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Editorial

KMC Research Journal is a peer reviewed multi-disciplinary journal published by Research Management Cell (RMC) of Koteshwor Multiple Campus, Koteshwor, Kathmandu. It includes research based articles from diverse fields of humanities and social sciences, management, and other disciplines. We follow a rigorous double blind review process for selecting the articles to be published in this journal. The accepted articles after double blind reviews are forwarded to the editorial process before they are finalized for publication.

There are ten selected articles from various subjects and disciplines like language and literature, art and culture, management, education, health and other issues of humanities and social sciences in this volume.

The editorial board of KMC Research Journal is grateful to the Research Management Cell (RMC) of Koteshwor Multiple Campus for publishing this issue on time. We are also thankful to all researchers for their invaluable research work and contribution to this issue by providing their articles for publication. We expect original research based papers for our upcoming issue in the same way. Researchers and academic scholars are encouraged to send their pure research based papers to the editorial board.

Editorial Board

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2022

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Geographical Alienation of Migrant Ranch Workers in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*

Agni Adhikari¹,
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Abstract

Of Mice and Men, a novella of John Steinbeck tells the story of American migrant ranch workers. This article observes and analyzes the alienation of the migrant ranch workers in the novella *Of Mice and Men* in Depression-era America in relation to American geography. The issue revolves around the major characters: George Milton and Lennie Small, as well as other minor characters. The characters in the novella suffer from alienation caused by unfair geographical conditions resulting from the uneven distribution of means and resources. After all, the characters become the victim of mental retardation and they perform inhospitable behavior to one another. To explore this state of alienation and geography, this article applies library research and content analysis of the novella. To moor the issue, the Marxist theory of alienation has been applied that discusses the influence of class economy in human interaction. According to Marx, in the capitalist mode of production, a worker is alienated from the production process, nature, society, and hence finally, with himself. In the novella, alienation related to geography is depicted in subtle and clear forms that the characters feel disconnected from society and the surrounding environment and ultimately from their intimate ones. The theme of alienation and geography is depicted in the relationship the characters share, in the plot, which presents the movement of the major characters from ranch to ranch in pursuit of the American dream, and in the setting, which represents Weed, California, as the place of poverty and inequality during the depression era. The harsh geographical conditions, as depicted in the novella, contribute to the theme of alienation of the migrant ranch workers, who are surrounded by poverty even in the crowded setting.

Keywords: Alienation, geography, ranch workers, unequal distribution, agony of poverty.

Introduction

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* depicts the unstable life of migrant ranch workers

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in Depression-era America. In this novella, the characters struggle with the issue of alienation, which is particularly caused by unfavorable geographical conditions. Thus, this research paper has attempted to uncover the theme of alienation in relation to geography from the novel. The article has been delimited upon the two major characters: George and Lennie. The discussion is made around the following research questions:

- ❖ What forms of alienation are evident in lower and middle class as portrayed in the novel?
- ❖ How do the major characters behave differently and unstably as a consequence of alienation and estrangement?
- ❖ How does the adversarial geographical condition contribute to the character's feeling of alienation in the novella?

The study of alienation in relation to geography in this novella is important because it provides insights into the social and economic as well as psychological conditions of depression era America, particularly for migrant ranch workers. It is also possible to understand the impact of poverty, inequality, and constant migration on the characters' lives and relationships. Likewise, the study of alienation in relation to geography can also shed light on more significant social issues, such as: influence of the class economy on human interactions and effects of economic and political instability in individuals and communities. This research can contribute to a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural context of the novel. Its themes and issues can provide valuable insights for observing human behaviors in contemporary society.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, geography is the scientific study of the earth's surface, physical features, divisions, products, population, etc. Place, space, location, pattern, regionalization, globalization, flows, networks, nature and society are the main geographical concepts, so nature and society are considered major elements of geography. The characters of this novella, being victims of the great depression, seek joy, pleasure and satisfaction in nature. The novella starts with the geographical description where Salinas River, yellow sand, Gabilon mountain and many flora and fauna are picturized vividly.

Writers and researches such as Nazanin Shayesteh, Clare Lawrence, Artis-Ann, Farzaneh Haratyan, Maria Guilhermina Silva and so on have focused on other aspects related to this novella, however, the issue of alienation and geography has not been highlighted. The novel has also been prescribed as part of the curriculum so that the research will be helpful to make a class discussion among students. The research gap is discussed in association with the aforementioned literature review. It is discussed in the following way:

- ❖ Very few researches have been conducted on alienation and geography related to this novel.
- ❖ The research works on the issue of economic reality which impacts human psychology and molds human dealings.

This article is based on library research which depends on literature review and content analysis. Likewise, the lines from the novella are also taken to prove the relevance of the theoretical base of the studies. Likewise, appropriate statements of the theorists are also cited to clarify the issue of the novel.

Alienation is a particularly popular concept used in Marxist discourse. It is the heart of a number of ideas and arguments and often has a very mystical nature. Alienation is also a concept that is frequently misunderstood or misused which is why it is important to become acquainted with Marx's description of alienation as well as its significance to Marxist theory.

Alienation refers to the feeling of disconnection of a person from family, society or the group of people. It is also a feeling when a person identifies himself having a lower level of affinity. The person suffers from a low degree of integration or common values, and simultaneously, he has a higher degree of distance and isolation. The concept involves a complex of sentiments and attitudes alienation from work includes especially the feelings of powerlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement (E. G. West, 1969).

Karl Marx directly connects alienation to estrangement of the working class people as a consequence of division of labor. It includes a social stratification by which the working class people feel inferior and isolated. Furthermore, alienation results in the consequence of being mechanical part of a social class, the condition of which estranges a person from his/her humanity. To the discussion of alienation, Marx argues:

Let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have, in two ways, affirmed himself, and the other person. (i) In my production I would have objectified my individuality, its specific character, and, therefore, enjoyed not only an individual manifestation of my life during the activity, but also, when looking at the object, I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be objective, visible to the senses, and, hence, a power beyond all doubt. (ii) In your enjoyment, or use, of my product I would have the direct enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature ... Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature (Marx, 1932, p.71).

Similarly, self-estrangement is a condition in which a worker becomes 'alienated from his inner self, experiencing a kind of depersonalized detachment rather than an immediate involvement or engrossment in the job tasks' (E. G. West, 1969). The relationship between alienation and geography is complex and multidimensional, but in general, geography can both cause and exacerbate feelings of alienation. Alienation can be defined as a feeling of estrangement or disconnection from one's surroundings, whether it be from one's community, society, or the natural world. When a wo/man is well off, s/he forgets nature and starts to plunge into the material world. S/he forgets her/his land or geography too. After falling victim to an accident while enjoying immense luxury, s/he again becomes a proletarian whose companion is nature. Thus s/he returns from nature to nature again. Hence alienation and geography are together with each other in crisis. Geographers started to incorporate a Marxist definition of alienation into their work in the 1970s, and the concept was particularly engaged during the late 1970s and early 1980s when geographers following humanistic and Marxist traditions attempted to discover common ground. However, the term is now rarely used, indicating the profound shift in the terrain of debate in recent years as various issues raised within feminism, post-structuralism, post-colonialism and cultural theory have come to the fore.

People who leave their homelands for economic, social, and other reasons feel isolated in the other distant lands. It is very hard for them to sustain in such an environment because it will be a challenge for them to win the hearts of local people, to get secure jobs and survive comfortably. They cannot return to their native lands because they have committed some sort of crimes there and are punishable. Though the present land may be beautiful and notable, they cannot enjoy the beauty of it, nor can they take advantage of the pleasant nature. They always feel alienated and alone. Melvin Seeman, an American social psychologist, has explained five varieties of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. The major characters, the ranch workers described herein *Of Mice and Men*, are also suffering from the same problems. They have left their native land and are alienated due to geography. This novella begins with the story of two fugitive ranch workers: George Milton and Lennie Small in Weed, California. George is an intelligent but uneducated man, and Lennie is a bulky strong but mentally unstable fellow. They hope one day to attain the dream of settling down on their own piece of land. Lennie's dream is merely to tend and pet rabbits, as he likes patting soft things. Lennie is an emotionally uncontrolled person, and he once grabbed the skirt of a young woman and would not let her go. This incident led Lenny to an accusation of rape, and both of them left their ranch in Weed, California. George is Lenny's protector and guardian, and he constantly retells Lenny about their favorite dream, which is to be the owner of their own land. The pair are hired into the new field, but they are confronted by Curley, the boss's son and a very short-tempered person. Curley has a Napoleon complex, and

he dislikes larger men. Curley has a flirtatious and provocative underaged wife to whom Lennie is attracted. Lennie starts to flirt with Curley's wife, which makes his antagonism to Curley. Likewise, George and Lennie also meet Candy, an elderly ranch handyman with one hand and a loyal dog, and Slim, an intelligent and gentle leader driver of a team of mules whose dog has recently had a litter of puppies. Slim offers a puppy to Lennie and Candy, whose loyal, accomplished sheepdog was put down by fellow ranch hand Carlson.

In spite of their problems with Curley, they make an affinity with Candy. Candy offers to pitch in \$350 to George and Lennie so that they can afford for their own farm by the end of the month. The three become very excited. However, their excitement does not remain long when Lennie crushes Curley's arm in a confrontation. Slim warns Curley that if he tries to get George and Lennie fired, he will be the laughingstock of the farm.

After that, George starts to isolate Lennie, and Lennie develops his communication to Crooks, another ranch worker who is isolated because of being black. Curley's wife also enters the stable and starts flirting with them. The next day, Curley's wife tells Lenny how her dream of being a film star has been crushed because of her husband's nature. She gives her hair to Lenny, and he starts to pat on her hair. After some time, she screams by the forcible touch of Lenny upon her hair. Lennie immediately strangles her neck and kills her. Lennie escapes from the stable before the police's arrival. George realizes the complexity of the case and he follows Lennie. He shoots Lennie at the end of the novella.

Geographical Discomfort and Alienation

Alienation refers to rootlessness or realization of isolation which forms the subject matter for observing the literary text. In contemporary writing, the subject of alienation has been explored in a variety of ways. A common theme in a lot of 20th century American and European novels is the estranged protagonist. The existentialist literature has addressed alienation in all of its aspects. Due to historical and sociocultural factors, it was also able to influence American English literature. Loss of identity leads to alienation. Modern fiction frequently explores the issue of the dispossessed personality's struggle for identity.

One of the significant factors which contribute to alienation in the characters is adverse geographical conditions. Firstly, the growing urbanization causes alienation of persons in the modern world, as stated in the discussion of how uncomfortable topography contributes to alienation by geographer Edward Relph:

The rapid growth of cities and proliferation of standardized environments have created a sense of placelessness, of alienation from the environment in which connection with the natural world and with other human beings have been broken. (Relph, 1976, p. 143)

The aforementioned lines also prove how a person seeks her/his connection to nature as he suffers from solitude in the urban area. As the person cannot accompany other persons, he finds himself alienated.

Another critic who has connected geographical connection to alienation is David Mithcell. He points out:

Geography can be a source of estrangement and disaffection for individuals and communities, as it can reinforce power relations and institutional practices that contribute to feelings of isolation and separation from others. (Mitchell, 2004, p. 125)

According to Mithcell, geography can not only be a source of estrangement and dissatisfaction for individuals but also it can be so for communities. Mithcell emphasizes that geography can play an important role both in individual and social parts as a source of alienation. There are many problems in the community such as crime, domestic violence, ethnic conflict, poverty, and so on and geographical isolation worsen such problems. In his book, *The production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre, a French Marxist critic, argues that geography is one of the vital things which reflects the social structure and power relations, through which a person experiences alienation. He argues: "The landscape of alienation is a product of the social order that creates it, just as the production of space is a product of the society that produces it" (Lefebvre, 1991, p.33). Social order creates the scenery of alienation. If the social system is effective, the social landscape will also be prosperous, as a result of which the people living in the society will progress. Poor social order pushes society towards poverty and people flee from their society to escape poverty.

Alienation and Geographical Theme

According to the story in the novella, in this research, an attempt has been made to find out deeply about the elements, causes, and effects of alienation and geography in society. The reality of every society is class conflict and people are lonely because of this class. The major characters: George and Lennie, in this novella are portrayed as lower class ranch workers who are socially, economically and even emotionally isolated. In the discussion of the novella, George once says to other ranch workers:

Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place....With us it ain't like that. We got somebody to talk to that gives a damn about us (Steinbeck, 1937, p.13).

The aforementioned lines indicate the transient lifestyle of the marginalized ranch workers who constantly face economic marginalization. They experience alienation and displacement frequently. Likewise, the characters also have the quest of earning social prestige by being an owner of their own land and by overcoming destitution. George once speaks to Lennie as:

"Someday – ' 'we're gonna get the jack together and we're gonna have a little house and a couple of acres an' a cow and some pigs and—" (p. 15). In George's voice he shares his dream of becoming self-reliant, however, such dream becomes unfulfilled and even they lack faith among each other despite being close friends. The central character George faces a lot of hope and despair in this novel as he has a responsibility of handling his mentally retarded guy, Lennie, however, Lennie's frequent repetition of silly things frustrates him. This situation leads to an investigation of the various forms of alienation and estrangement in this novella.

Similarly, the novella is contextually connected to the depression era of America which is also a cause of alienation and migration to different geographical locations of the characters. It was a very worst downturn in the American economy which has resulted in destitution of many people. It began with the crash of the stock market in 1929 and lasted in 1939. In this era, there was a massive decline of industrial and trade sectors; as a consequence people lost their property and they became unemployed. The people wandered from place to place in quest of job/employment after they became homeless. In the novel too, we can find out the effect of depression. In the novel, the old character named Candy says when he sees George and Lennie at the first working in the ranch:

I seen hundreds of men come by on the road an' on the ranches, with their bindles on their back an' that some damn thing in their heads. Hundreds of them. They come, an' they quit an' go on; an' every damn one of 'em's got a little piece of land in his head. An' never a God damn one of 'em ever gets it." (p. 74)

The aforementioned lines indicate that George and Lennie are the representative characters who have become a victim of economic depression who migrate from place to place in pursuit of employment. It is the economic reality which has obliged the characters to wander here and there who don't have enough resources.

After all, the plot of the novella tells about the life of farmers and ranchers and the continuous harvest failures that required them to leave their homeland to Southern California in the hope that this place is better than before. Overall, it reflected the great depression that occurred in America around the 1930s.

Alienation in the Setting of the Novella

Setting of a novel includes the geography too. In *Of Mice and Men*, Steinbeck uses the setting of the novel, a ranch in California, to convey the theme of alienation through geography. The ranch is located in a remote and desolate area, which serves to isolate the characters from the rest of society. A ranch is also a transient place where the workers are always on the move and do not have a sense of belonging. This sense

of isolation and rootlessness is a reflection of the larger societal alienation that the characters experience as itinerant workers during the Great Depression.

In the novella, the characters live in a bunkhouse. The place Weed, California is a barren land with low productivity. In the opening lines of the novella Steinbeck demonstrates the location of the story as: "A few miles south of Soledad, the Salinas River drops in close to the hillside bank and runs deep and green" (p. 1).

The characters dream of owning their own piece of land, a place where they can settle down and escape their current state of alienation, but this dream is never realized. Their longing for a sense of belonging, a home, is constantly thwarted by their circumstances, as they are forced to wander from place to place in search of work. Furthermore, the characters' physical distance from society makes them invisible to society and their issues, problems, and aspirations are not considered. They are not able to voice their opinions and society doesn't care about their struggles.

Steinbeck uses the setting of the ranch in *Of Mice and Men* to convey the theme of alienation through geography. The remote and transient nature of the ranch serves to isolate the characters and reflects larger societal alienation that they experience as itinerant workers during the Great Depression. The novella indicates its time setting as:

The bunkhouse was a long, rectangular building. Inside, the walls were whitewashed and the floor unpainted. In three walls there were small, square windows, and in the fourth, a solid door with a wooden latch. Against the walls were eight bunks, five of them made up with blankets and the other three showing their burlap ticking (p. 16).

Thus, the novella highlights the geographical causes of alienation through its setting. It employs an isolated region such as a small town, a rural community or an island where central characters feel disconnected from the rest of the world. Likewise there is a reflection of a sense of desolation, bleakness, or hostility, which also indicates characters' isolation. The characters also occupy the sense of being cut off from civilization owing to rough terrain and lack of resources. Finally, the geographical setting highlights the challenges and struggles faced by the main characters as they search their way out to overcome destruction.

The Geographically Alienated Characters

In the novella, the central characters have a close connection to the geography as they feel frequent alienation. The characters show various forms of alienation as they are the victims of the unfavorable geography. Firstly, George and Lennie wander in different places in search of stable work; however, they are always outsiders. They could not become a full part of any community. In spite of having a dream of owning their own land they are unable to connect themselves to the surrounding environment.

Candy is another character who is also alienated from other workers. He lives in a separate room which is near the barn with another man. His physical distance from the other men employs his sense of loneliness and isolation and he is unable to participate in the activities of other ranch workers. Likewise Crooks is the ranch worker of a different race. He stays in a separate place apart from others because of his inferiority complex caused by his race. Curley is also a character who is alienated from other ranch workers. He is alienated by the geography of the ranch because he is physically isolated from the other workers. He lives in a separate room near to the barn which contributes to his sense of loneliness.

The novella also demonstrates the different behaviors as they are alienated through geographical settings such as: change in attitude, quest of self-reliance, lack of faith upon one another, higher sense of vulnerability, social withdrawal and lack of adaptation in new culture. In this novel, the characters do not have a stable relationship among one another. In other words, they fail to develop their faith in themselves. At the beginning, George and Lennie are isolated from the ranch of Weed, California because of Lennie's improper behavior with a woman. The fault is of Lennie, however, George accompanies him because he does not have a proper trust with other workers in the ranch who will be supportive to fulfill his dream of being a land owner. Likewise, George gradually loses his faith upon Lennie because of Lennie's mental retardation. And at last, this loss of faith compels George to shoot Lennie who used to be his close friend. Therefore, the investigation of alienation and geography from this novel has become purposeful and appropriate.

Critical Points on Alienation and Geography

Of Mice and Men has received several critical appraisals. Firstly, Brian Reinking attempts to put on his critique on the title of the novel. He focuses on the question on why John Steinbeck has chosen this topic and what kind of connection can be found between "Mice" and "Men". His argument hovers around the poem 'To a Mouse' written by Robert Burns which conveys the futility of planning for a hopeful future in the face of unforeseen consequences. Likewise, *Of Mice and Men* also represents the absurdity of the dream which is similar to the castle in the air. At this juncture Reinking argues:

Burn's mouse represents the often futile hope and fruitless planning mortal creatures put into the future, the sadness and fear a being experiences when forced to contend with forces incomprehensibly bigger than itself, and, for the man observing the mouse, the regret over past deeds and anxiety about tomorrow... , it represents the truth about the American Dream and American capitalism and how an individual in America can be destroyed by the myth of tomorrow and the culture's mammonism. (Reinking, 2013, p.15)

The mouse is always hopeful to have easy meal for its survival though it is unknown and uncertain for it. It never plans for the future as the working class people do. They

know if they plan, it will fail. It is uncertain for the mouse whether it survives or not while receiving its meal. So are the working class people.

Similarly, William Goldhurst makes his judgment on this novel from religious and mythic-allegorical implications. He writes:

Of Mice and Men is a story about the nature of man's fate in a fallen world, with particular emphasis upon the question: is man destined to live alone, a solitary wanderer on the face of the earth, or it is the face of man to create for man, to go his way in companionship with another? (Goldhurst, 1971, p. 126).

A human being belongs to his/her respective society, but the society consists of different classes, culture and religion. S/he feels alone in the crowd if her/his desires and wishes are suffocated. S/he wants to be away from society, thus s/he is self-alienated.

Stephanie Jensen-Moulton argues the underlying intellectual disability, particular to Lennie, which is influenced by geographical location. He argues, "Steinbeck's understanding of the treatment of the intellectually disabled would necessarily have been influenced by his geographical location" (Moulton, 2012, p. 130). Likewise, Richard E. Hart analyses the novel from ethical perspectives. He argues:

Of Mice and Men presents dramatic situation and characterization that allows us to see and hear and feel ethical dilemmas and such social problems as: racism, sexism and economic exploitation in an immediate first hand way. Such issues are dramatically contextualized so as to provoke reader's reflection (Hart, 2004, pp. 33-34).

This novella not only narrates about George and Lennie, but also tells us about Crooks, Candy, Curley and his wife. Crooks is racially alienated whereas Curley's wife is sexually alienated. Candy is satisfied with his blind, lonely and old dog which is killed and he remains alienated. The ranch workers are economically exploited by their employer.

Samuel I. Bellman applies the notion of fear and control in the novella. According to him, Steinbeck has altered his assumption of life about orderliness of life and fitness. He discusses, "*Of Mice and Men* reveals an interesting paradox having to do with freedom and control" (Bellman, 1975, p.25). The right to behave, express, or follow as one wants without any restraint, and the absence of a despotic government is called freedom. Sometimes control disturbs freedom, but it reined in freedom too.

Geography can be a major contributing factor to feelings of alienation in several ways. For example, living in a remote or isolated area can create physical distance between individuals and the rest of society, leading to feelings of disconnection and isolation. Additionally,

living in an urban environment can create social distance, where individuals may feel disconnected from their community and natural surroundings. Certain geographical features can exacerbate feelings of alienation, such as living in an area with a high poverty rate or where there is a lack of social or economic opportunities. Furthermore, when people are forced to move to different places due to various reasons like war, displacement, or economic migration, they may feel a sense of disconnection from their homeland and the culture they grew up in, which could lead to feelings of alienation.

Conclusion

Geography can play a significant role in creating and exacerbating feelings of alienation. The physical and social distance created by geographical factors can lead to feelings of disconnection and isolation, and certain geographical features can make it more difficult for individuals to connect with their surroundings and feel a sense of belonging. This article has examined the theme of geographical alienation in the novella and found that the unfavorable geographical conditions in which the migrant ranch workers live contribute significantly to their alienation. These conditions include the physical distance between the workers and their families and friends, the social isolation that results from their constant movement from ranch to ranch, and the poverty and inequality that are endemic to the region. The study has also found that the Marxist theory of alienation provides a useful framework for understanding the characters' experiences of alienation. This theory suggests that alienation is a product of the capitalist mode of production, which separates workers from the products of their labor, from their fellow workers, and from their own humanity. The study has shown that these forms of alienation are all present in the lives of the migrant ranch workers in *Of Mice and Men*.

This article's findings have important implications for our understanding of the relationship between geography and alienation because it has shown that geography can play a significant role in creating and exacerbating feelings of alienation. The physical and social distance created by geographical factors can lead to feelings of disconnection and isolation, and certain geographical features can make it more difficult for individuals to connect with their surroundings and feel a sense of belonging. The study's findings also highlight the importance of understanding the impact of the economic system on human behaviour and interaction. The study has shown that the capitalist mode of production can lead to feelings of alienation, which can have a profound impact on individuals' lives.

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Understanding and Adoption of Internet Banking: Nepalese Perspective

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to ascertain the elements that lead to the adoption of internet banking. By examining customers' viewpoints, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into the fundamental determinants of this technological transition. A questionnaire survey was done among 398 banking customers in the Kathmandu Valley. The banking sector is currently experiencing a notable shift as a result of developments in telecommunications and information technology. These developments are facilitating transformative transformations through the introduction of novel distribution channels and the enhancement of banking value systems. These factors encompass the cost reduction, acceleration of service delivery, expansion of market reach, and enhancement of overall customer service quality. From a consumer's perspective, internet banking has the potential to reduce service prices and provide users with the ability to effortlessly manage their accounts at any time and from any location. The research findings have identified that security and trust as the most influential factors that lead customers' adoption towards internet banking, so bank managers should develop strategies to enhance overall service quality of internet banking services by delivering customized and quick financial services that help in meeting international standards with promising internet banking products and design.

Keywords: *Internet Banking, Customer Satisfaction, Security, Trust, Information Quality*

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Introduction

Understanding and adopting Internet Banking is considered highly important because of the growing needs and demands for innovative services by customers in banking sector. Internet banking is regarded as a backbone of financial institutions in order to create a competitive advantage in today's business world. Since the lifestyle of the people has been changing, they seek virtual banking services that reduce physical barriers, save time, and create convenience along with building trust among the service users.

Internet banking refers to the use of the internet as a delivery channel for banking services, including traditional banking services such as balance inquiries, fund transfers to other accounts, and bill payments. From the viewpoint of banks, internet banking helps them to maintain profitable growth through reducing operation and fixed costs. A simple transaction cost for a non-cash payment at a branch is likely to cost a bank as much as 11 times more than the same transaction over the Internet (Jayawardhena & Foley, 2000). Internet banking has created new ways of banking in the main areas of distribution, production, payment, and trading. In addition, Internet banking enhances marketing and communication, as it serves 24 hours a day, and a customer can be guided through a catalog of products and services (Jayawardhena & Foley, 2000).

In the modern era, customers demand a lot from banking services, especially from internet banking, so in order to create and maintain internet banking customers or to stay competitive, it is vital to provide them with the best services by understanding their needs. For this purpose, it is important for banks to know the factors that are important for internet banking from a customer's point of view. By understanding these factors, banks can make their policies and improve their services accordingly, which will eventually help them in attracting customers.

Internet banking delivers new banking products and services directly to customers through electronic and interactive communication channels. Through a public or private network using the internet, customers, individuals, financial institution, or businesses can assess their accounts, transact business and obtain information on financial products and services. Nowadays, most financial institutions provide internet banking to their valuable customers for opening new accounts, processing customer service inquiries, fund transfers, taking loan applications, opening new accounts, etc. Internet banking is leading toward a paradigm shift in performance in the banking industry. The components like data, hardware, software, network, and people are the essential elements of the system. Banking customers get satisfied with the system when it provides them maximum convenience and comfort while transacting

with the bank. Internet enabled electronic systems facilitate the operation to fetch these results (Singhal & Padhmanabhan, 2008).

In a digital era of competitive pressures, many financial institutions are focusing their efforts on maintaining a satisfied customer base, so banks provide many online services, which are extremely convenient for banking customers. Internet Banking makes it possible for banks and their customers to do business from anywhere in the world. This greatly increases the bank's potential client base. Nevertheless, the global approach to banking that e-banking permits make it extremely difficult for regulatory authorities to enforce finance laws (Shrestha, 2016).

With the advent of technology and its advancement, customers are willing to get quick, customized, and secured services from the bank. So, it is important to understand the customer's satisfaction level with digital services on banks. The aim of this research is to examine the understanding and adoption of internet banking in Nepal.

Literature Review

Electronic or internet banking is the latest delivery channel to be offered by retail banks in many developed countries, and there is wide agreement that this channel will have a significant impact on the market. Electronic Banking is a higher-order construct that consists of several distribution channels. It should be noted that electronic banking is a bigger platform than just banking via the internet. However, the most general type of electronic banking in our times is banking via the internet. In a very simple form, it can mean the provision of information or services by a bank to its customers via a computer, television, telephone, or mobile phone.

Kaleem (2008) studied that electronic distribution channels provide alternatives for faster delivery of banking services to a wider range of customers. Internet technology is rapidly changing the way personal financial services are being designed and delivered. Now, commercial banks are trying to introduce internet-based e-banking systems to improve their operations and reduce costs. Despite all efforts aimed at developing better and easier internet banking systems, these systems remained largely unnoticed by the customer and certainly were seriously underused in spite of their availability.

Haque (2016) showed that only protected transactions have a significant impact on consumers' perception of e-banking security, followed by service quality and regulatory framework issues. Faullant (2017) studied the acceptance of internet banking to investigate the role of internet trust as a specific form of technology trust in the context of internet banking. Furthermore, the integration of propensity to trust within the hierarchical structure of personality and its applicability to technological systems are investigated. The results confirm the influence of internet

trust on risk perception and consumer attitudes towards internet banking. Propensity to trust is a determinant not only for interpersonal relationships but also for trust in technological systems.

Smith (2006) indicated that psychological barriers are higher determinants of resistance than usage and value, which are constructs related to ease-of-use and usefulness determining acceptance in the traditional technology acceptance model. Moreover, the findings highlight the role of self-efficacy in bank customers' risk perceptions of internet banking. Hawanga and Thao (2013) identified the main barriers the internet users had organizational weaknesses, poor IT infrastructure, mistrust of the internet system, and legal issues. While the benefits positively contributed to the service and social bonds, the barriers negatively impacted the development of these bonds. The interactional benefits play a major role in increasing switching costs. Trust appears as a key variable that reduces perceived risk.

Kawamala (2021) revealed that internet banking is perceived more favorably by banks that offer it compared to those that do not. Government support, availability of the equipments, customers' satisfaction with their needs, competition with other banks, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, trust, and security aspects are deemed crucial factors to explain internet banking adoption in Tanzania.

Theoretical Framework

The framework of this research shows several factors affecting customer satisfaction towards internet banking.

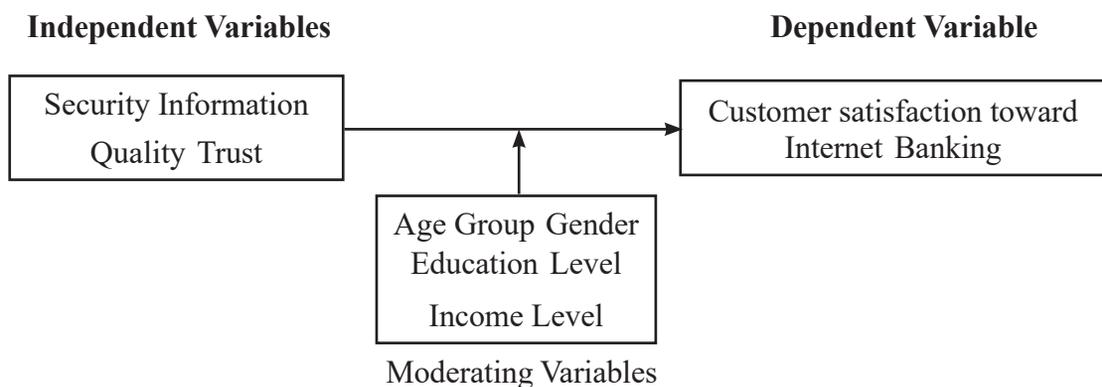


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Proposed Research

The conceptual framework helps in establishing a relationship between the independent and dependent variables that will be used in the research. The research seeks relationships between different factors influencing customers, which are independent variables such as security, information quality, trust, and privacy, while

customer satisfaction towards internet banking is a dependent variable. Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education level, and income have been taken as moderating variables.

Security

Security plays a vital role in the growth of trust in internet banking because when customers process financial information and know that their information processing will be highly secure, they feel comfortable, and gradually confidence in the bank will increase. Singh (2004) reported that customers often need to have full control of their financial behaviors, especially since they know that online information and services grow rapidly, and so the level of risk is high.

Information Quality

Hoffman and Novak (2006) stated that information quality is an important factor in the IS success model, which determines users' trust in financial transactions. Because internet banking does not involve face-to-face contact, high system quality and information quality are critical to ensure users' trust. Internet banking services transform how banks develop and sustain their customer relationship and with the proper information and communication.

Trust

It is vital for a bank to design proper internet banking strategy that can build customers' trust in internet banking. Customers' trust would be heightened if they felt that they had a high degree of control of their banking transactions. Ibbotson & Moran (2006) have reported that the maintenance of future earnings and consumers' trust can be achieved via building deep relationships with customers. Yap & Majhyar (2011) proposed a conceptual model to identify the antecedents of trust in Internet banking and the impact of trust on customers' intentions to adopt internet banking.

Research Methods

This study is conducted in the context of Nepalese commercial banks. The research is a descriptive type as it investigates the understanding and adoption of internet banking among customers. The sample unit was an account holder of a commercial bank drawn as a sample from random sampling method. To get a better response from customers about their understanding and adoption level, this research is mostly focused on getting a response from respondents who had frequent transactions with the banks. According to the quantitative research approach, the survey technique was the most appropriate to select participants for the study. Data was collected from the respondents inside Kathmandu valley.

A Structured questionnaire was designed to collect the required information for primary data. The questionnaires were distributed to 500 internet banking service users. Out of them, there were 398 respondents from Kathmandu Valley. It was selected through the non-probability sampling method using judgmental sampling.

Descriptive analysis was carried out in accordance with the objectives of the study by the use of SPSS program that assisted in generating frequency distributions, mean, standard deviation, correlation, and tables. The goodness of measure was done through testing of reliability and validity. Reliability was done by testing for both consistency and stability. The association of demographic variables of internet banking was assessed through the independent t-test and one way ANOVA.

Results and Analysis

The main objective of the questionnaire was to identify the most important factor that customers consider while adopting internet banking. After the questionnaires from the respondents were collected, relevant information was drawn regarding different dimensions of internet banking and customer's perspectives. Then, SPSS software was used for coding, reliability test, analysis and presentation of collected data.

Table 2

Results of respondent's profile

Dimension	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	204	51.25
Female	194	48.74
Total	398	100

Age		
20-25	112	28.1
26-30	122	30.6
31-35	92	23.1
36-40	40	10
Above 40	32	8
Total	398	100

Education		
Diploma	93	23.3
Bachelor's Degree	175	43.9
Master's Degree	130	32.6
Total	398	100
Level of Income Per month (Rupees)		
Upto 10000	80	20.1
10000-20000	83	20.8
20000-30000	77	19.3
30000-40000	42	10.5
Above 40000	116	29.1
Total	398	100

Source: *Survey, 2021*

Table 2 depicts most of the internet users are male. It portrays that a higher percentage of respondents was male. Male comprised 51.25% of the total respondents, while females comprised 48.74% of the total respondents. It also represents the age group distribution of respondents. The highest percentage of the respondents are of the age group 26 to 30 years of age which is 30.6 % of the total samples, followed by the age group 20 to 25 years of age with 28.1% of respondents, age group 31 to 35 years of age comprise 23.1% respondents, age group of 36 to 40 years of age comprises 10% respondents, and least percentage of respondents is from the age group of above 40 which is 8% of total samples. It shows that 43.9% of total respondents' education level is Bachelor's Degree, followed by Master's Degree, 32.6% and least, i.e., 23.3 % of respondents have Diploma. It also shows that most of the respondents comprise 29.1% of total respondents with income level above Rs. 40000, and the least is 10.5% who have income between Rs. 30,000 to 40,000. A total of 20.8% respondents have an income between Rs. 10,000 - 20,000, 20.1% of respondents have an income of Rs. upto 10,000, and 19.3% of respondents have an income between Rs. 20,000 to 30,000.

Reliability Analysis

The study used Cronbach's Alpha test to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire, grouping the questions according to the defined independent and dependent variables. Cronbach's Alpha is commonly used to determine whether the items are homogeneous, can measure the response correctly and whether the result can be replicated or not. The value of Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.7 shows the questionnaire has a relatively high internal consistency. Likert scale was set for

identifying the dependent and independent variables. Cronbach's Alpha test on the reliability statistics is observed, which is presented in the following table.

Table 3

Reliability statistics

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	No. of respondents
0.968	8	398

Table 3 highlights that Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the variables is 0.968, indicating satisfactory levels of internal consistency in terms of reliability. The factors reflected the reliability values above the accepted benchmark of 0.70, which is regarded as very good.

Reliability Analysis of Dependent Variable

Three items were chosen to measure the dependent variable regarding internet banking by bank customers. All three variables are retained from the reliability test. The detail of reliability statistics of the dependent variable is represented in Table 4.

Table 4

Reliability statistics of items

Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Internet banking saves from monetary loss	.966
Internet banking prevents unauthorized access to the accounts through network attacks	.967
Given information helps me to perform internet banking transactions easily	.966
Information at banks website are accurate	.967
Information at banks website are regularly updated	.966
I trust in safety of online money transfer	.967
My trust in internet banking services is as strong as compared to offline services provided by the bank	.966
I trust the information presented on e-banking websites	.967

Table 4 represents the Cronbach's Alpha of each item of dependent variables and the observed value reflects good reality with an alpha value greater than 0.7.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics represents the outcome by considering the collected data. Likert scale questionnaire was relevant to the dimensions regarding internet banking such as security, information quality, and trust. The mean score drawn from the result is obvious that the majority of respondents or internet banking users are positive about the intention of using internet banking. Likewise, the value of Standard Deviation clearly depicts that the extent of items are deviating from the mean.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics regarding various outputs of variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Security	3.6757	0.91448
Information Quality	3.2533	1.0031
Trust	3.6	0.96238

Table 5 shows the mean value of 3.6757 is tending towards the value 4, which correspond to the Likert scale "agree", showing the positive response of consumer towards security. Table 3 represents the mean value of 3.2533 is nearest to the value 3, which corresponds to the Likert scale "neutral" showing the neutral response of respondents towards information quality. Table 4 depicts that concerning trust, the mean is 3.6, which tends to lie near the option of "agree," rounding off to 4 as per the data collected through the questionnaire.

Group Statistics of Dependent Variable

This section analyses the position or tendency of internet banking in terms of age, sex, education level, and monthly income. In addition to this, respondents' most common agreement towards services responded has been analyzed in order to know the most applicable agreement of respondents on internet banking.

The mean score of the response is observed, and the standard deviation has been analyzed in the mean response. Following table 6 is presented to analyze the descriptive statistics.

Table 6*Descriptive Statistics of Response to Each Item*

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Internet banking saves from monetary loss.	398	3.58	1.018
Internet banking prevents unauthorized through network attacks access to the accounts.	398	3.77	.908
Given information helps me to perform internet banking transactions easily.	398	3.28	1.177
Information on bank's website is accurate.	398	3.49	.981
Information on banks website is regularly updated.	398	2.99	1.234
I trust in the safety of online money transfer.	398	3.59	1.024
My trust in internet banking services is as strong as compared to offline services provided by the bank.	398	3.55	1.138
I trust the information presented in e-banking websites.	398	3.66	1.054

Since the Likert items are designed with increasing i.e. five is assigned for the strongly agree and 1 strongly disagrees. In such a situation, greater mean values indicate a positive response towards internet banking. Table 5 indicates the positive response towards customer satisfaction towards internet banking with the mean value 2.5, which indicate a positive tendency of customer toward internet banking.

Descriptive Analysis

The correlation coefficient between dependent and independent variables reflects the relationship and association among the variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to measure the degree of linear association between the two categories. The three dimensions of internet banking, namely security, information quality, and trust, are correlated with the dependent variable. The following tables reflect that the marked correlations are significant at $p \leq 0.01$. Correlation coefficients between internet banking and its variables are presented in table 7.

Table 7*Pearson Correlation Coefficients*

Items	Security	Information Quality	Trust
Internet Banking	0.706**	0.699**	0.761**
**Significant at 0.01 level of significant			

The correlation coefficient between security and internet banking has been found to be 0.706, which is significant at one percent level of significance. It shows the positive correlation between security and internet banking among customers. The correlation coefficient between information quality and internet banking is found to be 0.699, which is significant at one percent level of significance. It shows the positive correlation between information quality and internet banking among customers. Similarly, the correlation coefficient between trust and internet banking is found to be 0.761, which is significant at one percent level of significance. It shows the positive correlation between trust and internet banking among customers.

Association of Internet Banking with Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study has also made an attempt to examine the impact of demographic characteristics of customers on internet banking. In this connection, the hypothesis was formulated. The following section presents the result of the hypothesis.

Association of Internet Banking with Gender

The test is a parametric technique that was used to find the differences in the perceptions regarding internet banking between male and female.

Table 8*Internet banking by male and female*

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	204	3.6494	1.07319
Female	194	3.7489	.94409

Value of $|t| = 0.602$ and $p\text{-value} > 0.05$

Table 8 shows Levene's test for equality of independent sample t-test carried out to find whether opinions differ between males and females. Here, the p-value is greater than 0.05. It indicates that the mean of opinions of both males and females are not seen as significantly different. It concludes that there is no significant difference in the opinion toward internet banking between male and female respondents.

Association of Internet Banking across Age Group

This part of the analysis has been focused on examining the situation of internet banking across different age groups. One way ANOVA has been used to examine the association of internet banking across different age groups. Table 9 shows the result of this test.

Table 9

Internet Banking across Age Group

	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	4.166	1.041	1.021	.399
Within Groups	147.911	1.020		

Table 9 reflects the association of age groups on internet banking. Overall (F=1.021; $p>0.05$) suggests that a significant difference has not been found across the different age groups on internet banking. Result of one way ANOVA test suggests that the internet banking services across different age groups are insignificant at five percent level of significance ($p\text{-value}>0.05$). The data has sufficient evidence for establishing a similar opinion across the different age groups on internet banking.

Association of Internet Banking Across Education Levels

This part of the analysis has focused on examining internet banking across different education levels of customers. One way ANOVA has been used to examine the respondents holding a different educational degree. Table 10 shows the result of this test.

Table 10

Internet Banking across Education Level

	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	.031	.015	.015	.985
Within Groups	152.046	1.034		

Table 10 reflects that internet banking across the level of education. Overall F = 0.015 and $p>0.05$ suggests that a significant difference has not been found across the different education levels on internet banking. The result of one way ANOVA test suggests that the respondents' opinion was not significantly different regarding internet banking across different education level. Thus, there is no significant difference across education levels on internet banking.

Association of Internet Banking across Income Level

This part of the analysis has focused on examining internet banking across different income levels of customers. One way ANOVA has been used to examine the respondents with different levels of income. Table 11 shows the association of internet banking across income levels.

Table 11

Internet Banking across Income Level

	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	P-value
Between Groups	3.109	.777	.756	.555
Within Groups	148.968	1.027		

Table 11 reflects internet banking across the level of income. Overall $F = 0.756$ and $p > 0.05$ indicate that a significant difference has not been found across the different income levels on internet banking. The result of one way ANOVA test suggests internet banking behavior. The result of one way ANOVA test suggests that internet banking across different income levels is insignificant at five percent level of significance ($p > 0.05$), which suggests that income level does not differentiate internet banking by customers. There is no significant difference across income levels on internet banking.

Discussions and Conclusion

As a matter of fact, people are becoming more and more demanding; internet banking has gradually shown its important role in a way to serve customers by providing a variety of services in fast and convenient manner. The significance of online banking as a strategic tool for enhancing customer satisfaction and improving banking services is undeniable, owing to its diverse functionalities that facilitate simplicity of use and communication with clients.

Based on the study conducted, it can be inferred that there are minimal disparities observed in the replies provided by participants across several demographic variables, including age groups, gender, income level, and education level. In Nepal, users exhibit a high level of awareness regarding internet banking services and accord them a significant level of priority. Security and trust are significant considerations for customers when evaluating and embracing internet banking services in Nepal. This observation aligns with the research conducted by Kolsaker and Payne (2002), who emphasised the significance of security in the context of internet banking. Consequently, many protocols have been developed to ensure the protection of encrypted data packets

in internet security. In a similar vein, the present discovery aligns with other scholarly investigations, such as the study conducted by Kim and Prabhakar (2004), which posited that trust has a favourable influence on users' loyalty towards technology. This loyalty, in turn, manifests as a willingness to engage with the technology on several occasions.

The research findings have identified that security and trust as the most influential factors that lead customers adoption towards internet banking, so bank managers should develop strategies to enhance the overall service quality of internet banking services by delivering customized and quick financial services that help in meeting international standards with promising internet banking products and design. All transactions occur on a secure server of a bank via the internet. The bank must ensure that it has secured software and process to execute the transactions. Security can be assured by providing a privacy statement and information about the security of the shopping mechanisms and by displaying the logos of trusted third parties. Likewise, to boost trust in internet banking and overall improvement in bank customer relationships, bank, and financial institutions can build safe online money transfer services and provide trustworthy websites.

In conclusion, the rising customer expectations have brought to light the crucial role that online banking plays in offering quick and convenient services. As important factors in deciding whether to adopt internet banking, security and trust emerge. As a result, banks should put more effort into providing tailored financial solutions, upholding international standards, and guaranteeing secure transactions through reliable software and procedures. Safe online money transfer services and trustworthy websites can further emphasize the significance of internet banking by fostering client relationships and trust.

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Displacement and Violation of Inalienable Rights in Alan Gratz's *Refugee*

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Abstract

*Refugees are human beings but not citizens of the nation; they are left in no man's land and treated as traitor, criminal and animal. Even though, human rights about refugees are penned in different charter, such rights are not implemented appropriately. They leave their nation longing for survival; however many countries do not let them to enter their territory. Their right in home country is absconded and their identity of being citizen is confiscated and they are left to live the bare life. Those who are lucky to flee from the home have to face grave troubles and violence from police, and the state rules and regulations violating the International Human Rights of right to live the dignified life. This article analyzes the solemn issues from the perspective of Derrida, Kant, and Hannah Ardent, who explicitly urges about the rights of refugee and their survivals in Alan Gratz novel *Refugee*.*

Key words: *Refugee, rights, violence, nation state, bare life, identity*

Introduction

Alan Gratz's *Refugee* vividly portrays the life of refugees in three different eras; even though they are from different historical period they pass through similar conditions and can be broadly analyzed in three phases of their life: their condition inside home country, their difficulties in the journey and their uncertain life future as asylum seekers. *Refugee* follows the stories of three refugee children fleeing conflicts in their home countries. The prominent commonality is that the rulers have suspended laws and ruled in a state of exception, where people are not even enjoying the rights of citizens. They are degraded from citizens to only human beings who lack fundamental rights and are excluded from the law. Josef, Isabela and Mahmoud's stories apparently clarify the life of refugees and unimaginable difficulties that they undergo in their life.

However, Terri Ratini and Bitai Zakeri have analyzed the novel as a refugee problem; they have not proposed the perspective from a theoretical proposition. This article analyzes refugee problems, how a state creates difficulties and compels people to flee from their home land and their struggle of survival as human beings from different theoretical lenses. Similarly, it also raises the pertinent issues of hospitality, rights of

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human beings and the nation-state border injustice where refugees are left to be killed but not accepted inside and outside territory. Refugees are left nowhere, not in the land and not even in the sea.

Even though there are three stories in the novel, life of the refugees is almost similar. They are exposed to war, atrocities or ethnic cleansing obliging them in search of new places but remain uncertain about discovering sanctuary cities as Levinas postulates in “City of Refugee”. They leave their home unknown to a certain future, not even survival in their journey. They are deemed as only living beings absconding all the rights and freedom they enjoyed as citizens inside their home. They live three different lives: life in their countries, life in their journey and life in the host country if they are lucky to get asylum. The foremost part is to save life is to escape from the home — “like the persecution and murder of Jews in Josef’s Nazi in Germany, the starvation and civil rights abuses in Isabela’s Cuba, or the devastating Civil war of Mahmoud’s Syria” (Gratz,2017,p. 161). The issue of displacement can be solved by accepting the refugees unconditionally in the host country and practicing human rights properly as proposed by Derrida, Kant and Hannah Ardent.

Methodology

The research methodology in this research is descriptive and qualitative. The primary data source in this research is Alan Gratz's novel *Refugee*. Meanwhile secondary data sources are journal articles, different research papers published about displacement, refugee rights, and theoretical approaches to address those issues. Basically this research hinges upon the idea of Jacques Derrida, Immanuel Kant, and Hannah Ardent. These theorists' ideas are intensively used to clarify about the horror created by displacement and apparatus of power of nation-state to clear the topic.

Findings and Discussion

War, violence and persecution has terrorized the country and forced people to leave the home. Anti-Semitism, holocaust, and ethnic cleansing compelled people to leave their home in search of secured life. Nevertheless, despite getting opportunity to leave nation, refugees have to encounter grave problems while crossing the borders. Many refugees lost their lives and their family is dismantled in the journey. Hannah Ardent (1943) in her essay "We Refugee" says "refugees are those of us who have been so unfortunate as to arrive in a new country without means and have to be helped by Refugee Committees" (p. 69). Therefore, from the very beginning of their journey they are always in lost.

A. Process of Displacement in Germany, Cuba and Syria

According to Hannah Ardent when a nation is not able to respect the human rights of the citizen– it leads the condition of annihilation of the mass. When citizens are

deprived from the rights and the freedom, they are deprived from the action and right to opinion. State suppresses their voice and rules nation in arbitrary form. The organized community will be dismantled and political status of the people will be lost with the loss of humanity altogether. (Ardent, 1976, pp. 296-297).

Ardent (1976) further mentions that "once [refugees] left their home they remained homeless, once they have left their state they remained stateless; once they are have been deprived from their human rights they were rightless, the scum of earth (p. 267). Refugee when they leave their home, they leave everything behind, their lineage, their identity, their physical property their national identity. This atmosphere of loss germinates the new identity of refugee; they carry the human rights but not fundamental rights. Therefore, the process of leaving home is always scary, there is loss and sometimes one even encounters death.

The process of displacement from their home is always in loss. Refugees have to leave everything; their home, relationship with the country, their history and restart their life from the beginning if the host luckily accepts them. The causes of the displacement always lie inside the home. The persecution and ethnic cleansing of Jews in Germany forced them to leave the nation in Josef's story. Jews in Germany are not allowed to follow laws, "Nazi told Josef's father that he wasn't allowed to practice law anymore because he was Jewish" (Gratz 2017, pp. 1). They ransacked the house of Josef and his father was taken to a concentration camp.

Josef's father was released from the concentration camp, but "only on condition that he had to leave the nation in fourteen days" (Gratz, 2017 p. 3). Josef does not want to leave the nation because Germany is his home but the Landau family has no choice since they can't wait what Nazi would do next. Foucault (1979) in his book *The History of Sexualities Volume: 1 An Introduction* posits, "It is as managers of life and survival, of bodies-and the race, that so many regimes have been able to wage so many wars, causing so many men to be killed" (p. 137).

Riots and famine have succumbed the lives of people in Cuba. The government of Fidel Castro has sabotaged the democratic values. People are dying from starvation and Castro has prohibited leaving the country basically in elnorte (towards the north). After the downfall of the USSR, in 1989, "Cuba had hit the rock bottom" (Gratz 2017, p.4). The condition is so bad that "[a]ll the cows and pigs and had been slaughtered and eaten. People had even broken into Havana Zoo and eaten the animals; cats like this had ended up on dinner tables" (Gratz, 2017, p. 4). In Castro's state of exception human rights and right to migrate is grossly violated, "Fidel Castro, the man who ruled Cuba as president wouldn't allow anyone to leave the country—especially not to go to the United States —elnorte as Cubans called" (p. 5).

Human right according to Kofi Annan is, “The yardstick by which we measure human progress” (quoted in James D. Ingram, 2008, p. 401). Instead of protecting and respecting the rights of the people Castro’s government is killing those who are protesting against them, even people who strive to migrate elnorte is against the rule of Castro’s government as Isabela discloses, “If you were caught trying to leave elnorte by boat, Castro would throw you in jail” (Gratz, 2017, pp.5). Migration always is not the choice but to escape from the hardships to survive inside the country as Thomas Nail (2015) urges, “[i]t has become more necessary for people to migrate because of environmental, economic, and political instability” (p. 1). Rioting, vandalizing, and breaking of the glasses are not out of the choice but out of necessity.

People are coming out from their homes to protest against the tyrannical government. Rioters are chanting against Castro’s rule. Police are brutally killing people in order to establish Castro's regime. The plight of the innocent people has been unrecognized and unaddressed by the state because "a practical demonstration of the totalitarian governments' cynical claims that no such things as inalienable human rights existed and that the affirmation of the democracies to the contrary were more prejudice, hypocrisy, and cowardice in the face of the cruel majesty of the new world" (Arden, 1976, pp. 269). In the beginning, these citizens were denaturalized and they were ghettoized in order to establish despotic rule and compelled them to run away from the nation.

Third story is the story of Mahmoud, who is compelled to flee from Syria due to the civil war and mass killing of people. Foucault (1976) urges that "if he [ruler] were threatened by external enemies [those who are against his rule] who sought to overthrow him or contest his rights, he could legitimately wage war, and require his subject to take part in the defense of the state; without directly proposing to death" (p.135). Mahmoud is twelve years boy, who keeps himself hiding under cloak to stay away from the enemies, whereas, “Mahmoud did everything he could to hide his size and his face, to stay under the radar” (Gratz, 2017, p.7). He does not want to invite trouble because “to walk around getting noticed by the Syrian army or the rebels fighting them was just inviting trouble” (Gratz, 2017 p.7).

Syria has been divided into two ethnicities between Shia and Sunni Muslim. His friend Khalid was Shia and once he found his friend being beaten by the older boys saying, “Not so smart now, are you, pig?” one of them had said. “Shia should know their place! This is Syria, not Iran!” (Gratz, 2017, p. 8). Shia in Syria is other, even though that is their home. Levinas postulates on the idea of “others” where the meaning of other means “someone else (other than one self). While talking about the face he urges that “the face is the most exposed, most vulnerable, and most expressive aspect of the other presence” (Levinas, 1969 p. 197). Shia is the face of others for the Sunni and this other

face has become the site of violence. Since, Mahmoud understands the face of others as filth and violent — he also understands the importance of invisibility.

Syria was under the rule of Basar Al Assad and he was ruling under the state of exception. He was elected twice as president and no one was allowed to run against him. Had any one dared to such he would have made people disappear. When people started rioting against him demanding freedom, “Assad had turned his tanks and soldiers and bombers on the protestors — on his own *people*” (Gratz, 2017, p. 8). When the bombs and missile hit his home, the TV place and the wall collapsed making a big hole through many floors below, the scariest part is, “Waleed was centimeters from joining them both and the floor beneath their feet groaned and shifted” (Gratz, 2017, 24). Mahmoud, his brother, his mother and his sister are able to survive nearly an inch of death away. Foucault (1976) states, "the sovereign has exercised his right of life only exercising his right to kill" (p.136). Here bombarding in citizens house explicitly indicates creating terror in the life of people. Such circumstances further lead the cleansing of people who are against ruler and support his government. Mahmoud family decided to leave the nation for Germany. If Germany, a country with not a big land mass, could accept refugees, why could not others follow the suit? If Germany is accepting all these refugees the calculation can be labelled as unconditional hospitality. Following decades of internal religious, political, and economic turmoil and international actions, a civil war broke out in Syria in 2011, sending unprecedented numbers of refugees to the surrounding countries, to Europe, and gradually to North America.

B. Journey from Home Country to Host Country

It is all too easy to conceive of present-day asylum seekers as figures who form part of a nameless and helpless mass, waiting to be “rescued” from the clutches of people smugglers before being “managed”: in other words, being considered for admission as recognized refugees or returned either to their country of origin or to another country deemed safe as Kant stated about the hospitality. Unconditional hospitality, in contrast, starts with the problem of putting those ideals values into practice.

Foucault (1976) in his book urges that “If someone dared to rise up against him and transgress his laws, then he could exercise a direct power over the offender's life: as punishment, the latter would be put to death” (p. 135). Josef, Isabela and Mahmoud are the victims of a totalitarian government who has confiscated the right to live and dragged them deemed into death. Refugees are scum of earth, they are “unidentifiable beggars, without nationality, without money and without passports to cross their frontiers” (Arden, 1976, p. 269). All these characters set their foot to leave the nation as an asylum seeker without calculating the risk in their journey and without knowing whether the host country will accept them unconditionally. They entirely belong to

different historical eras; however, they do have a common mission — Escape. Josef is a Jewish boy in 1930's Nazi Germany. Threats of concentration camps loom over him and his family and they board a ship bound for the other side of the world. Isabel and her family from Cuba in 1994 set out on a raft escaping riots and unrest plaguing in her country, hoping to find safety and freedom in America. Mahmoud is a Syrian boy belonging to modern Syria who is escaping to Europe especially Germany. All of them are succumbed by the home country's totalitarian government failing to protect the unalienable rights and searching for bonhomie asylum; however, first they have to be alive to get asylum during their journey. The obstacles they must overcome right from the decision making, the journey and the process of resettling in a foreign land is a monstrous expedition.

Journey of refugees is not easy going. They have to trespass without being caught, nevertheless, if they are caught, they are deported from where they flee to save their life. Refugees either have to travel through the sea or they should make a journey from the land. However, international maritime law forbids them to travel without having consent to that particular country as law states:

In accordance with the rules and principles of the law of the sea, the coastal state has sovereignty in the territorial sea. Although subject to innocent passage, the nature of the territorial sea as a constituent part of coastal state's national territory remains unchanged; and as embodied in the nomenclature, in this belt of the sea a territorial regime applies. The sovereignty of a coastal state in the territorial sea extends to the seabed and subsoil under the water column, as well as to the air space over the territorial sea. (Vidas, 2015, p. 34)

The unjust law of the territory and the maritime law are against the human rights as Kant posits about right to visitation, “a right to visit, to which all human beings have a claim, to present oneself to society by virtue of the right of common possession of the surface of the earth” (Kant, 2006, p. 82). Humans by nature have the right to visitation which can be traced back as nomadic rights; notwithstanding, the evidence of territorial sovereignty over the land has confiscated this right besides refugees remaining nowhere if they won't get entry into certain areas.

Having left their country subjected to excruciating violence, refugee re-runs from the hardships not only of manmade but also of nature. While leaving Germany, Josef lost his father even though he is physically present in journey with them. When Josef saw his father after six months released from concentration camp he was like, “the shabby man who had lurched from the shadows like an escape from a mental asylum” (Gratz, 2017, p. 18). Isabela traded her trumpet which was everything to her. Similarly, Mahmoud's father

lost his car while escaping through which they are planning to reach the Turkey border.

In the story of Isabella, first, their motor dies; then there is leakage from the bullet hole in the rudder; a giant tanker in the night almost crashes; Rudi Castillo, the captain, is thrown off the boat, but in the meantime, Isabel risks her life to rescue him, is an example of unconditional hospitality. Strenuously, they have to hide themselves from being caught because of unjust maritime law. They lost their aspirin and bandaged all prepared things. Isabela compares this journey as Cubano song's;

. . . and each part of it was verse. The first verse had been the riot: a blast of trumpets, the rat-a-tat-tat of a snare drum. Then the pre chorus of trading her trumpet for gasoline—the piano that gave the *son* its rhythm — and then the chorus itself: leaving home. They were still leaving home, still hadn't gotten to where they were going. They would return to the chorus again and again before they were done. (Gratz 75)

But, what does the refrain indicate? She even does not know how many verses are going to be added in her journey. They reached Bahaman land but the law of the land did not allow them to enter there because “Bahamian law forbids the entrance of illegal aliens to the Bahamas. If you set foot on Bahamian soil, you will be taken into custody and returned to your country of origin” (Gratz, 2017, p. 84). Refugees learn, over time, and follow the law of the land; however, for the survival they have to set more miles as Kant urges, “it remains the right of the visited party, however, to deny visitors entry into its territory, as long as this can be done without causing their death” (Kant, 2006, p. xx). Jews were also returned to Europe from the St. Louis ship from Cuba in 1939, where the Josef family was dismantled and Josef ended his life in a concentration camp.

Isabel's journey to the north probed the injustice law where nation states seized the rights of the human beings and “left without national states of their own” (Ardent, 1976, p. 272). Still unknown how much time it will take to reach Miami, they headed from the Bahamas but they collected lots of food and medicine from people. Even though the law of land restricted them to set foot on soil, people helped them unconditionally whatever they could. For such charity Ardent (1976) urges, "the prolongation of their lives is due to charity not to right to residence; their freedom of movement, if they have it all, gives them no right to residence" (p. 296).

The deprivation of human rights is manifested through the deprivation of entering into the place. This is something more than the freedom and justice. On their journey, they were attacked by the Shark and Ivan died. Isabela lost her friend Ivan and could not grasp the moment. Unlike their heydays in Cuba, they now are not able to perform funeral rites, the saddest part of their life. However, they have to continue the journey. The idea of

fighting against impossibility to win is repeated many times. This becomes a moral boost for Isabela, as she reminds herself whenever there are extremely difficult obstacles to overcome, “FIGHT AGAINST THE IMPOSSIBLE AND WIN” (Gratz 38, 90, 118).

The story of Mahmoud probes how international law of refugees is violated. Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 in article 2 clearly affirms that, “all man human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (International Declaration of Human Rights, p. 6). Similarly, in UNHCR, a guide to international refugee protection and building a state asylum state transparently affirms that “hosts’ state responsibility for safeguarding the civilian, peaceful and humanitarian nature of asylum” (1979, p. 28). Nevertheless, the Mahmoud family enters Turkey, but they have to endure the abject difficulties of life. All the refugees over there are staying on the ground, besides they don’t have a roof to stay out of the rain and they are treated as if they are the criminals. Only citizens who fall under the law of the nation are only privileged to enjoy human rights and fundamental rights.

Right after they move out from their territory until and unless they will get asylum, refugees are condemned to live natural life neither political life nor bare life, “life without rights” and the life which caught under the sovereign ban, “is the life that is originary sacred – that is, that may be killed but not sacrificed – and, in this sense, the production of bare life is the originary activity of sovereignty” (Agamben, 1998, p. 53). Mahmoud's family reaches Izmir refugee camp. They have to pay a handsome amount of money to stay there. They waited for the boat broker, who tells them, “No boat today. Tomorrow” (Gratz, 2017, p. 58). They don’t have any option but to wait like the Cuban police said to Josef and like in discussion of *manana* in Isabela's journey.

They head towards Europe from the sea in the dark night, but unfortunately their boat hits the rock and breaks down. People are striving in the mid of the ocean for survival. Mahmoud loses his sister Hana in the struggle of survival. He feels guilty because it is he who requested, “At least take my sister” (Gratz, 2017, p. 76). People are dying prematurely and some of them are using the dead body as a prop to stay alive. This harsh situation arrived because of so-called nation state sovereignty and restriction on free movement of people in this extreme situation, which is also against the right to visitation.

Mahmoud finds a dead body floating around wearing a life jacket. While picking it out he remembers the *kafan*, a funeral rite to perform. Every human being born on the earth has right over death rituals are also a part of hospitality and ethical responsibility. Derrida (2006) has much to say about death of foreigners in a foreign land, “in a foreign land in that there is no manifest grave has no visible and phenomenal tomb” (p. 113). By the time they arrived Lesbos and every refugee family had lost someone, so, instead of being happy, there was only “a soft mournful murmur of conversation” (Gratz, 2017, p. 101).

Mahmoud realizes that people won't listen or see them when they are in trouble but "they only see us when we do something, they don't want us to do" (Gratz, 2017, p. 102). Levinas (1969) in his book *Totality and Infinity* explicates that "The face is the most exposed, most vulnerable, and most expressive aspect of the other's presence. The face resists possession, resists my powers" (p. 197). This face is not a literal face, but speech, gesture, action, or something "infinite" over which we can have power. Mahmoud's articulation about seeing and not seeing is based on the idea of others and face. When the Mahmoud family reached Hungary, they experienced extreme hostility. They were robbed under the knuckle of a pistol and Hungary declared a new law that closed the border. Police treated them as if they are the harsh criminal. Ardent and Derrida both agree that police should act under political authority rather than ruling authority. Hungarian police are acting as if they are the ruling authority because human rights or rights have been grossly violated.

When refugees are kept under Hungarian surveillance, Mahmoud lost the hope at first but examination of UN instills hope to be visible; and being invisible was so much easier. It was useful too, like in Aleppo, or Serbia, or here in Hungary. But sometimes it was just as useful to be visible, like in Turkey and Greece. The reverse was true too, though: Being invisible had hurt them as much as being visible had" (Gratz, 2017, p. 136).

When Mahmoud's attempt is analyzed, it can be examined the Rancier (2004) idea of rights, who argues, "the rights of the man are those who have not the right that they have and have the rights they don't have" (p. 303). From the premise refugees can collectivize and fight for their rights. In this context Hungary cannot eliminate all possibilities of the right to fight even if it wants to and makes all the efforts to do that. Mahmoud took a deep breath and dared to come out soon. He was followed by many refugees as he said; "I'm not staying in that place and waiting for them to send me back to Serbia. . . We're walking to Austria" (Gratz, 2017, p. 137). As soon as they cross the border, they are welcomed by the Austrian people and offered them whatever they need. When, finally, Mahmoud and the family arrive in Germany are welcomed by the Rosenberg family, the hospitality is a bit both unconditional and conditional as Derrida (1999) says, "with tears in their voices, they sometimes speak familiarly to the other who keeps silent, calling upon him without detour or mediation, apostrophizing him, even greeting him or confiding in him" (p. 2).

Isabel and the family, and the Mahmoud family are lucky to get asylum, whereas Josef is taken to a concentration camp and is never returned. Isabel gets her trumpet back and remembers her Cubano song for her origin; however, Mahmoud suffers everyone's pain including the loss of Hana.

Conclusion

The pertinent issue is the issue of acceptance of refugee and making city of refugee as proposed by the Derrida in *On Cosmopolitanism* and by Levinas in “City of Refugee”. Derrida proposes the “open cities” or “refuge cities” where migrant may seek sanctuary from the pressure of persecution intimidation and exile. For Derrida foundation of ethics is hospitality, the readiness and inclination to welcome the other in one home. Ethics he claims is pure unconditional hospitality. For such Derrida (2001) postulates on the idea of the certain sovereignty of the city; “the city itself could determine the law of hospitality—The Great Law of Hospitality, an unconditional law, law both singular and universal which order that borders to be open to each and every one, to every other to all who might come without question or without their even having identity” (p. 18).

Unfortunately, much of the mass media in the global North portrays refugees as people who have lost everything, including the capacity to speak or to contribute productively to the host country. The crises of refugee can be addressed as Zapata-Berrero recommended in his article “Utopian Political Theory and Migration Without Borders” That the idea of sovereignty needs to re-framed in that it must follow the lead of migration, must accept migration and freedom of movement base its legitimacy and ensuring the right to free movement. Similarly, states can retain but allow free movement like the EU (pp. 178-181).

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Naipaul's Divided Self in *An Area of Darkness*

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Abstract

*This paper seeks to analyze V.S. Naipaul's futile attempt of seeking his lost identity in particular reference to his travelogue *An Area of Darkness*. This study shows how he fails in grabbing the self identity as an Indian and how he diverts himself from his quest when he has time and again suffered by the memory of past.*

The study adopts qualitative methodology and takes memory studies as a theoretical tool to interpret and analyze the primary text. Moreover, the study focuses on analysis of the text in concern with seeking the fundamental identity that once was lost being a migrant to a distance land. The writer falls in the prey of his own memory time and again and finds himself distorted and distanced from his identity as he is seeking his Indianness there. The study argues that Naipaul remains neither Indian nor Trinidadian due to his own divided cultural and individual self that he possesses in his undying memory.

Keywords: *Self identity, collective memory, alienation, home, rootlessness*

Introduction

An Area of Darkness is V. S. Naipaul's account of his visit to India, in which he does not only express his anthropological, sociological, historical and ethnographic observation and discussion but also his deep introspective reflection. Naipaul's first visit to India in the sixties was preceded by the romantic notions and stories on which he was fed in Trinidad by his immigrant relatives. There he had been brought up as Hindu child in Hindu family and his visit to India was also motivated by his desire to explore his own roots. His activities show that the romantic picture of India was embedded deep in the consciousness of V.S. Naipaul. On the basis of the romantic notions and stories about India, mostly heard from his grandparents, V.S. Naipaul had also built up within him a picture of a dream India which could be a home for him now.

His visit to different locations of India, he had hoped, would help him understand his true self and would give him an identity that would stop troubling him thenceforth. The memory instigates in him a desire to traverse to and across India with an intention

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to explore the country of his origin and discover himself by means of his journey. The study, thus, digs beneath the memory of a Trinidadian family of Indian origin as to measure and establish the extent of impact of collective memory of the Indian root that compels Naipaul to undertake a journey that offers him an amalgam of hope and disappointment. Naipaul's frequent exposure to stories about India from his grandparents and gatherings of other people of Indian origin invariably instigate him to visit India.

Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness*, begins with the narrator's setting out from his home, either in search of some specific goal or else seeking new experiences and interesting stories. Since travel is the "negotiation between self and other that is brought about by movement in space" (Thompson, 2005, p.10), *An Area of Darkness* has maintained a complex relationship with any number of closely related other genres. It figures out not only the literal travels of its author, but also an emotional and psychological journey within the author.

Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* has become a common field where multiple theorists and scholars implant their multiple theoretical seeds in it, and let it as they desire. It suggests his travelogue has got a wide range of response where multidimensional criticism is appeared to traverse through different angles. Since, Naipaul remains unaware, he could not avoid his collective memory that was instill within him.

Maurice Halbwachs was the first person who conceptualized collective memory as 'Living Memory' of one's social group. It is a mode of experience of being able to share memories of events, places and ways of life within collectivities with which we in some way identify (Zerubavel, 2003, p.39). This form of identity is articulated through a shared past and a continuous process of reconstruction of a common narrative in relation to which we define ourselves as members of such collectivities. In *An Area of Darkness*, too, V. S. Naipaul is overwhelmed with the memories of events, places and the livings that he had dreamt by the communicative memory drenched through the small village created by his grandparents and the immigrant relatives.

Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* has also been understood as embedded with the notion taking the colonial perspective in a wide variety of scholarly writings. Critic Suman Gupta (2010), too, discovers the colonial overtures in the book as he contends that Naipaul is concerned primarily with "describing the nuances of unique kind of colonial mimicry he found in India" (p.80). Another critic Pankaj Vaishnav (2014) finds Naipaul "culturally displaced and distorted due to his own sense of distancing". Naipaul, to him, did not attempt to dive into the ocean of "Indian culture, rather simply developed the sense of negativity as a mere reflection of surface understanding of India" (p.13).

Vaishnav's notion became solid when Dr. Neeta Pandey (2013), too, asserts similar conceptions ahead. She blames that "Naipaul seems to look only into the negative aspects" (p.16). He is found Naipaul "deeply guided by the Eurocentric notions in his area of thought" (p.23). Similarly, Ajay Chaubey (2011) interprets Naipaul's writings as filled with "personal complaints" (p.5). Moreover, he gets Naipaul totally "repressed by his western self" accusing Indians for their blindness to their own realities (p.6).

A good amount of time and energy has been invested in Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* investigating the political and historical aspects of Naipaul's travel to India taking mostly the colonial and post colonial area of research. This is why, even after being extensive studies on Naipaul and on his different writings, the role of memory to shape his identity and the sense of rootlessness is much overlooked in scholarly writings. Hence, the proposed study, as it aims to deal with the issue of quest for Naipaul's identity in term of the roles played by collective memory deeply rooted in his consciousness in *An Area of Darkness* as the primary text, explores an area that has not induced much attention from the scholars.

Naipaul's Divided Self in *An Area of Darkness*

An Area of Darkness subtitled as 'Experience of India' charts out the writer's first hand impression about India. He faces a great amount of contradiction between the imagined India of Trinidad and the actual country that he gets to visit. India shocked Naipaul because it posited a wall of differences and challenged his idea of himself. And that shock led him to delve into the inner thought of the country that he always dreamt to be attached with. It makes the book logically one of the most emotional and subjective travel narratives.

Naipaul's identity plays a crucial role in the travelogue. Although he grew up in a Hindu community in Trinidad, he remained detached from the country of his grandfather. He says, "I was without religious faith myself. I barely understood the rituals and ceremonies I grew up with [. . .] my Hinduism was really an attachment to my family" (p.12). His denial of having any religious faith reverberates in his writing.

India as a country existed in his imagination and knowledge, at a distant pole. And, the very sense of separateness is caused due to the cultural memory he is possessing within him. Cultural memory bothers the consciousness of people and invigorates them to uncover their authentic identity which they realize disjointed from any other identity marker. In this connection Dietrich Harth (2008) opines that this realization of "self" often instigates one to seek for an authentic identity that conforms to what they infer from "sites of memory" (p.86). Memory of the past, therefore, is very much pertinent to the understanding of one's self. When one finds his/her self indispensably linked to

a certain historical location and the cultural tradition the location entails, only then, he can make a true sense of what/who he/she is.

The anxiety over a missing past due to migration or self-exile is the foremost Naipaulian theme. Memory of the ancestry comes in play with his present, and compels him to undertake a journey of far reaching consequences in terms of his understanding of himself and his memory of the ancestral land. As defined by Erll (2011), cultural memory is the “the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts” (p.7), Naipaul’s travelogue is an outcome of cultural memory, in a sense it is what prompts him for the journey to India. It is the stories shared by his grandparents that led him to the journey. The real India he has experienced while visiting is completely different from what he dreamed of as his homeland. He asserts:

The India, then, which was the background to my childhood, was an area of the imagination. It was not the real country I presently began to read about and whose map I committed to memory [...] I now had almost no Hindi. But it was more than language which divided me from what I knew of India. (p.37)

Naipaul’s experiences of India and his memory about it affect him in such a way that he remains incapable to figure out who he is and what he is looking for there. His inability to understand India makes him noticeably separate not only in his thought but rather puts him in distaste where he is regretting for the self. He feels a kind of separateness and distancing from the country, and realizes a clear gap between his thought and the real image of it after all. He bears time and again the sense of detachment, and the thought of being alienated drives him to eternal quest of his lost identity as he had to live as other in England. The same displaced sense of identity after all forces him to travel India to struggle against the effects of displacement. Ever since his arrival in India, he suffers from a deep identity crisis: “I was not English or Indian; I was denied the victories of both” (p.102).

Naipaul’s sense of displacement and the inability to place himself in the societies make him a man without a home and his “homelessness” becomes for him a “universal condition” (White, 1975, pp. 2-3). A larger desperateness grows in Naipaul with the sad realization when he comes to understand that the real India and the India of his childhood are completely different places. His memories of the practices of Indian customs and traditions, which he experienced in the Hindu community in Trinidad, differ considerably from what he experiences later in India. That is also one of the prime reasons for his woes and grieves that he feels in the Indian environment. The real India fails to fulfill the vision of India of his imagination. He finds himself in a society to which he cannot belong. So, the main concern in this book is to show how after

generations of gaps, one finds oneself utterly alien and homeless in a land from which one or one's ancestors have migrated or got displaced.

Naipaul's idea of India was formed in him with the very fact of his birth into a Hindu joint family in Trinidad. India also existed around Naipaul in the various domestic things that his grandfather had brought from India:

India lay about us in things: in a string bed [...] in plaited straw mats; in innumerable brass vessels; [...] in brightly coloured pictures of deities on pink lotus or radiant against Himalayan snow; and in all the paraphernalia of the prayer room: the brass bells and gongs [...] the images, the smooth pebbles, the stick of sandalwood. (p.23)

Here, Naipaul attempts to recapitulate the cultural beauty of India as his inseparable identity, though he was there in distant land, seemingly unaware of those artifacts since a generation. But the constant hunt of the same cultural ethos drags him to travel his one and only pristine land i.e. India.

Naipaul's dreams, assertion of self and evasion of family responsibilities are the result of his cultural, social and psychological rootlessness in a multi-cultural land of Trinidad. Commenting on the significance of ancestral consciousness Champa Rao Mohan (2004) posits that the "social identity of people is rooted in their culture while at the individual level, it is determined by personal achievements" (p.47).

On the one hand, he tries to be aloof from any connections that come ahead, whereas on the other hand he is found to be entangled in the cultural labyrinths that exist in his subconscious mind. He simply becomes irritated when he found the change in the way the festival Diwali celebrated. These two separate selves had stayed and pinched him together as long as Naipaul was either in Trinidad or in England. And his first hand experience of India tore his two selves apart. His life was broken into two. So as an unbeliever he cannot believe in the rites and ceremonies.

Naipaul came to visit India with certain preconceived thought which had been shaped in his psyche since his boyhood. His explicit intention as prevailed in his book is to discover his identity and his roots from which he had been alienated culturally, emotionally and also by birth. His acquaintance with India was only through what he had "heard about it from the parents and relatives" (p.21). From his childhood he had romanticized India and on his visit sought to realize the romanticized images of the land of his forefathers.

With this concept he arrived to India and was eager to quench his perennial thirst of fundamental Indianness. Sometimes the over expectation and misjudgment leads to

a hilarious outcomes that may make the observant a stubborn. On the very onset to India, Naipaul faces the same fate. This happened because the India of his dreams has been overridden by an India crawling with "the children, the dirt, the disease, the undernourishment, the cries of baksheesh, the hawkers, the tout, etc."(p.11). This feeling resulted in disillusionment. Memory of his past and the result of his experience in time and place, Naipaul couldn't appreciate India in the way she was appreciated and highlighted in the books he had read.

The subtitle 'Fantasy and Ruin' is Naipaul's direct confrontation with his imagination. He digs up the roots of his imagination and dissects his past experiences. On one level, he himself knows that now he would not be able to identify himself with India. In Bombay, he finds himself lost:

And for the first time in my life I was one of the crowds. There was nothing in my appearance or dress to distinguish me from the crowd, eternally hurrying into Church Gate station [...] To be an Indian in England was distinctive; in Egypt it was more so. Now in Bombay I entered a shop or a restaurant and awaited a special quality of response. And there was nothing. It was like being denied part of my reality. Again and again I was caught. I was faceless. I might sink without a trace into the Indian crowd. I had been made by Trinidad and England [...] I felt to need to impose myself, and did not know how. (p.39)

Being a country of his imagination, he is found busy on looking for his presence in the city Bombay where he realizes that he would be outnumbered by the crowd who claims them as Indian. His passion of being called or recognized as Indian goes on futile, and he is still searching for the special recognition thereafter.

Naipaul had never been to India before the year 1962. He had visited India only in dreams and in his imagination. But, when Naipaul came to India, he felt more than the usual fear of arrival whether he would be accepted as Indian or still would remain as outsider there, too. He fears of not getting the space even in his dream land. It was ultimately a dream land for Naipaul, a resting place for his imagination, his homeland. But he lost his identity in the crowds of Bombay. He was like each person in the crowd. As a whole, Naipaul suffers a lot due to his lost identity. He was moved or pushed again and again by the time, location and the lives he is living now. Wherever he has gone, he found himself shapeless, directionless, even aimless when he instill the feeling of no response from where he thought he would be given a special response.

On the one hand, he is distressed by his rootlessness; he does not feel to be an Indian. On the other hand, he is frustrated when he goes on panic by his dissimilarities. In Bombay

when he “entered a shop or a restaurant and awaited a special quality of response”, there was “nothing” (p.39). The feeling of separateness and disillusion leads Naipaul nearly to a complete negation of India, as it is suggested at the end of the travelogue. He asserts that it was only now, as “my experience of India defined itself more properly against my own homelessness, that I saw how close in the past year I had been to the total Indian negation, how much it had become the basis of thought and feeling” (266). He was there in pursuit of his long lost recognition which he could not easily have it, that makes him not only worried but develops some sorts of peripheral negation regarding India.

But his innermost being was critiquing India not because he hates India, but because he loves the land in such degree that he always prays his pristine land’s glorious past. On the one hand, he looks India through western eyes, but on the other, he feels himself incomplete if there is no sense of Indianness in his speech, thought and action. This is why, Naipaul’s divided self makes the story of *An Area of Darkness* the story of an identity crisis to an individual who is forced to live away from the country existing as a being half insider and half outsider.

Conclusion

The theme of cultural disintegration receives detailed treatment in *An Area of Darkness* describing three generations of East Indians. Naipaul’s novel succeeds in transcending the individual self by universalizing the issue of alienation. V.S. Naipaul suffers from the identity crisis that was laid to him by his collective memory while living in Trinidad and England as an outsider. He seems to be fighting then and now finding his voice there getting the memory of India in his mind which was developed since his childhood when he was time and again narrated the glorious stories of India by the migrated labourers especially his grandparents.

Definitely, his purpose to come to India probably was to return to the land of his cultural roots in order to secure the idea for composition. Incidentally, his journey to India gave him an opportunity to touch and recognize some negative facets of his mother country. Naipaul sees a great many people spitting and pissing on the streets; he sees beggary and destitution, and he sees the combination of all these activities. It made him disappointed, and prompted him to write in a dismissive tone that “Indians defecate everywhere” (70). His deepest sense of hopelessness and despair has overtly manifested in *An Area of Darkness*. He cannot cope with both the surface and deeper realities that he has to face being for the first time in the land of his forefathers. The real India fails to fulfill Naipaul’s expectations. He is absolutely disgusted by the appalling conditions in the country. In this travelogue, he paints a dismal picture of India, and yet it shows his great passion and untiring fascination for it. This love-hate relationship

with India makes his writings more interesting and more complex. They also elaborate the need Naipaul felt to trace his 'roots' and trace his journey in search of 'roots'.

This paper has focused on investigating what role collective memory plays in one's identity in general and Naipaul's in particular. The myths, stories and legends he hears from his grandparents and the neighbours incite him to undertake journey of India which he perceived to be a land of wonders. The India he formed in his imagination was an ideal location of cultural grandeur. He travels to India with a hope of realization of the ideal land of his imagination. However, when he comes face to face with the Indian reality, his imaginary perception of India shatters and he suffers a sense of rootlessness.

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Position of Funds and Its Mobilization in Prime Commercial Bank Ltd (PCBL)

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Abstract

The number of commercial banks and financial institutions are being established rapidly. These institutions have been established to assist economic development of the country. The major problem in almost all under developed countries and Nepal is formation and proper utilization of capital. Banking institutions are inevitable for resource mobilization. Bank collects fund as a saving from public and invests in highly return yielding firm. This study is concerned with whether Position of funds and its mobilization in Prime Commercial Bank Ltd (PCBL) is adopting efficient fund mobilizing policy or not. It is seen from the study that Prime bank is in better position about the sources of fund and is also mobilizing funds effectively. By effectively mobilizing the funds it is succeeding to earn high rate of return. But because of lack of sufficient knowledge towards saving among people banks are unable to raise adequate fund which is hampering country's economic growth.

Key words: *Position of Fund, Prime Commercial Banks, Ratio, Mobilization, Growth*

Background of the Study

Banks can create new money when they make a loan. New loans throughout the banking system generate new funds elsewhere in the system. The money supply is usually increased by the act of lending, and reduced when loans are repaid faster than new ones are generated. Bank plays an important role in the economic development of a country. Banks are the most important financial institution for collecting and utilizing resources for economic development of the country. The economic conditions are based on financial institutions. Development of the country depends on the active participation of the banks in different developmental activities in the country. If all the banks increase their lending together, then they can expect new funds to return to them and the amount of money in the economy will increase. Excessive or risky lending can cause borrowers to default. The banks should become more cautious while making investments so it can maximize its profit by minimizing risks (Basnet, 2007).

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Banks are intermediary between lender and receiver of fund and they mobilize the funder's fund. After the liberalization of the financial sector, financial sector has made a hall mark progress both in terms of the number of financial institutions and beneficiaries of financial services. Development by its means is not possible within a short period and it takes a long time for the proper development of a country. It has to build up infrastructure. In Nepal, the process of development started only after 1956 AD when the first five-year plan came into practice. Capital in fact, plays the leading role for the economic development of a country. But in Nepal, there is shortage of capital. There are internal and external sources of accumulating capital. Under external sources: aid, grants and loans are the main sources. In internal sources: accumulating capital, taxes, public enterprises, public debt are popular in our country. But due to underdevelopment, poverty, lack of banking knowledge the desired capital for the development of the country cannot be accumulated from those internal sources. So, it can be said that in Nepal's present situation, bank fund is dependable and permanent sources of capital accumulation. The need of fund mobilization for economic development of a country is no more to question. But we are facing an acute problem of resources mobilization (Sapkota, 2013).

A balanced and inclusive financial resource mobilization is essential for financial stability as well. The mobilization of deposits plays a pivotal role in bank financing as it is a dominant part of BFIs' liabilities, collected mainly from public. If such deposits are mobilized from the differentiated region, BFIs rarely face problems of short term solvency. Similarly, the balanced distribution of loans and advances in various sector and region automatically minimize the risk of default of large portions of loans. If loan portfolio is properly diversified, then problem faced in one sector has the lesser probability to impact other sectors so that the BFIs will bear minimum loss and can avoid the potential systemic risk. Therefore, the balanced distribution of financial resources from different perspective is important for the sustainable development of both the financial sector and the economy as a whole (UNCTAD, 2020).

When people fund money in a saving account in bank for example; the bank must invest the money in new factories and equipment to increase their production. In addition, borrowing from the banks most issues stocks and bonds will be sold to investors to raise capital needed for business expansion. Government also issues bonds to obtain funds to invest in such projects such as the construction of dams, roads and schools. All such investments by individuals business and government involve a sacrifice of income to get an expected future benefits. As a result, investment raises a nation's standard of living

Financial resource mobilization has crucial role in inclusive and sustainable economic development. There are predominantly two types of system to mobilize the financial resources viz. Bank-based and Market-based financial system. On the one hand, Bank

based financial system promotes the debt financing and prevails mostly in developing countries. On the other hand, the market-based financial system encourages equity and debt financing both and found mostly in the advanced economies. (Jacob et. al., 2019). As in many developing countries, compared to the market-based financial system, the bank based financial system is more developed in Nepal.

Timilsina, (2014) has studied the fund mobilization of NABIL, HBL, NIBL, and SCBNL. The study is based on secondary data and has analyzed the data from period of 2005-2006 to 2010-2012. The finding from the study was the liquidity position of all four banks is satisfactory. The liquidity position of NIBL is better than NABIL, HBL and SCBNL. The analysis also depicts that the total investment to total fund is highest in SCBNL. But NIBL's capacity to mobilize its loan and advances to total fund is better than SCBNL. The study also added profitability position of SCBNL is slightly better than NABIL, HBL, and NIBL. SCBNL has highest return on loan and advances. Similarly, the study also concluded positive relation between fund and advances of NABIL, HBL, NIBL, and SCBNL. By considering the trend values, SCBNL is more successful to utilize its total collected fund in investment than NABIL, HBL, and NIBL.

According to Ibrahim, (2012) bank accepts funds to lend the same at a higher rate of interest. Funds and credits are just like inflow and outflow of funds of the banks. Banks deploy funds by way of providing credits to needy people. Credits (loans and advances) are the largest income earning asset of the bank and the most profitable and high risk associated item on the asset side of the bank balance sheet. Banks utilize its funds in suitable area and right sector. Bank cannot achieve its goals until and unless it mobilizes its funds in right sectors and by performing different activities. Bank should separate the useful and profitable sector for mobilization of its funds. Banker being only a financial intermediary, will not be able to make any profit unless it has to pay interest on funds, meet establishment expenses, meet liquidity of cash balance, and yet allow some balance from out of which it can build reserve and pay dividend to the shareholder.

Research Department of NRB, (2021) studied on "Financial Sector's Resources Mobilization under Federal Structure of Nepal" researchers stated that Nepal has entered into the federal governing system after the promulgation of new constitution in 2072 BS. With the implementation of fiscal federalism, allocation of financial resources across the province and local levels has been a key concern among policy makers and practitioners. The recent policy efforts from government and the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) are directed to channelize financial resources across the sub-national levels. For equitable mobilization of financial resources, many efforts have been introduced subsequently by the government of Nepal and NRB. Financial inclusion has been focused widely during the last couple of years. As a result, for instance, 750 out of 753 local levels are equipped

with the access of commercial bank in their front yard. In the context of increasing access to financial services, now, the uses side of financial resources provided by the banking sector under the federal structure has to be analyzed. Researchers analyzed the data related to financial access, uses of financial services such as deposit mobilization and credit expansion, concessional financing, deprived and directed sector credit and other important types of credit in provincial level. The study found that the financial resource mobilization is still imbalanced in provinces. However, the indicators are in positive direction towards balanced financial resource mobilization.

Shrestha, (2011) in her studies concluded the following points:

- ❖ The structural ratio of commercial banks show that banks invest on the average 75% of their total deposit on government securities and shares.
- ❖ The analysis of resources position of commercial banks should quit high percentage of deposit as cash reserve.
- ❖ Return ratio of all the banks show that most of the time foreign banks have higher return as well as higher risk than Nepalese banks, etc...

Pradhan, (2010) in his article, “Deposit mobilization, its problem and prospects” has presented the following problems in Nepal's context:

- ❖ People do not have knowledge and proper education on saving in institutional manner. They do not know financial organizational process, withdrawal system, depositing system etc.
- ❖ Financial institutions do not want to operate and provide their services in rural areas.

Establishment of commercial banks contributes significant role in the formation and mobilization of internal capital and development efforts. They furnish necessary capital needed for trade and commerce for mobilizing the dispersed saving of the individuals and institution.

Sources of Fund

A. Owned Funds/ Equity Capital of Bank

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| a) Ordinary Share | b) Preference Share | c) Bonus Share |
| d) Retained Earning | e) Reserve Fund | f) Undistributed Dividend |

B. Borrowed Fund of Bank

- a) Selling of Debenture
- b) Deposits
- c) Loans from the Central Bank
- d) Loan from Financial Institutions

Mobilization of Funds

- a) Liquid Funds
- b) Investment
- c) Loan and Advances
- d) Fixed Assets
- e) Administrative and Miscellaneous Expenses

Profile of the Prime Commercial Bank Ltd. (PCBL)

Prime Commercial Bank Ltd. was incorporated in September 2007 as the 21st commercial bank in Nepal. It is a Category 'A' Financial Institution registered under the "Banks and Financial Institutions Act" of Nepal. It has been established by prominent business personnel and professionals from diversified areas with a prime objective of providing 'Banking Services to Everyone' in the country where still large number of populations are deprived of Banking Services.

The bank has established itself as an emerging player in financial sector with focus in customer service excellence, maintaining excellent relationship with valued customers. It is counted among the top 10 commercial banks in Nepal by independent raters and publications in the country.

Statement of the Problem

The number of financial institutions including Commercial Banks has increased rapidly with the introduction of liberalized economic policy after 1990s but the coverage of Commercial Banks has not spread throughout the nation uniformly. Most of them centered in limited and facilitated urban areas like Kathmandu Valley and other major cities. The increase in the number of Commercial Banks causes the increase of its share in the whole financial system and consequently the contribution in the economic development of the country through mobilization of funds and utilization of its funds to increase the aggregate demand in the economy.

In developing countries, the rate of saving is quite low and existing institutions are half successful in mobilizing such savings as most people have lower income that vertically all current income must be spent in maintaining a subsistence level of consumption. Investment is an essence of the national economy. Banking system is the integral part of investment system in productive sector. It involves the sacrifice of current rupees for future. It is concerned with the allocation of present fund for later reward, which is uncertain. Due to the high competition between the financial institutions, the collected

amount from public is comparatively lower than fund mobilization and investment practice of collected funds. Therefore, it has raised the problems of investment and proper mobilization of collected funds.

Based on this statement, this study is focused on the following research questions:

- ❖ What is the trend of deposit collection and its mobilization?
- ❖ What is the relationship between different factors of fund mobilization?
- ❖ What is the position of fund and its mobilization in PCBL?

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to evaluate the fund position and mobilization of Prime Bank Ltd. The following specific objectives are to support the evaluation and comparison of the efficiency and progress of this bank:

- ❖ To evaluate the trend of fund, loan and advances and investment of commercial bank.
- ❖ To measure the association among fund mobilization factors.
- ❖ To know the fund position and mobilization of selected commercial bank.

Limitations of the study

The study has following limitations:

- ❖ This study has only focused on fund mobilization aspects of the bank.
- ❖ This study is based on only secondary data and accuracy depends upon the data provided by the organization.
- ❖ This study has focused on only one commercial bank as sample i.e., PCBL.
- ❖ Because of limited time, research cannot be extended fully with all aspects of fund mobilization procedure.

Research Methodology

Basically, the proposed study is based on two types of research design namely descriptive and analytical. Descriptive research design describes the general attitude of the Nepalese funders, business environment, problems regarding the fund's mobilization aspects etc. Similarly, the analytical research design makes a thorough analysis of gathered facts and information and critically evaluates it as well.

Secondary data has been used for this study in order to analyze the relationship between fund and its explanatory variables. Among the twenty-one commercial banks.

Prime Bank is selected for the study purpose by using purposive sampling. Financial statement and annual financial report of Prime Bank, Banking & Financial statistics of Nepal Rastra Bank are used for secondary data collection purpose. The report will be analyzed using Ratio Analysis tools.

Results and analysis

The financial analysis is done to ascertain liquidity, profitability, leverage, debt servicing and interest servicing ability of the firm. Combinations of ratios are analyzed to drive a true picture.

Net Profit to Gross Income Ratio:

The ratio measures the volume of gross income. The higher ratio measures the higher efficiency of the bank and lower ratio indicates lower efficiency of the bank.

Table 1

Net Profit to Gross Income Ratio

Years	Net Profit	Gross Income	Ratio (times)
2016/17	477566263	31423860	15.20
2017/18	553447114	29443386	18.80
2018/19	745589121	92005697	8.10
2019/20	115759677	20917773	5.53
2020/21	1467942925	211970958	6.93

Source: Annual report of Prime bank

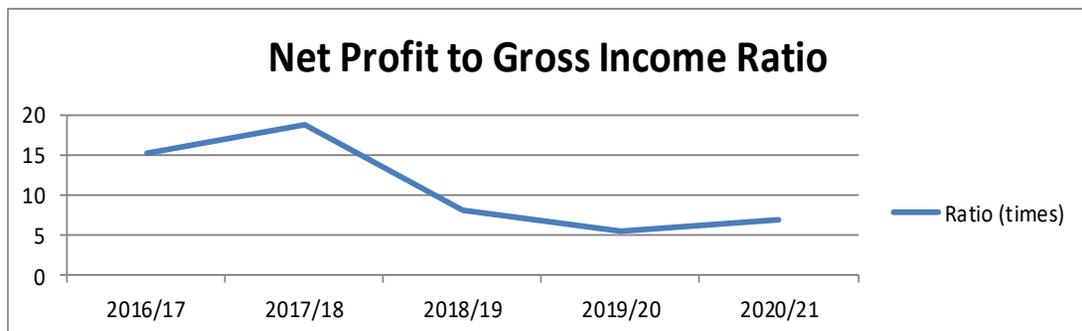


Fig 1: Net Profit to Gross Income Ratio

Note: Net Profit to Gross income ratio = $\frac{\text{Net Profit}}{\text{Gross income}} \times 100\%$

Table no 1 and Figure 1 show that the total net profit to gross income ratio of Prime Bank is in fluctuating trend. The highest ratio is 18.80 times in the year 2017/18 and lowest ratio is 5.53 times in the year 2019/20. The bank is able to obtain higher efficiency. Therefore, credit management is in good position of the bank.

Interest Income to Loan and Advances

There is a positive correlation between the consumer loan ratio and bank performance, suggesting that it is beneficial for banks to exploit the consumer loans market. Loan growth leads to an increase in loan loss provisions during the subsequent three years, to a decrease in relative interest income, and to lower capital ratios.

$$\text{Note: Interest Income to Loan and Advance} = \frac{\text{Interest Income}}{\text{Loan and Advances}} \times 100\%$$

Table No.: 2

Interest Income to Loan and Advances

Year	Loan and Advance	Interest Income	Ratio
2016/17	57711391949	2786218393	4.83
2017/18	40272093722	2871169081	7.13
2018/19	32616506541	3242635081	9.94
2019/20	27104417443	3556635240	13.12
2020/21	21226687733	520727381	2.45

Source: Annual report of Prime Bank

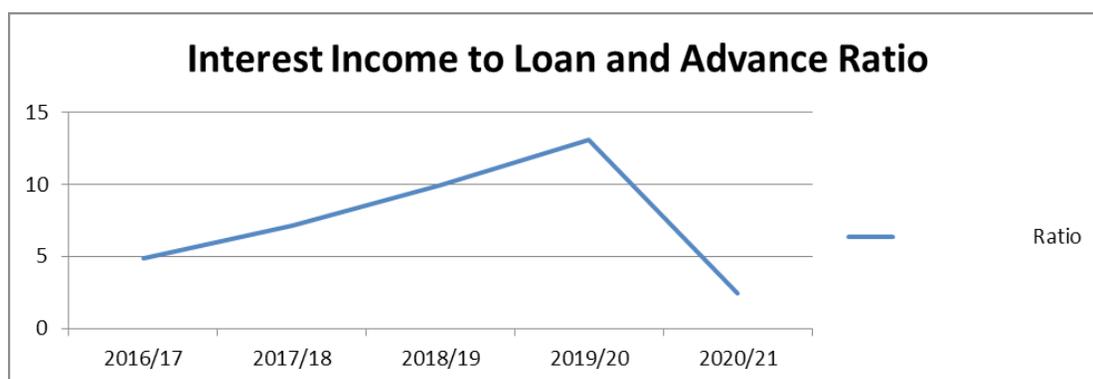


Fig 2: Interest Income to Loan and Advances Ratio

Table 2 and figure 2 represent the Interest Income to loan and advance ratio. During the year 2019/20 the return on loan and advance ratio is 13.12%. In the year 2020/21 the return on loan and advance ratio is 2.45%. From the table it can also be analyzed that loan and advances are in decreasing trend for the entire study period.

Investment to total fund Ratio

It is the total investment to total fund ratio. The ratio helps to analyze the position of an organization by letting know about the fund mobilization as an investment.

$$\text{Investment to total fund} = \frac{\text{Investment}}{\text{Total Fund}} \times 100\%$$

Table No.: 3

Investment to total fund ratio

Year	Investment	Total Fund	Ratio
2016/17	6145430804	65855880385	9.33%
2017/18	5070194361	48342121058	10.49%
2018/19	5743071578	41005754566	14.01%
2019/20	9595131013	34045262660	28.18%
2020/21	4894964319	28798028030	17.00%
Average			15.80%
SD			6.17%
CV			39.02

Source: Annual report of Prime Bank

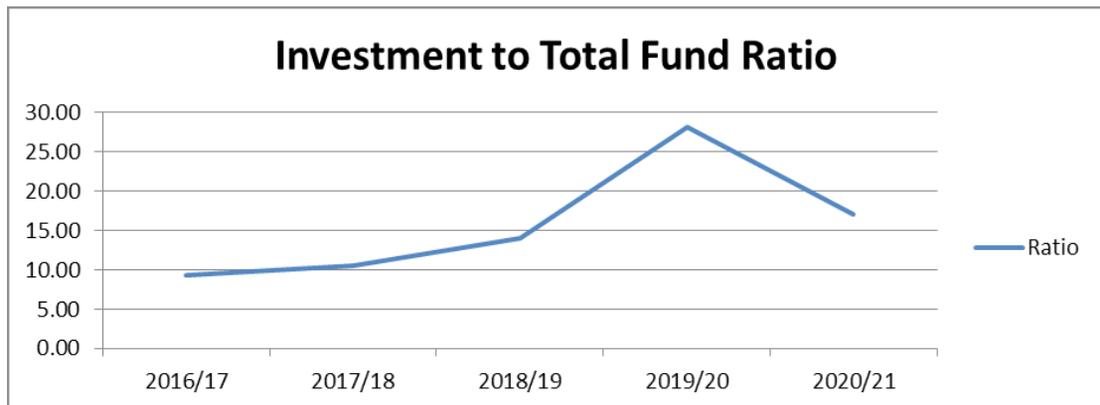


Fig. 3: Total investment to total fund

In the table and bar diagram shown above, the highest ratio is in the year 2019/20 with the ratio of 28.18% while the lowest is during the year 2016/17 with the ratio of 9.33%. The average ratio is 15.80% with standard deviation of 6.17%. Coefficient of Variation is 39.02%. From the table it can be analyzed that investment has fluctuating trend during the study period whereas total fund has showed decreasing trend.

2.2.2 Loan and Advances to current Assets Ratio

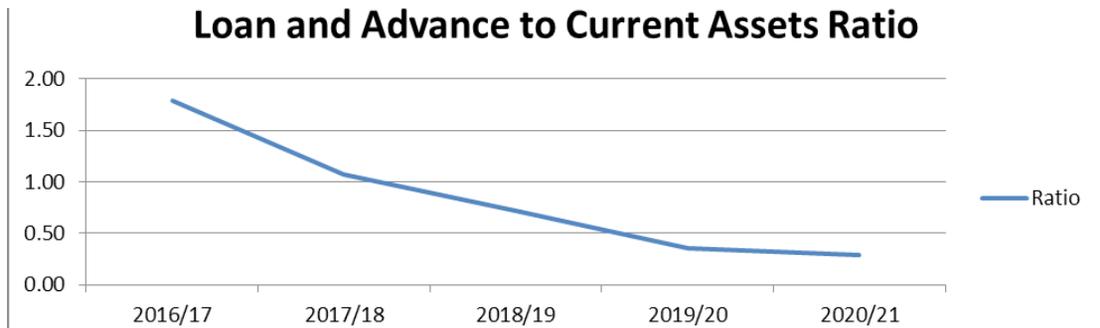
Loans and advances are the bills purchased and discounted, local and foreign currencies, loan and advances and overdrafts. Bank loans and advances are the main assets used as a source of income in the commercial banks. This ratio is used as a source of income in the commercial banks. This ratio is calculated to determine proportional of current assets which are interested as loans and advances to generate the income for the bank. It is expressed as:

$$\text{Loan and advances to current Assets Ratio} = \frac{\text{Loan \& Advance}}{\text{Current Assets}}$$

Table: 4

Loan and Advance to Current Assets

Year	Loan and Advance	Current Assets	Ratio
2016/17	57711391949	32226480934	1.79
2017/18	40272093722	37659817915	1.07
2018/19	32616506541	45424248635	0.72
2019/20	27104417443	77545264241	0.35
2020/21	21226687733	73429583416	0.29

Source: *Annual report of Prime Bank***Figure 4: Loan and Advance ratio**

In the above table and bar graph, there is decreasing trend in loan and advance to current assets ratio. The highest is during the year 2016/17 i.e. 1.79 and lowest in the year 2020/21 i.e. 0.29. From the table it can be analyzed that during the study period current assets of the Prime Bank showed increasing trend.

Cash and Bank Balance to Current Asset:

Cash and bank balance are the most liquid form of the current assets. The cash and bank balance ratio indicate the percentage of readily available fund within the bank.

The cash and bank balance to current asset ratio is calculated by using the following formula:

$$\text{Cash and Bank Balance to current Assets Ratio} = \frac{\text{Cash and Bank Balance}}{\text{Current Assets}} \times 100$$

Table 5

Cash and Bank Balance Ratio

Year	Cash And Bank Balance	Current Assets	Ratio
2016/17	12392418305	32226480934	38.45
2017/18	7824890933	37659817915	20.78
2018/19	6622873369	45424248635	14.58
2019/20	7268359201	77545264241	9.37
2020/21	5441973928	73429583416	7.41

Source: *Annual report of Prime Bank*

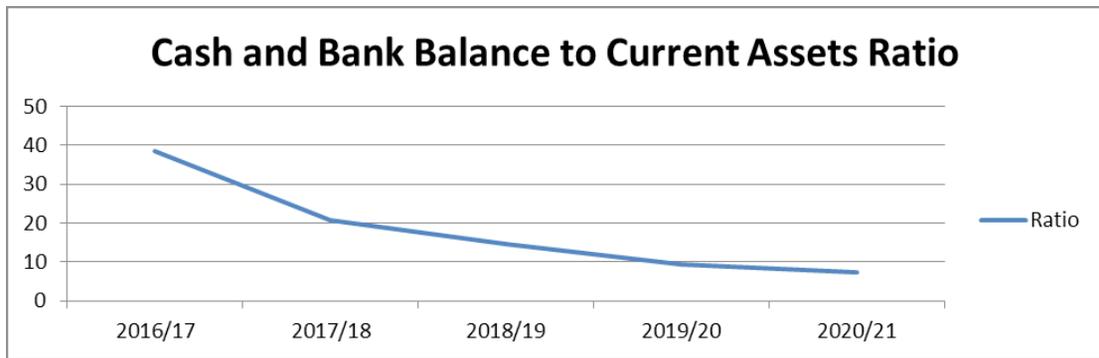


Figure -5: Cash and Bank Balance Ratio

As per table 5 and bar diagram, there is decreasing trend of cash and bank balance but increasing trend in total current assets. During the year 2016/17 Cash and Bank to total current assets is highest which is 38.45% and the lowest is during the year 2020/21 with the value of 7.41%. The overall trend of ratio is decreasing.

Major Findings

- ❖ The total net profit to gross income ratio of Prime Bank is in fluctuating trend. The highest ratio is 18.07 in the year 2019/20 and lowest ratio is 5.53 in the year 2019/20. The bank is able to obtain higher efficiency. Therefore, credit management is in good position of the bank.
- ❖ Return on loan and advances ratio is increased up to the year 2019/20. During the year 2019/20 the return on loan and advance ratio is 13.12, but in the year 2020/21 the return on loan and advance ratio is 2.45. This ratio is quite satisfactory except for the year 2020/21.
- ❖ Investment to total fund ratio is also in increasing trend except 2020/21 which shows the better fund mobilization status as an investment. This ratio is decreased in the year 2020/21 that may be because of coronavirus pandemic. In an average 15.80% of fund was utilized as investment whose standard deviation is 6.17% and coefficient of variation was 39.02%.
- ❖ During the year 2016/17 ratio of loan and advance to current assets is 1.79 times which is decreased over the years and in the year 2020/21 it reached to 0.29 times. This indicates that loan and advance of Prime Bank was not able to generate sufficient income.

- ❖ Cash and Bank to total current assets is 38.45% as the highest during the year 2016/17 but after that it decreased to 7.41% during the year 2020/21. Overall, it was in the decreasing trend from 2016/17 to 2020/21. The cash and balance and current assets were in increasing trend which shows the readily available fund was also in increasing trend in spite of having low ratio.

Conclusion

The major conclusion of this study is that the investment, loans and advances and asset purchased shows the positive correlation with funds. Among the explanatory variables under the study loans and advances is the most dominant variable which shows the fund has a high impact on the loans and advances sector in the context of Nepal.

Short term investment to total fund ratio analysis of Prime Bank has enough short-term investment in an average. This shows Prime Bank has effectively mobilized its fund in garnishing benefits from short term investments which can be easily converted into cash to meet the obligations of customers. Likewise, total Investment to Total Fund ratio analysis of Prime Bank shows that the bank has invested significant portion of fund to total investment. Cash and bank to Current Fund Ratio of Prime Bank suggests that Prime have maintained higher ratio in an average during the study period. Return on Loans and Advances of the sampled bank during the review period shows that the bank has generated moderate return from the investment in loans and advances.

As per the standard regulation of NRB, the CRR at present should be 6%. During the study, it was found that Prime Bank has maintained the CRR above six percent on an average.

Implication

On the basis of analysis and finding following implications can be mentioned.

- ❖ The liquidity position of a bank may be affected by internal as well as external factors. The affecting factors may be interest rates, supply and demand position of loan and advances as well as savings, investment situations, central banks directives, the lending policies, capability of management, strategic planning and funds flow situations. The ratio of cash and bank balance to total deposit of the bank is in good position. It means the bank has high idle cash and bank balance. It may decrease profit of the bank. Prime Bank is recommended to mobilize its idle cash and bank balance in profitable sector as loan and advances for its further breakthrough progress.

- ❖ The main source of commercial banks is collecting deposit from public who don't need that fund recently. So, if this bank collects more amounts as deposits through large variety of deposits schemes and facilities, like cumulative deposit scheme price bonds scheme (life insurance), monthly interest scheme, house building scheme, direct finance housing scheme, education loan scheme and many others that is better for further progress of this bank.
- ❖ Observing the findings of growth analysis it has noticed that bank has been adopting an aggressive policy in all the parameters including loan and advances. As the economy has not been able to show the survival growth, the aggressive policy may prove to be harmful in future. The bank should rather prefer an aggressive defensive policy in mobilizing the resources in loans.

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A Comparative Study on Promotional Strategies of Two Nepali Telecom Companies, NTC and Ncell.

Prakash Pokharel¹

Abstract

This paper is intended to compare the promotional strategies of two leading telecommunication industry of Nepal – NTC and Ncell. Telecommunication industry is vital for economic growth. It begins with analyzing and comparing their promotional activities. Then it compares the promotional strategies in two ways: in terms of frequency and in terms of budget they spend. Through comparison, it reveals that promotional activities have been taken very seriously by the Ncell than Nepal Telecom.

On the basis of David Aakar model of brand equity, this paper also analyzes the effect of promotional activities into brand equity in the following ways: brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality and brand association of telecommunication companies. It shows that two companies have difference in promotional strategies mainly because of their attitude to be a leader in market.

Keywords: *Promotional Strategy, Telecommunication companies, Brand Equity, Ncell, NTC*

Background of the study

The word “strategy” is derived from the Greek word “stratēgos”; stratus (meaning army) and “ago” (meaning leading/moving). Strategy is an action that managers take to attain one or more of the organization’s goals. Strategy results from the detailed strategic planning process”. Promotional strategies have been in constant growth since 1960’s and have today become one of the key factors in making strategies about promotion mix.

Promotion is the element in the marketing mix that serves to inform, persuade, and remind the market of a product and/or organization selling it, in the hopes of influencing the recipients’ feelings, beliefs, or behavior (Stanton et. al, 1994). Promotion is to communicate with individuals, groups and organization to directly or indirectly facilitate exchanges by informing and persuading one or more of the audiences to accept the organization’s products (Pride & Ferrel, 2012). Promotion performs the major role of communicating to the buyers (Koirala, 2010). Generally, people buy that product about

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what they are familiar with. So, maximum efforts today, of a business organization is to introduce themselves well among the people. Promotion includes all the activities the company undertakes to communicate and promote its products to the target market (Kotler, 1999). Promotion is the persuasive communication with customers. Promotion strategies will be executed by using the tactical elements of Marketing Communications, or Promotions Mix. The five main aspects of a promotional mix are; advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing.

Abedin and Ferdous (2015) researched to determine the impact of promotional activities of Airtel Bangladesh limited. As per the study, promotion is a comprehensive term, and covers the entire scope of advertising, publicity, public relations, personal selling and sales promotion. In the present competitive world if any business organization has to survive it needs to keep an eye on various forces operating in the market. More over competitors constantly try to win others. In this scenario, every business organization needs to monitor changes taking place in the market so that they are not caught by competitors. The study investigates, measures, and evaluates promotional activities of Airtel Bangladesh Limited from the perspective of customers' perceptions.

Rahimi (2019) stated in the research paper that the telecom companies in Afghanistan were established in the first decade of the 21st century. Competition among companies is high, and they introduced new services and packages in order to keep their customers satisfied and increased their shares in the market. Therefore, the research was designed to assess telecom companies' customers in Afghanistan, and their satisfaction for companies marketing strategies and services. The research was conducted in a quantitative research method. Primary data was collected through close-end questions from 151 respondents who had been customers of at least one of the Telecom companies in Afghanistan. The questions were collected to assess customers' satisfaction from telecom companies and their marketing strategies. The collected data are analyzed by SPSS 20 and the results are explained and shown by tables and charts. From the research it was found that customers believe the telecom companies services are simple to use, promotions programs are attractive for them, and they do not want to switch to another line if they find favorable promotional programs. But the fact was that the companies were trying their subscribers, so they introduced new attractive marketing policies and strategies in attracting young customers. Therefore, there has been improvement from the time the telecom companies launched their operation in Afghanistan.

Aaker (1991), in his brand equity model, defines brand equity as the set of brand assets and liabilities linked to the brand-its name and symbols that add value to, or subtract value from, a product or service. These assets include brand loyalty, awareness, perceived quality and associations.

Promotional strategy is majorly performed with the motive of increasing brand equity and purchase intention by using the tools of promotion mix i.e., advertising, sales promotion, publicity, public relation and personal selling. Brand equity refers to the increment of brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality. Similarly, purchase intention refers to willing purchase, considering purchase and purchase recommendation. This can be shown via following diagram:

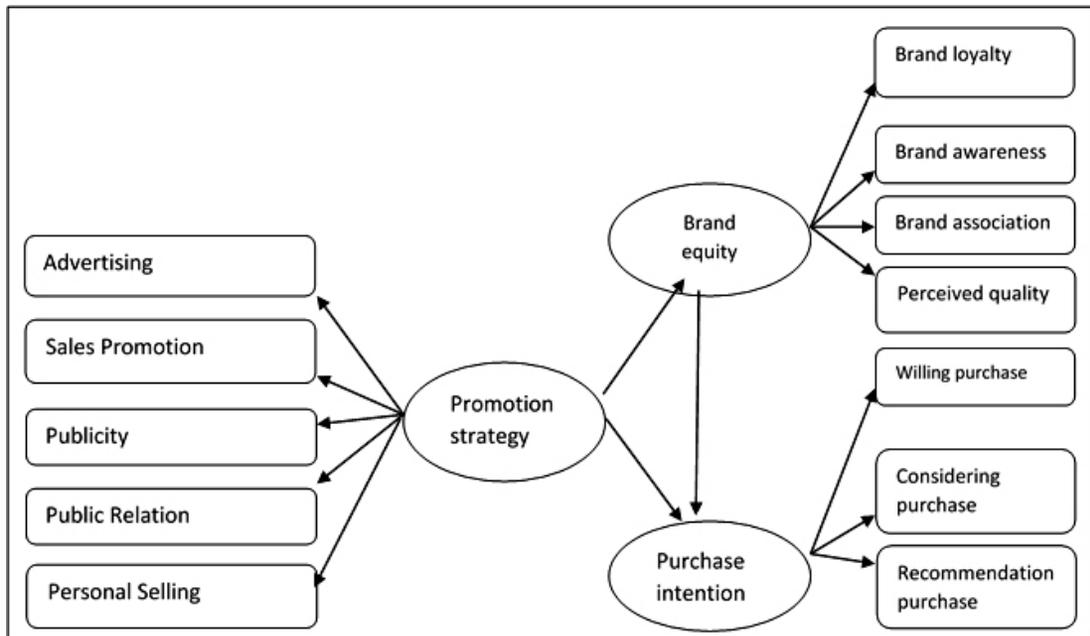


Figure 1: Comparative analysis of promotional strategies for brand equity

Telecommunication Sector in Nepal

Nepal Telecom (NTC) and Ncell (previously known as Mero Mobile) are two of the GSM mobile carriers in Nepal. NTC was established in 2032 B.S. as government organization, started GSM mobile service back in 1999 whereas Ncell started mobile operation as private sector in 2004.

Together they contribute over 73% mobile penetration (20.7 million users as of 2078 BS, National Census Data, 2078), with majority being Ncell users. Despite the early adoption advantage, NTC has been hearing several complaints as being non-competitive to Ncell and for its poor services.

Predominantly the major focus of this study is to identify the promotional strategy adopted by the leading telecommunications and their effect on customer while making comparison on their strategies.

Statement of the Problem

Nepalese market is facing failures daily. It has created significant effect in total national economy. Trade deficit is the consequence of business failure. Serious problems like capital flight, unemployment, foreign dependency are increasing. Several forces or factors play vital role to sustain the business environment i.e., internal and external. The effects of marketing tools such as promotion have severe effect in the success or failure of the business.

Promotional activities are rarely performed by the business organizations in Nepal except communication sector. They count expenditure in promotion as waste of resources and waste of time. Predominantly, the major focus of this study is to identify the promotional strategy adopted by the leading telecommunications and their effect on customer and to make comparison of their strategies. How they are forcing customer to switch the services they are using? Some of the research problem that researcher found out through review of literature as follows:

- ❖ What are the promotional strategies of the two leading telecommunication companies?
- ❖ Which of these — NTC or Ncell are more efficient in promotion and why?
- ❖ What are the promotion budgets of both organization and how are they utilizing it?
- ❖ What are the different schemes offered by both leading telecommunication companies?
- ❖ How has the promotional strategies affected the number of customers?
- ❖ How has the promotional strategies affected brand loyalty?
- ❖ How has the promotional strategies affected brand awareness?
- ❖ How has the promotional strategies affected brand perception?
- ❖ How has the promotional strategies affected brand attitude?

These are the research questions and problems to be solved on this study.

Objectives of the study

Since the promotional activities are not much performed by the business organization, this study is conducted to determine what the leading telecommunication business are doing to attract customers, how they are presenting information to customers, how they are increasing their demand, which of them are more efficient in promotion and why, how they are making promotional strategies to compete with each other. So the general objective of this study is to present comparison between NTC and Ncell in terms of their promotional strategies.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- ❖ To compare promotional strategies of the NTC and Ncell.
- ❖ To examine the effects of promotional strategies on consumer behavior.

Limitations of the Study

Errors are inevitable. Beside 'to err is human' but to be conscious enough to avoid errors brings completeness. Maximum efforts have been applied to minimize errors. This study has the following limitations:

- ❖ NTC and Ncell have more than 13 million customers but very few samples of 107 customers have been taken for the study.
- ❖ Due to small number of sample population, it is not practical to generalize its findings.
- ❖ The study has been limited to GSM service only. So, this study does not cover other services offered by NTC and Ncell.
- ❖ Data regarding promotional activities are based on advertisements published in daily newspapers (*Kantipur Daily, The Himalayan Times Daily and Nagarik Daily*).
- ❖ Convenience sampling has been taken.

Research Methodology

This study is descriptive as well as analytical in nature. It attempts to cover the promotional strategies followed by both the telecommunication companies based on promotion scheme, customer satisfaction, and generating new customers.

Since the objectives are to compare promotional strategies of the NTC and Ncell and to examine the effects of promotional strategies on consumer behavior, information was collected from the direct meeting with company staff, companies' brochure, and their websites.

Data were collected from primary sources and from secondary sources from the customers as well as from the company staffs and other available materials that were found in newspaper, internet and other possible means. Other official data were collected visiting the office itself. Likert-type scale, ranking scale and ordinal scale is used in the questionnaire. To test the validity of response collected from respondent reliability test was performed where Cronbach's alpha of NTC is 0.614 and Cronbach's alpha of Ncell is 0.552 which is acceptable.

Information about number of customers was extracted from Nepal Telecommunication Authority MIS annual reports. Information about advertisement frequency and budget was extracted from daily newspapers. For this purpose, the leading daily newspapers - *Kantipur Daily, The Himalayan Times, and Nagarik Daily*, were taken into consideration.

Respondents' profile

Questionnaire responses

Distribution	No. of respondents	Percent
Responses	107	89.17
No-responses	13	10.13
Total	120	100

120 questionnaires were distributed, but only 107 were successfully obtained. The success rate of this survey is 89%. It is assumed that response rate and number of respondents is acceptable and valid in the field of marketing research.

No. of respondents by gender

Distribution	No. of respondents	Percent
Male	80	74.8
Female	27	25.2
Total	107	100

75% of respondents are male whereas 25% of the respondents are female.

No. of respondents by age group

Age group	Frequency	Percent
Below 25	49	45.8
26-35	41	38.3
Above 36	15	14.0
Total	105	98.1
Missing	2	1.9
Total	107	100.0

46% of the respondents are in the age group below 25 years, 38% of the respondents are in the age group of 26-35 years and the remaining 15% of the respondents are in the age group of above 36 years. This shows that majority of the respondents are below 35 years.

No of respondents by mobile service companies

	Frequency	Percent
NTC	64	59.8
Ncell	20	18.7
NTC & Ncell	23	21.5
Total	107	100.0

60% of the respondents use NTC mobile service, 19% of the respondents use Ncell mobile service and 21% of the respondents use NTC and Ncell mobile services.

Questionnaire method was used for customers of the selected sample group. Interview method also was used especially for company staffs as primary sources of data. Other financial information was collected from internet, newspapers, and published document of both companies, office staffs etc.

All collected primary as well as secondary data were recorded and processed using SPSS in computer with proper tools to find out the requirement of the research objectives. Data were also analyzed using judgmental approach. Basically, descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. Likewise, independent sample T- test and reliability test was also used to present and analyze the result. Comparative analysis for various parameters of promotion and SWOT analysis was also used as qualitative tools to analyze the collected data.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In this part, promotional strategies of NTC and Ncell are analyzed with the help of secondary data which are analyzed with the help of frequencies, mean and percentiles. Summary of different promotional parameters used by NTC and Ncell are as follows:

Descriptive statistics of customer base and promotional activities on the basis of MIS report

This section analyzes the number of customers and their growth, market share and their growth and promotional budgets and their growth.

No. customers and growth in market share of NTC and Ncell

Month	No. of customers		Market share (%)		Growth rate (%)	
	NTC	Ncell	NTC	Ncell	NTC	Ncell
Baisakh	4,872,897	5,207,239	48.34	51.66		
Jestha	5,014,377	5,421,414	48.05	51.95	2.90	4.11
Ashad	5,121,518	5,619,224	47.68	52.32	2.14	3.65
Shrawan	5,214,995	5,846,365	47.15	52.85	1.83	4.04
Bhadra	5,263,627	6,032,938	46.59	53.41	0.93	3.19
Ashwin	5,422,869	6,334,011	46.13	53.87	3.03	4.99
Kartik	5,556,699	6,686,871	45.38	54.62	2.47	5.57
Mangsir	5,646,682	6,851,561	45.18	54.82	1.62	2.46
Poush	5,742,687	7,008,777	45.04	54.96	1.70	2.29
Magh	5,816,159	7,178,008	44.76	55.24	1.28	2.41
Falgun	5,905,146	7,527,022	43.96	56.04	1.53	2.39

Source: MIS Reports, Nepal Telecommunication Authority

Number of customers of NTC during the month of Baisakh was 4,872,897 whereas number of customers of Ncell was 5,207,239 during the same month. Market shares of NTC and Ncell were 48.32% and 51.66% respectively during the month of Baisakh.

During the month of Falgun, number of customers of NTC as well as Ncell has increased to 5,905,146 and 7,527,022 respectively. During the same period, market share of NTC decreased to 43.96% whereas, market share of Ncell increased to 56.04%.

The number of advertisements published in daily newspapers by Ncell is 2.47 times higher than NTC and advertisement budget of Ncell is 5.44 times higher than NTC during the same period of time (Source: Advertisement Published in daily newspaper for eleven months period ending Falgun 2078), which shows Ncell is more aggressive than NTC.

Descriptive statistics on the basis of Questionnaire Survey

Users by company aggressive in promotion activities

Which mobile service company is more aggressive in promotional activities					
			NTC	Ncell	Total
Users	NTC	Count	5	59	64
		Percentage	7.8	92.2	100.0
	Ncell	Count	0	20	20
		Percentage	0.0	100.0	100.0
	NTC & Ncell	Count	1	22	23
		Percentage	4.3	95.7	100.0
Total	Count	6	101	107	
	Percentage	5.6	94.4	100.0	

Ncell is highly aggressive in terms of promotional activities compared to NTC since 94.4% of the respondents choose Ncell as more aggressive company.

Analysis of consumer behavior through brand equity

David Aaker's brand equity model is used to measure consumer behavior. For this purpose, primary data are used which were collected through questionnaire.

Users by perception of better mobile service company

Perception of better mobile service company						
			NTC	Ncell	Others	Total
Users	NTC	Count	48	10	3	61
		Percentage	78.7	16.4	4.9	100.0
	Ncell	Count	4	16	0	20
		Percentage	20.0	80.0	0.0	100.0
	NTC & Ncell	Count	11	12	0	23
		Percentage	47.8	52.2	0.0	100.0
Total	Count	63	38	3	104	
	Percentage	60.6	36.5	2.9	100.0	

60.6% of the respondents perceive NTC as better company. Similarly, 36.5% of the respondents perceive Ncell as better company and 2.9% of the respondents are neutral among them. Similarly, among the respondents using both NTC and Ncell, 47.8% perceived NTC as better company and 52.2% perceived Ncell as better company. Hence, from the above findings it can be said that customers are more associated with Ncell rather than with NTC.

Users by recommended mobile service						
			Recommended mobile service			Total
			NTC	Ncell	Others	
Users	NTC	Count	44	11	7	62
		Percentage	71.0	17.7	11.3	100.0
	Ncell	Count	3	17	0	20
		Percentage	15.0	85.0	0.0	100.0
	NTC & Ncell	Count	9	12	1	22
		Percentage	40.9	54.5	4.5	100.0
Total	Count		56	40	8	104
	Percentage		53.8	38.5	7.7	100.0

54% of the respondents recommended NTC, 38% of the respondents recommended Ncell and 8% of the respondents recommended neither of them. Similarly, within the respondents using both NTC and Ncell, 40.9% recommended NTC and 54.5% recommended Ncell. This shows that most of the respondents recommend Ncell over NTC.

Users by top of the mind question

Name of mobile service company that comes first in the mind					
			NTC	Ncell	Total
Users	NTC	Count	58	3	61
		Percentage	95.1	4.9	100.0
	Ncell	Count	4	14	18
		Percentage	22.2	77.8	100.0
	NTC & Ncell	Count	18	5	23
		Percentage	78.3	21.7	100.0
Total	Count		80	22	102
	Percentage		78.4	21.6	100.0

78.4% of the respondents choose NTC. Similarly, when asked the same question, 21.6% of the respondents choose Ncell. In the same way, 95.1% of NTC users choose NTC and 4.9% of the users choose Ncell whereas 22.2% of the Ncell users choose NTC and 77.8% of the users choose Ncell as answer to the top of the mind question. Similarly, out of the respondents using both NTC and Ncell, 78.3% choose NTC whereas 21.7% choose Ncell. Hence, from the above findings, it can be said that NTC is more successful in creating brand awareness in comparison to Ncell.

Test of mean difference of perceived quality between NTC and Ncell users				
Variables	T-value	Std. error	P-value	Remarks
Overall satisfaction with the mobile service	-5.153	0.101	0.000	Difference is significant
Provides good services	-7.837	0.102	0.000	Difference is significant
Provides good internet service	-7.483	0.131	0.000	Difference is significant
Charges low phone tariff	4.426	0.134	0.000	Difference is significant
Easy availability of recharge cards	-1.836	0.127	0.069	Difference is not significant
Easy availability of sim cards	-9.59	0.112	0.000	Difference is significant
Attractive promotional schemes	-9.339	0.122	0.000	Difference is significant
Reliable service	-4.717	0.100	0.000	Difference is significant

The mean is lower in NTC regarding low phone tariff suggesting NTC being cheaper. Regarding other categories except “the easy availability of recharge cards” category, the mean is higher in Ncell in all the categories suggesting better quality perception of Ncell in comparison to NTC.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The current study compares promotional strategies of two leading telecommunication companies – NTC and NCELL as well as customer behavior in terms of brand equity.

As Porter states that the resources based theory of the firm postulates that firm seeks to gain and sustain competitive advantage in order to earn profits. To do this they utilize resources that are superior to competitors. From this research it can be concluded that Ncell is making aggressive promotional strategies which are superior to NTC and is increasing its customers. Ncell has got first ranking on customer’s rating in terms of aggressive promotion.

The number of advertisements published in daily newspapers by Ncell is 2.47 times higher than the number of advertisements published by NTC during the same period of time. Similarly, advertisement budget of Ncell is 5.44 times higher than the advertisement budget of NTC during the same period of time. This shows that Ncell is more aggressive than NTC regarding promotional activities. Overall growth rate and market share of Ncell is 3.35% and 4.38% during the study period which is higher than NTC. Besides all those, measurement of brand loyalty, brand awareness shows result in favor of NTC. Perceived quality and brand association is also in favor of Ncell.

Baldauf et al. (2003) in their research state that brand equity directly enhances value to the customer by providing information, confidence and use satisfaction, efficiency and effectiveness of marketing programs, price or margins which is used by NTC as its promotional strategies.

According to the findings of the study, three among five parameters of promotional strategies (direct marketing, personnel selling and public relation) is being used by

Ncell only. Remaining two parameters (advertising and public relation) is also used aggressively by Ncell than NTC.

This research investigates the relationship and effect of sales promotion and customer loyalty. It was confirmed that there are positive relationships between sales promotion and customer loyalty. From the summary of the results, it can be concluded that as sales promotion expenditure increases and so does the customer loyalty.

As per Deep Sherchan's article in Business Age Ncell is using latest technology to attract customer in terms of developing promotional strategy. In this study it was found that Ncell is using online technology as well as other latest media as its promotional strategy which helps it to increase its customer in the market than NTC.

To sum up, it can be concluded from the findings that brand dimensions have the power in influencing the purchase decision of consumers but if they find the perfect substitutes with attractive promotion schemes, they can switch the brand. Because of those promotion strategies Ncell was successful in increasing its market share where as NTC's market share is gradually decreasing.

Recommendation

- ❖ The study recommends to develop promotional strategies that incorporate celebrity endorsements, event sponsorships, non-price promotions and cross media advertising to NTC as well as to develop their service quality if they want to retain their customer.
- ❖ Besides heavy promotion activities Ncell has not succeeded to increase its brand equity which might be because of its high phone tariff. Therefore, it should try to reduce its phone tariff.
- ❖ From this study it is found that maximum number of customers for Ncell is youngsters. It should focus its promotional activities towards elder group.
- ❖ If possible Ncell should differentiate its services in the market like CDMA.

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Patients' Perception towards Chronic Kidney Disease and Government Policy in Nepal

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Abstract

This article is based on patients' perception towards Chronic Kidney disease and government policy in Nepal. Mostly qualitative method was applied and 12 (patient with chronic Kidney disease) were taken as respondents and their perception, about policies and their suffering were recorded. Based on the findings of the research, this article argues that health is socially constructed and if the social status is better, the accessibility is higher. However, the state has health policy but it is not implemented properly because implementation is the paramount for the output. Healthy habits are social construction. Health is also socially determined. Financial burden of the patients are taken by the family. Most of the kidney donors are the relatives of the patients. The current status of the health care policy is not reachable to public.

Key words: Chronic Kidney disease, Health, society, state policy.

Introduction

Historically, if we search for understanding the nature of illness and disease, it was found in the definition provided in cultural-religious belief system. Now, more and more society is transforming into scientific procedures including in institutional and everyday life, such belief system is fading gradually. In these circumstances, across the world, understanding of nature of illness and disease rest on scientific methodology concerned partly on the biological dimension of human body, and partly on social construction of illness and cure (Thokar, 2016). The research is concerned about relationship between kidney patients, doctors and state policy.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined health in a broader sense in its 1948 constitution as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

According to MoHP (2014) there is still 22 percent of total population out of basic health services which shows that health facilities are inadequate.

Health is socially constructed. Now it has been perceived that individual's health behavior is based on his society (Thokar 2016). In the ancient time, health and illness

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was guided by the divine theory. Ancient medical systems stressed the importance of reducing illness through divination and ritual. Other codes of behavior and dietary protocols were widespread in the ancient world. During the Zhou Dynasty in China, doctors suggested exercise, meditation and temperance to preserve one's health (Dorothy 1999). The Chinese closely link health with spiritual well-being. Health regimes in ancient India focused on oral health as the best method for a healthy life. The Talmudic code created rules for health which stressed ritual cleanliness, connected disease with certain animals and created diets. Other examples include the Mosaic Code and Roman baths and aqueducts.

In Nepal only limited people had access to ayurvedic and modern health care services at Singhadarbar Vaidyakhana established nearly 300 years ago and the Bir Hospital was established in 1947. Most ordinal people had to rely on Dhami, Jhakri, Jharfuke, Guvaju (Annual report 2071 BS). These types of practice even still exist in remote area of Nepal.

The kidneys are two bean-shaped organs that extract waste from blood, balance body fluids, form urine, and aid in other important functions of the body. They reside against the back muscles in the upper abdominal cavity. They sit opposite each other on either side of the spine.

Chronic kidney disease, also called chronic kidney failure, describes the gradual loss of kidney function. Your kidneys filter wastes and excess fluids from your blood, which are then excreted in your urine. When chronic kidney disease reaches an advanced stage, fluid, electrolytes and wastes can build up in your body. In the early stages of chronic kidney disease, one may experience few signs or symptoms. Chronic kidney disease may not become apparent until one's kidney function is significantly impaired. Treatment for chronic kidney disease focuses on slowing the progression of the kidney damage, usually by controlling the underlying cause. Chronic kidney disease can progress to end-stage kidney failure, which is fatal without artificial filtering (dialysis) or a kidney transplant (Koirala 2015). Annual Report (2014) shows that the government is extremely aware of the burden that chronic kidney disease places on the individual, families and communities. Report further shows that Australia is one of the most health aware countries and is protecting her citizen form kidney diseases. More than \$260 million was spent on kidney related medicine and also \$26.8 million was invested in research for kidney saving policy.

Nepal health policy 2048 was not adequate to support the demand of health sector. Thus to fulfilling the gap Nepal Health Policy 2071 was lunched which mainly focused on providing access quality health services (Universal health coverage) to every citizen in an effective way and to provide basic health services free of cost. Similarly, it had also emphasized on planning, production, retaining and developing skilled human resources to deliver affordable and effective health services.

Sarha (2014) says that there is a need of at least one kidney transplant center with the capacity to perform living donor nephrectomy, kidney transplantation and post-transplant management of recipients – within the country's borders. Though the need is felt no deceased donor activity was reported to the Global Observatory on Donation and Transplantation between 2006 and 2011. To meet the ongoing demands of the kidneys countries have commenced deceased donor kidney transplantation within their own borders. There is a need of sufficient local capacity including local medical expertise to perform kidney recovery surgery from deceased and living donors, kidney transplantation and recipient management.

Chronic kidney disease is a worldwide public health problem. In Nepal, Chronic kidney disease patients are increasing and the management of this disease is very expensive compared to other chronic diseases. Mishra (2015) shows that the socioeconomic status of chronic kidney disease patients registered in National Kidney Centre, Banasthali, Kathmandu.

A descriptive cross-sectional study among ninety six patients with chronic kidney disease in National Kidney Centre, Banasthali, Kathmandu showed the mean age of patients was 47 years, among them 65% respondents were male, mostly married and literate, 75% were drinker or past drinker, more than half of the respondents were past smokers, and 59% were from Kathmandu valley (Mishra, 2015).

Dr Rishi Kumar Kafle (1954) is an award winner and a founder of National Kidney Center. According to him in Nepal kidney patients are rapidly growing and the kidney care needs to be improved in time. He is serving through National Kidney Center which was founded in the year 1997 with five dialysis machines and performed 724 sessions of dialysis in the entire year then, today this center proudly boasts of 35 dialysis machines and now monthly they are conducting about 2800 sessions of dialysis. Health Care Foundation has been working with National Kidney Centre.

According to WHO report the number to kidney patient and deaths from it are very high. Many patients are diagnosed of kidney failure when there are few opportunities to prevent adverse outcomes. A simple urine test is necessary to find out the condition of ones' kidneys.

Screening for a disease is necessary to identify the disease. It helps in reducing the risk of progression of the disease and reduces its complication and also helps in reducing the cost of kidney treatment. In low-income country like Nepal, early kidney screening program will reduce the hemodialysis burden alongside with financial burden to the government. In Nepal there are more than nine percent population with the problem of kidney diseases.

The Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has announced that it will provide free dialysis services to patients suffering from kidney failure in 2012. According to ministry officials, the government will also refund the cost of dialysis service even in

private hospital. Government now should focus on kidney screening program. Kidney screening in the population is beneficial to both individuals and the government. New kidney disease screening program for targeting patients with diabetes, hypertension, and metabolic syndrome may be required; however, nationwide kidney disease screening system is crucial for management of major CKD and reducing medical costs in Nepal.

Kidney disease is very expensive and mostly out of reach of majority of Nepalese, now being a silent social problem. A study shows that among 96 respondents (kidney patients), 32 were under medication and another 32 were under dialysis and remaining 32 also transplanted their kidneys. This study was conducted in three hospital of Kathmandu valley and 12 CKD patients were taken as respondents, in-depth interview was conducted.

Conceptualization of health

Koirala (2015) shows that about 51% of patient's transplanted kidney during medication followed by CKD patients under dialysis. Majority of the patient transplanted their kidneys in India because of cost effectiveness. About 16 percent of CKD patients transplanted their kidneys in Bir hospital and least number in Teaching hospital. About 57 percent of the patient transplanted their kidneys on the cost range of Rs 5 lakhs-Rs10 lakhs. About 32 percent of CKD patients spent worth Rs 11 lakhs-15 lakhs for their kidney transplantation. Other costs borne by transplanted patients was Rs. 29,100/- per month for medicine, routine investigation, hospitalization and transportation from home to hospital except transplantation charge and others. In this way, a single patient paid Rs. 3,49,200/- per year for management of disease after transplantation. It shows that kidney patients are facing acute problems and state is not taking their responsibility. There were total 96 among them, 12 were taken for in-depth-interview respondents who responded. Thapa, et. all (2015) conducted a research on kidney problem comparatively male and female. The findings shows that special size and volume was found out by the sonography testing. Measuring kidney was based on supine position.

Discussion

This chapter shows respondents background, their perception and experience. Basically, kidney patients experience regarding state policy and welfare have been stated.

There are a plethora of studies, reports and journal articles documenting and quantifying the extent to which chronic kidney disease (CKD) and particularly end stage kidney disease significantly and more frequently impacts. This study has showed the impact of kidney patients on their family and relatives which is sociological vantage point.

Millions of people across the world suffer from kidney disease. Of those millions, several thousand will eventually or do need kidney transplants. Out of those millions in the world, 16,500 in the United States needed a kidney transplant in 2008. Of those

16,500 people, 5,000 died while waiting for a transplant. Currently, there is a shortage of donors, and in 2007 there were only 64,606 kidney transplants in the world.

This shortage of donors is causing countries to place monetary value on kidneys. Countries such as Iran and Singapore are eliminating their lists by paying their citizens to donate. Also, the black market accounts for 5-10 percent of transplants that occur worldwide. The act of buying an organ through the black market is illegal in the United States. A lot of people are put on the waiting list. To be put on the waiting list for a kidney transplant, patients must first be referred by a physician, then they must choose and contact a donor hospital.

Once they choose a donor hospital, patients must then receive an evaluation to make sure they are sustainable to receive a transplant. In order to be a match for a kidney transplant, most of the patients must match blood type and human leukocyte antigen factors with their donors. They must also have no reactions to the antibodies from the donor's kidneys. Respondents of this study has also mentioned that aforementioned conditions for the transplantation.

One of the biggest challenges the human society is facing is chronic diseases which are sweeping the entire globe, with an increasing trend in developing countries.

This study clearly shows that kidney disease is one of the severe diseases among non-communicable disease. Nepal is one of the developing countries with less cope up mechanism due to its financial status.

The WHO Global status report on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) 2010 showed that NCDs were globally the biggest cause of death. Of the 57 million deaths that occurred worldwide in 2008, about 36 million (63%) were due to non-communicable diseases, principally cardiovascular diseases (48%), cancer (21%), chronic respiratory diseases (12%) and diabetes (4%). Unfortunately, more than nine million of these deaths occurred before the age of 60 and could have largely been prevented.

Low and middle-income countries were the home of 80% of these NCDs. Moreover, more than 40% of NCD related deaths in low-income countries occurred under the age of 60, nearly three times the proportion in high-income countries (13%). If the trend is not reversed or at least stopped, NCD deaths are expected to reach 44 million deaths by 2020. During the next decade, the greatest increases will occur in the WHO regions of Africa, South-East Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean (increases over 20%, compared to a global increase of 15%). Most non communicable diseases have globalization, urbanization and ageing as underlying determinants; and unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and tobacco/alcohol as common risk factors. They also share intermediate risks like high blood sugar, raised blood pressure, overweight/obesity and abnormal blood lipids. "The two major

inextricably related issues, aging and chronic disease, create challenges for public health and clinical care in settings already faced with scarce recourses.”

Major causes and consequences

There are many causes of chronic kidney disease. Basically most of the respondents reported that weight loss, pressure, and headache and feel weakens were common symptoms. Majority of respondents reported that kidney disease was the consequences of high blood pressure.

Attitude of respondents towards state' role

Sociologist argued that health is socially constructed. In essence, individual's knowledge, perception and behavior is related to his social surrounding. Developed countries have prepared their resilient capacity to cope with such non-communicable disease; however, developing countries are lagging behind from different problems. Respondents put their forth view on state policy and majority of the respondents responded that they are not familiar with Deprived Citizen Medical Treatment Fund. The fund has helped a little but it is not enough. According to NHRC (2017), “Those citizens who are suffering from chronic disease and who cannot afford the treatment are provided support under the social security program.” The treatment subsidy for deprived citizen was started after the people’s movement 2062/63. Though it is targeted for poor others who have the recommendation letter have also got the services. However, no respondents reported that they got services form government side.

“We give 208 sessions of dialysis free of cost to the patients with the recommendation letter from the VDC/municipality and DHO/DPHO. Further if the patient wants to undergo transplant, s/he gets three lakhs in total including one lakh for medicine and two lakhs for transplant process” (NHRC, 2017). Nutritional status is one of the risk factors for mortality in chronic dialysis patients. Malnutrition can be defined as a state of nutrition in which an excess or deficiency of energy, protein and other nutrients causes measurable adverse effects on body composition, body function and clinical outcome. Both overnutrition and undernutrition are highly prevalent in the dialysis population. The prevalence of undernutrition, defined as protein-energy wasting, 28 ranges between 29% and 48% at the start of dialysis, depending on the nutritional parameter that has been used. 29-33% once on dialysis, the prevalence of protein-energy wasting ranges between 23 and 76% in hemodialysis patients and between 18 and 50% in peritoneal dialysis patients. Approximately 10% of these patients suffer from severe protein-energy wasting.

Obesity is one of the established risk factors for increased morbidity and mortality in population. Many survival studies in hemodialysis patients, however, have indicated opposite associations of obesity. 48-55 low values for body mass index (BMI) are

associated with increased mortality, and higher values for BMI, (Thokar, 2014) even morbid obesity, were found to be protective and associated with improved survival in dialysis patients. This obesity-survival paradox in the dialysis population has been referred to as 'reverse epidemiology and has led to the hypothesis that a higher level of adiposity may provide a survival stage.

Man Bahadur aged 40 (name changed) said I am a permanent resident of Bhaktpur. I had weight loss. I went to hospital and came to know that I suffered from kidney disease. At the initial period I used some medicine, however it did not improve. I decided to transplant. And my kidney was transplanted in Bhaktpur-hospital. My blood pressure was high and doctors also told me that high blood pressure is the problem. I don't have any knowledge about government support. So I personally managed all the amount. Monthly I need Rs 40,000/- for medicine. Operation is free from government side and rest of the amount we should pay. Fortunately my wife's blood matched and she was ready to donate. My wife donated her kidney to me and I followed all the instruction given to me by doctors. When I got information that I suffered from kidney disease I had prepared Rs 700,000. I got 400,000 from Bhaktpur hospital as subsidies. Government should provide subsidies for the kidney patient and it would be wonderful if the government provides medicine free of cost. I do not have any other health problems, however, I suffered from pressure. So, I think pressure is the main cause of kidney disease.

"My mother gave me birth and again by kidney donation she gave me second birth that is why my mother is everything for me" (Personal interview 2017). Health is not far from social status. Most of the respondents reported that when they suffered from kidney disease, the first effects were seen in their family members.

Conclusions

Kidney disease is one of the burning issues of Nepal. Due to lack of proper health screening and healthy habit this non communicable disease is rampant. It may occur even among well-known community members, the rich, the poor, the well-educated and uneducated, all cultures, society and religious groups.

High blood pressure, lack of health care, lack of regular health checkup most of the respondents got more severe case to lose their kidney and needed a transplantation. If they would have accepted/practiced preventive measures they would not have suffered from the severity. Kidneys can be protected during the initial stage of the disease.

The research reveals that most of the relatives of the donors are family members. The family bears the entire cost. Though there is a fund to assist people in the kidney health service it is not reachable in the public. It is recommended that the government come up with programs and policies and take that information to all the public.

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Impact of Working Capital Management on Profitability of Non-Financial Firms

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Abstract

The managers of today's non-financial enterprises are more concerned with working capital management. This study used a descriptive and comparative causal research approach to examine working capital management's effect on profitability. Regression and correlation test was performed for 15 observations from three non-financial institutions based on a purposive sample design. The result shows a strong positive correlation between the current ratio (CR) and returns on assets (ROA), cash conversion cycle (CCC), receivable conversion period (RCP), and payable deferral period (PDP) have no significant correlation. Regression results show that CR, PDP, and CCC are significant predictors of ROA, and RCP has no significant effect. It is recommended that non-financial managers focus on maintaining a favorable current ratio while reducing the cash conversion cycle and optimizing payment periods. By doing so, they can improve their firm's liquidity position, effectively manage cash flow, and ultimately enhance profitability.

Keywords: *Business Activities, Financial Planning, Liquidity, Operation Management, Gel Codes: G23, G31, G39*

Introduction

Working capital is company capital employed in daily operations. It's a company's current asset-liability discrepancy. Working Capital Management (WCM) affects company profitability and liquidity condition, making it crucial to business performance (Yakubu et al., 2017). These difficulties vary by organization and period. Internal and external variables affect company working capital choices (Adusei, 2017). Successful company operation requires sufficient funds to operate at the right moments. Atseye et al. (2015) defined working capital as the stuff a corporation needs to produce products for sale. Thus, current asset overflows over current liabilities. WCM involves the

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company's existing assets and obligations, linking liquidity and profitability (Alvarez et al., 2021; Pant et al., 2022). Financial managers must handle day-to-day usable capital well to succeed (Filbeck & Krueger, 2005; Mwangi et al., 2014). So, working capital management was an essential point for managers at firms long ago.

For determining factors, cash conversion cycle (CCC) management significantly affects WCM. The cash conversion cycle begins with raw material procurement and finishes with cash or supplier payment (Nimalathasan & Brabete, 2010; Shah, 2016). Working capital for a company is assets minus liabilities (Nguyen et al., 2020). Current assets comprise a firm's total assets, and current ratios (CR) are fundamental indicators. By renting or leasing equipment and machinery, a corporation may minimize its investment in fixed assets but not working capital. High current assets may minimize liquidity risk from the opportunity expense of cash that might have been invested in long-term assets (Nazir & Afza, 2009). Profitability shows a firm's capacity to benefit from all operations. It illustrates how a corporation may help by employing all its resources (Ghimire et al., 2021). Clendenin et al. (1953) defined profitability as "the ability of an investment to earn a return from its use". Book value (accounting-based) and market value (marketing-based) evaluate profitability and shows profitability, like Return on Asset (ROA) (Bui, 2016; Mohamad & Saad, 2010; Nguyen et al., 2020; Rahman & Saima, 2018).

WCM involves short-term finance and working capital decisions (Nimalathason & Brabete, 2010). The stages of the cash conversion cycle, involving the receivable conversion period (RCP), the inventory conversion period (ICP), and the payable deferral period (PDP), have an unfavorable association with a company's profitability. A decrease in either the RCP or the ICP will increase the profits of the business. Mansoori and Muhammad (2012) concluded that profitability could be increased by reducing the receivable and inventory conversion periods. Working capital balances with profitability and liquidity throughout the company's operations; operations might smoothen due to sound management of RCP. Firms must put aside capital for everyday expenses and fixed asset investment. To satisfy short-term compulsions, a corporation should avoid liquidity issues.

Managing working capital is the issue at hand; the company must take into consideration all of the things in both accounts and make an effort to strike a balance between the risks and rewards associated with the business (Dahal, 2022; Wasiuzzaman, 2015). Working capital is a crucial factor in financial decision-making, as it is a component of the asset investment that necessitates adequate financing. Frequently, a lack of operating capital is cited as the primary cause of a business's failure. What are the status and trends of working capital management with ROA and ROE for a sample of non-financial companies? How do CR, CCC, RCP, and PDP affect the Return on Assets of

Nepalese non-financial firms? Is there a connection between CR, CCC, RCP, and PDP with the Return on Assets of Nepalese non-financial firms? To resolve these issues, the research's primary objective is to determine the effect of working capital mechanisms on effectiveness across industries.

The objectives of the study are presented as follows:

- ❖ To analyze the relationship between CR, CCC, RCP, and PDP with the return on assets of Nepalese non-financial firms.
- ❖ To examine the effect of CR, CCC, RCP, and PDP on the return on assets of Nepalese non-financial firms.

A year of improved working capital and debt management could make purchasing, manufacturing, and selling more affordable and flexible. Finally, working capital concerns and proposed solutions to enhance business operations are examined. Working capital management may reduce expenses and benefit the organization. The success of a business depends on having sufficient operating currency on hand when required.

This research article is divided into four main headings: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Presentation and Analysis. This major heading has guided to achieve the study's objectives and helped it become a reliable and valid study in the market.

Literature Review

Many firms' finance team handles working capital decision-making daily. Working capital management should increase business value. Business firms need liquidity (Sunday, 2011). Tanveer et al. (2016) examined the impact of WCM on businesses' profitability throughout several economic cycles in 65 non-financial enterprises listed on Pakistan's Karachi stock market; the study found a considerable inverse link between the profitability of a firm's operations and the cash conversion cycle and its constituent parts. WCM and company effectiveness at revenue is impacted by the economic progression. It concluded that financial planning should consider effective WCM. RCP negatively correlated with profitability only during the financial crisis (Oseifuah,2018). Second, during the problem, the connections between profitability, cash conversion cycle, ICP, and PDP are negative and positive, though that's minor. Company managers should implement effective working capital management procedures during non-crisis times to survive an unexpected economic recession.

Hossain (2020) found a negative association between ROA and CCC, suggesting that reducing the cash conversion cycle, average payment duration, and average collection period may boost manufacturing profits. ICP favorably correlated with ROA and ROE. This study suggested that manufacturing organizations' profitability depends

on working capital management. Alvarez et al. (2021) found that return on asset was positively and significantly linked to IN, AR, AP, CCC, CR, and Size. Oladipupo et al. (2019) found that cash collection and spending negatively affect the rate of return on assets. The current ratio of payment and inventory period, both have positive effects. Inventory management, account receivables, account payables, cash conversion cycle, current asset, current ratio, and firm growth have an advantageous effect on return on assets (ROA), whereas debt has a negative impact. Basyith et al. (2021) conducted a study to examine the effects of WCM on profits and the working capital conditions of several Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX)-traded companies. The results indicated that the useful capital investment approach has a positive and significant effect on ROA; the working capital financing approach has a negative but not significant impact on ROA; the practical capital expenditure approach has a significant and adverse value for the gross profit margin in all examples; and the working capital financing approach has a negative and important sign for all capital used.

Aldubhani et al. (2022) sought to figure out if working capital management strategies affect the profit of manufacturing businesses traded on the Qatar Stock Exchange. The average collection period, inventory turnover, average payment period, and the cycle of cash conversion were used as proxies for working capital management, and profitability was measured by operating profit margin (OPM), return on assets (ROA), bear in invested capital (ROCE), and return on equity (ROE). The study found that companies with faster times to collect on debts and turn debts into cash are more profitable. There is a link between a company's ability to make money and the time it takes to turn over its goods and pay its bills.

Abdullah et al. (2022) discovered a high correlation between WCM and profitability and liquidity. Jaworski and Czerwonka (2022) discovered a correlation between measures of working capital management (cash conversion cycle, working capital value, and financial flow) and the profits of Warsaw Stock Exchange-listed firms. The study revealed a nonlinear relationship between working capital (WC), current ratio (CR), and income; when WC and CR prices increase, profits increase, but not as rapidly. However, a linear link between CCC and pay would point in the opposite direction.

When the cash exchange cycle is shortened and financial debt is reduced, there is an increase in the amount of profit made, and there is not a statistically significant connection between the amount of time it takes to shift inventory and the firm's level of fixed financial assets (Naumoski & Naumovska, 2022).

Based on the study's literature review, the research framework presented in Figure 1 shows the standing of independent and dependent variables.

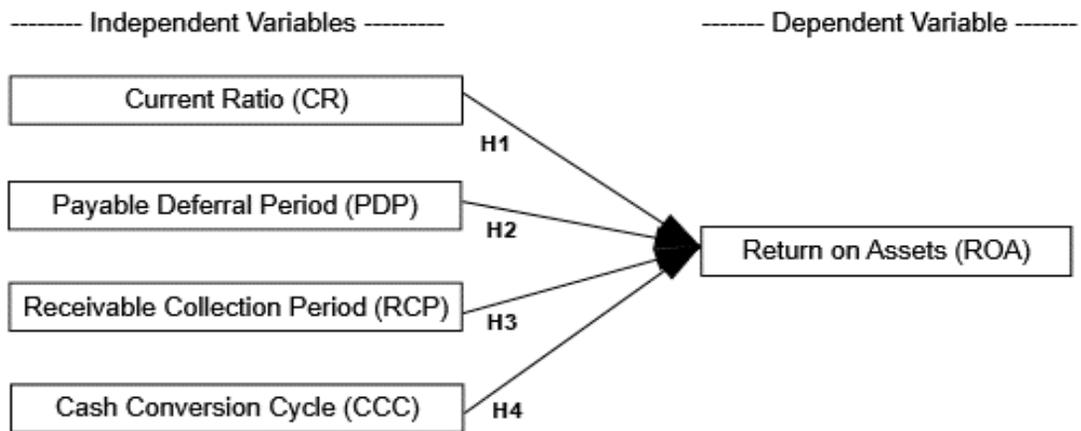


Figure 1 Research Framework

The following hypothesis statement is employed for the above framework for this study:

- H1: The Current Ratio (CR) significantly impacts the ROA of non-financial firms.
- H2: There is an impact of the Payable Deferral Period (PDP) on the ROA of non-financial firms.
- H3: There is a significant impact of the Receivable Conversion Period (RCP) on the ROA of non-financial firms.
- H4: The Cash Conversion Cycle (CCC) significantly impacts the ROA of non-financial firms.

Methodology

Descriptive and causal-comparative research designs were used to compile the data for this analysis. The population of this research is thought to consist of non-financial companies that are traded on the Nepal stock exchange. The study aims to determine whether or not there is a connection between these non-financial organizations' profitability and their level of working capital. In this study, three leading non-financial firms are selected as the sample using a purposive sampling technique.

- ❖ Himalayan Distillery Limited
- ❖ Unilever Nepal Limited
- ❖ Salt Trading Corporation Limited

For the study, necessary data were collected from the financial statements of selected Nepalese non-financial companies listed in the Nepal Stock Exchange for five years from 2016/17 to 2020/21. The data was extracted from the website of each firm. This study also took the annual report of selected Nepal Stock Exchange Limited companies.

It is the quantitative approach of acquiring insight into a company's liquidity, operational efficiency, and profitability by reviewing its financial statements, such as balance sheets and income statements. There was a regression analysis as well as a correlation analysis carried out.

As per the research study, a model has been developed that states that the dependent variable ROA depends on CR, RCP, PDP, and CCC.

Regression equation:

$$ROA_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (CR_t) + \beta_2 (PDP_t) + \beta_3 (RCP_t) + \beta_4 (CCC_t) + \epsilon_i$$

Where,

ROA_t = Return on Assets level for time t,

CR_t = Current Ratio level for time t,

PDP_t = Payable deferral period level for a time t,

RCP_t = Receivable Collection Period level for a time t,

CCC_t = Cash Conversion Cycle level for a time t,

β₀ = Constant

ε_i = the residual error term.

Presentation and Analysis

This section includes an analysis of collected data and their presentations. Following the study technique outlined in the third section, the data has been analyzed and evaluated using financial and statistical tools. The estimated outcomes of the investigation have been arranged in an appropriate fashion and displayed.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics depict the mean and standard deviation values for chosen variables.

Table 1**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CR	15	.717	6.32	1.92	1.45
PDP	15	14.12	377.04	136.35	118.94
RCP	15	9.33	197.91	43.43	46.90
CCC	15	-184.38	232.55	21.67	113.22
ROA	15	.499	45.08	16.18	14.55

Table 1 shows insights into the characteristics of the variables. CR has a range from 0.717 to 6.32, with an average value of 1.92. This suggests that the values for CR are relatively low and not too widely dispersed, as indicated by the standard deviation of 1.45. The variable PDP has a wider range from 14.12 to 377.04, with a higher average value of 136.35 and a larger standard deviation of 118.94. This indicates a greater variability and a potentially more diverse range of values for PDP. Similarly, the RCP and CCC variables exhibit relatively wide ranges and higher standard deviations, suggesting greater variability in their values. In contrast, the variable ROA has a smaller range, with values ranging from 0.499 to 45.08 and a relatively lower standard deviation of 14.55.

Table 2**Relationship of Working Capital Management with ROA**

	CR	PDP	RCP	CCC
ROA	.751**	-.455	-.010	.237

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

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

Companies with higher current ratios have a tendency to create a bigger return on assets, as indicated by a substantial positive correlation between CR and ROA (0.751), while other factors do not have a significant link with ROA.

Table 3**Regression Result**

	Unstandardized Beta Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Beta Coefficient	t-statistics	p-value
R = 0.874 R ² = 0.764 F (4, 10) = 8.088, p = 0.004					
(Constant)	34.45	11.84		2.90	.016
CR	5.20	1.817	.520	2.86	.017
PDP	-.216	.077	-.760	-2.82	.018
RCP	.143	.086	.462	1.67	.125
CCC	-.230	.088	-.790	-2.62	.025

Dependent Variable: Return on Asset

Table 3 shows that the coefficient of multiple determination (R^2) is 0.764, indicating that the model's independent variables account for approximately 76.4 % of the dependent variable (ROA) variance. The model fits data on the independent variables on return on assets since $F(4, 10) = 8.088$, $p < 0.05$ indicates that the model is statistically significant. A p-value less than 0.05 is commonly used to determine statistical significance, indicating that CR, PDP, and CCC are significant predictors of ROA, whereas RCP has no significant impact on ROA. The regression analysis indicates that CR, PDP, and CCC collectively account for a substantial proportion of the variance in ROA. CR has favorable impacts on ROA, whereas PDP and CCC have negative effects.

Discussion

The current research findings make it abundantly clear that effective working capital management plays a critical part in determining the level of profitability that non-financial businesses may attain. To be more specific, CR, PDP, and CCC are significant components that influence company performance. Effective management of these periods has the potential to increase profitability. This may be accomplished by effectively managing the current ratio and the payable period, as well as by reducing the cash conversion cycle and improving liquidity. Arnaldo et al. (2021) discovered that the CC negatively affects profitability.

The current research discovered that the CCC substantially influences the ROA of non-financial enterprises. According to the recent results, which agree with Phuong and Hung (2020), CCC had a detrimental impact on the company's success. According to Marisetty and Shreelakshmi (2022), the cash conversion cycle was shown to be statistically insignificant, and its association with profitability was determined to be unfavorable; this conclusion is in contrast to the results of the current study. Nonetheless, according to Naumoski and Naumovska (2022), lowering the cash conversion cycle and increasing financial leverage result in increased profitability. When viewed as a whole, the most current study emphasizes how important it is for non-financial companies to have efficient management of their enterprises' working capital if they wish to boost their profitability. If businesses are able to effectively manage their current ratio, payable deferral period, and cash conversion cycle, they will be able to improve their liquidity position, optimize their cash flow, and ultimately reach higher levels of profitability. However, when making use of these results, it is vital to take into consideration the specific conditions as well as the characteristics of the company.

Conclusion

This study studied the possible links of linkage between various financial factors and the ROA of non-financial companies. These findings provide important information on the elements that influence the profitability of these firms. The CR, one of the

independent factors, had a beneficial effect on ROA. In contrast, the PDP and CCC had detrimental effects on ROA. An increase in the PDP ratio was correlated with a decline in ROA, indicating that firms with delayed cash conversion processes may experience diminished profitability. These findings highlight the significance of managing liquidity, investment, and efficient currency conversion, a payable period for non-financial firms' profitability enhancement. The results offer insights that can aid financial administrators and decision-makers in evaluating and enhancing their firms' financial performance.

Limitations and Future Scope

It is essential to observe that this study has several limitations. The study was grounded on a sample of manufacturing companies, and the results may not apply to other industries or contexts. In addition, variables not included in the analysis may also affect ROA. Future research could consider additional factors and execute a more exhaustive analysis to further investigate the profitability determinants in non-financial firms.

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Exploring the Role of Rural Tourism in Achieving Sustainable Rural Development

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of rural tourism in facilitating sustainable rural development, with a specific focus on Ghandruk region situated in Kaski district of Nepal. Employing a case study methodology, the researchers collected data through in-depth interviews conducted with a diverse range of stakeholders, including homestay owners, hotel owners, foreign tourists, local leaders, NGOs, government representatives, and farmers. The study findings highlight the positive impact of rural tourism activities on the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of development within the study region. The research sheds light on the potential of rural tourism in improving the standard of living for rural residents while also preserving local culture and resources. The findings contribute to the existing literature on rural tourism and offer insights for policymakers and stakeholders in leveraging rural tourism as a catalyst for sustainable rural development.

Key words: rural tourism, raising the level of living, sustainable rural development

Introduction

Tourism plays an important role in transforming economy. As per the World Travel and Tourism Council, tourism contributes to 12% of the total global gross domestic product and provides employment opportunities for approximately 200 million individuals across the globe. It is projected that the number of tourists visiting various destinations will reach one billion by 2010 and 1.6 billion by 2020 on a global scale (WTTC, 2015).

Nepal, especially Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) is a top tourism destination over the world (Kapri, 2021). ACA has high biodiversity, internationally renowned peaks of over 7000 m, and well-known trekking routes such as the Annapurna Circuit trail. The Gurung, Magar, Thakali, Manange, and Loba ethnic people live in the area, along with Brahmins and Chhetris, resulting in diverse ethnic cultures, languages, and religious values, as well as Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples. As a result, ACA is listed as one of the top 10 tourism destinations of the world. (Prajapati, 2020).

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The term "Tourism" is highly recognized in present times and is derived from the French term "Tourisme" that emerged in the 19th century. Although it gained popularity in the 1930s, its true significance was not fully understood until today, as "Tourism" now encompasses a broader scope and holds greater importance (Satyal, 1999). Tourism is a study of man away from his usual habitat (Jafari, 1977). In addition, tourism is the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal place of work and residences, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs (Mathieson, 1982).

Nepal, a small yet exceptionally affluent nation in terms of biodiversity, stands out due to its distinctive geographic location and varying altitudes. This country is renowned as one of the finest destinations worldwide for religious, cultural, and natural exploration. With its remarkable fusion of art, culture, and tradition, coupled with its abundant natural beauty, Nepal has immense potential to captivate tourists of all kinds from around the globe (Bhattarai, 2071 BS).

Development of Tourism in Nepal

Tourism, as a human activity promoting international brotherhood and understanding, holds great significance for nations worldwide. In Nepal, the concept of modern tourism is relatively new. Prior to the unification of Nepal under King Prithivi Narayan Shah, tourism was intricately connected to religion, politics, and business. Many visitors, especially from neighboring countries like China, India, and Tibet, visited Nepal for religious purposes. Notable individuals like "Manjushree" played a key role in making the valley habitable for humans. During the reign of the Lichhavi dynasty, renowned travelers such as Huich-Tsang from China and Chinese envoys Li-Y-Pio and Wang Hiuentse visited Nepal along with their companions. After Nepal's unification, British visitors arrived with political motives, including figures like Knox, Hamilton, and Captain Kirkpatrick. During this period, Nepal restricted access to outsiders, particularly Europeans, to preserve unity and independence. A significant milestone in Nepal's history was the emergence of the "RANA" regime, lasting 104 years until 1950, during which successive kings held symbolic roles with limited power and authority. Nepal effectively became a forbidden land for foreigners, except for a few small traders and Indian pilgrims (Himalayaban, 2011).

Currently, the Nepalese community is reaping the rewards of past efforts in tourism development and promotion. Thus far, our focus has primarily been on traditional forms of tourism, such as trekking, rafting, and mountaineering. Many individuals and businesses are entering the industry, providing similar touring, travel, and trekking services, and employing conventional promotional strategies. Unfortunately, the Nepalese tourism sector is lacking investment in research, product development, and innovation. The

industry continues to offer outdated tourism products without introducing fresh and inventive ideas. It is essential to recognize that tourism is a dynamic and ongoing process, demanding foresight and vision for sustainable growth (Rai, 2020).

The country has witnessed an increase in tourist arrivals to approximately one million per year, indicating successful promotion efforts. This growth in global awareness has stimulated domestic tourist activities, processes, and destinations, creating a favorable environment for sustainable tourism development in Nepal. As Nepal can tap into the world market, particularly the sizable populations of neighboring countries, it is expected that both tourist arrivals and the duration of their stay will continue to rise. In the fiscal year 2018/2019, tourist arrivals reached 1.197 million, contributing 2.7 percent to the GDP. This influx of tourists also resulted in direct employment for 200,000 people, with an average daily expenditure of USD 48 per person and an average length of stay of 12.7 days (NPC, 2019/20-2023/24).

Concept of Rural Tourism

In the past few years, the rural areas have blossomed with fresh opportunities. Rural tourism has emerged as a rich and diverse activity, extending far beyond traditional farm or agriculture-based experiences. It encompasses a wide range of offerings, from delightful farm-based holidays to captivating nature getaways and ecotourism adventures. Whether it's exploring picturesque landscapes on foot, embarking on thrilling climbing and riding escapades, seeking exhilaration through adventure and sports, prioritizing health and wellness, indulging in hunting and angling pursuits, engaging in educational travel, immersing in arts and heritage experiences, or exploring the cultural and ethnic tapestry of specific regions, rural tourism has something special for everyone (Paudyal, 2017).

The charm of rural tourism, agro tourism, and village tourism often intertwines, as these terms are frequently used interchangeably by experts and developers. This phenomenon can be attributed to the wide range of activities available in these areas. The warmth of countryside hospitality is intricately linked to the world of agribusiness, offering a delightful package of accommodation services, delectable catering options, and a plethora of leisure activities to indulge in (Kovács, 2002).

Rural tourism is a tourism product that is built for introducing rural regions, and to utilize other attractions and provide diversified services. Tourism provides authentic special emotions for the tourists, alternative income, and the preservation of local natural values and culture for the local inhabitants. Homestay is a major form of rural tourism that permits a visitor to charge a room from a local family in a residential setting. It is sometimes used for improving language skills and getting familiar with the local lifestyle. This word was

first time introduced in 1956 AD in globe, but, in Nepal, it is a new concept of tourism, which is playing a significant role in rural development process.

Concept of Sustainable Rural Development

Sustainable rural development involves a holistic approach where daily basic needs of rural population must be covered by reliable public utilities combined with technical, socioeconomic, and environmental conditions to support regional economies and urban-rural linkages (Iatu, 2020).

Sustainable rural development is vital to the economic, social and environmental viability of nations. It is essential for poverty eradication since global poverty is overwhelmingly rural. The manifestation of poverty goes beyond the urban-rural divide; it has sub-regional and regional contexts. It is therefore critical, and there is great value to be gained, by coordinating rural development initiatives that contribute to sustainable livelihoods through efforts at the global, regional, national and local levels, as appropriate. Strategies to deal with rural development should take into consideration the remoteness and potentials in rural areas and provide targeted differentiated approaches (UN, 2022).

Sustainable rural development covers agriculture, processing and marketing of products, trade-industry-construction-crafts, infrastructure-service industry, structure of the population-age-employment, culture-local history-leisure tourism, water industry, forestry, devastating effect on the soil, agro-ecology, conservation-landscape care, settlement structure, natural resources and conditions (Merzolov, 2012).

Rural Tourism and Sustainable Rural Development

Rural tourism is an activity that contributes directly and indirectly to the development of rural areas. But this development needs to be sustainable. For this, appropriate policies that positively influence these areas from an economic, social and environmental point of view must be instrumented and implemented in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals. This study analyzed the contribution of role of rural tourism to promote sustainable rural development that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. The variables that significantly influence sustainable rural development through rural tourism are local products, tourist behavior, motivation, the destination image, and the satisfaction obtained by the tourist have been analyzed.

Rural tourism consists of activities in rural areas, rural environment, attractiveness of rural areas, sustainability of rural development, rural accommodation, and additional income of rural families, active leisure time activities in rural, rural culture and utilization of local resources (Könyves, 2001).

For (Polo, 2010), the development of the rural tourist activity is very suitable for improving the development of rural areas, likewise (Marzo-Navarro, 2017) stated that rural tourism promotes the development and economic growth of the destination areas, for which it is a priority to achieve the objectives of economic, sociocultural, and environmental sustainability. The (UNWTO, 2021) has recognized that “tourism is one of the driving forces of global economic growth and is currently responsible for the creation of 1 in 11 jobs.

There are various problems in context of tourism development in the rural areas of the country. Although there are many researches related to rural tourism, it has not been able to expose the environmental aspect along with the socio-economic aspect. Therefore, the sustainability of rural tourism has been taken as its main problem or focus area.

This study aims to explore socio-economic-environmental prosperity through rural tourism in the study area. Thus, how can rural tourism be changing economic status of local people in the project area? is the question to be investigated.

This research was conducted on the base of Smart Growth Model and Modernization theories. Smart growth models typically promote long-term economic development while preserving the natural environment (Ewing, 2010). These models can involve both building new infrastructure and revitalizing existing assets to promote the growth of vibrant rural communities. Smart growth addresses multiple social determinants of health (SDOH), including economic stability, transportation, and housing. And modernization encourages socio-cultural changes, as economic growth demands these changes as a foundational stage for further economic development (Rostow, 1960) (Inglehart, 1997). That directly linked with the research issue.

Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to investigate pivotal role played by rural tourism in attaining sustainable rural development with a specific focus on social advancement, economic transformation, and environmental preservation.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significant academic value within the domain of sustainable rural development. Its focus lies in generating novel insights by delineating the various roles played by rural tourism in fostering sustainable rural development. The analysis of rural tourism's contributions to sustainable development in Nepal, particularly from social, economic, and environmental standpoints, remains largely understudied, rendering it a critical research area. The study provides a foundation and contextual backdrop for the subject matter, highlighting the absence of prior scholarly investigations in Nepal pertaining to this specific aspect. Thus, the current research endeavor is warranted to address this gap and fulfill the need for a comprehensive study in this field.

Research Methods

The present study was conducted within the framework of a case study research design, aiming to investigate the role of rural tourism in facilitating sustainable rural development in Ghandruk. A total of thirty participants were selected as samples for the study, comprising 10 homestay owners, five hotel owners, five tourists, three local leaders, three members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), two government officials, and two farmers. The selection of participants was based on the purpose of obtaining diverse perspectives and insights. Moreover, rural tourism sites and centers were chosen as the focal points for the observation phase.

Field surveys were carried out in December 2022 to collect socio-economic data. Initially, data were gathered through a targeted sampling method, followed by interviews and the completion of focus group discussions. The natural state of rural tourism was assessed through careful observation by the researchers. For the socio-economic survey, a simple random sampling technique was employed to select stakeholders and households. The selected households were representative of various socio-economic criteria, ethnic/caste backgrounds, levels of accessibility/remoteness, age groups of users, and resource availability.

Consequently, the variables to be measured were considered as the fundamental database for the analysis, with profit sharing and participation serving as key elements. The study employed a combination of group deliberations, observational analysis, and self-administered questionnaires to assess the contribution of rural tourism to local development.

Data Analysis

This research employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The quantitative data, comprising numerical values, were subjected to statistical analysis using established tools such as mean, median, and tabulation. In parallel, the qualitative data underwent a meticulous examination against the research objectives, employing techniques such as description and content analysis.

The examination of stakeholder access within the context of sustainable rural development served as the focal point of this study. The data collection process commenced after the completion of an interview schedule based on field observations. To ensure consistent analysis, the scales employed for each sample were standardized. Within this analytical phase, descriptive methods were employed to analyze the qualitative data.

Discussion

The study aimed to assess the sustainability of the profession within the chosen area. Furthermore, the study aimed to elucidate interconnections between community

participation, economic benefits, and living standards of local residents. The findings resulting from the investigation were thoroughly described and analyzed.

The research site selected for this study was the Annapurna Rural Municipality, specifically Ward No. 11 and 12, located in Ghandruk, Kaski. A sample size of thirty participants was chosen to fulfill the study's objectives. The survey employed a simple random sampling technique with a lottery method. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, observations, and focus group discussions.

To examine the accessibility of stakeholders within the community, the issue of sustainable rural development was analyzed. After completing the interview schedule during field observations, data collection commenced. Computer programs were utilized to standardize the scales for each sample, and basic statistical tools such as tables were employed for data analysis. Descriptive methods were employed to analyze qualitative data during this stage.

By utilizing the Smart Growth Model and Modernization theories to justify the role of rural tourism in achieving sustainable rural development, this study acknowledges the potential of tourism to facilitate positive transformations within rural communities. This approach underscores the significance of balancing economic growth with environmental preservation, cultural conservation, and community empowerment. Ultimately, this integrated approach can foster sustainable and inclusive development in rural areas.

Description of the study area

The study area is Annapurna Rural Municipality (ARM), which covers an area of 417.74 square kilometers with a population of 23,417. Located in the Kaski district of Nepal, it is known for its focus on agriculture, tourism, energy, and infrastructure. The rural municipality consists of 11 wards, including villages like Dhikurpokhri, Bhadauretmagi, Salyan, Lumle, Dangsing, and Ghandruk. Annapurna Rural Municipality shares borders with Machhapuchhre Rural Municipality to the east, Manang and Myagdi districts to the west, and Parvat and Pokhara-Lekhnath Metropolitan Municipality to the south. The key sectors driving the local economy are tourism, agriculture, and animal husbandry. Naudanda, Kande, Nyanpul, Birethanti, and Syauli serve as the primary market areas. The region is renowned for its tourist attractions, including Annapurna Base Camp, Machhapuchhre Base Camp, Ghodepani, Ghandruk, Panchase, Ishru, Hidne Tal, and Nasikhar. The total length of national roads in the area is 24 km, while district roads cover 58.52 km. The village-level roads add up to approximately 237.41 km (ARM, Profile, 2017).

Ghandruk, a village within Annapurna Rural Municipality, gained prominence in 1950 when French climber Maurice Herzog successfully climbed the Annapurna Himal. Since then, it has become a popular destination for tourists, especially those trekking in the

Annapurna region. Ghandruk offers stunning mountain views, historical and religious sites, such as Meshramwarah, Taujiwarah, Poz Nebwarah, Kotdanda, Gumba, and Nyowarah Lake. Visitors are captivated by the snow-capped peaks, picturesque landscapes, diverse cultures, and rural settlements. Ghandruk has attracted both domestic and international tourists, becoming a significant tourist destination in the region (ARM, Record, 2021).

Annapurna Rural Municipality's First Five-Year Plan (2076/77 — 2080/81)

The development of Annapurna Rural Municipality is centered on agriculture, tourism, and physical infrastructure. The Five-Year Plan focuses on energy, industry, human resources, and governance. The plan aims to achieve economic growth, improve health, water supply, sanitation, environment, and education, ensuring social security and good governance. The target is to increase the economic growth rate from 5.2% to 8.5% by 2080-81. The annual average economic growth rate of the municipality is 7%, and the per capita income is estimated to reach \$1,350 by the end of the plan period (ARM, 2076/77).

Table 1: ARM Plan (BS 2076-77-BS 2080-81)

SN	SECTOR	FY 076/77	FY 077/78	FY 078/79	FY 079/80	FY 080/81	Total Expenditure (Predicted)
		Rs. in Lakh					
1	Infrastructure Development	1130	1424	1724	2050	2365	
2	Economic Development	200	340	385	445	543	
3	Social Development	320	376	430	525	595	
4	Environment and Disaster Management	75	113	146	170	211	
5	Institutional Capacity Development	65	45	60	75	95	
	Total	1,790	2,289	2,745	3,265	3,809	15,581

Source: ARM, First Plan.

Above table shows that Annapurna Rural Municipality priorities in various areas like; agriculture, livestock and fishery development, land management, cooperative sector, land conservation and bio-diversity, herbs development, environment protection, tourism, hydroelectricity, renewable energy, industry, mines development, commerce and supply, road development, irrigation, drinking water, building construction, information and communication, education, health and hygiene, population and migration, youth and sports, labour and employment, good governance, social security, mobilization of tax, etc.

Direct Tourism Services

People, in the study area were engaged in different occupation related tourism services. Likewise, highest 33.33% engaged in homestay services and lowest 6.66% in tea shop services, which details is presented below the table.

Table 2: Occupational Engagement

Occupation pattern	Frequency	Percentage
Homestay	10	33.33
Hotel	5	16.66
Foreign Tourist	5	16.66
Leaders	3	10
NGOs	3	10
Government	2	6.66
Farmers	2	6.66
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Annual Income Before and After Tourism

One of the major impacts of rural tourism is change in level of income. Generally social status is determined by income level. Employment opportunity is created due to village tourism and by engaging themselves in income generation the respondents have been benefitted. The income levels due to before and after rural tourism as per the respondents are as follows:

Table 3: Annual Income Before and After Tourism

Income ratio	Before Frequency	After Frequency	Before Percent	After Percent
50,000-200,000	12	2	40	6.66
201,000-450,000	8	3	26.6	10
451,000-600,000	6	7	20	23.33
601,000-above	4	18	13.33	60
Total	30	30	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

According to the data presented, 40% of respondents in the study area earn between 50,000 and 2 lakhs per year from rural tourism. Furthermore, 26.6% have earned between 2 lakhs and 4.5 lakhs, 20% between 4.51 lakhs and 6 lakhs, and 13.33% earn up to 6 lakhs per year. The data indicates that the majority of people earn between 50,000 and 2 lakhs per year. However, after engaging in rural tourism activities, there has been an improvement, with 6.66%, 10%, 23.33%, and 60% respectively earning above 6,01,000 Rs yearly.

Supply of Local Rural Products

The present study area attracts a significant number of national and international tourists. The table presented illustrates the dominance of international tourists in purchasing local products.

Table 4: Supply of Local Rural Products

Statistics	Frequency/Percentage
Indigenous product for domestic tourist	14 (46.66%)
Indigenous product for international tourist	16 (53.33%)
Total	30 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

A field survey involving 30 respondents was conducted, with 56.1% of them belonging to the age group of 30-44 years. Despite 29.3% of the total population being female, they were found engaged in various income-generating activities. The majority of the settlement comprised Gurung, Chhetri, and Rai ethnicities, accounting for approximately 76.4%. About 46.3% of the respondents owned land ranging from 5-9 Ropani, while only 7.3% possessed 20 Ropani or more. The direct category consisted of 42.3% of the respondents, primarily involved in hotel business, while 57.7% fell under the indirect and non-beneficiary category, with farming and guide porter services being predominant. The supply of local or indigenous products to guests was relatively low. The average initial investment for opening a tourism-related business exceeded three lakhs, and the average annual income from the tourism sector was five times higher than that from non-tourism activities. Approximately 60.2% of the respondents had a bank account. Good road accessibility was highlighted as a significant requirement by 39% of the respondents, and women's participation in tourism-based services and products showed an increase. Furthermore, 88% of the respondents emphasized the need for motivating local youth and women to become direct beneficiaries of tourism, while over 90% stressed the importance of financial support to cultural institutions by the local government.

Case 1

An important feature of tourism in Ghandruk is community-based tourism. Leader Kisam Gurung, 50 years old, believes that the tourism business here has taken a leap due to the relationship between the tourism professionals here and the local community. He says, "The good relationship between the tourism professionals here and the local community has made everyone feel that the tourists who come to Ghandruk are their own guests." (sic)

The same rate has been fixed for the service facilities of all the hotels here. Any tourist who reaches Ghandruk can get services and facilities of his choice. "We have maintained the same menu of service facilities here, we change it collectively every year" - Leader Gurung said.

To reach Ghandruk at an altitude of 6,700 feet, you have to walk for about five hours after reaching Nayapul in Kaski and getting off the car. Many tourists are eager to reach Ghandruk by walking through this route. Tourists who reach Ghandruk in this month can also see the charm of nightingales in the forests, Chairman Gurung said.

Gurung Said, "After the development of rural tourism, people have been changing their living standard and getting more income. We did not know that there will be so much development in the social, cultural, economic and environmental fields that rural tourism has given us. We are happy and have created an environment for the next generation."

Case 2

Bikram Gurung, 34, who runs a hotel business in Ghandruk, says that business is also being conducted by Nepalis so as to support the foreign tourists who come here. According to Gurung, the arrival of domestic tourists is increasing here after the armed conflict and covid-19.

When the sun rises there are scattering bright rays. One can visualize the wonderful wave of the snow chain, which looks like gold reflected from the ground. The attraction of this region is to observe more than 20 snow peaks belonging to the mountain range of Manaslu, Annapurna and Dhaulagiri, which are more than eight thousand meters high, Gurung said.

He believes that all of the changes in education, trekking trails, income, level of awareness, cultural preservation are the outcomes of rural tourism

Case 3

Kamal Thapa Magar, 48, owner of Hotel Samipyra said that the hotels and lodges operating here are regularly monitored by the local society, so the price is almost the same. Cultural programs are also shown to tourists in Ghandruk, which is a model village for rural tourism. In the months of February and Chaitra, you can see the blooming of red gourds all over the path on this footpath. Everyone's heart is happy when they see the red rose blossoming in the dense forest. He said, there is an income of "50,000 a day even if there is no business. That is good."

He said that, now a days minimum 200 tourist arrive Ghandruk but on Friday and Saturday there 1000 tourists. He added, "Now even those who do not earn here are earning up to three lakhs and those who used to earn now earn 15 lakhs annually."

Due to rural tourism, social development has helped in health, sanitation, covid vaccination, environmental awareness and action, program to stop deforestation, and disaster preparedness. Ward no 10 and 11 are active for rural tourism, Thapa said.

Conclusion

Rural tourism is a concept that can serve as a foundation for sustainable development in certain contexts. It operates on a demand-driven strategy and can be managed independently, focusing on promoting local stakeholders and benefiting domestic entrepreneurs and urban residents. In Nepal, rural tourism has proven to be a significant contributor to the wellbeing of rural inhabitants, reducing out-migration and fostering the development of rural areas. While it cannot be the sole driving force of the region, it can synergize with other sectors of the local economy. Ghandruk serves as a notable example of successful rural tourism, showcasing the positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes it can bring. The development of rural tourism in this area has created employment opportunities, new businesses, cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and enhanced community livelihoods. This highlights the substantial impact of rural tourism on sustainable rural development.

Recommendations

The study findings offer several recommendations for policymakers, stakeholders, and individuals involved in tourism and tourism marketing in the study area. Firstly, there is a need for adequate resource mobilization to uplift the rural population. Implementing programs like "One family one product" and promoting local products can attract the youth and stimulate economic growth. The local financial institution should provide effective support to Homestay owners, while proper waste and road management is crucial for attracting tourists. Government bodies such as the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Nepal Tourism Board, and other tourism-related organizations should actively contribute to tourism development. Promoting agro-based rural markets can greatly support rural development, and increasing tourism education locally can foster the locality. Finally, it is important for owners, stakeholders, and tourists to adhere to the Homestay rules of 2067 (Nepali calendar) responsibly. These recommendations aim to foster sustainable rural development and maximize the benefits of rural tourism in the study area.

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Projection of “Dibya Upadesh” of Prithvi Narayan Shah: Lessons for Small State Diplomacy in Contemporary World Affairs

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Abstract

The narratives of small state diplomacy are not a recent phenomenon in international relations and world affairs. The projection of state like Nepal in classical era as 'sandwich' between two giant economy was classical reflection of it. Nepal has always observed and followed the balanced foreign policy with neighbours and also with external entities and it was a clear idea in Dibya Upadesh of late King Prithvi Narayan Shah which is still relevant and contextual. The small state diplomacy has been a subject of contestation and a discourse to locate the role of small state in international relations and foreign affairs. The collective growth of small states seems challenging in contemporary affairs. Nepal is projected as a small state qualifying all criteria to be considered or defined as small state. The diplomatic move played in past was literally an articulated step for presenting power of small states in world affairs. The reflection in Upadesh is also an ancient depiction of it. This paper has analysed the projection of Nepal as small state and its relevancy in contemporary world affairs.

Key Words: Projection, Small States, Diplomacy, World Affairs, Lesson, Relations

Introduction

There is no single agreement on the definition of a small state (Crowards 2002, Cooper and Shaw 2009). Some define small state in absolute terms based on population size (population of 10-15 million for developed states and population of 20-30 million for developing ones), geographical area, power and GNP/GDP (Goetschel 1998, Vital 1967) and some define it in relative terms based on its relation to other states (Mosser 2001); usually, small state is defined in contradiction to the big state (Cooper and Shaw 2009). The idea of perception is another criterion set for defining small states. Hey (2003a, p. 4) states that “small states are defined as they themselves and others define them.” Thürer (1998, p. 33) provides two perceptions on how small states perceive themselves. On one hand, small states perceive themselves as being in “prison” and on another, they perceive themselves as “beautiful,” as the slogan says, “Small is

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beautiful” (Schumacher 2013) due to its structure that makes it organized, flexible and people can get benefit from “everybody know everybody syndrome” (Schmidle 2001).

The constructivist argument that small state defines itself in relation to the others in meeting its own interest (Goetschel 1998) incorporates the relative definition of small state from the psychological dimension. But Von Däniken (1998) finds no indicators helpful in differentiating between a small and large state as the meaning of small simply provides a descriptive and statistical understanding rather than political. Unlike other authors who challenge the definition of small states, Maass (2009) finds no problem in having more than one definition of small states as he claims that such disagreements over definition have benefited the area of small state studies by providing it conceptual flexibility in both research designs and variations among actual small states in the world. The projection of Nepal as small states is narrated in different ways and mostly the academic work also satisfies the content/features to be considered as small states. The geopolitical position of Nepal in world affairs and contribution made for shaping the international politics and world affairs also justify the role of small states and narratives. The perception developed towards the small states also matters for shaping the diplomatic attitude and relation with the other state.

The role of perception holds the cognitive frame in explaining the behaviour of small states in world politics. It is a perceived thought in international relations that small states survive under the umbrella of large states, in a system to compensate for its power deficit. Nepal’s foreign policy projection and narrates as 'strategy for survival' also disclaims the intention as seen in most of the small states related literature. Small state is viewed as a “suboptimal participants in the international system” due to their lack of “real independence” in defending themselves (Hagalin 2005, p. 1, Cooper and Shaw 2009). The interest of small states is often taken for granted or their individual voices are not properly presented in the international system hence the collective voice is needed among the small states because most of us share similar problem and have faced similar identity crisis in the international forum. Vital (1967) differentiates between a state in terms of their capabilities to influence or to positioned themselves in the world affairs. Since the end of WWI, small states are usually perceived as irritants among large powers in international relation. The priorities of these small states were not considered as real subject matters of world politics hence narrated as disturbing factor for the world peace and stability. They have been recognized playing the role of “ambiguous-non-functional pseudo communities”: the “third world”, the “underdeveloped” or the “Afro-Asian states” in world politics (Rose 1971, p. xiv). Neumann and Gstöhlkt (2004, p. 15) state that small states are often treated as “objects, not subjects of international relation”. The subject-object correlation in the world politics is also not well supporting to preach the existence of small state and their

contribution for the world affairs. The received wisdom in IR is that small state is always seen inferior to larger powers. But a state can be small and big at the same time depending on the context of power (Goetschel 1998, Hirsch 1976), i.e. countries focus on specific issue area looking at the context in which they find themselves. Hänggi (1998, p. 84) states, “the situation of smallness or weakness can change over time and can differ from one aspect of smallness to another.” The strategic frame is significant in reflecting the relation between small and greater powers. The constructivists argue the existence and context relatively define the power and relation of the states.

The received perception is that if a small state is close to a large state (geographical proximity), the small state becomes economically dependent on large state trapping itself into geopolitical vulnerability. The economic status of the small states would be influenced by attachment with the large states and their economy. There is positive correlation between the small states' economy in the global affairs. In other words, greater powers tend to interfere with the domestic policies of smaller states. Despite structural constraints that limit small states' space, they adopt various strategies to participate in the system. Cooper and Shaw (2009, p. 2) argue that “what small states lack in structural clout they can make up through a creative agency.” Small states, as Cooper and Shaw say, adopt principles of non-interference as a part of their diplomatic culture and small states must follow the underlining principles of non-interference in the political affairs of the states. Realizing that they lack in economic influence, small states choose to use their sovereignty to move forward (Prasad 2009). For the security and independent existence of small states in the system, principles for small states have been introduced which implies that “small states can enhance their external reach and maintain their independence at the same time; they are entitled to participate in all types of decision-making process; they can maintain core values of their foreign and security policy; and they cannot be forced to take part in activities they found incompatible” (Goetschel 1998, p. 22). But in practice, all of these principles rarely get executed and thus small states adopt strategies like defensive isolationism, strategies of adaptation, “active foreign policy” (Goetschel 1998, p. 23) to ensure the independence and survival in the system.

It is clear that small isolated states are not weak which challenges scholars like Mosser who used the term ‘small’ and ‘weak’ interchangeably. Small states thus transform their vulnerable situation by adapting to their external environment, resisting and reshaping it. Mathisen (1971) finds the significant role of small powers in the strategies of great powers. In contrast to Mathisen who only sees the role of small powers in great power strategies, Fox looks at the reciprocal ways in which great powers also play a significant role in serving the purposes of some small states. Taking the example of five small states in WWII, Fox (1959) argues that small states sought to resist the strong pressure of great powers even in crisis period by 1) making great powers realize that the

use of force would be too expensive in terms of benefit sought and thus, there was no requirement for the use of force to satisfy their requirements; 2) easily escaping from the attention of great powers due to their less significance in great powers' priority list that makes the diplomatic task more easier for small power leaders (Baillie 1998); 3) emphasizing on respect for their dignity to compensate for their military inferiority; 4) employing tactics to ride out the storm represented by a particular crisis; 5) waiting for correct timing, and 6) forming outright alliance (drawing upon the power of one side to oppose the other) (Fox 1959).

Alliance building is one of the important strategies of a small state. A small state usually serves as a buffer state between great powers and their best strategy to ensure security are "either to balance or bandwagon among the great powers in the system" (Mosser 2001, p. 63). As small states are more susceptible to risk, small states' decision to join alliances and take refuge in them (Reiter 2001) can be observed as their strategy towards survival in the world politics. Small states join alliances if the benefits of joining outweigh the cost. In joining alliances, the small state gets into the trap of being "entrapped" when their dependence on the alliance is greater, or "abandoned" when their ties with the alliances are looser. History has shown that these states usually choose "neutrality" or "hide" as a strategy to escape out of this trap (Gärtner 2001, p. 2).

The small states imply that small states have been so far studied at international level, and not at domestic level. From the lens of the strategic frame, scholars like Snyder, Handle, Fox, Schweller and Walt see domestic political theories only significant foreign policies of great powers but not of small states. Wolfers and Rosenau also examined structural/systemic level factors in studying small state foreign policy as they find domestic politics significant only in explaining the great power foreign policy due to a lower level of external threat faced by great powers in comparison to small states. But Elman (1995) argues that domestic politics matters in explaining foreign policy outcomes. It is said that statesman on small states needs to be more concerned about external constraints than great power leadership due to less 'margin of time and error' and greater effects of anarchy on small states. But Elman's argument makes one think that domestic politics mediates the foreign policy of a state. Thus, the internal politics and external policies become an integral part of the small power leadership. The next chapter has explained about the small states' narratives and relevancy with Nepal.

Dibya Upadesh of Prithvi Narayan Shah and Small States Narratives

In January 1775, the legacy of Prithvi Narayan Shah was introduced in the form of a text called *Dibya Upadesh*. The work on *Dibya Upadesh* (it is considered as divine messages/teaching given by founding figure of modern Nepal) was edited by Yogi Narharinath in 2016 BS (1959 AD) in Nepali-Devanagari script and transliterated by Ludwig Stiller in

English (Stiller 1968, Narharinath 1959). This is the basis on which *Dibya Upadesh* has been evaluated in this research paper. *Dibya Upadesh*, the teachings of Prithvi Narayan Shah, was delivered by him at his death bed to his successors and citizens of Nepal to educate the countrymen about his journey in Nepal's unification and the necessary duty that a countryman should follow to ensure the survival and security of Nepal from external threats after his death. Despite its significance in reframing diplomatic practices which can be employed in affecting policies of small states, and leadership of Prithvi Narayan Shah and his role in mediating the domestic politics and external policies, this text has been “too little known and too little appreciated” (Stiller 1968, p. iii).

After unification, Nepal found itself geographically situated between two powerful neighbors, Tibet and East India Company. In *Dibya Upadesh*, Prithvi Narayan Shah calls Nepal as “a gourd between two rocks,” (Stiller 1968, p. 47) which holds a fragile position in international relations due to complex problem from the north and the south, plus difficulty posed as a result of opposing spheres of influence and the expansionist policy of the East India Company (Stiller 1968). Prithvi Narayan Shah well understood Nepal's relation with its neighbors.

As a small state, Rose (1971) finds Nepal's foreign policy different from that of its neighbors as it is more concerned about its survival. Trapped between two powers, Nepal cognitively accepted its greater proximity to East India Company due to its stronger cultural and economic ties with India than Tibet. Rose (1971, p. 17) argues, “the imbalance in Kathmandu's perception of India and China determines Nepal's perception towards its neighbors.” Thus, the role of perception as shaped by Prithvi Narayan Shah played a significant role in determining Nepal's foreign policy.

Prithvi Narayan Shah's dealings with his neighbors can also be studied under the strategic frame. In an attempt to substitute the old Malla coins from circulation with the new Shah coins, Prithvi Narayan Shah adopted the strategy of bargaining to persuade Tibet but he did not succeed as Tibet refused his substitution terms, which ultimately led to the closure of Nepal-Tibet relation for five years and later Nepal-Tibet war after his death (Stiller 1968), thereby leading to the transformation in Nepal's relation with its northern neighbor. Calculating the benefits sought and costs that Nepal might have to pay if it further engaged Tibet, Prithvi Narayan Shah decided to turn towards East India Company to maximize Nepal's interest. In dealing with East India Company, he chose to bargain to accelerate his expansionist policy further. When the governor of the East India Company requested Prithvi Narayan Shah to assist him in blocking the route the sanyasi rebellion (an obstacle for the British at the beginning of their rule in Bengal) used for their escape to the jungles of Nepal, he responded to the governor's request by suggesting that he be allowed to extend his dominions up to the River Gandak. Thus, it is argued that the sanyasi were blocked as per some agreement made (Stiller 1968).

The role of Prithvi Narayan Shah in shaping external policy was associated with domestic politics. Bozeman (1994, p.5) argues that “present day International relations are by definition intercultural relations political systems that are grounded in cultures.” Ideas travel from one place to another in the course of interaction at international level. Like Italian Machiavelli, as Bozeman says, it can be argued that Prithvi Narayan Shah’s monarchy was also influenced by the Kautilya’s Saptang theory, which states that seven core elements make state: *swamin* (the ruler), *amatya* (the minister), *janapada* (the people), *durga* (the fortress), *kosa* (the treasury), *danda* (executive power), *mitra* (allied state). These elements were rationally interconnected and were central in endowing order to the state (Modelski 1964, Liebig 2013). A study by Narharinath (1959) showed that Shah in *Dibya Upadesh* (treatise on government) calls Nepal as “a garden with 36 species of flower, or jaat (caste), organized into four varnas (sects)” (Hepburn 2002, p. 616) to promote the idea of inclusiveness and fraternity among Nepalese. But as a pragmatist and a system theorist, he explained the meaning of statecraft which related the ideas of state to the foreign policy of the state.

As Shah’s relation was tilted more towards India due to closure of communication from Tibetan, this dissertation will explain his role at domestic level in shaping Nepal’s relation with India. In dealing with the East India Company, Prithvi Narayan Shah advocated for an economic protectionism, thereby showing a firm opposition toward Company’s attempt as he was suspicious of their move (Stiller 1968, Shakya 2013). Shah advocated for building forts that would provide a defensive assistance while fighting. *Dibya Upadesh* further highlights on Shah’s isolationist policy as a calculated act. Prithvi Narayan Shah says, “Do not let the merchants of India come up from the border. If the merchants of India come to our border, they will leave the people poor” (Stiller 1968, p. 43). Shah’s words convey that opening of state to foreigners may emerge as a threat to Nepal’s culture and give space to foreign agents to conspire against Nepal. He stresses this idea when he further adds in his teaching, “They (singers and dancers of India) take away the secrets of your country and deceive the poor. Let no one even practice ragas...If this is done, your country will be protected” (Stiller 1968, p. 46). Thus, Shah’s isolationist policy in holding influence of external powers is significant as it determined Nepal’s behavior with the Company. But Stiller (1968) argues that it proved to be a harmful policy to Nepal’s development. To understand whether or not isolationist policy led to positive or negative transformation both in domestic and external politics, the concept of small state is crucial in understanding the role of a statesman in choosing certain policy options over another.

Niche Diplomacy of Prithvi Narayan Shah and Small State Reflection

In *Dibya Upadesh*, Shah’s dealings with his neighbors highlight his conduct of astute diplomacy. The text extracts the insights on Shah’s economic diplomacy (Dahal 1998).

As a statesman of a small state, Shah recognized the asymmetric size which Nepal shared with its neighbors. He viewed himself invisible, unrecognized and less powerful as compared to his bigger counterparts due to lack of hard power resources and limited information both in quantity and quality. To make up for state's constraints, Shah took an approach of niche diplomacy (Henrikson 2005), and trade became the main area of his focus. It can be argued that Shah's practice of niche diplomacy in dealing with his neighbor is useful in advancing the literature on small state diplomacy.

For instance, in order to outmaneuver the Valley, during his campaign, he cut valley's trade links with the Tibet and Principalities by sealing off the northern and western passes, which eventually disrupted the Tibetan trade and strained the valley's economy, on one hand, and on the other hand, prevented any of the *Chaubisi (twenty four)* from sending troops to the direct assistance of the kings of the valley (Stiller 1973, 1993). In this diplomatic step taken by Shah, Gorkha gained an opportunity to traffic in Tibetan Gold and Silver, thereby leaving the valley's economy vulnerable. Moreover, the imposition of an economic blockade on the valley restricted the contact of trade between India and China, as the other route to India-China trade was not much effective (Stiller 1973). His adoption of isolationist (literally squeezing the diplomatic space) policy during the unification process left the valley helpless and more vulnerable to Gorkha's attack, the result of which was the unification of Nepal and Prithvi Narayan Shah henceforth was perceived as the conqueror of unified Nepal. After the unification, trade became the central area in determining Shah's relation with his neighbors. Nepal went into a disagreement with Tibet over monetary exchange issue that resulted in the closure of Nepal-Tibet relation and Shah tilted towards East India Company. Perceiving the strong presence of powerful India, Shah advocated in *Dibya Upadesh* to avoid dealings with the merchants of India and foreign agents as they will leave people poor and make a conspiracy against Nepal. In short, Shah's behavior with his neighbors over the area of trade throws light on the isolationist policy in influencing the neighbors, thereby managing the external environment.

Dibya Upadesh: Influenced by Kautilya's Arthashastra?

In dealing with his neighbors, Shah was more inclined towards the Company and adopted specific strategies which suited his condition. As stated earlier Bozeman's argument on the migration of idea could have worked in the case of Nepal too. Kautilya in *Arthashastra* emphasized the importance of wealth of a nation (i.e. territory of states and its people engaged in occupation), the duty of a ruler to protect the nation (securing border), maintaining law and order within the state and to protect its people from external threats (Rangarajan 1987). All these have been articulated by Shah in *Dibya Upadesh*. For instance, *Dibya Upadesh* clearly highlights the fear of Shah about the proximity of Muglan (India) and his strategy to choose a peaceful method, i.e.

isolationist policy, to maintain secrecy and wealth of the country and thus safeguard the poor from being deceived by singers and dancers of India (Stiller 1968). Based on the similarities between Shah's pro-active diplomacy and prescriptions on foreign policy as suggested in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, it is argued that Kautilya's theory of foreign policy is significant in guiding the external policies of Nepal.

Kautilya's *Arthashastra* that is stated as a relevant text for today's India (Liebig 2013) is significant in reflecting on the relevance of *Dibya Upadesh* for today's Nepal. Rangarajan (1987) argues that Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is significant in the contemporary world as nations follow the teachings of *Shashtra* in actual practice still today. As the nature of human beings and behavior of states remain the same, the relevance of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* pertains in this 21st century until an effective supra-national authority is recognized. Influenced by *Arthashastra*, Shah's *Dibya Upadesh* holds its importance in contemporary Nepal as the value of this text has moved beyond merely historical interest and reflects its relevance in the present context as well. Shah's advocacy on battle formations or punishment rules might hold its meaning back in the historical context, but his insistence on the approaches to foreign policy and the necessity of seven power factors (*Prakriti*) in maintaining order in the society has still significant role in present context (Liebig 2013). As emphasized by Kautilya, Shah's main emphasis on the economy of a state in *Dibya Upadesh*, highlights the necessity of this text in making the nation self-reliant, that would ultimately support the national image and national identity in the international system. The value of independence and sovereignty laid by Shah's *Dibya Upadesh* holds its applicability in the context of a small state like Nepal in dealing with its demanding neighbors.

There are striking similarities between the suggestion on the internal ordering of the state, which Kautilya suggests, and ways and means through which a leader should adapt to his foreign policies. For instance, the seven elements: the king, council of ministers, territory and people, forts, treasury, army and ally made up Shah's state, which determined the direction of state's foreign policy in moving the state from inferior to superior position (Modelski 1964). In this research paper the only external element, is taken to be significant in leading the discussion on Shah's foreign policy. Thus, Prithvi Narayan Shah's strategy can be well thought and planned when Gorkha entered into an agreement with Lamjung by negotiating a peace treaty that ensured the security of Gorkha in advancing towards the campaign goal. In his dealing with the East India Company after the unification, Shah purchased peace by giving the Company surety about his action. Shah then waited for a favorable chance and pursued his interest in taking the Bijayapur *jagirs* for granted by making a strong claim through communication and negotiation (Stiller 1968). In addition, Shah saw an opportunity of pursuing his expansionist interest by entering into some agreement with the East India

Company over their demand for the sanyasi blockade. ‘*Samdhi*’ (peace), thus became an instrument of foreign policy for Shah in pursuing state’s interest and accommodating the neighbor’s demands.

‘*Vigraha*,’ (war/hostility) the other instrument of Kautilya’s foreign policy explains Shah’s relation with his neighbors, keeping the internal elements into consideration. ‘*Mantra Yuddha*’ (diplomatic offensive) and fighting a battle (Rangarajan 1987) were the strategies adopted by Shah in his indulgement in the war in the context of foreign policy. He fought many battles in his journey of Nepal unification keeping cost-benefit analysis into mind. Army and people comprised the main part of Shah’s state before and after unification, *Dibya Upadesh* includes. During unification, the army recruitment strategy, characterized by “martial race theory,” (Vandervort 2012, p. 85) formed the military strength of Gorkha which was perceived as less compared to the neighbors. *Kosadanda*, the treasury, and the army, formed the military might of a state (Rangarajan 1987). The role of people was significant in supporting army’s survival during the campaign through the means of Gorkha’s agriculture. The acquisition of land became the motivating factor for the army and the citizens to support Shah in his campaign of unification that included wars, both undeclared and secret (Stiller 1968, Rangarajan 1987). In the process of the campaign, he imposed undeclared war by using secret agents and occult practice on those who made a conspiracy against him (Stiller 1968). Gorkha’s attack on Nuwakot and Kirtipur was done secretly, thereby taking over them. Fort, the internal element that makes up state, also had significance in supporting and winning the war. The fort built by Shah on Shivapuri not only assisted Shah in fighting the battle with Jayaprakash Malla of Kathmandu valley but also established a relation of competition over the fort between the two kings. Even in directing the British force into the hills, the garrison was withdrawn from the fort at Sindhuli that left the British and their Indian sepoy vulnerable, resulting in the victory of Gorkha (Stiller 1968).

Diplomatic invasion, on the other hand, became an important instrument of Gorkha’s foreign policy in maintaining balance with *Chaubisi* in the West as Gorkha perceived itself economically and militarily weak for going into war with Lamjung alliance. As a small state, ‘*Mantra yudhha*’ policy (Rangarajan 1987) was also the instrument for Nepal in dealing with the Company and Tibet and transforming the external environment. Shah viewed the external issue of sanyasi rebellion and the internal issue of Bijayapur affair as a means to pursue his interest through the diplomatic offense. Kautilya’s method of foreign policy, *Asana* (staying quite) and *Yana* (preparing for war) are instructive in guiding the diplomacy of a small state. Gorkha prepared to go to war with his neighbors due to domestic pressure to acquire land. Nepal, on the other hand, chose the policy to remain quiet and handled the situation diplomatically and peacefully by adopting the isolationist policy in dealing with India and Tibet.

As survival becomes the primary concern for a small state, Shah adopted ‘*samasrya*’ (alliance building) as a method of foreign policy (Rangarajan 1987) either by choosing the strategy of bandwagoning or balancing the neighbors. Shah formed an alliance with Lamjung to avoid interference in Gorkha’s unification campaign and joined Kaski (weaker side) to increase its influence within the alliance. After getting avoided by Tibet, Nepal’s tilting towards India was the reflection on Shah’s foreign policy towards ensuring Nepal’s survival. Shah made relation with Lamjung alliances and harassed the king of the valley by taking over the kingdoms surrounding the valley. Although Shah followed the six-fold methods of foreign policy, as a king of a small state, accommodation, protection, and double policy mainly remained the main policy in his relation to the neighbors.

Conclusion

Shah had little opportunity to participate in decision-making affecting the country’s status in the external environment and thus he focused on a particular sector, i.e. trade, in dealing with his neighbours. The notion of smallness associated with Shah’s state helped it to escape the eyes of great powers easily and thus Shah could easily take forward his diplomatic task of focusing on the niche diplomacy to meet the demands of his state. Despite lacking in structural power, Shah’s state, without itself being a victim of the war, managed to resist the strong pressure of great power by adopting different tactics and strategies in changing the external environment. Thus, the role of the strategic, cognitive and strategic frame is associated in reflecting the similarities between *Dibya Upadesh* and literature on small state diplomacy. As highlighted by literature on small state diplomacy, *Dibya Upadesh* reflects the fact that small states can have space in determining external environment through the employment of creative tactics in overcoming the great powers’ pressure on them. Hence, the small states diplomacy as projected by Nepal is mostly relevant to other states. The role and existence of small states in the contemporary affairs make more sense to deal with the world affairs and realization is more needed.

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