion product buyers who had previously engaged in online shopping. The collected data was analyzed

using SPSS, and the respondents' profiles were categorized based on gender, age, income, and education level. The survey showed the following demographic characteristics: 51.8% of respondents were female, and 48.2% were male, indicating a fairly balanced gender distribution (Table 1). Age-wise, the majority of respondents (46.8%) were between 20 to 30 years old, followed by those aged 30 to 40 years (31.2%). Younger age groups had fewer participants, with only 11.7% below 20 years and 1.8% over 50 years. Income distribution showed that 30.2% of respondents earned below Rs. 20,000, while 21.6% earned above Rs. 50,000, with various income ranges represented throughout the sample. In terms of education, most respondents had completed a Bachelor's degree (42.6%), with 24.1% holding a Master's degree or higher.

Analysis of Social Media Marketing Variables

This study section describes the descriptive analysis of the information gathered from respondents via questionnaires during the investigation. Descriptive analysis uses statistical metrics and methods to provide an explanation for the data. The three statistical metrics are the standard deviation, mean, and frequency. The tabular version of this mean and standard deviation is displayed. Questions are posed for this investigation.

Informativeness section consist of four questions which explain how Facebook and Instagram are helping respondents to make informed decision.

Table 1
Summary statistics of informativeness

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Facebook and Instagram ads help keep me up to date with new and trending fashion products	1	5	3.34	1.227
Facebook and Instagram advertisements allow me to make better purchasing decision	1	5	3.22	1.149
Facebook and Instagram ads are convenient source of products information	1	5	3.27	1.230
Facebook and Instagram ads are valuable source of a product information	1	5	3.38	1.182

The Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for four statements related to Facebook and Instagram ads, reflecting the responses from 282 participants. Each statement was rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents Strongly Disagree and 5 corresponds to Strongly Agree.

The statement that received the highest mean score (3.38) is Facebook and Instagram ads are a valuable source of product information. This relatively high mean score suggests that respondents, on average, hold a favorable view of these social media advertisements as valuable resources for accessing information about various products. Conversely, the statement with the lowest mean score (3.22), Facebook and Instagram

advertisements allow me to make better purchasing decisions, garnered a slightly lower level of agreement.

Table 2
Summary statistics of E-WOM

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
I often read online recommendations to buy product online	1	5	3.38	1.353
To choose the right products or brands, I often read online reviews of products and brands provided in Facebook and Instagram pages	1	5	3.38	1.274
I am willing to share my experiences with products and brands on Facebook and Instagram	1	5	3.11	1.260
To make sure that I buy the right products, I often go through consumer reviews on respective Facebook and Instagram pages	1	5	3.66	1.213

Table 2 displays descriptive statistics for four statements related to online shopping behavior and engagement with Facebook and Instagram. The data is derived from responses collected from 282 participants, who rated each statement on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree and 5 representing Strongly Agree.

The statement with the highest mean score (3.66) is "To make sure that I buy the right products, I often go through consumer reviews on respective Facebook and Instagram pages." This higher mean score suggests that, on average, respondents exhibit a notable inclination to rely on consumer reviews on Facebook and Instagram pages to guide their product purchasing decisions. Conversely, the statement with the lowest mean score (3.11) is "I am willing to share my experiences with products and brands on Facebook and Instagram." This lower mean score suggests that respondents, on average, hold a more moderate willingness to share their product and brand experiences on these social media platforms.

Table 3
Summary statistics of perceived value of advertisements

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
I do believe that I can depend on Facebook and Instagram advertising to make purchasing decisions	1	5	2.80	1.240
I do believe that the information provided in Facebook and Instagram Ads are sincere	1	5	2.79	1.168
I do believe that Facebook and Instagram advertisements deliver valuable offers and information related to new and existing products	1	5	3.11	1.131
I believe marketing done via Facebook and Instagram add value to consumers by saving consumers time, resources, enabling convenience and by easing the shopping	1	5	3.50	1.142

The Table 3 presents descriptive statistics for four statements that explore beliefs and perceptions of Facebook and Instagram advertising. The data is based on responses from 282 participants who rated each statement on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly Agree."

The statement with the highest mean score (3.50) is "I believe marketing done via Facebook and Instagram adds value to consumers by saving consumers time, resources, enabling convenience, and by easing the shopping." This higher mean score suggests that, on average, respondents strongly believe that marketing efforts carried out through Facebook and Instagram contribute positively to consumers' experiences. Conversely, the statement with the lowest mean score (2.79) is "I do believe that the information provided in Facebook and Instagram Ads is sincere." This lower mean score indicates that respondents, on average, have a more reserved belief in the authenticity of information presented in these advertisements.

Entertainment experiences with Facebook and Instagram advertisements. The statement regarding with responsiveness are as follows:

Table 4
Entertainment experiences

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
I enjoy watching Facebook and Instagram advertisements	1	5	2.79	1.284
Facebook and Instagram advertisements are clever and quite entertaining	1	5	3.04	1.216
Facebook and Instagram advertisements are fun to watch or read	1	5	3.10	1.236
Facebook and Instagram ads do not just sell, they also entertain me	1	5	3.10	1.267

The Table 4 displays descriptive statistics for four statements that explore participants' entertainment experiences with Facebook and Instagram advertisements. The data is based on responses from 282 participants who rated each statement on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly Agree."

The statement with the highest mean score (3.10) is "Facebook and Instagram advertisements are fun to watch or read." This higher mean score suggests that, on average, respondents find these advertisements on social media platforms to be engaging and entertaining. The elevated mean score indicates that a notable segment of respondents perceive these ads as sources of enjoyment, either due to their visual appeal, creative content, or engaging presentation. Conversely, the statement with the lowest mean score (2.79) is "I enjoy watching Facebook and Instagram advertisements." This lower mean score signifies that respondent, on average, expressed a more moderate level of enjoyment when watching these advertisements.

The mean and standard deviation of independent and dependent variables are shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Mean and standard deviation of all variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Informativeness	3.3023	.90970
EWOM	3.3839	.95915
Perceived Value of Ads	3.0904	.86411
Entertainment	3.0071	1.00773

Looking at the data, "Informativeness" has a mean of approximately 3.30, suggesting that participants, on average, find the content informative, with responses varying moderately (standard deviation of 0.91). Similarly, "EWOM" shows a mean of about 3.38, indicating participants generally engage in electronic word of mouth, with some diversity in opinions (standard deviation of 0.96).

The Table 6 presents descriptive statistics for four statements that explore participants' behaviors and responses concerning Facebook and Instagram advertisements. The data is based on responses from 282 participants, who rated each statement on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly Agree."

Table 6
Consumer Buying Decision

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
I look for information about products advertised on Facebook and Instagram	1	5	3.18	1.219
I buy products advertised on Facebook and Instagram	1	5	3.11	1.138
My buying decisions are highly influenced by Facebook and Instagram advertisements	1	5	3.06	1.231
I purchase products that are on video and pictorial ads on my Facebook and Instagram	1	5	3.25	1.272

The Table 6 shows statement with the highest mean score (3.25) is "I purchase products that are on video and pictorial ads on my Facebook and Instagram." This elevated mean score signifies that, on average, respondents tend to consider video and pictorial advertisements on their Facebook and Instagram feeds as influential factors in their purchasing decisions. Conversely, the statement with the lowest mean score (3.06) is "My buying decisions are highly influenced by Facebook and Instagram advertisements." This slightly lower mean score suggests that, on average, respondents have a more moderate level of agreement regarding the strong influence of Facebook and Instagram advertisements on their purchasing decisions.

Consumer Buying Decision has a mean of approximately 3.15, indicating that participants' buying decisions are somewhat influenced by the variables considered in the study, and responses have moderate variability (standard deviation of 0.95). Overall, these

statistics help to understand both the general consensus and the range of perspectives among participants regarding the assessed variables. This result shows that the most of the response are agreed to the question asked towards the consumer buying decision.

Relationship between Social Media Marketing Variables and Consumer Buying Decisions

The dependent variable, Consumer Buying Decision, is the focal point of the study, indicating the variable researchers want to understand or predict. The correlation coefficient between Consumer Buying Decision and Informativeness is approximately 0.396, indicating a positive but moderately weak correlation. This suggests that as participants perceive content as informative, their buying decisions tend to have a slightly positive association with that perception.

Consumer Buying Decision and E-WOM have a correlation coefficient of around 0.422, suggesting a positive but again moderately weak correlation. This implies that when participants engage in electronic word of mouth, their buying decisions also exhibit a slightly positive correlation with this behavior.

The correlation coefficient between Consumer Buying Decision and Perceived Value of Ads is about 0.503, indicating a moderately positive correlation. This suggests that participants who perceive value in ads tend to have a more positive relationship with their buying decisions.

Consumer Buying Decision and Entertainment have a correlation coefficient of approximately 0.438, indicating a positive but moderately weak correlation. This implies that participants who find ads entertaining tend to have a slightly positive correlation with their buying decisions.

Impact of Social Media Marketing Variables on Consumer Buying Decisions

The impact of several independent factors on a single dependent variable is examined using multiple regression analysis. Consequently, the influence of social media marketing variables on customer purchasing decisions is examined using multiple regression analysis.

The coefficient of determination (R Square) is around 0.335. This statistic reveals that about 33.5% of the variability in the dependent variable can be explained by the predictor variables included in the model. This suggests a moderate level of predictability, meaning that the selected predictors collectively have a notable impact on the outcome. The adjusted R Square, which stands at approximately 0.326, provides a more conservative estimation of the proportion of variance explained by the model. This adjustment accounts for the complexity of the model and helps ensure a more accurate assessment of the explanatory power of the predictors.

The results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the regression model. ANOVA assesses the overall significance of the regression model by comparing the variability explained by the model (Regression) with the unexplained variability (Residual) in the dependent variable. The p-value associated with the F-statistic is .000. This p-value is

used to determine the statistical significance of the model. In this case, the p-value is very close to zero which means the model is highly statistically significant.

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis shows the coefficients for each predictor variable along with their standard errors, standardized coefficients (Beta), t-values, and significance levels. The coefficient for the predictor variable IN is .125. This indicates that for a one-unit increase in IN, the dependent variable CB is estimated to increase by .125 units, holding other variables constant. The standard error for IN is .063, and the associated t-value is 1.966. The p-value of .050 suggests that the relationship between IN and CB is marginally statistically significant. The coefficient for the predictor variable EW is .154. This suggests that a one-unit increase in EW is associated with a .154-unit increase in CB, while other variables remain constant. The standard error for EW is .062, and the associated t-value is 2.472. The p-value of .014 indicates that the relationship between EW and CB is statistically significant.

The coefficient for the predictor variable AP is .273. This implies that a one-unit increase in AP leads to a .273-unit increase in CB, keeping other variables constant. The standard error for AP is .072, and the associated t-value is 3.793. The p-value of .000 indicates that the relationship between AP and CB is highly statistically significant. The coefficient for the predictor variable ET is .207. This suggests that a one-unit increase in ET is associated with a .207-unit increase in CB, while other variables remain constant. The standard error for ET is .054, and the associated t-value is 3.812. The p-value of .000 suggests that the relationship between ET and CB is highly statistically significant.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: There is significant impact of Informativeness on consumer buying decision of fashion products. The p value of informativeness regarding influence of social media marketing of fashion products in Kathmandu valley is 0.050 ($P \leq 0.05$). Alternative hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Thus, informativeness has significant impact on consumer buying decision of fashion products in Kathmandu valley.

H2: There is significant impact of E-WOM on consumer buying decision of fashion products. The p value of E-WOM regarding influence of social media marketing of fashion products in Kathmandu valley is 0.014 ($P \leq 0.05$). Alternative hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Thus, E-WOM has significant impact on consumer buying decision of fashion products in Kathmandu valley.

H3: There is significant impact of Ad Perceived Value on consumer buying decision of fashion products. The p value of Ad Perceived Value regarding influence of social media marketing of fashion products in Kathmandu valley is 0.000 ($P \leq 0.05$). Alternative hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Thus, Ad Perceived Value has significant impact on consumer buying decision of fashion products in Kathmandu valley.

H4: There is significant impact of Entertainment on consumer buying decision of fashion products. The p value of Entertainment regarding influence of social media marketing of fashion products in Kathmandu valley is 0.000 ($P \leq 0.05$). Alternative

hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Thus, Entertainment has significant impact on consumer buying decision of fashion products in Kathmandu valley.

Discussion

The study found that social network marketing as informativeness had positively and significantly influenced consumer buying decision in fashion products. Similarly, Mathews and Ohajionu (2019) results showed that social network marketing as informativeness had positively and significantly influenced consumer purchase behavior. But in the contrary, Nuseir (2020) found that social network marketing as informativeness had negatively and insignificantly influenced consumer buying decision.

Similarly, this study shows that social network marketing as E-WOM had positively and significantly influenced consumer buying decision in fashion products. Similarly, Dulek and Aydin (2020) results showed that social network marketing as E-WOM had positively and significantly influenced consumer purchase behavior. But in the contrary, Ashmond et al. (2021) found that social network marketing as E-WOM had negatively and insignificantly influenced consumer buying decision.

Likewise, this study also found that social network marketing as ad perceived value had positively and significantly influenced consumer buying decision in fashion products. Similarly, Wrangmo et al. (2013) results showed that social network marketing as ad perceived value had positively and significantly influenced consumer purchase behavior. But in the contrary, Neupane (2019) found that social network marketing as ad perceived value had negatively and insignificantly influenced consumer buying decision.

Lastly, this study found that social network marketing as entertainment had positively and significantly influenced consumer buying decision in fashion products. Similarly, Gholampour et al. (2022) results showed that social network marketing as entertainment had positively and significantly influenced consumer purchase behavior in Facebook Marketplace. But in the contrary, Ashmond et al. (2021) found that social network marketing as entertainment had negatively and insignificantly influenced consumer buying decision in fashion products.

Conclusion

The correlation analysis initially shows the numerous interconnections between predictor variables and consumer buying decisions. Notably, variables such as Perceived Value of Ads and Entertainment surfaced as moderate positive correlates, suggesting their pivotal roles in shaping purchasing choices. Electronic Word of Mouth and Informativeness also emerged as statistically significant contributors, albeit with slightly more modest associations. Building upon these correlations, the subsequent regression analysis provided a deeper dive into the predictive power of the predictor variables. The regression model demonstrated that both Perceived Value of Ads and Entertainment wielded significant influence on consumer buying decisions, substantiated by robust

unstandardized coefficients. Electronic Word of Mouth and Informativeness, while presenting relatively smaller coefficients, retained their importance in shaping consumer behavior.

Mutually, these findings underscore the intricate tapestry of factors guiding consumer buying decisions. The analyses underscored the prominent roles of perceived value and entertainment value in advertisements, shedding light on their potential to sway choices. Also, the acknowledgment of Electronic Word of Mouth and Informativeness as significant contributors showcases the diverse spectrum of influences that can prompt consumers to take action.

This study provides invaluable insights for crafting effective marketing strategies. The knowledge that the perceived and entertainment values of advertisements significantly impact consumer behavior serves as a compass for businesses seeking to engage and resonate with their target audience. By aligning advertising efforts with these influential factors, companies can enhance their ability to influence consumer buying decisions and create impactful connections in an ever-evolving marketplace.

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AUTHOR GUIDELINES FOR SOUTHWESTERN RESEARCH JOURNAL (SRJ)

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