

bi-annual publication

Vol. XVIII, No. 1-2, Jan-Dec 2018

NEPALI JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY STUDIES



Nepal Centre for Contemporary Studies

NEPALI JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY STUDIES

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Nepal Center for Contemporary studies publishes the Nepal journal of Contemporary Studies (ORN-487/1995) (V.S. 2051/52) bi-annually in March and September.

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ISSN 2565-4861

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Income Dimension of Women's Empowerment: A case of Citrus Producing Areas in Sindhuli District

❖Hritika Rana and Krishna Prasad Pant

Background

Agriculture sector employs almost two-third of the Nepal's economically active population aged above 10 years (CBS, 2013: 67). Out of 64 percent of the country's agricultural labor force, women constitute about 51 percent . However, when the percentage of agricultural labour by gender is generated out of the total economically active male and female population engaged in different industry, then the male engagement in agriculture sector is only 54.48, whereas that of women is 76.60 percent. Similarly, in rural Nepal, 82.32 percent of economically active women and 62.82 percent of economically active men are engaged in agricultural activities (CBS, 2013: 67). Such variation in the participation of men and women in agriculture and other occupational sector shows gender inequality in terms of occupational engagement as well as opportunities available to them. The tendency of men getting engaged in other sectors besides agriculture is considered as a factor in increasing the number of women in household farm and labour market as well as increasing their workload in agriculture. Empirical evidence on the other hand suggests increasing involvement of men in agriculture when they see the opportunity for higher cash income. Men's return into agriculture as a result of the introduction of a cash crop tends to marginalize women, increase their workload, and reduce their control over household resources (Acharya, 2000a: 535; Adhikari-Thapa, 2013).

Studies suggest that as women are generally involved in food preparation at home, they are more concerned with production of food crops while cash crop production is taken over by men (Adhikari-Thapa, 2013; Acharya and Bennett, 1983). Nevertheless, women still work in cash crop plots that are often managed by their male counterparts. Other researchers have also pointed towards limited involvement of women during the upsurge

of growth-oriented development along with male biased strategies and intervention that hindered women's development (Gurung and Banskota, 1990; Gurung, 1995). Despite of a rise in unequal gendered society, current discourse on agriculture and development point towards the potentiality of commercializing agriculture in Nepal, and its contribution towards economic empowerment of women (Acharya, 2000; Adhikari, 2008). In Nepal, number of researches on the importance of cash crop farming and improved rural income has been loosely linked to women empowerment (Gartaula, 2010; Adhikari-Thapa, 2013). Thus, agrarian transition to high-income commodities can be considered as both an opportunity and a challenge for women. The structural arrangement in which agricultural change is taking place within the rural space influences the way women may be confined towards their stereotypical traditional role or break through the boundaries of social norms that govern the division of roles, responsibilities and resources between household members (Agarwal, 1997; cited in Gammage et al., 2016). Feminist inspired scholars have not only tried to look at how things are for women but have suggested to explore the conditions and social arrangements that has influenced the way in which gender inequality is created, maintained and/or transformed (Kabeer, 2001; Gammage et al., 2016). It is within this background that the current paper has further analyzed the income dimension of women's empowerment in agriculture by using the empowerment model of Kabeer (2001).

The concept of empowerment

The notion of empowerment has gained prominence in the field of gender and development as a result of the increasing understanding on gender hierarchies (Kabeer, 1994) that marginalizes and subordinates one sex over the other. The concept of empowerment is thus used mostly to reflect those people who have been previously disempowered, and are either empowered or are in the process of empowerment, or who need empowerment. The process of change, which increases one's power that was earlier denied to them, is what Kabeer (1999, 2001) terms as empowerment. Kabeer distinguishes between power and empowerment in terms of the ability to exercise choices, but asserts that the term empowerment can be used only to those who have been disempowered in the first place and thus exercise strategic life choices to improve their conditions. The term

powerlessness which may suggest the exact opposite of the term power according to Kabeer (1994:223-263) suggests a total absence of power. But in reality people have at least a small amount of power to resist, subvert and sometimes transform the conditions of their lives asserts Kabeer (1994, 2001). Hence the term empowerment and disempowerment is more applicable to understand the power relationships that create, maintain and sometimes transform gender hierarchies.

Clear definition of empowerment is however lacking, in part due to the use of the term in diverse fields, and partially due to the importance given by scholars to the specific context in which empowerment is being studied (Kabeer, 2001; Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007; Alkire et al., 2013). Scholars have nevertheless tried to operationalize the term by elaborating on the specific dimensions, attributes or components that are relevant and essential to understand the term empowerment. Comparing the conceptualization of empowerment as suggested by Rowlands (1997) and Kabeer (2001), Gamage et al. (2016) can make feel that the concepts used by Kabeer (2001) provides a more holistic understanding of the term as it incorporates the dimensions of resources and achievements which were missing in Rowlands' (1997) concept. Kabeer (2001) has emphasized on the three inter-related dimensions — resources, agency and achievements to elaborate on the concept of empowerment. Difference versus inequality debate according to Kabeer (2001) provides a framework in which empowerment could be assessed. She asserts that an observed lack of uniformity in functioning achievements cannot be automatically interpreted as evidence of inequality because it is highly unlikely that all members of a given society will give equal value to different possible ways of 'being and doing' (Kabeer, 2001:22). Kabeer (2001) emphasizes on the aspects of tradition and culture which become neutralized as they are taken-for-granted, but are revealed under competing ways of 'being and doing' as result of availability of alternative resources and possibilities. At one hand, choices can then be made within the prevailing norms, and on the other the choices could have significant transformations by challenging the existing social inequalities. These choices and values are central in understanding the three inter-related dimensions of empowerment.

Women's economic empowerment in agriculture

Empowerment as a concept has been used in varied disciplines, out of

which agriculture is one sector where scholars have widely used the term to explore women empowerment in agriculture over the past few years (IFPRI, 2012; Kabeer, 2012; Alkire et al., 2013; Sraboni et al., 2014; de Brauw 2015; Said-Allsopp and Tallontire; 2015; Quisumbing et al., 2015). Although not strictly dichotomous in nature, the tendency of women's involvement in most occupations is more towards 'traditional, menial, non-skilled, informal, less lucrative, low wage' categories of work. Some scholars suggest that women tend to cluster in lower-paying jobs (Doss et al., 2011), and are often placed in the less lucrative activities in the agricultural value chain (Elbehri and Lee, 2011). Some scholars argue that women often take up income generating activities when there is urgent household needs, such as debt payment or medical expenses (Whitehead, 2009), while some suggest distress-driven character of the women's labor market, whereby women's participation in labour market is driven by survival needs, reflecting an increase rather than decrease in vulnerability (Elson, 2002).

Dolan (2001) has studied the changing agricultural context after the introduction of French beans in Kenya, and its impact on women by assessing intra-household resource allocation. Dolan suggests two situations, one in which there is women control and another men control of the income from French bean. In both cases, there needs to be a redistribution of labour especially during the intersection of the production cycles. In case of women control of the income, women proactively divert their labour from food to export crop production. But in case of men control of income, women have to negotiate their labour time between food crop and cash crop. Such cases highlight the boundaries of gendered contribution to household subsistence as well in the tasks that are predominantly female-oriented. Although the term empowerment has not been explicitly used, Dolan's study focuses on income, land and labour as resources by examining how negotiation takes place to adjust land and labour obligations as well as income control based on gender hierarchies. Negotiation as highlighted by Dolan (2001) takes the form of compliance to existing Christian norms and patrilineal norms that stress on domestic duties and female obedience at one hand, and on the other they oppose patrilineal norms by participating in church functions to free themselves from the domestic responsibilities, including of domestic agricultural production. Dolan's study focuses on exploring gender-differentiated norms in a mixed-farming system which is similar to Kabeer's (2001) multi-dimensional empowerment model.

Issues raised by various scholars regarding women's subordination, marginalization, increasing dependency, relatively decreasing status on one hand, and increasing income, economic independence, accumulation of assets, choices and empowerment on the other have become a scope of inquiry among scholars and policy makers to understand the situation of women in changing agrarian context.

Similarly, as presented by Jütting et al. (2010) and in the case of American and English cheese-making (McMurry, 1992), the difference in social norms, gendered structures, and women agency of individuals and groups is essential in determining the value given towards the job, work or any activity. Likewise, in case of Nepal, as shown by Gartaula et al. (2010), the increased presence of women in agriculture is resulting in feminization, with considerable amount of decision-making within agriculture. However, despite of decision-making, women's emphasis on leaving agricultural sector shows that the decision-making aspect might still not provide full understanding of the empowerment concept as suggested by Kabeer (2001). Number of scholars (Alkire et al., 2013; Sraboni et al., 2014) have worked on the multi-dimensional model of empowerment development by IFPRI (2012). The multi-dimensional Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) is a tool developed to measure women empowerment in five domains of empowerment - production, resources, income, leadership, and time allocation (IFPRI, 2012). Without contesting the understanding of the concept of multi-dimensionality of the term empowerment, the present study however focuses mainly on the income dimension of empowerment, whereby income is seen as the resource dimension as understood from Kabeer's model of empowerment. Since empowerment suggests the need to change the existing gender unequal society, the concept has been used widely as an analytical tool to understand the status of women as well as to identify the arenas of gender hierarchy that has been influenced by social norms and practices. How do men and women accumulate income in agriculture? Who has control over the income from each production domain? How do men and women use their income? What does women's income from crop/livestock with varying degree of market orientation say about women's empowerment in agriculture? This paper carefully scrutinizes these questions to understand women's empowerment in agriculture by using income as a resource dimension.

Site selection

Sindhuli district, which lies in the central development region of Nepal is popularly known for Junar production area. Junar, which is widely known as sweet orange, is a particular species of citrus fruit (*Citrus sinensis* Osbeck) having an indigenous germplasm (Kaini, 1995), giving Junar a status of indigenous fruit of Nepal. Out of 60 citrus fruit producing districts in Nepal as of 2011/2012, Sindhuli had the highest production (9737 metric tons) and area coverage of 1476 hectare (MOAD, 2012). Citrus accounts for about 37 percent of the total fruit production in Nepal (Kaini, 2013). Ten villages from three VDCs, Baseshwor, Ratanchura and Tinkanya were selected as a study site. These three localities fall under under Golanjor Rural Municipality after existing VDC's were dissolved on March 10, 2017 because of local government restructuring under the new constitution to form new lower administrative division in Nepal.

Methodology

Total of 140 households were included in the survey using purposive cluster sampling by focusing on citrus dense areas. Quantitative data have been important for the study as it provided a glimpse of gendered participation in a mixed-farming system. Narrative interview was conducted with twenty women farmers, out of which five women belonged to households that did not practice exchange labour anymore, eleven women from households that practiced exchange labour, and four households that practiced exchange labour as well as worked as hired labourers. Both survey and narrative interviews were conducted as part of ethnographic approach to data collection. Field notes and transcripts of interviews formed the basis of data on narratives. Complexities related to factors influencing gender hierarchy and women's subordination that was undermined by the quantitative survey was hence gathered by using Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) developed by Wengraf (2001). Each women narrative was triangulated with data collected from other family members of the same household. Single Question Inducing Narratives (SQUIN) were used to generate data with minimal interruption from the part of researcher. Question mostly asked included of 'Tell me about your life as a farmer, mainly citrus farmer. How was your life before and how is it now?' Another such question was 'what is your role in citrus plantation and citrus

commercialization?' Maximum variation sampling as a purposive sampling technique was used to identify patterns and commonalities between cases despite of diversity in each case (Wengraf, 2001: 102).

Findings and discussion

Sources of income in agriculture

Crop prioritization, with major focus on citrus orchard, mainly Junar has resulted in changes in land use. Plot of land that was previously used to cultivate traditional cereal crops like maize and millet is now being replaced with market-oriented production of citrus. While very few citrus farmers stress on export-orientation, many provide their conviction towards varying degree of market-oriented production of citrus. On the other hand, every farm families emphasize on subsistence farming as a mode of rural life, with most farmers providing reminiscence of the past struggle to secure food, while some still stressing about their struggle to produce food for basic consumption. Subsistence farming is thus an integral part of agrarian life in the study site. Subsistence in the study area is characterized by mixed-farming system in which farmers produce diverse crops, and livestock for self-sufficiency. By self-sufficiency, farmers' intention is to provide enough food to feed the entire family for the whole year. One year's harvest of either one or two crops should therefore last for entire year until the next harvest. The ownership of Khet land or low land with irrigation facility is considered vital for the maintenance of the subsistence. Therefore, some better-off families own Khet land in distant places, which is occasionally supervised, but the production responsibility is mostly given entirely to the share-croppers or contract holders who are liable to pay the landowners with share of the crop or cash. Unlike some families who sold surplus cereal production, there were also very few families who cultivated cereal to cater to the need of local market, within the periphery of their village.

Livestock and poultry play an important role in a mixed-farming system, as it fulfills multiple purposes. Cows, buffaloes, goats, pigs, and chickens support the family with subsistence milk, meat and eggs. The animals are also used as a source for manure that assists in enhancing productivity of crop. Livestock sale, especially goats is an important source of income for peasant families, especially during festivals to meet cash requirements for

increased demand of food and clothes and during emergency related to health of family members. Income from livestock can be earned by selling the livestock, selling their products such as milk and meat, selling their by-products such as manure and by using livestock to plough the field. Although livestock is sold in the market, and is often produced for sale, livestock is still not considered as a product that should be scaled up by gradually increasing the number. Livestock is characterized by production for the family, and occasional income source rather than as a production characterized by market-orientation. Unlike citrus or even vegetables, livestock are rarely considered as an agriculture product that can be specialized with intensive focus in the study area. Compared to the past, the degree of market orientation for livestock at present seems to have decreased over time as asserted by many citrus farmers. Experience of some respondents helps to understand the situation further.

A seventy-eight year old man says :

‘My father used to have fifteen to twenty— cows, buffaloes, and oxen. He used to take the herds to graze every day. Those days they were called gothalas (cow-herders). What can we do? There wasn’t any other way of earning money at that time. So when I was young, I remember my mother used to make ghiu (clarified butter), and my father would take the ghiu when he traveled [to towns] to sell it. But raising livestock is difficult [laughs]. Once when my father was away, I and my mother decided to sell the cows. I saw that it was hard for mother to take care of livestock when my father was not around.’

Another fifty seven year old woman says :

‘I had six cows until a week back. Recently I sold three cows. I thought keeping too many livestock was increasing my workload. It’s just two of us in the household, my husband and I. [...] Now, I won’t trouble myself more with large livestock. Instead, I will buy goats. Goats are easier to raise, and to sell. Selling goats has become easier than selling cows now [laughs]. Nowadays people have more money, and they want to eat meat more than they used to’.

Two patterns were found in terms of livestock. First, that the farmers, mainly citrus farmers were decreasing the number of livestock; and the

second pattern was the tendency to shift from large livestock to small ones. Livestock was seen as a major source of income by previous generation of farmers, with the tendency of increasing the number of productive livestock. However, at present there has been a shift in the way farmers view livestock as having potential for market orientation. The degree of market orientation of livestock is diminishing mostly in families that have other sources of income, mainly from citrus. On the other hand, livestock still plays a significant role in terms of income-generation, especially among families that haven't been able to earn through citrus production. For example, a thirty-eight years old women from Ratanchura, late adopter of citrus says :

We have been increasing the number of goats. By selling goats, we can earn eight to ten thousand [rupees] per goat. Unlike other households who have started earning lakhs [100 thousand rupees] from citrus, we haven't been able to do so. We have planted some saplings recently. Wonder when they will grow, and when we can sell citrus. Now, I even doubt if we may be able to earn from citrus. People say that the disease in citrus is ruining the crop. The fruits are falling. And big insects have started infecting the fruits. If such situation does not stop, we might never be able to earn from citrus. So, we have invested in goats

A thirty nine year old man's experience goes like this :

We sell pigs, goats and some ghee. Sometimes I make bamboo Doko (Basket). But one bamboo costs hundred rupees. So if there is bamboo in my own land then I make it, otherwise I don't prefer making Doko. There is no profit in that. Our household income is insignificant. I am even embarrassed to talk about income. That's it, that's how we earn. [...] Frankly, we wouldn't even know how much we earn, and from where. We make our earnings sometimes from work and sometimes from selling these livestock.

Livestock is a major source of income-generation for families who have been late in the adoption of citrus. With some degree of market orientation, some families have been increasing the number of goats, but decreasing large livestock. As compared to that of citrus and cereal, market orientation of goats had still not resulted in scale-enlargement, with an average of six goats to a maximum of fourteen goats. Moreover, if the number of

livestock at present is compared with that of the number of livestock raised in the past, then the trend of farmers' involvement in livestock shows gradual decrease rather than an increase. Like livestock, vegetables were also produced with some degree of market orientation, and were a major source of income-generation. Large-scale and intensive vegetable farming for the market was more evident in areas that had better access to the road and outside market. Vegetables on the other hand are gradually being considered as a market oriented crop, especially in areas that are closer to the market or highway. Depending upon the proximity of the market, the degree of market orientation of vegetable farming changes. Similarly, in few areas where there is enough market integration as well as irrigation facility, production of vegetables for the market is prevalent even if such areas are relatively far from the road or the market. But in most areas, vegetables are produced only for home-consumption, with some families selling surplus vegetable in the local market. Given the market value of the crop/livestock at a given time and space, farmers are found to be making decisions on land use and income generation.

Decision-making in agriculture by gender

Those who have more say in relation to the resource in question have more influence in intra-household decision-making. The resources in question for the analysis includes four domains of agricultural production – cereal, citrus, livestock and vegetables.

Production	Sex	Female to Male Ratio in decision-making
i. Cereal		102.5
ii. Vegetables		136.95
iii. Livestock		100.8
iv. Citrus Fruits		69.35

Source: Field Survey, 2016/2017

The ratio of female to male decision-making participation rate in citrus related decision-making is notably low with the value of 69.35 (Table 1).

The involvement of men in decision-making of other production domain and citrus shows that decision-making in citrus has become male dominant. Women's involvement in decision-making is nevertheless substantial in other domains of production.

Measurable aspect of decision-making operationalized 'who has more say' as the basis on which gender-based differences in decision-making could be analyzed. However, such operationalization leaves many detailed information regarding how and why men or women become the decision-makers within each production domain. What made either men or women to participate in decision-making of each resource? Why is men's participation higher in decision-making of citrus? Why is women's participation higher in decision-making of cereal, vegetable and livestock? These questions need further exploration to understand the nuances behind differential participation of men and women in four-production domain of agriculture. Given that the study has disaggregated agricultural sector into four-production domain, each domain presents an availability of choices within agriculture. For each crop and livestock, the study participants have the ability to choose the degree of market-orientation. Such choices at household level can sometimes be a result of resource pool available within the household, which may result in differences in their ability to choose. Thus, the differences in choices may not always be a result of gender. Rather than the differences in the resource choice, the process in which decisions are made is where the role of male and female, and their status within the decision-making has been presented. The process of decision-making thus highlights gender hierarchy.

The differences in choices at intra-household level, nevertheless, present a situation where the household has more or less similar resource pool. Ideally, the men and the women within the household have similar resources available to them, however as experienced by men and women of the same household, there is a difference in resource access, use and control by gender. Despite availability of choices, differences in participation and decision-making regarding each available resource presents a case of gender inequality. In order to understand how and why men and women have been able to choose between four alternatives available within agriculture, the study has further assessed other resources, namely income in this paper. The process of choosing to participate and make decisions

between available alternatives shows how women exercise their agency. Behaviors that show decision-making and non-decision-making in each production domain in relation to other resources thus constitute women's agency. Finally, women's functioning achievements in these four domains of production presents a case in which women have either been able to make strategic life choices, or comply to the existing social arrangements which maintain the status quo between men and women.

Women's economic empowerment in agriculture

The degree of vegetable farming was higher than that of citrus in some households. Few women living closer to the highway, mainly from Ratanchura earned substantial amount of income from vegetable sales. They even used their income to buy additional land, besides accumulating jewelries, gas cylinder, cooking utensils and providing basic necessities in the household as well as other goods such as television and mobile phones. In such areas, the number of male farmers involved in vegetable farming was however higher than that of women, with women's input in agricultural production at household level but no control over income use from vegetables sale. However, RukumayaThapa, demonstrates how she has changed her life through hard-work in vegetable farming:

My life changed completely in past seven to eight years. Before that it was only about feeding oneself. We used to plant some vegetables for consumption, and then focus on cereal. But after the road [construction], many organizations came to the village. They provided us with training on vegetable farming. The village also started having better access to water supply. So it was easier to do farming. Earlier for one halgoru [pair of bullocks] we had to provide four to five days of labour. But now since we earn, we can also pay in cash. They come work for us if we pay 700 - 800 rupees. Earlier we used to work in others field; now others come work for us. Just imagine, how much life has changed. [...] It's not that our work has decreased. Although household work has become less than before, I engage myself in other work. I have also recently bought a thela (Push-cart). I sell my vegetables and sometimes buy citrus from local farmers .

Rukumaya suggests reduction in drudgery related to exchange labour practice in cereal crops, as more valuable than the overall amount of

workload that she still has. Her ability to free herself from exchange labour as a result of her capability to earn from vegetables sale, has provided her with a choice to get engaged in other work that she values.

Maya Kumari Thakuri, who is an early adopter of citrus also expressed her concern over labour arrangement:

I had five daughters and no son. Before planting Junar, we used to pool our labour in the village, with households nearby. We worked really hard to grow food. Others had many sons, and brothers so they didn't have to worry about workload. But for us, we had to work a lot more. With only one man in the house, we could provide one-man labour in return. But when it came to working in our field, then we needed more men. How could we manage time to work so much? That's when I focused on planting Junar. Even when nobody was ready to plant fruits, I thought to myself, [...] there is no value in working so hard to fill our stomach, if we need change then we have to change .

Maya Kumari Thakuri also provides similar meaning when she suggested that transition to citrus crop was also a means of household labour utilization. She referred to cereal crop work as 'work that killed enthusiasm'. Her reluctance to provide her labour in cereal crop which benefitted households with more men over women, motivated her to engage and invest in citrus farming. 'Even when there was no road, and no women, except for porter class women would travel to distant places, I used to gather porters, walk for a whole night to get porters from another village, then come back to the village to collect citrus. Then early morning we would move to Sindhuli. I didn't carry the load, but I used to go with them' asserts Maya. She recalled that her husband would rather sell citrus with farm-gate price, than go to the market and sell it in higher price. She, however, did not agree with his views, and decided to take the lead by herself. 'I decided to go although it was not usual for a woman to travel long distances, and he said ok. We didn't have much argument about it' shared Maya.

The process of decision-making in Maya's case shows her ability to take control of every decision regarding citrus sale. Regardless of additional workload, she insisted on enhancing her economic status by thinking over

the profit margin between two alternative ways of selling the citrus, one at farm-gate price, and another by going to the market. Unlike most women in the study site, she kept income from citrus sale as her own income. She had a bank account in her name where she has kept all her savings, including of sales from vegetables and livestock. Most women however relied upon their husband or other elderly member of their family such as mother-in-law or father-in-law to deal with citrus traders. In some cases, mother-in-law kept the income from citrus, but in most cases it was the male member of the family who had total control over the use of citrus income. Despite control over land, few households did not have control over the income from citrus that was planted in their land. There were issues regarding land use from women's experience in the study site. For instance, Bidhya Magar says¹ :

These lands here belong to us. It's my husband's land but paper work hasn't been done yet. The land has been divided among brothers. Now we can use it the way we want. Although we had been using these lands [bhogchalan] for some time, formal distribution of land among the brothers was not done. Now, some wanted to plant citrus, some still wanted to focus on cereal. So when there was a debate in the house, our father-in-law decided to properly distribute the land so that we can use it the way we want to.

Another woman Tulasia Budhathoki's experiences are as follows :

We have Junar and Suntala (mandarin orange) in our bari (upland). Our father-in-law planted those fruit trees. He still takes care of these fruit trees. I don't know anything about Junar and Suntala. In our maita (women's paternal home or birth home), we didn't have these fruits, so I am unaware of how to take care of them. Before, my husband used to look after these fruit trees. He used to work with his father. But now since he is not in the village, father-in-law takes care of all the Junar [...]. He also takes the income from Junar sale. My husband used to argue with his father when he was here to give some share out of Junar sale since it's in our land. But now I don't even provide labour, so how can I ask money from him? .

1 Please note that pseudonym has been used to respect the privacy of the study participants. However, names have been used to differentiate women and their experiences.

Suntali Ale Magar's experiences are as follows :

Those trees in our land belong to us, some belongs to our mother-in-law, and some of them belong to his brother. Only whatever cereals has been produced from the land belongs to us. Otherwise, those trees have been divided among different family members. Our mother-in-law and father-in-law planted those trees; unfortunately they planted more trees in our land. Now, maize and millet from these lands are less than that of his brothers. But we have to share the citrus trees. I don't know why my husband did not say anything when land was divided among brothers.

Despite formal land tilling, inheritance of land through patrilineal land distribution is a factor influencing land use. Although men and women had access to use of land prior to land distribution, the debate as presented in the case of Bidhya, suggests that households did not have control over the way they wanted to use the land, i.e. to produce either citrus or cereal crop. Formal land distribution (not necessarily formal land titling) thus provided more control over land use. Similar to land, citrus trees in the study site was also inherited. Thus, even when one had access and control over the land, the same household did not have complete control over the crop produced in that land. While cereal crops were completely under the control of household member, citrus crops were distributed among family members through patrilineal system if the citrus was already planted before land distribution. Suntali Ale Magar , who had felt that her family was in disadvantage as a result of equal distribution of citrus crop, shared her experience:

I thought to myself, why should I be bad. It's ok even if we don't have enough land for cereals. [...] My husband should have said something, but he did not. So why should I? It was about their family property. When everyone was discussing about which land should be theirs', I couldn't abruptly speak.

Like Suntali, Tulasa also remained silent despite her dissatisfaction with the use of her land for the production of citrus that was benefitting her father-in-law but not herself. She further pointed out, that her husband would have argued and negotiated with his father to get the share out of

citrus sale, but in the absence of her husband, Tulasa justified her father-in-law taking the entire earning, as she had not been able to provide enough labour in citrus production. Even though these women had access and control over the land, they did not have full control over what was being produced in the land. The difference in control over the crop was mainly regarding the inherited citrus trees. Besides partial control over the inherited citrus trees, these women were able to use the land for production of cereal, citrus or vegetables. However, since the land that already had citrus could only be used to produce cereals and vegetables for few years until branches stretched out, the choices to produce cereals or vegetables was considerably low in areas where citrus had already been planted. But not all land had citrus trees, thus many land were being used to cultivate cereals. Many such lands were potential land for citrus production, resulting in intra-household negotiation about how much land to use for cereal production and how much for citrus production. Despite inter-cropping and multi-cropping potential in citrus producing land, the debate on the use of land was a major issue in almost every household, sometimes between husband and wife, and occasionally between the extended family members.

Having citrus orchard thus did not translate into control over the use of income. Women farmers' experiences on the use and control of income from four domains of agriculture was as follows.

Suntali Thapa

We earn from citrus sales and some earning happens by selling vegetables. And my husband also gets some thekka-patta (contractual services). I wouldn't know what he does, but he says he has other work too. He usually deals with the citrus traders, and receives and keeps the baina (advance), and final sale amount. [...] But he told me that I could keep whatever amount I earn from vegetable sale. So whatever amount of hard work I put into vegetables is mine .

Bina Karki

I take milk to the nearby market every day. We sell it for fifty-five rupees per litre. So, I keep some milk for home consumption, and then sell the

rest in the market. I sometimes sell some vegetables too. But I don't always plant vegetables. We also have Junar Suntala, but I don't sell it. My husband does .

The pattern in which the income from agriculture was used and controlled by men and women shows men having more control over citrus income, while women took control over dairy products and vegetables. Although women were making income out of dairy products, the sale of livestock was still not under the control of women in many cases.

Ranjana Koirala's following statement is one such typical example.

How can I sell buffaloes and goats, that includes lots of money, so dai (literally elder brother, but referred to her husband) handles selling and buying of livestock although I tell him when and why we should sell it .

Similar experience was shared by many women, who told that selling of large livestock and citrus that includes of transaction of large sum of money is usually handled by men. Although men mostly handled large transactions, women also occasionally sold agricultural products as expressed by Ranjana Koirala:

I sometimes sell a small amount of citrus or milk products when I need immediate cash, especially when my husband is not around (RanjanaKoirala).

As shared by some women, only a small amount (almost negligible) is obtained by selling agricultural products. Such amount is then used to recharge their cell phones, buy sweets or snack for young kids and guests, or provide pocket money to their children. Although small in amount, the money that women manage to acquire provides them a sense of independence as they are capable of performing day-to-day behavior that is not constrained by financial measures. The term that is often used by women to suggest their day-to-day lifestyle includes of 'ghar-byawahar' or household affairs which not only includes of daily agricultural task and food preparation but also social networking and relationship building for which at least a minimal flow of cash is a necessity. Despite acknowledging the importance of cash in maintaining day-to-day lifestyle,

the entrepreneurial tendency in agriculture was however not found among women in many cases. Especially, when it came to expanding vegetable farming, some women even feared that once the earning is high, the work will be noticeable and the income will then not remain in their own hands. Responses of following women help to arrive at such conclusions.

Bidhya Magar

I am happy with the money that I am making by selling small amount of vegetables. It helps me to buy things that I want. If my husband sees that I earn more, then he would ask me to spend my money, instead of giving his money to purchase household goods .

Suku Maya Ale Magar

We shouldn't tell how much we are earning. These are small earning compared to citrus. But if he thinks that I earn a lot by selling vegetables, and sometimes ghiu (clarified butter), then he would expect me to use my own money to recharge my phone, or to buy salt when its over. If he earns more than me, then he should be the one to spend on every household item. I wouldn't spend my money on things that he would buy .

While most women suggested that men mostly take hold of agricultural domain that has large earning, and leave income earned from other agricultural domain to women, some women used the argument of 'small' earning and 'large' earning as a concept that determined control over the household income and expenditure. During such argument, some women also used the phrase, 'Akha naparesamma afno', which means that the amount, which is not large and is not noticeable, belongs to them. Such a reasoning suggested lack of motivation among few women farmers in expanding vegetable production. By comparing their income with that of their husbands, women showed concern over how men might save their income by making them invest in household expenditure that was earlier provided by men. Instead of spending in household goods, these women aspired to spend their earning in other things that they valued. Most women suggested buying recharge card for cell phone as an expense that they did not feel comfortable asking their husband. Thus, by keeping their income low, these women felt more secure as they could make their husband

more responsible towards providing the basic household necessities. Men in these households usually purchased both big and small items that were necessary in the house, including of food items like salt, oil, spices, rice, and other goods such as clothes, shoes, soaps, shampoos, toothpaste and so on. Women thus valued the amount of earning based on how much control they could exercise. Women's concern over household expenditure burden and their earning often provided insight on how men on the other hand spend their money on consumption of alcohol, playing cards and gambling, and on socialization over household sharing of expenditure. Some women were found to be working hard to increase their income and make large-scale investment even in buying land, while some women were found to be creating a boundary in how much they earn given their anxiety over whether they could control the income and expenditure as per their will if the earning is highly noticeable.

Conclusion

Income is definitely the most important factor in agricultural transition, motivating both men and women to utilize their available land to produce citrus crop over cereal crop, or to cultivate inter-crop or diversification of agricultural product. With citrus crop having the highest market value over other crops and livestock, gender-based differences in decision-making participation in a mixed-farming system, presents gender hierarchy in decision-making within the multi-functional agriculture. Income dimension of empowerment not only shows how income provides economic empowerment to women, and ability to exercise and assert their choices, but also how women influence income earning opportunities based on their household living arrangement. In households that provide enough space for women to utilize their income in what they value, women tend to be more actively engaged in economic activities. However, in households where women feel confined to freely use the income from their work tend to create and set boundaries in accumulation of income, despite of possibilities to enhance income generation. The reluctance shown by these women to increase income suggest two things. First, higher share of income almost always means higher share of contribution in household expenditure. It means Higher earning by women through their own hard work in vegetable farming, may result in women having to contribute more in household expenditure. Second, Women's reluctance to share their

income from vegetable farming where the workload is hardly shared by men; and that men share of income from citrus is much higher. Thus women expect men to take the burden of household expenditure. Further, given the living condition, men might be able to save their income as a result of women's contribution, but as argued by women, women's saving would be lower, and men's role of providing for the family would be reduced, making men more capable of using the extra money for what he values rather than for household benefit. These women suggest the capability to utilise the income as more significant factor for defining their agency. Women's ability to hire labour, or leave exchange labour practice in order to utilize their time to engage in something that they value demonstrate women's struggle to cope up with the existing agricultural responsibilities and to create space for both agricultural and non-agricultural responsibilities that they value.

There are some differences between in which men and women earn and the way they provide meaning to the amount of income and expenditure. Income as a resource has been presented as having the ability to either challenge or conform to the existing gender role of men as a provider of the household. Some women have actively participated in income generating opportunities from citrus as well as vegetable farming, while some women show reluctance to engage in commercial vegetable farming due to the fear that visibility of their earning might result in less control over their income as increased income may increase burden of family expenditures. These women express unwillingness to provide additional work in commercial vegetable farming, as they expect their husband who earns significant income from citrus sale to contribute in household expenditure. These women share anxiety over their husband's demand to share household expenditure if their earning is noticeable. These women conform to the existing gender role of men as a provider of the household, but at the same time, question the way in which women's control over their own income and saving weakens relative to that of men. Thus, the current paper portrays case by case comparison of women's agency or their involvement in the process of decision-making in regard to the resource in question by showing how women's involvement in each four-production domain of agriculture shape gender status quo, either by reinforcing existing gender roles or by challenging it. As much as income is considered as an important resource for women's empowerment, this paper highlights ways in which

gender power relation within the rural agrarian context shape women's lives and decision-making with expansion of income earning opportunities.

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Homestay Tourism Development: A Case of Amaltari Madhyawarti Homestay in Southern Terai of Nepal¹

❖Suresh Acharya

Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world (WTO, 2003; Campbell, 1999). Tourism is now further divided into small components depending upon the choice of people. Among various forms of tourism, home-stay tourism is considered as alternative tourism that has been instrumental in bringing sustainable development in many communities across the world such as in Malaysia, Costa Rica, Thailand and Nepal. (Kwaramba, Lovett, Louw & Chipumuro, 2012). They are often located and operated in rural areas actively owned, managed and operated by the local communities where tourists stay and enjoy the local traditional activities and cultural performances (Jamal, Othman & Muhammad, 2011).

Tourism in developing countries is normally viewed as source of earning foreign currencies creating employment, and a modern way of life (Jenkins, 1991; Sharpley, 2002). But, some researchers (Butler, 1992; Hall & Page, 1999) claim that tourism raises the possibility of destruction of traditional culture and lifestyles as well. They argue that it initiates neo-colonialist relationships of exploitation (Mbaiwa, 2004); and causes over dependence of host community upon a single industry and hence it can lead to inflation (Butler, 1992; Hall & Page, 1999). As this research assesses social and economic impacts of tourism on host families and the community, a comprehensive literature review is indispensable to understand the problem and formulate a theoretical perspective on the research topic.

¹ A seminar paper in partial fulfillment for the requirements of Doctoral Degree in Philosophy in Rural Development

Motivated by the concept of sustainable development and eco-tourism, homestay tourism has been introduced by the Government of Nepal (GoN) with the promulgation of Homestay Working Procedure, 2010. Homestay tourism is a community-based programme, where tourists can have interaction and direct experience of the life in the community (MoCTCA, 2010). The programme's preliminary positive impact on women, local economy, environment, children and the community shows the effectiveness of the homestay approach. This programme appears to preserve the rural lifestyle, culture and identity. An increasing number of locals are operating the homestay programme, offering tourists a window into their local culture and lifestyle in areas without hotels (Thapaliya et al, 2012).

The concept of homestay is described differently in different countries. For instance, it is referred to as farm stay in Australia, educational homestay in Japan and South Korea, leisure stay in Africa, cultural and heritage homestay in Canada, agriculture and educational homestay in USA and urban homestay in Singapore (Hamzah, 2010). Tourism may have impacts on local population structure, occupational forms and types, and influence traditional lifestyle, and modify consumption patterns (Guo& Huang, 2011; Pizam&Milman, 1986).

Although the introduction of homestay program is new to Nepal, it has started to show the preliminary positive impacts on the community development, women development, local culture, economy, and the environment. Initially, the then His Majesty's Government of Nepal introduced village tourism in 1997 for the first time which was in reality and operationally the birth of homestay tourism. Later, with the introduction of Homestay Working Procedure 2010 (2067 B.S.) home-stay has taken a shape and gained popularity in the country (Devkota, 2010).

Homestay is considered as an alternative strategy to improve the socio-economic conditions of the rural areas (Wijesundara&Gnanapala, 2016). So, there are opportunities of economic well-being and social welfare to the community and people. However, studies show that Homestay operation and growth is not free from obstacles and barriers at community and national level (Wijesundara&Gnanapala, 2016; Ashikin&Kalsom, 2010 cited in Wijesundara&Gnanapala, 2016, see also Thapa, 2005). Therefore, this

paper aims to discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with the home-stay development and operations.

Statement of the Problem

Tourism has the potential of contributing positively to local development (cultural, social and economic) of a region more than any other industry(Thompson,2012). Homestay is economically profitable operation for the operators (Bhuiyan, Siwar, Ismail & Islam, 2013).Homestay program give focus on economic development and social enhancement of the operators (Bhuiyanetal,2012).

In Nepalese context, rich natural and cultural diversity is the greatest opportunity to tourism development in general and Homestaydevelopment in particular. The failure of mass tourism and the rise of Homestaytourism as an alternative in essence have to do with the unique and exotic social, cultural, warm hospitality and services which are manmade and environmental assets naturally gifted, particularly in a mountainous and ethnically diverse country like Nepal. To name a few of them are Sirubari, Ghalegaun, LwangGhalel, Dallagaun etc.(see Thapa, 2005, 2010; Acahrya&Halpenny 2013; Budhathoki, 2014). The feasibility of homestay is yet the greater concern and the most indispensable task for tourism promotion in any places elsewhere. Due to these reasons some newly established home stays may not continue as homestays. Therefore thorough and analytical study on opportunities and challenges facing the Homestaydevelopment should be carried out.

The paper mainly focus on the development of Amaltari Homestayin Nawalparasi district of Southern Nepal. That is the only Homestayin the district and the study aims to explore the opportunities, identify challenges and recommend measures at policy-making level. The essence of the study lies in the strategic outline to tourism development in the study area.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

Various development theories have been used in explaining the tourism development. However, not all theories can adequately cover aspects of tourism in terms of its cost and benefits to the community and people in

long term. The modernization theory has been criticised for its deleterious effects of creating unequal income distribution, loss of social and cultural values and environmental resources in the hasty drive for quick and easy profit. The diffusionist model seeks to apply diffusion process in tourism. According to this theory, a new place can develop as tourist destination due to the increasing demand of modern tourists for new destinations. However, the results of diffusion process do not lead to significant economic development and improvement in individual welfare, but has increased regional inequalities, disparities between socio-economic classes and elitist entrenchment (Brown, 1981). Dependency theory argues that the peripheral tourism is controlled and exploited by 'the industrial core regions' (Keller, 1987; Potter, Binns, Elliott & Smith, 1999). As a result tourism in many peripheral regions suffers economic dependency. However, dependency theory has failed to regard the significance of individual and domestic tourists for the economy and welfare of a destination area. It fails to formulate alternative prescriptions for tourism development in developing countries (Oppermann & Chon, 1997) and ignores the fact that in some cases local firms of developing countries control major facets of their tourism industry, e.g. accommodation establishments in Nepal (see Lama, 2013; Budhthoki, 2014; Acharya and Halpenny, 2013; Thapaliya, Rai, Shrestha, Parajuli & Pandey, 2012; Thapa, 2005, 2010).

Tourism as vehicle for development is recently controlled and managed by the local community. Homestay is appropriate example that takes into care the needs of the local community and the importance of environmental and cultural conservation in development. Consequently, a more comprehensive approach: the sustainable development approach was developed (WCED, 1987). Recently, sustainable development approach has become the driving principle in tourism development as well. Moreover, homestay in rural tourism is community based where the promotion, decision-making and benefits sharing are community based.

Homestay Concept in Nepalese Context

Homestay as a concept is defined differently in different countries. Generally, homestay is a type of accommodation facility where tourists have an opportunity to stay and live with the host family, observe and experience the daily life of that particular family (Hussin, 2008). Lynch, McIn

tosh&Tucker(2009), suggest a broader definition of homestay by referring to it as commercial homes where by visitors or guests pay to stay in private homes where interaction take place with a host or family. Similarly, Timalisina (2012) mentions "Homestay are such stays where a guest instead of being put up in a lodge or guest house or hotel is accommodated to a local house where he/she gets to partake in the activities of the house". The government of Nepal formulated 'Homestay Working Procedure 2010 (2067 B.S)', which defined homestay as "an accommodation where host provides foods, accommodation and other related services to their guests and operates it individually or in community groups". The procedure further classified homestay in two types; the private (urban) Homestay and rural community home stay. Urban Homestay programmes are normally operated by individual hosts and can accommodate only four guests per day but the village community homestay can be operated by different individuals as a group where members should be at least 5 host families to operate Homestay in particular community.

In Nepal, community homestays are mostly operating in attractive small villages where life is still spent in a traditional and simple way, the place which are still untouched from everyday hassles of city life. The panoramic landscape, unexplored cultural and natural heritages, gorges, different indigenous people and cultures, their unique lifestyle and foods in the villages of Nepal are not only of greatest interest but also the strong foundation for community homestay tourism development in most villages of Nepal (HTN, 2012).

The rural homestay in Nepal is community managed. The essence of community based management lies in the direct involvement of the community people in the management, operation and benefits sharing process (see Hamzah, 2010; Kunjuraman & Hussain 2013). Various studies have revealed that homestay tourism has become instrumental in developing and enhancing the socio-economic level of the host community (Devkota, 2010; Bhuiyan, Siwar, Ismail & Islam, 2012; Bhuiyan, Siwar & Ismail, 2013; Thapa, 2005).

Review of Previous Studies

Despite benefits to host communities, homestay operators have been

facing numerous challenges while practically implementing community led homestay programme (Ashikin&Kalsom, 2010, cited in Wijesundara & Gnanapala, 2016). Ashikin & Kalsom (2010) distinguished two forms of challenges as internal; arising within the homestay operators and host community and external challenges; beyond the control of homestay operators and the host community. Internal challenges included unbalanced demography, passive community, leadership problems, informal organizational structure, over commercialization, conflicts in community, incompetent community leadership, lack of creativity & entrepreneurship skills and external challenges include misconception of homestay programme, inefficient networking, exploitation by external parties and method of payment.

Bhan and Singh (2013) revealed that poor infrastructures mainly roads and communication, lack of skilled human resources, lack of marketing and promotional tactics, poor coordination among different tourism stake holders regarding homestay operations, poor awareness about conservation of natural and cultural heritage, improper resource management system, inadequate funds and lack of pro-poor tourism approach and poor maintenance of security are the major challenges that current home-stay operators are facing.

Wijesundara and Gnanapala(2016) highlighted the challenges that impede homestay development in Sri Lanka. According to them, misusing of the homestay concept, lack of youth participation, passive community initiations, lack of community leadership, lack of formal management system, lack of industry awareness, lack of facilities, lack of marketing and promotional skills, lack of networking, communication problems, community attitude, lack of incentives and other motives, , lack of proper education and training the lack of coordination and involvement of the key stakeholders and lack of government assistance and political involvement for decision making are major challenges impeding Homestaydevelopment in Sri Lanka. They recommend proper planning and management and the active involvement of all the key stakeholders along with the active and honest role of the government in homestay market.

Talib and Sulieman (2017) revealed tourists are attracted to the unique and

diverse culture and background of the people in a country. This situation shows that the culture and background of the people directly affects the successful inauguration of the homestay program. While, they pointed out issues such as lack of homestay signage, less promotion, lack of upgrading facilities and services, poor condition of roads, difference in climate of the area, inactive homestay members, lack of coordination among stakeholders and lack of support from the government as challenges of homestay tourism. They suggest intensive efforts and attention from homestay stakeholders, in attracting especially foreign tourists and exposing local culture to a wider world which leads to its sustainability.

An overview of homestay tourism in Baghkor, Kawaswoti,

The Amaltari Madhyawarti Homestay is located in Baghkor village in Kawaswoti Municipality of Nawalparasi district. Situated at 557.78 m above the sea level and in the country's southern Terai region of Nepal, Baghkor village has a sub-tropical climate and receives abundant rainfall. Agriculture is the primary occupation of the residents of this village. Amaltari Madhyawarti homestay location (i.e. Baghkor village) is the only gateway to Chitwan National Park. The village lies adjacent to the river Gundrahi and the beautiful Chitwan National Park, the nation's first and the most famous national park and a home to diverse flora and fauna.

Baghkor is predominantly an ethnic village of diverse ethnicities like Tharu, Bote and the Musahars (table 1). Lately, few other non-ethnic groups have inhabited the area. The unique Tharu, Bote and Musahar cultural heritage, their ways of life and the natural heritage have created tourism potential in this village.

Near to Baghkor village, decades old star rated lodges and resorts have been in operation but they have not been able to bring changes in the social, cultural and economic life of the local people. With a view to reducing people's dependence on natural resources while ensuring that its benefits can be sustainably managed, the Amaltari Buffer Zone Users' Committee (The Community Forest User's Committee) led by young energetic Tharu

youths with major assistance of World Wildlife Fund(WWF)'s TAL program² introduced homestay programme on May 19, 2013 (Jestha, 5, 2070 B.S). Initially there were 20 households with 84 bed capacities . The households were selected on the basis of the interests of the households after rigorous counseling by the Buffer Zone Users' Committee and the capacity of the households in terms of human and financial capacity. In fact, the idea of the homestay evolved from 'Conservation for Livelihood' introduced by WWF's TAL Program. The natural resources, beauty and culture of the village were conserved and have been used as tourism products. This is the first place in Nawalparasi district to have homestay. Each household can accommodate persons. The Amaltari home-stay is located about six kilometers south of Danda, situated in the East-West Highway³.

Table: 1 Caste/Ethnic Composition of Kawaswoti-15, (includes Five Toles)

S.N.	Caste/Ethnic Group	Number of HHs		
1	Bote	72		
2	Tharu	55		
3	Musahar	85		
4	Damai	01*		
5	Bahun	01*		
Total		214		

Source: Kawaswoti-15, Amaltari Madhyawarti Home Stay Profile 2017 (2073/74 B.S.)

Note: * denotes immigrant households; the late comers and are not considered as eligible when it comes to community benefits and identity

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- 2 World Wildlife Fund (WWF)'s TAL program- "Conservation for Livelihood" as its slogan is working with local community in homestay development. TAL supported 50 thousand NRS(500€) per household to start a homestay program and generate income from this program for local community.
 - 3 Mahendra Highway also called East-West Highway runs across the Terai geographical region of Nepal, from Mechinagar in the east to Bhim Datta Nagar in the west. It is the longest highway in Nepal measuring 1,027.67 km (638.56 mi) in length and was constructed by CPWD/ PWD Nepali and Indian engineers.

Table 2: Visitor Status (Year wise)						
		Number of Visitors				
S.N.	Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
1	Nepali	9500	10770	14045	4878	39193
2	SAARC	129	25	42	59	255
3	Foreigner	71	80	44	105	300
Total		9700	10875	14131	5042	39748

Note: as of 31 Dec., 2017

Source: AHMC, Database Record 2017

Homestays have become choice of more and more tourists because there are transport facilities and the environment is peaceful. Although, Amaltari homestay was introduced not much ago, influx of tourists has shown positive results both in social, economic, political and environmental sphere of peoples' life (table 2 & 3).

Since its inception, the number of visitors to Amaltari Madhyawarti Homestay has been increasing every year (table 2). In an average, there is almost 22% growth rate in number of local visitors from 2014 to 2016 with 13.36 percent increase in 2014 to 2015 and 30.40 percent in 2015 to 2016. However, the visitors of other SAARC nations have decreased by 80.62 percent from 2014 to 2015. However, the visitors have increased by 68 percent in 2016 over the previous year and by 40.47 percent in 2017 over the last year. The number of foreign visitors (excluding SAARC) is also not encouraging with just 71 from 2013 to 2014, 81 in 2014 to 2015 and even lower to just 44 in 2016. That means in average 65 foreigners have visited the place in a year. However, there is increment of foreigners by 138.63 percent though not very significant in terms of number. Thus, the average number of foreigners has reached to 75. Overall, there is increasing trend in number of visitors in total which were 9700, 10875 and 14131 in the years 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 respectively. Unexpected decrease in numbers of visitors in 2017 is due to floods in River Gundrahi in the monsoon. The reconstruction, renovation and building of infrastructures took almost four months for Amaltari Madhyawarti homestay to resume to its shape and delivery of services.

		Table 3: Income Status (Year wise)				
S.N.	Items	Income (Rs.)				
		2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
1	Homestay	3574714	6804000	8522759	3900884	22802357
2	Cultural Performance	175000	445000	1083835	1760658	3464493
3	Nature Tour	15000	577311	1142058	2156532	3890901
	Total	3764714	7826311	10748652	7818074	3,01,57,751

Note: as of 31 Dec., 2017

Source: AHMC, Database Record 2017
Dawasoti-15, Baghkor, Nawlparasi

With the increasing number of visitors, the income of Amaltari homestay showed increment of 47.46 percent from 2014 to 2015 and 25.20 percent from 2015 to 2016 in homestay alone. Overall, the income also shows increasing trend from Rs. 3,764,714 in 2013-2014 to Rs. 78,26,311 in 2014-2015 and to Rs. 1,07,48,652 in 2015-2016. The income went down in 2017 by 27.26 percent as the homestay could not operate for almost four months due to damages caused by flood in Gundrahi river that flows close to Baghkor village.

Research methodology

The study is based on the results of a surveys conducted by the researcher between December, 2016 and July, 2017 with frequent visits to the study area during the study. The study made use of both the primary and secondary sources to substantiate the facts collected. Primary data collection involved the administration of household survey questionnaires to 23 homestay household operators, 10 randomly selected non-homestay HHs and tourists each during visiting there during at the time of study. The structured survey questionnaire (both close ended and open ended) mainly sought the information on the social, cultural impacts of tourism and attitudes and perception of host families towards tourism development in terms of benefits, problems, opportunities, and challenges in homestay development in the area. Key Informants Interview were conducted with teachers, health workers, ward chair person, members of village homestay committee, executive members of Nepal Tourism Board, Chairman of VITOF-Nepal and Tara Gaon Tourism Development Board-Nepal and were

focused on the impacts of homestay in the socio-economic benefits to the local people. Informal interviews were also conducted with the members of non-homestay households and the people of neighboring villages. In addition, focus group discussion (FGD) were held to discuss on the issues of income generation, employment opportunity, physical infrastructures and quality of life, benefits distribution and social and cultural issues in the development of homestay.

Information from the homestay is primarily based on qualitative data; however, quantitative data were also equally used to complement the research findings. Household survey questionnaire method, key informants' interview, the observation method, focus group discussion and informal discussions were used to ascertain primary data whereas secondary data were collected from different published and unpublished literatures. Secondary data collection centred on the use of published and unpublished literatures collected from district level offices, the Municipality, Village Homestay Management Committee, Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) and reports published by Central Bureau of Statistics, Nepal, Tourism Policy 2065, and Nepal Homestay Procedures 2067 of Nepal.

Based on census household survey sampling, 23 homestay operators (20 Tharu HHs and 3 Bote HHs) with 92 bed capacity were studied with case study approach. Before sampling, the Village Homestay Committee was consulted to rationalize the validity of Homestay operator's HHs as samples.

Results and Discussion

The case study of Amaltari homestay reflects more opportunities despite foreseeable challenges and few temporary challenges at present as well. The survey data, formal and informal interviews and observations have obtained the following status of opportunities and challenges in the study area.

Opportunities of Amaltari Homestay development

Kathryn (2004) say that when a tourism industry is in its infancy, myriad

of opportunities and possibilities emerge. This appears true in case of Amaltari homestay as well. Although, Amaltari homestay has been initiated not too long ago, it has appeared to open door to immense opportunities in various aspects of the host community and the households suggesting the homestay tourism development in long term. The regular transportation has been arranged and health services and educational sector have been established. Other than the development of infrastructures, various opportunities to tourism development have emerged. However, the potentialities of Amaltari homestay are yet to be explored.

Social opportunities of homestay

The panoramic landscape, unexplored cultural and natural heritages, gorges, different indigenous people and cultures, their unique lifestyle and foods in the villages of Nepal are not only of great interest but also the strong foundation for community homestay tourism development in most villages of Nepal (HTN, 2012). Baghkhori village is located adjacent to Chitwan National Park and is home to various indigenous people such as Tharus, Botes and Musahars with their unique ways of life and food. These limitless opportunities for Amaltari Homestay development. Wildlife such as one-horned rhino, spotted tiger, deer, crocodile, birds and plants, wet lands, grassland, community forest are tourist attractions. The People's Park located in Baghkhori, Tharu Village in Khoki Tumbi, Indigenous Tharu Museum located in Saras Tole, National Tharu Museum in Danda Bazar and historical and religious places such as Kottaandi, Keurenighaari, Gundrehi etc. are foundations for homestay development (Argeuli VDC Profile 2011 A.D.)

Besides these homestay creates following opportunities :

- ❖ Homestay offers the ideal platform for cross-cultural exchange (Bhan & Singh, 2014). The host family members in their comments have regarded the host-guest interactions as beneficial to enrich their knowledge and built the capacity of confidence and in their day to day life. Unlike, mass tourism, Homestay has built connection at personal and inter-personal level. The close interaction with the guests has developed friendship and bond between them.

- ❖ Peculiar Tharu way of life such as ploughing the field, rice plantation, fishing, bull cart rider can be promoted as tourism product and offer the experiences of rural life in natural setting.
- ❖ Homestay promotes cultural heritages (Thapa, 2005, 2010). The cultural performances in the Amaltari Madhyawarti Cultural Building are pivotal and have potential to establish inter-ethnic and social solidarity.
- ❖ The economic benefits of Homestay are undeniably growing and this can be strategic in checking the migration of youths.
- ❖ The full engagement of the family members in Homestay business can enhance unity among family members and reduce conflicts at least at household level.
- ❖ Women empowerment is a significant social opportunity induced by homestay business. Trainings on cooking and hospitality are provided to Homestay hosts households on regular basis. The survey and focus group discussion revealed that trainings and tours have not only widened their knowledge on Homestay business but also empowered them, especially the women.

Economic opportunities of homestay

Baghkhori, once an isolated village, described as the undeveloped and backward ethnic place has now provided employment opportunities not only to the homestay households but also to non-homestay households. This has raised income and life standard of the villagers. This is the multiplier effects of tourism. Some other benefits are as follows :

- ❖ The use of local resources such as food, accommodation, even the natural ones such as forest and wildlife as attractions has become constant source of income.
- ❖ The conservation of local ethnic culture and the local life style has lured tourists.
- ❖ The local people are enthusiastically making investments in Homestay tourism and other sectors such as cooperatives, thus opening

door to economic opportunities.

Environmental opportunities of home-stay

- ❖ Homestay entails sanitation programmes and this has become regular practice in Baghkhori and around even in the adjacent villages without home stay.
- ❖ The training and the awareness programmes has made the locals keep the house premises neat and clean. This sanitation practices has reduced the diseases and epidemics in the village.
- ❖ The Amaltari Buffer Zone User Group has played key role in conservation of community forest and the Chitwan National Park. The interviews and the survey data reveal the increased invading of wild life in village area and easy availability of wild animals during jungle safari.

Opportunities for non-homestay households

- ❖ Homestay has linkage effect (K.C., 2014). The homestay has provided economic opportunities to non-Homestay households. The local foods, chicken and eggs are supplied to homestay households from non-homestay households and the handicrafts prepared by them are purchased by the Homestay managing committee.
- ❖ Educational opportunities for children of economically weak non-Homestay households are provided scholarships by the Amaltari Homestay Management Committee. A total of 142 students of Bote and Musahar ethnicity are provided scholarship that includes stationery, shoes etc. and informal education as well.

Opportunities for tourists

- ❖ Tourists travel for various purposes. There are many theories to explain tourists' motives to travel different places.
- ❖ Tourists can enjoy the natural and cultural diversity
- ❖ The influx of tourist has forced to increase accommodation capacity

and the additional homestay households.

- ❖ The problem of seasonality has gradually reduced with the gaining popularity and tourist friendly accommodation facilities, services and rural people's innocence and warm hospitality.
- ❖ The Amaltari Homestay can attract tourists who would like to come for research on wildlife and bio-diversity.

Challenges in Amaltari home-stay development

Despite many possibilities and opportunities of tourism development in Baghkor village, some challenges have been identified. These challenges could promote as well as adversely affect the operations of homestay (Thapaliya, Rai, Shrestha, Parajuli & Pande 2012).

Challenges at household level

❖ **Financial problems and exclusion of the poor**

The constitution of Amaltari homestay highlights the socio-economic development of the poorest of the poor. The Homestay Village Committee has come up with the policy of including households of all ethnic groups. However, there are no poor households as the direct beneficiaries of the programme. The non-Homestay mentioned that lack of enough funds to run homestay has become the major cause of being excluded from the opportunity. Majority of Botes and all the Musahars are very poor. Informal interviews aided by survey asserted that despite meager benefits of homestay to them through arts and craft work, they are less informed about the homestay as a pro-poor programme. Similarly, the Musahar households neither are homestay operators nor are in the priority list of the homestay village committee. The social stigma has become barrier to their access to this opportunity. So, in case of Musahars, both the socio-cultural and economic factors are responsible for their exclusion while for Bote and rest of the Tharu households, lack of economy is the major factor.

- ❖ Human and wildlife conflicts, crop raiding, livestock depredation

Since it is located in the close proximity of the Chitwan National Park and within the buffer zone, the wild life and human conflict is a serious

threat. This location poses crop raiding and livestock depredation. Lack of concrete control mechanism in terms of policy and implementation is still a challenge to the potential growth of homestay. Wild animals such as rhino, elephant, bear and tiger are common predators while wild boar, deer etc. are also seen often. The survey reported a human casualty in 2015. Thakur Prasad Mahato, father in law- of Amar Kumari Mahato was killed by rhino on nearby rice field. Such incidents if repeated, could lead to reduce the flow of tourists in the home stay.

❖ **Limited flow of foreign visitors**

The latest tourism data reported 0.729550 million foreign tourists had arrived to Nepal (MoCTCA, 2016). While, as of July 31, 2017, Amaltari as a homestay had received only 200 visitors in 2014 since its operation in 2013, 105 in 2015 and 86 tourists in 2016. This negligible inflow of foreign tourists and inability of corresponding plans and programmes as measures are challenge to sustainability of Amaltari homestay.

❖ **Irritating guests**

Many hosts reported that some guests were hypersensitive and irritating. These could also be challenges to continue with homestay. This situation is consistent with the Doxey's Irridex Theory while still the saturation is not reached at the study area.

❖ **Communication difficulty**

The ethnic Tharu and Bote people especially the old aged and the women have problems of communication with the guests who are non-native speakers. There are chances of host and guest misunderstandings which may negatively impact in long term.

❖ **Lack of Knowledge on recipe**

When it comes to satisfying the guests, the food is one of the greatest attractions. Despitetrainings, the host families are not able to prepare the dishes as demanded by the tourists. This can be huge turn off for food lovers visiting the area.

Challenges at the community level

❖ Ethnic diversity and economic disparity

Ethnic and cultural diversities are viewed as the attractions to tourists (Talib & Sulieman 2017). In some instances, this can act as nuisance to programmes based on community consensus, especially when it comes to decision-making. Majority of homestay operators in Amaltari are Tharus with only 3 Bote HHs and no Musahars. This fact portrays an unbalanced distribution of homestay benefits which limits the future growth of homestays. With the increasing income, the infrastructures are also growing. However, little has been developed around the Musahar settlements.

❖ Location

Location of Amaltari homestay is naturally beautiful because it is situated in the buffer zone of Royal Chitwan National Park. This is an opportunity for this place.. However, the Gundrahi River in the south poses a threat. Similarly, the wildlife and human conflict is another perennial problem. Unlike, the concept of sustainable development, the simultaneous process of conservation and development is also a challenge.

❖ Modern hotels and resort

The Baghkhori in erstwhile Argeuli Village Development Committee is known for its natural beauty and is the only gate way to Chitwan National Park in Nawalparasi district. The serenity, artistically designed hotels and lodges around the village, facilities such as jungle safari have been able to attract visitors from around the world. These hotels have already become brands and hence are obviously challenge to the homestay so far as foreign tourists are concerned. The national and international tourism networks have not yet started promoting this destination.

❖ Lack of proper physical infrastructures

Lack of proper infrastructures is the major problem for development of tourism (Basnet, Subash (2016)). Like other parts of Nepal, Baghkhori village also lacks proper infrastructures. The transportations are not regular and health and communication facilities are not very reliable.

❖ **Lack of enough accommodation capacity**

The survey and key informants interview revealed the lack of enough bed capacities to accommodate the huge influx of tourists. This has resulted in advance booking and in long term can adversely affect the Homestaybusiness.

❖ **Westernization**

Westernization of culture can hamper homestay in the long run (Thapaliya, Rai, Shrestha, Parajuli & Pande, 2012). With the introduction of homestay, the locals have no alternative to Nepali language and at most youths are more inclined to western attire than traditional dress.

Conclusion

Homestay tourism is a new concept of alternative tourism and still newer in the Nepalese context. It was officially recognized only with the formulation of Home-stay Working Procedure in 2010. Since then, home-stay has been mushrooming in the country particularly in the rural areas of the country. Majority of the studies converge on the positive results, especially economic benefits while social, political and environmental benefits are also not less significant.

Amaltari, the only gate way to Chitwan National Park in Nawalparasi district is naturally and culturally rich. Located on the bank of river Gundrahi with Chitwan National park in the central south region of Nepal, the home-stay location is major source of tourist attraction. Therefore, Amaltari Madhyawarti Homestay, has great potential in improving the social, cultural and economic life of the locals without having significant negative impacts to the natural environment. The Amaltari Homestay is practiced based on the principle of eco-tourism which means conservation for development. It can be developed as a model homestay for its multi-faceted prospects. The serenity, national park rich in flora and fauna, ethnic cultural life ways, matchless hospitality are treasures for adventure and nature lovers.

However, like other home-stay elsewhere in the country, Amaltari is also not

free from difficulties and challenges that impede its development. With the growing influx of tourists, the homestay household members hardly have any spare time to exchange their joys and sorrows with the neighbours, though they assemble for homestay related discussions. However, these gatherings do not happen very often. Although, the homestay households claim of social solidarity, the everyday interactions among the villagers has significantly reduced. The economic life is better with homestay income but at the cost of social life, particularly the time they could have offered to their relatives and their own children. The focus on agricultural production has declined and dependency on homestay has increased, as it is less strenuous and comparatively easier than working on the field.

There are indications that the culture of ethnic communities have gradually revived but this requires promotion at all levels to make it a tourism product. This requires participation of all stakeholders including the government to prioritize its value for socio-economic and environmental benefits. Very less number of international tourists in Amaltari homestay is a major setback that demands policies both at community and government level. At wider level, homestay can be the most effective and efficient medium of poverty alleviation provided it is based on pro-poor tourism approach. In addition to indirect engagement of households in homestay tourism, the interested households can be provided soft loans and other financial helps in order to lessen economic disparity in the community. Furthermore, the national park and the cultural attractions are its potentiality for tourism development. However, Amaltari still can add value to its attraction by increasing tourism products through diversifying its potentialities. For, this agro-tourism and wildlife tourism can be added.

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Seed Management Practices among Indigenous Thami Community in Nepal

❖ Neelam Thapa Magar and Uddhab Pyakurel

Seeds are central to the everyday practices of small-scale farmers that feed 70 percent of the world's population (Global Alliance for the Future of Food, 2016). Adequate and quality seed is the most critical determinant of agricultural production. The quality of seed is intrinsically related to the crop production and yield. In view of this, better the quality of seeds, better is the production. Besides quality factor, other agricultural inputs- farmer's knowledge, skill and experiences associated with seeds and crops, farming techniques- are fundamental to quality and quantity production.

Indigenous seeds are not the product of scientific invention. Rather, they underpin the agricultural biodiversity and are the sources of food consumed by global population. Indigenous peasants, who are the guardians of nature, have been growing and saving seeds since ages. With advancing science and technology in the world, there have been numerous invention and modern techniques in agricultural system. Agriculture markets have extended all around the world (Andersen & Hazell, 1985). Green revolution in 1960s featured and proliferated hybrid seeds and modern farming techniques. This proliferation of modern inputs in the agricultural sector was envisioned to solve the world's food problems. The introduction of hybrid varieties and use of chemical fertilizers have contributed in surplus production of food in the world. But today seeds are under great deal of threats. Business oriented seeds that are distributed in the markets have triggered the disappearance of more than 50 percent of crop diversity in the world (Kastler, 2016). These commercial products which are exclusively produced under controlled experimental settings boom with application of extensive chemical fertilizers. Farmers when have no choice other than buying commercial seeds every year erases the local diversity. Farmers' collective

seed system is replaced due to increasing capture on seeds by the corporates and accelerating destruction of the overall agricultural biodiversity. It is even more problematic and challenging for poor farmers to adapt with changing climatic condition and environmental stresses.

The principal of artificially selected genetic uniformity in farmlands seems inappropriate in varying natural environment in different parts of the world (Wilkes & Wilkes, 2010). The environmental conditions and socioeconomic factors in South Asia still implement a critical effect on adoption of new seed varieties and acceptance of modern technology (Farmer, 2007). The world at present contemplates that large scale and industrialized agricultural system is feeding around 7.2 billion people. However, over 500 million family farms which are small farms operated by family members mostly in rural areas are responsible for at least 56 percent of global agricultural production (FAO, 2014). Since, more than 50 percent of global food comes from these small farmers and their farms, they are predominant form of agriculture production. Small traditional farmers are guardians and keepers of local knowledge systems. Not only the management of their agricultural land, their intimate relationship with and knowledge about nature equally add on to improve and maintain ecosystem around. Yet, it is estimated that globally around 90 to 95 percent of indigenous and local varieties of seeds that farmers once owned have been lost over the last 100 years (Mayet & Greenberg, 2017) (with 2 percent loss rate per year). Reports also claim that around 70 percent of plant genetic diversity is lost as farmers worldwide have shifted interest in genetically produced and high yielding varieties over their local landraces (Suárez, Rahmanian, & Onorati, 2016).

Nepal, a small but topographically diverse country is richly endowed with numerous agricultural crops and plants. Agricultural biodiversity in the country is important source of food and nutrition, fiber and fuel that serve for the livelihood of people. Most rural population in Nepal practice subsistence farming (Gautam, 2008) and rely on their own farm inputs like seed, compost manure and human and animal labor for agricultural productivity. Local farmers save parts of their product from earlier harvest and store it for planting for next season or for the following year. But there is an increase in seed imports, especially hybrid seeds, which threatens the diversity of seeds. Hybrid seeds of maize and rice are especially rising in Nepal. With increasing dependency on high yielding varieties, the control over the

seeds has been more and more in the hands of a few large multinational companies such as Monsanto and less in the hands of local farmers. This has affected the genetic diversity as well as farmers' rights on access to local seeds (Adhikari, 2014). The erosion is mainly taking place in staple crops of Nepalese farmers such as rice, wheat and maize (K.C., 2016). There have been cases of crop failure leading to desperate situations for farmers where hybrid seeds were used (Guragain, 2014). This issue in the country is not a new phenomenon. Also, the rise of market based agricultural interventions have led to increasing marginalization of local production and associated knowledge (Thapa, 2013). It is evident that availability and coverage of modern agrochemical inputs have dominated market and local production are not prioritized. Hence, with market extensions and increasing dependency on high yielding varieties, traditional farming practices and seed management are devalued and not considered innovative. Local seed management techniques that farmers practice from generations are gradually disappearing from the society. These practices are also not acknowledged and documented enough. This implies that the opportunities to assemble the local knowledge and skills are inadequate.

In Nepal, where majority of marginalized indigenous people are small landholders (Subba, et al., 2014), their contribution to conservation of natural resources including maintaining seed viability and diversity is important to study. Previous studies have shown that commercialization of agriculture is being dominant in Nepalese agriculture system (Upreti & Ghale, 1999), increasing the vulnerability of seed diversity. Focusing on such issues, this research aimed in valuing traditional seed management practices by taking the case of indigenous Thami farmers and their locality.

This research focuses on seed management practices by Thami community of Dolakha district. In this regard, this research is an attempt to study the changes in seed management practices of this community with increasing application of modern interventions in agriculture. By the term "Seed Management" this research explores and studies the seed sources, collection and selection, seed storage and preservation, seed conservation knowledge sharing and practices of Thami community of Dolakha.

Two hamlets from Suspakshamawati were purposively selected as the study sites. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used for the

research where primary data were collected through household surveys, in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and observations whereas books, journal articles, research reports and reports by government and non-government organizations were consulted for secondary data.

Findings of the study

Thami inhabitants from Damarang and Phaselung primarily depend on agriculture for living. Some households characterized themselves as seasonal laborers as well. Most Thami farmers in the study area own small dry terraced lands 'Bari' and very few irrigate their farms for rice plantation. Small terraced paddy fields called 'Khet' were irrigated mainly during monsoon. Traditional farming of staple crops is dominant among Thami farmers. Farmers also practiced tunnel farming of vegetables for consumption as well as for commercial production. Most farmers grow, and harvest maize as primary crop followed by millet, rice and wheat once a year. Besides these staple crops, they grew vegetables like cauliflower, tomato, radish, spinach according to seasons. Thami people owned large amount of lands under Kipat System in the past but deliberate encroachment by Chhetri and Brahmin left Thamis with small amount of land (Magar, Subedi, Pradhan, & Chhetri, 2008). Today most Thami farmers are marginal cultivators and own land less than 0.25 hectare. Some are landless and work in others' farms. Agriculture production is not enough to meet their dietary needs for a whole year. Their annual agricultural production is enough for six months or less. This is one of the major reasons that these people are seasonal laborers as well. Some have even migrated to foreign lands for labor works. Farmers shared animals for ploughing their terraced lands based on social contracts. Plantation of crops, weeding, harvesting are also based on social contracts 'Arma-parma' and employing agricultural laborers traditionally called 'Khetalas'. Sometimes, Khetalas are paid money to work in the fields. The payment depends on working hours, for example, according to a local informant, a Khetala can earn around three to four hundred rupees for working one whole day. Thami farmers thus make seasonal earnings by working in other's field as well. Majority of Thami households earned an average of up to Nrs 20,000 in a month. Besides selling agricultural products from their farms, farmers also worked as laborers in the market and in the neighboring fields to earn for their living.

Earlier study reports (Magar, Subedi, Pradhan, & Chhetri, 2008) show that Thami farmers have traditional practice of exchanging seeds with their relatives and neighboring farmers. It is an age-old practice of exchanging or bartering better seeds with other products. But the situation at present has changed. According to farmers, these days, seeds are often bought from neighbors and market whereas exchanging seeds used to be practiced in the past. Since Thami people have diversified their source of income (labor works, small shops and commercial vegetable farming), some farmers prefer buying seeds rather than exchanging due to risk of receiving poor quality of exchanged seeds. This instance is true to those farmers who can afford to buy modern inputs like hybrid and improved seeds and chemical fertilizers. These farmers strongly assert that had the traditional varieties been enough, they wouldn't have to opt for modern agricultural inputs. But on the other hand, Thami farmers added that use of modern inputs has disadvantages as well. Use of modern inputs increases year by year and insect pests are also increasing in the crops. Indigenous varieties which were mostly pest tolerant are disappearing. This negatively impacts on indigenous pure seeds (*gau ma paine chokho biu*) and associated knowledge about traditional ways of farming and management. Moreover, subsistence Thami farmers are more vulnerable when their local seeds are rare to find, identify and preserve.

Agricultural practices are evidently linked with religious and cultural aspects of Thami community. Thami farmers are nature worshipper and believe in offering their first harvest to *Bhume Deuta* (god of land) before self-consumption. Even if there are changes in the traditional practices of Thami farmers such as use of chemical fertilizers, hybrid seeds and modern tunnel farming, there still exists associated traditional beliefs and knowledge in Thami society. Traditional practice of using rice grains, turmeric herbs, tuber is evident in lives of Thami community from birth and in death rituals as suggested through interviews.

While analyzing the educational status of Thami in study area, not a single individual was found to have enrolled in a university. Majority of respondents (72 percent) were literate but literacy was limited to their ability to read and write in most of the cases. Few respondents attended primary and secondary level of education but dropped out from school due to family reasons like burden of livelihood and farm activities. Likewise, only one

male respondent had cleared his higher secondary level of education. People attaining higher degree of education were very rare to find due to limited opportunities to access higher education and poor financial resources. Food sufficiency of Thami respondents largely depended on their landholdings and quality of agricultural inputs in their farms (Pradhan, et al., 2006). Only 9 percent respondents had enough food production for the whole year. For the time being, respondents who used only hybrid seeds had greater yield enough throughout the year. The rest who are more dependent on local seeds but also use hybrid seeds occasionally have lesser production leading to lesser food sufficiency in a year. In addition, crops that grow from hybrid seeds are not always free from disease and pest attacks resulting in crop damage and yield loss (Adhikari, 2014). Hence, their food requirements are often fulfilled by working as wage laborers and seeking debts and relying on market to purchase food. Degree of food insufficiency of Thami respondents generally reflects level of their poverty status as well.

Majority of respondents know about self-retained, locally available and seeds available in the market and in the agriculture office. Most Thami farmers stored seeds from previous harvest and defined those seeds as self-retained seeds. Likewise, locally available seeds are those that have been adapted to local environment since generations. These seeds used to be often shared and saved within members of Thami community. The seeds that are distributed by agricultural office are mainly improved and hybrid varieties which Thami farmers receive when required after soil quality inspection by JTA (Junior Technical Assistant) in the village.

Access to quality seeds among small farmers is crucial to improve their farm productivity. Majority of the respondents (76 percent) used the seeds stored by themselves for cultivation. This suggests that Thami farmers prefer using their own varieties of seeds which they have selected, grown and stored themselves. Thami farmers trust their own seeds as they have been adapted locally and well grown in local ecological condition. As observed, scattered settlements in the study site also limited Thami farmers to access different varieties of seeds from local networks. Seeds in the past were extensively exchanged by Thami farmers mainly for changing varieties, substitute poor quality seeds and to get better yield. But these days, desired seeds are also purchased from farmers within the community

and from local seed traders due to easy market accessibility.

Hybrid and improved seeds of mainly rice and maize were used by respondents. Vocational training conducted in the village, local seed traders and agriculture office enriched Thami farmers' knowledge about hybrid seeds. Most Thami farmers purchased these seeds only for greater production. They were not aware about the adaptability of such seeds in their local environment. Most of these farmers did not know about compatibility of hybrid seeds with the soil. Thami farmers were inclined to hybrid seeds as they were benefitted by early maturity and better yield of hybrid varieties. While on the other hand, these farmers preferred local seeds over hybrid ones. Thami farmers have experienced and observed the growth and yield of crops during the earlier seasons. Based on previous harvests and adaptability of crops, farmers opt for their own local variety of seeds. Another factor is that not all Thami farmers choose to take risks of planting a new hybrid variety in their fields. Farmers expressed their skepticism about the characters and production from a new variety. Also, for marginalized Thami farmers, purchasing seeds was not always easy as collecting and saving their own seed. It was understood that Thami farmers purchased seeds mostly when their seed stock was not enough to sow or plant in their farms.

The process of seed selection and storage of grains by Thami farmers is directly linked to their farm yields. Majority believed that drying seeds on open air or Sun are the most effective way for preserving. It is a traditional method that all the villagers practiced after harvesting of crops. Likewise, local ways of treating stored seed grains was also considered crucial. Various locally available botanical extracts such as Titepati, wood ash, Bojho, Timur can be mixed with grains during storage. Such practices were primarily done to prevent fungal infection or development of pests during storages. A majority of i.e. almost 64 percent of Thamis in the present day used plastic bags and drums as storage structures. Despite being well versed with traditional skills on how traditional instruments are made, Thami farmers made use of synthetic materials like plastic bags (bora) and drums for storing their farm yields. Major reason behind the use of modern products was the damage of traditional storage devices due to earthquake on 25th April and 12th May 2015. Modern materials were viewed as more secure from insects and rodents because they were sealed from all sides. Thami farmers thus, were content with what they have in the present day.

Storing of seeds and grains were done separately so as to not mix seeds for germination and grains for consumption.

For majority of Thami population, storing and preserving own seed grains provided them with many advantages. Farmers believed that being able to preserve your own seeds shows characteristic of being a good farmer. Storing their seeds and grains allowed them to access seeds without having to spend for it. According to most farmers, proper drying of seed grains and clean storage structures influence the quality and longevity of seed grains. Farmers who maintained suitable storage conditions and controlled the attack of seed grains from rodents and insects were able to use for a longer period. Food grains were edible till they lasted. However, in most of the households the food did not last for long time. Farmers often struggled with storage process and preventing loss of seeds or damage of grains by insects and pests. Maintaining the quality of seeds for future plantation was sometimes beyond the control of poor Thami farmers perhaps due to lack of awareness on storage hygiene and quality attributes maintenance.

Seed sources, selection, storage and treatment of staple crops

According to respondents, there is one common criterion for selection of seeds. The seeds should be visibly good and free from disease, insects and pests. This criterion of selection holds true for all Thami farmers and other neighboring communities as well.

In accordance with traditional practice, rice plants (dhan ko bala) that look good and not infected by pest, insects or any other plant diseases are selected. When observing each farmland of paddy, plants that include similar color of seeds/grains (daana) are preferred over mixed colors and sizes. Farmers usually observe a mixture of black, red, white or yellow colored and short or long sized seeds in their fields. Wind, butterflies and other insects can cause differences in sizes and colors of seeds. According to farming practices and experiences, selecting seeds of uniform traits in color and size are better for storing as such selection yields good production in the fields. Selection of seeds is done before harvesting entire paddy fields. Selected dry rice seeds are grown into seedlings in a small piece of well-managed, weeded and irrigated land of seedbed (Biyad rakhne) for around a month. The technique of manual transplanting of rice plants is

the most popular among Thami farmers.

In case of wheat, matured and well-shaped wheat grains are selected as seeds. Wheat grass affected by black molds (locally called kali poke) observed during harvesting is not selected for seeds. Black mold is a fungal disease especially caused by species of *Cladosporium* and *Alternaria* which affects wheat grains and is characterized by black discoloration in wheat grains at maturity (Hershman, n.d.). Wheat grass with yellow rust on its leaves is also not considered healthy for seeds. Yellow rusting of wheat is locally called “Gahu ko sindure”. In such situation, farmers either exchange or buy wheat seeds from neighbors or from agriculture office. Pasang Lhamo and WK 1204 are improved varieties of wheat seeds distributed by agriculture office. Stored wheat grain seeds are often affected by small grain borers or termites locally called ‘Ghoon’ during storage. For treating such pests, Bojho herbal plants (*Acorus calamus*) can be mixed with wheat grains in storage containers. There is a belief that aroma from this plant is toxic to grain borers and hence it is likely that wheat grains are less affected by such pests. Another way of preserving is mixing wheat seed grains with wood ash in almost equal amounts in a tin vessel. No health impact was ever experienced by such way of preserving. However, proper sun drying of harvested product is the most effective way for longevity of seeds and grains. Thus, in case of wheat, farmers examine wheat grass and grains carefully to select good seeds for storing and sowing in the future. The criteria of selecting healthy looking seeds is common in most crops and it applies to maize seeds as well. Large maize cobs are first collected for seeds. Likewise, similar colored corn kernels within a cob are preferred. Sometimes within a selected large maize cob, different colored (white, yellow, red, black or grey) kernels can be found. Such mixture of colored kernels is not considered good for seed. Maize kernels in the upper and the lower part are first separated by hand and the middle part that contains regularly arranged large kernels are usually selected as seeds. Selected seeds are then dried on Sun properly to make them rigid and stiff. Maize seeds after drying are pressed with hand nails to check its hardness and proceed towards preservation. Harvested maize cobs are usually stored by hanging several bunches of cobs (Jhutta) above fireplace. Thami farmers believed that smoke generated by burning fuelwood controlled the infection from pests. Similar storage technique has been highlighted in a case study among indigenous farmers of Dang valley (K.C., 2016). The smoke

from burning firewood produces carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide gases which is toxic to insect pests (Gyawali, 1993). Thami farmers also practiced roof storage of sun-dried maize until few years ago as the roof of the house was spacious, dry and air-conditioned room for storing. Farmers could consume roof stored maize cobs and grains for more than a year. But earthquake on April and May 2015 destroyed almost all houses of Thami inhabitants which left them with no storage structures and spaces. Since then, Thami farmers in the study area have been seeking shelters in temporary houses made of zinc plates (*Jasta pata*) and wooden frames and storing their harvested maize grains in plastic drums and bags.

Millet is another staple crop secondary to maize that most Thami farmers grow in rainfed lands of Suspa region. While selecting seeds, millet plants are first observed as is done with wheat grass. Basically, larger plants with grains (*Kodo ko bala*) that are standing straight are selected. Bigger sized healthy panicles of millet grains are considered good for seeds. Selected millet plants for seeds are sometimes harvested before harvesting entire millet crops in field. *Dallo Mudke kodo*- like the shape of fingers curled in a palm, *Chyalthye Kodo*- long Finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), *Juwain Kodo* or *Seto Kodo* and *Sunkoshi Kodo* are some local varieties of millet grown by Thami farmers. After harvesting, millet plants are sundried and threshed and de-husked. De-husking of millet grains is done using traditional tool locally called *Gyalbi* or *Gyabri*. Such activity is solely dependent on manual labor and is very time consuming. Size of wheat and millet grains at maturity depends on the amount and quality of manure and fertilizer added to the soil.

As stated by most Thami farmers, millet seed grains are less infected by insect pests when compared to other food grains. It is an important crop as Thami farmers and their families consume especially when they do not have or are unable to produce enough rice. Thami farmers believe that food such as *Dhedo* and *Roti* from millet is nutritionally rich and energy giving food. Millet grains in the past were stored in hand made *Dalo* made of bamboo but these days small plastic and tin storage bins are used. According to villagers, traditional storage structures had several limitations. Grains stored in traditional storages could easily be accessed by insects and rodents due to cracks around the walls and surface of the structures. In such circumstances, farmers rather opt for buying modern storage bins

from market than modifying their existing traditional storages. It was convenient for most villagers to use modern storage structures that offered better safety of their grains from rodents and pest attack.

Experiences of recent hybrid seeds

Villagers had certain ideas about benefits from hybrid seeds that offer high yield in terms of food security but only if agroecological conditions are favorable for its adoption and growth (Chepkesis & Parzies, 2013). Trend of precipitation also is a subject of concern for choosing hybrid options. Food insecurity was the main reason for increasing reliance on hybrid seeds of maize, rice and vegetables. Respondents shared their dependency on hybrid maize has continued since 3 to 4 years. Even though local varieties have nutritional advantages over hybrid, changing weather patterns during past few years affected locally grown maize plants. Local maize plants grow taller and hence are vulnerable to falling due to strong winds and damaging production. Such event followed by rain showers further could encourage foliar or leaf diseases in maize plants (Nafziger, 2016). According to the Thami farmers increasing trends of storms in the past few years especially during April/May have resulted in losses of local maize yields. The shorter plant heights with stronger base of hybrid maize largely resisted falling due to winds as opposed to relatively tall local maize plants. Farmers also have the benefit of faster rate of growth and maturation of hybrid maize. They shared that they do not have to wait until 6 months at least for harvesting and consuming maize as hybrid maize could be harvested within 4 months from cultivation. The bottom-line is hybrid maize enabled Thami farmers to get higher yields relatively in short period of time when compared to local ones.

Along with new seeds of maize, farmers purchase synthetic fertilizers as well. Most Thami farmers use mixture of compost manure, potash and urea in their farms. Compost manure is first added to the soil and mixed thoroughly whereas synthetic fertilizers are applied after planting or sowing of seeds. Initially, farmers agreed to relying only on compost manure but due to insufficient organic manure, synthetic urea was used for boosting production. Through various agricultural programs and trainings, majority of Thami farmers in the study site use mixture of both organic and synthetic fertilizer to ensure healthy growth of crops and maintain soil quality.

Storage process of hybrid maize is similar with local maize but used predominantly to meet their daily food requirements. Besides, herbal inputs in storage structures for preservation of seeds and grains, Thami farmers also use medicines available in the market for treatment. A single piece of medicine (Chakki) wrapped in a piece of cloth can be kept in an air tight storage of 50-60 kgs of maize and rice and other grains as well to prevent insect pests for almost a year.

Growing hybrid maize is benefitting farmers by providing them greater yield but on the other hand, farmers also shared instances of disease in hybrid maize plants. There were incidences of insect pest attack in the stalk and cobs of maize. In some cases, decaying of tip of hybrid maize cob is observed before harvesting. This decaying is called *Aspergillus* ear rot of maize cobs caused by fungus and infects maize kernels (Jackson & Rees, 2016). Such infection is especially observed in fields during droughts. Likewise, farmers also observed gray leaf spots (Thegle rog) and stem borers (Gawaro) in maize plants.

Besides disease in hybrid maize, it was noted that paddy was also affected by Rice Gundhi Bug locally called Dhan ko patero as observed by farmers during early stage of rice grain formation. Discoloration of rice grains and in some cases, ill development of grains in panicles is spotted. Foot rot of rice locally called Dhan ko fed kuhune rog is another disease that is common in the study area. None of the farmers interviewed made use of herbicides to control unwanted grass and disease in their paddy fields.

Decaying at the tip of maize cobs was rare to find in local variety of maize namely, Paheley and Seti makai. In case of traditional paddy namely, Paheley, Gadere and Tauli, it mostly depended on timely weeding off the paddy fields. Likewise, in case of traditional millet and wheat variety, storage and handling process was crucial for any disease to infect rather than during growth of these crops in fields (Pakho bari). As per the perception of Thami farmers, it is evident that not all hybrid varieties are resistant to pest infection and diseases. In fact, Thami farmers asserted that locally available traditional varieties outshined hybrids as traditional varieties were often disease resistant. Though traditional varieties are relatively low yielding, they are usually durable and resilient to environment changes (Atlina, Cairns, & Das, 2017). Nevertheless, it was noted from interviews and discussion

that adoption of hybrid varieties has been increasing among Thami farmers since last 4 to 5 years.

Seed hybridization and consequences on traditional seed management

Some villagers perceived that shifting towards labor works had negative impacts on traditional farming practices. One had to work in fields for at least 6 to 7 months to grow a staple crop and wait for consumption. Whereas, working as laborers for some farmers was less complicated and they could earn their daily meal. Farmers in the present context preferred working as laborers to gain within short time. In addition, villagers started purchasing foreign seeds of crops and vegetables to use in their fields for rapid and greater production. Market, as of today has been an important source to access modern agricultural inputs for many farmers.

In earlier times, seeds exchange was vital in achieving diverse seeds from neighbors and relatives. Today many Thami farmers still practice seed exchange, however, some farmers were reluctant to do so. These farmers perceived that there is no diversity in seeds as all Thami farmers grow rice, maize, millet and wheat as staple food crops. Instead, farmers either reach local seed traders or agricultural office for new variety which ultimately leads to continued dependence on foreign variety and gradually replacing local varieties. The local seed traders based in Charikot had similar opinions about degrading quality of local seeds which might have caused some farmers to discontinue the traditional practice of exchanging seeds. Cultivating a certain variety of crop for many seasons in a field does not improve crop quality and consequently degrades the seed quality 'Biu khiy-iyeko'. Some indigenous varieties of rice such as Charikote, Chautari dhan, Anati or Anadi Dhan from the study area were very difficult to find.

Besides local Tauli and Paheley Dhan, Khumal -8 and Khumal -11 are popular high yielding improved rice varieties released by NARC (Joshi, et al., 2017) cultivated by farmers in the study area. Khumal -8 reaches its maturity in 158 days and can be grown with wheat. It can be harvested within 5 months of growing. Compared to Tauli and Paheley which takes at least 6 months to grow, farmers could benefit from harvesting improved rice variety in 4 to 5 months. Such characteristic of improved variety is among the major motives for many farmers in the study area to incline towards

new varieties and substitute their local rice varieties. As a result, rice seeds stored by farmers themselves these days have been mixed with non-local varieties and they are called mixed locally called 'Thimahas' and lack indigenous qualities of color, vigor, aroma, nutritional benefit and taste as in the past. Likewise, most farmers in the study area were not aware of the fact that even certified seeds available in the market can show potential of greater production only until few years. The fact that these farmers did not know about seed generations caused them to make continual use of one variety of seed. This only contributed in degrading the quality of seeds. Thami farmers also agree to the fact that growing hybrid maize is increasing practice in their village. It was noted that farmers growing both hybrid and local varieties divided their terraced land for sowing both varieties. This was mainly the case when local maize seeds (Pahaley and Seti makai) were insufficient for their entire fields. Even if local seeds were insufficient, these farmers continued cultivating and saving that they could harvest. In this case Thami farmers could trace the presence of their local variety unlike some lost variety of rice. On one hand, farmers were gradually shifting towards adopting modern inputs in agriculture but on the other, they also considered saving and preserving local variety to use during future uncertainties. These farmers were aware about consequences of hybrid variety such as inability to cope with erratic rainfall and susceptible to diseases through their personal and neighborhood's experiences. Yet, the demand for hybrid and improved varieties are increasing.

It was also prominent in the responses that increasing demand of high yielding varieties go parallel with increasing use of chemical fertilizers too. Farmers stressed on their views that continual use of synthetic fertilizers could have possibly escalated insect pests and diseases in crops. Changing environmental condition and rise in temperature are other additional factors favoring rapid reproduction and multiplication of insects and affecting crops (Adger, et al., 2007). In earlier times when farmers mostly used livestock manure in agricultural lands, crops were not as frequently attacked by pests and infections as in the present. In the present day, with increasing pest and diseases, farmers also expressed their dissatisfaction about the degrading quality of soil.

In case of millet, none of the respondents said that they purchased hybrid or improved millet. Indeed, most villagers were not sure of any available

high yielding variety of millet. It is evident from the common responses of all that only traditional millet varieties have been grown and harvested since time immemorial. Whereas, some had purchased high yielding wheat variety called WK 1204. Villagers reach out to buy WK 1204 in situation when they are not able to save enough local wheat, Seto Gahu. Easy to thresh after harvesting and good quality of straw for feeding livestock are some benefits perceived by Thami farmers for adoption of such variety.

Dual role of local market

The research exposes that the local markets also have not played positive role for indigenization of seeds. Rather a dual component of the market can be observed in agriculture sector. Easy access to market has enabled villagers from the study area and neighboring villages to reach local agrovets and seed traders for purchasing seeds. Farmers from all over Dolakha visited these seed traders especially for cereal grains and vegetable seeds. Besides purchasing seasonal vegetables, it was noted that farmers also buy a completely different variety (Hybrid rice, Asparagus, Cabbage, Chinese spinach imported from Japan, Thailand) that they never cultivated before. Depending on the yield of tested variety, farmers often visited these agrovets to purchase new seeds. On the other hand, presence of such seed businesses in the market provided many farmers an incentive to discontinue seed preservation. Farmers believed that they could easily access and purchase seeds from these agrovets. Easy access to new seeds and associated information has been beneficial to farmers. However, seed traders also stressed on the fact that establishment of such market components have caused loss of local indigenous seeds. Farmers are interested in quantity rather than quality. Additionally, local seeds grow only in their respective seasons whereas modern varieties are advantageous as they can be grown in off seasons too. Greater yield of new variety encouraged farmers to continue growing new seeds and discard quality local seed.

Social aspect associated with new seeds

Purchase of seeds these days was also realized as a social aspect in the study area. In the earlier times, nettle leaf (Sisnu) was consumed by most marginalized and poor farmers. Nettle leaf in the past was meant for consumption only by the poor and cereal grains only by the richer ones. Some

elderly Thamis considered nettle soup as high nutritional food that improved immunity and boosted energy. In the present day, Thamis seldom cooked nettle soup as their meal. Likewise, Thami families these days preferred rice over traditional food 'Chyakhla' from maize and millet. Local informants perceived that increasing demand of modern varieties was influenced by social division of richer and poorer in the community. Following western cultures and adopting foreign products is evident in lives of many Nepalese and the community they live in. Shifting towards application of modern agricultural inputs for quantity rather than quality is one prominent example. As perceived by many Thami farmers, the socioeconomic divide of rich and poor in the society has negative impacts in agriculture system. Poor farmers tend to follow the practice of economically well-off households and thus purchase new seed varieties and other modern inputs. In most cases, poor farmers face failures of production due to lack of knowledge about certain variety. Such socioeconomic divide is identified as one of the reasons for losing local varieties and not valuing them.

Knowledge deficiency among Thamis about qualities of seeds

Knowledge of seed selection, saving and storage by Thami farmers has predominantly relied on traditional practices and know-hows and is not based on scientific reasons. Farmers sometimes relied on local agricultural technicians and agrovets for agricultural guidelines. Based on their traditional knowledge, Thami farmers mechanize their agricultural activities to achieve productivity. Yet, these farmers were deficient in scientific aspects related to seed management. Knowledge deficit in physiological and pathological attributes of seeds and seed health (FAO, n.d.) among most farmers might as well have been a crucial factor that impedes quality seed maintenance.

Most farmers are not aware about moisture limit, level of purity, luster, vigor and viability of seed embryo. These attributes vary in different crops. For example, when farmers harvest maize yields in rainy season, moisture content is maximum, and farmers have no idea about limiting the moisture content in maize. Also, many farmers in the country harvest maize after maize stalk has turned into dry yellow coloration. As revealed by scientist from NARC, harvesting when maize stalk is dry is not appropriate. The stalk must be matured, green but with dried maize cobs "Hariyo bot

tara sukeko ghoga”- (Scientist, NARC). Delayed harvesting causes drying of maize stalks and can cause increase in risk of yield and quality loss due to lodging and rotting of maize stalks. Similar is the case in paddy. According to International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), ideal moisture content of rice at the time of harvesting is 20-25 percent. High moisture content in rice during harvesting causes low germination rate and conversely low moisture content may result in breaking of seed grains. In such condition, better seeds cannot be acquired for next plantation. Furthermore, when grains stored are placed on cold surfaces, harvested grains develop greater susceptibility to fungus infestations and encourage activity of microorganism. Consequently, rapid deterioration of grains and seeds take place degrading the quality.

Storing of seed grains can be best done in jute bags as jute is hygroscopic that absorbs moisture and helps to maintain moisture content in seed grains (Amadi & Adebola, 2008). Informants from NARC also emphasized on storing staple crop grains in jute bags above wooden plank to improve storage conditions. Traditional use of botanical extracts such as Neem leaves and wood ash in stored grains were supported by professionals at NARC. Many Thami farmers revealed that the storage of their staple seed grains is done in tin containers and plastic bags (Bora). Such storage bins were not considered good as according to informants from NARC as seed grains when stored in air tight tin containers are even more vulnerable to fungal attacks.

Likewise, Thami farmers generally do not reach to institutions that perform laboratory test of seeds for inspecting quality characteristics. Lack of awareness about quality of seeds and financial issues of these farmers are their major constraints that prevent these farmers from doing so. The traditional seeds have gone unrecognized with increasing interest for quantity than quality. “Farmers see yield and are not concerned about quality factors”– a professional from Seed Department of NARC said. Markets respond in favor of demands increasing import of hybrid seeds in the country. The situation is even worse when unregistered varieties flow in local market via open border with India.

Conclusion

Step-by-step process of agricultural production starting from seed selec-

tion to storage of harvested yield defines the overall seed management practice of Thami farmers. Seed selection, threshing, cleaning of staple crops is usually done on farms and drying, and storages are mainly practiced after harvesting and manual transporting of seed grains to their homes. Seed selection practices by Thamis are similar in all staple crops. Majority of women Thami farmers were involved in selection whereas both men and women members equally contributed in the rest of agricultural doings. Traditional sun and air drying of seed grains and knowledge regarding treatment with botanical extracts during storages are reflected during interviews and discussions with the research participants. Thami farmers considered their customary ways of managing seed grains as safe, economical and environment friendly. However, there were exceptions. Sometimes farmers used treatment medicines available in the market to prevent insect pest infestations in stored grains. The traditional storage structures reflected traditional skills and knowledge of Thami farmers but were not sufficiently safe enough to protect seed grains from rodents. These traditional structures were replaced in many Thami households with tins, drums and plastic bags especially after April and May 2015 earthquake. Use of modern structures is understood as an immediate alternative to store their seed grains after earthquake. Many Thami farmers as of now have given continuity to such alternative and gradually discontinuing making of traditional storages. Hence, associated skills and knowledge of traditional storage structures are weakening in Thami community.

Thami farmers' in the present day are in dilemma about the use of seeds. Due to unavailability of enough local seeds and insufficient food throughout the year, most Thami farmers have shifted to hybrid and improved varieties. Whereas, on the other hand, for taste and nutritional benefits of their local seeds, they continued growing local seeds retained from their earlier harvests. Farmers divided the plantation of both local and hybrid in their fields. It is the quantity factor that Thami farmers were compelled to use hybrid and improved varieties to fulfill their dietary needs. It is reflected from the responses that indigenous Thami community have always relied on traditional farming and seed management since ancient times. This caused these farmers to be limited to their traditional system only and not aware of crop rotation and seed replacements after certain time for maintaining quality of their local seeds and nutrients in the soil. Financial constraint was also one of the reasons for not being able to practice such

techniques. Hence, using same seed of a crop every year without replacing or crop rotating caused the quality of their local seeds to decline. Only when in shortage, local seeds were bartered or purchased with their neighboring farmers. But again, farmers get the same quality seed as they grow same crops in their community. Storage and management practices are still similar to that of the past.

Thami farmers also shared their loss in harvest due to incidences of disease in hybrids and other new seeds purchased from market. Due to absence of state function in quality inspection and regulation of seed supply, profit oriented market in the study area were not 100 percent reliable for quality seeds. Local market and agriculture office for hybrids and improved seeds were inevitable sources to get the seeds. Among major crops, Thami farmers in the study area still cultivate at least 4 / 5 indigenous millet varieties. Whereas, for other staple crops, Thami farmers planted only few local varieties. Fewer traditional varieties of their most staple crops encouraged farmers' growing dependency on new seeds from market. As most local varieties have disappeared, there is lack of choices in seeds and most Thami farmers consider seed traders as modern seed stock. Hence, it can be assumed that, informal seed exchange and associated knowledge have become weaker and less lively. The more dependent farmers become on market inputs, the more inactive is the informal seed system.

Regulation and control of unregistered varieties are not effective. Nepal is still lagging in scientific advancement and conservation works are not coordinated with government, farmers and private groups (Ghimire & Dahal, 2016). Limited awareness about value of agro biodiversity at different levels is also an important issue that needs to be addressed. Recognition and reward system by responsible bodies to farmers for trying to conserve their landraces can provide incentives for farmers to prevent erosion of local varieties. Policies to support marketing of local crops and building capacity of indigenous farmers can strengthen informal seed networks and improve access of local seeds along with modern improved varieties. As stated by Ms. Sangita Kudal, a Scientist from NARC, conservation of local landraces should not be limited only to the efforts carried out by government. Farmers are equally responsible to be aware about conservation of local seeds and reach to community seed banks to preserve local landraces for future use. Policy actions can be extended to reinforce traditional knowledge and science facts for preserving and boosting indigenous resilience. Talking about further research extensions, mechanism of flow of in-

digenous seed varieties and seed management can be further researched. Seed quality of local staple crops of Thami farmers of Suspakshamawati can be tested and predictions can be made about their yields. Additionally, it would be interesting to know the possibility of developing improved seeds using traditional variety through selective breeding. Positive results from such possibility can therefore contribute in identifying, conserving and valuing local crop varieties and increasing food security of the entire community.

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Economic Causes of International Labour Migration

❖Kiran Dahal

Background

Movement of labor from one place to another either within the domestic territory or across nations has been an important and essential feature of socio-economic development throughout the human history. Labor migration for overseas employment from the labor surplus country has rapidly increased particularly after globalization (Shrestha, 2008). DESA (2015) reports that in 2015 alone, 244 million people (3.3 percent of the world's population) lived outside their country of origin. Between 1990 and 2015, the number of international migrants worldwide rose by over 91 million (by 60 per cent). In 2015 about 72% of all international migrants were between the ages of 20 and 64.

The majority of migrants cross borders in search of better economic and social opportunities (UNFPA, 2015). International labor migration was found to be higher in those regions where there were long histories of emigration. The labor migrates mostly from developing to developed countries as guests and seasonal or contract workers (Shrestha, 2004). For instance, 3.48 million people -around 10% of total population- have gone for foreign employment from Nepal (MOF, 2017). Besides other purposes, international migration for foreign employment has become strategy for survival of the rural subsistence households in developing countries like Nepal (Shrestha, 2004).

Social, cultural, economic, political and, even, psychological factors of both labour sending and labour receiving countries are responsible for giving rise in international labour migration, and in determining its intensity and direction. International labour migrations also have different social, cultural, political and economic consequences- consequences of all kinds: favorable and unfavorable- in both the labour receiving and the labour

sending countries.

Objectives

The objective of this paper is to explore the economic causes of international labour migration from developing countries like Nepal to developed countries and its potential viability in the future. This research paper also tries to address the issue of how the equilibrium of demand for and supply of labour is achieved in the international labour market.

Methodology

This paper is qualitative in nature. Statistics on international labour migration are assessed from different secondary sources. It analytically demonstrates the causes of international labour migration in developing countries and its potential viability in the future. This research paper intends to explain the economic causes of international labour migration from the economic prospective of both labour receiving economies and labour sending economies.

Literature Review

In this era of economic globalization and liberalization, international migration of labour has become a global and inevitable phenomenon. Different theories of international migration of labour have been developed either to describe the initiation of international migration or to explain the continuation of migration across space and time. However, each model employs radically different concepts, assumptions, and frames of reference (Massey et al, 1993). Massey et al. (1993) and Schoorl (1995) distinguish theoretical approaches of international migration into two categories: those explaining the initiation of migration and those explaining the continuation of migration. Neo-classical economic theory, the dual labor-market theory, the new economics of labor migration and the world systems theory have been proposed to explain the initiation of migration whereas network theory and institutional theory attempts to explain the course of international migration flows over time.

The oldest theory of migration is neo-classical theory. The neo-classical economic theory of international migration argues that the differentials in wages and employment conditions between countries, and migration costs determine the international labour migration. Furthermore, this theory considers migration as an individual decision for income maximization. The new economics of migration, in contrast, considers migration as a household decision taken to minimize risks to family income or to overcome capital constraints on family production activities (Massey et al, 1993).

The dual labour market theory argues that international migration is mainly caused by structural requirements of modern industrial economies. According to this theory, modern industrial economies have two segments of labour markets; primary segment and secondary segment. The primary segment is characterized by capital intensive production methods while the secondary segment is characterized by labour intensive methods. And, the demand for labour in secondary segment, i.e. labour intensive segment, of modern industrial economies causes international migration to take place (Bulow and Summers, 1985). The relative deprivation theory argues that the incentive to emigrate will be higher in societies which experience much economic inequality. There is system theory of international migration as well which states that international migration is a natural consequence of economic globalization and trade liberalization.

According to Stark and Bloom (1985), the decision to become a labor migrant cannot be explained at the level of industrial workers, wider social entities have to be taken into account as well. Their approach is called the new economics of labor migration. One of the social entities to which they refer is the household. Family members abroad send remittances which have a positive impact on the economy of labour sending countries as households with a family member abroad can have more production and investment opportunities (Taylor, 1999).

The relative deprivation theory argues that the incentive to emigrate will be higher in societies which experience much economic inequality (Stark and Taylor, 1989).

The world systems theory considers international migration from a global

perspective. This approach emphasizes that the interaction between societies is an important determinant of social change within societies (Chase-Dunn and Hall, 1994). An example of interaction between countries with a weaker economy and countries with a more advanced economy causes economic stagnation, resulting in lagging living condition in the former (Wallerstein, 1983). This is an incentive for migration.

Migrant network are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship and shared community origin. They increase the likelihood of international movement and increase the expected net returns to migration. Network connections can constitute a form of social capital that people can draw upon to gain access to foreign employment. Once the number of migrants reaches a critical threshold, the expansion of networks reduces the costs and risks of movement, which causes the probability of migration to rise, which causes additional movement which further expands the networks and so on (Hugo, 1981; Taylor 1986; Massey, 1990).

Once international migration has begun, private institutions and voluntary organizations emerge to satisfy the demand created by an imbalance between the large number of people who seek entry into capital rich countries and the limited number of migrant visas these countries typically offer. This imbalance and the barriers that core countries erect to keep people out, create a lucrative economic niche for entrepreneurs and institutions dedicated to promoting international movement for profit, yielding a black market in migration. These entrepreneurs and institutions make another form of social capital that migrants can draw upon to gain access to foreign labor markets (Massey et al, 1993).

In addition to the growth of networks and the development of migrant supporting institutions, international migrations sustain itself in other ways that make additional movement progressively more likely over time, a process Myrdal (1957) called cumulative causation (Massey, 1990). Causation is cumulative in that each act of migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, typically in ways that make additional movement more likely so far, social scientists have discussed six

socio- economic factors that are potentially affected by migration in this cumulative fashion: the distribution of income, the distribution of land, the organization of agriculture, culture, the regional distribution of human capital and the social meaning of work (Taylor, 1992).

Analysis

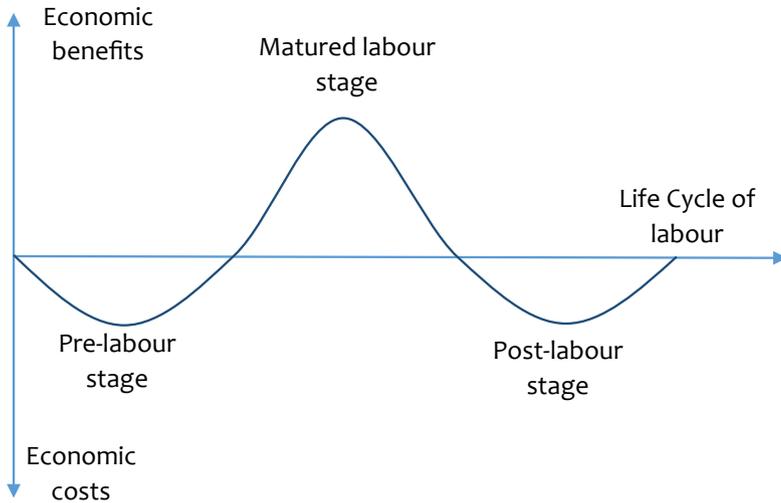
There are two types of labour migration based on the political territory it covers: internal and international. When the labour migration happens within the domestic territory of a nation, then it is called internal labour migration. But when the labour migration crosses the boundary of a nation, then it is called international labour migration. This research paper tries to reflect the economic causes of international labour migration which happens in a unidirectional fashion from so called economically less developed nations like Nepal to the so called economically more developed nations . This analysis is broken down into five sub-topics for easier understanding of the international labour migration hypothesis:

Economic life cycle of labour

Human is the only economic animal in the Earth as s/he engages in many economic activities- like consumption, production, distribution, exchange and trade- throughout the lifetime. During the process of production of various goods and services in an economy, different factor inputs- like land, labour, capital and organization- are utilized together. So, humans live as labours in an economy. There are three stages in the life cycle of a labour: pre-labour stage, matured labour stage, and post-labour stage. In the pre-labour stage, the family, the community, or the state as a whole spend resources on foods, clothes, accommodation, health, education, skill development (like cognitive skills, technical skills and interpersonal skills) and marriage of the individual. It means that an economy is spending its resources on an individual in order to transform him/her into a matured labour force. In doing so, an economy bears certain costs. The matured labour force works in an economy together with other factor inputs to produce goods and services in an economy. The matured labour force is paid certain compensation for his/her services in the production process. Still after paying certain compensation to the labour force and to other factor inputs, the economy is in benefits as the labour is producing surplus

value (Marx, 1951) in an economy. After active labour life, the labour gradually loses physical and mental strength and cannot provide any services for the economy. In the post labour stage, again an economy provides all resources for the survival of his/her labour until he/she dies naturally. In this way, an economy spends all the benefits obtained from matured labour force for the maintenance of its labour in the pre-labour and post-labour stage. Like this, series of labour cycle takes place in an economy endlessly. And, economy simply (voluntarily and non-profitably) serves the labour as his cost bearer and benefit taker as per the need of time.

Life cycle of Labour in an Economy



Mathematically,

Net Economic Benefits for an economy from its labour = Benefits – Costs

When there is no international labour migration,

Benefits = Costs (= pre-labour stage costs + post-labour stage costs)

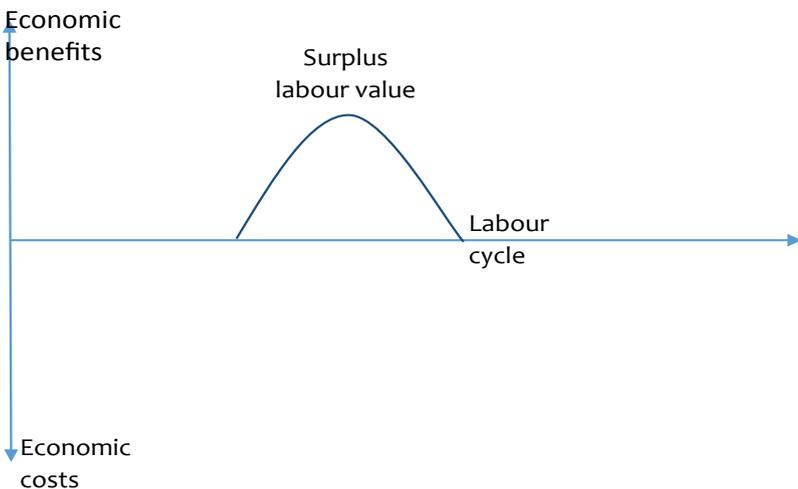
Therefore, Net Economic Benefits for an economy from its labour = zero

1. Economic cost benefit appraisal of labor receiving country

The popular and the most general trend in the direction of international labour migration is from less developed economies to the more developed

economies. Now the obvious question would be the cost and benefit of international labour migration for the labour receiving economy. The first thing is that there is scarcity of labour force in more developed economy, at least in that category of work where foreign labour forces are invited. In most of the cases, labour forces from less developed economies are invited for 3D (dirty, dangerous and demeaning) jobs. There are two types of benefits for the labour receiving economy on inviting foreign labour force. Firstly, it solves the problem of labour scarcity and the economy can effectively utilize all its economic resources by producing various kinds of goods and services with the help of imported labour force. Secondly, and most importantly, the economy has to invest nothing in the maintenance of labour force during the pre-labour stage and the post-labour stage as the labour sending economy is doing, or will do, that job free of charge. So, the position of the labour receiving economy is to take all the benefits from the foreign labour force -when they are in the most productive period of their labour cycle- at the least possible price. So, receiving international labour force has been a profitable business for more developed economies and because of this the demand for international labour migration is increasing alarmingly in an upward direction. In this way, more developed economies pulls labour force from the global labour market becoming the demand side of the international labour market.

Net Economic Benefits for Labour Receiving Economy



Mathematically, when an economy receives international labour,

Benefits = surplus labour value

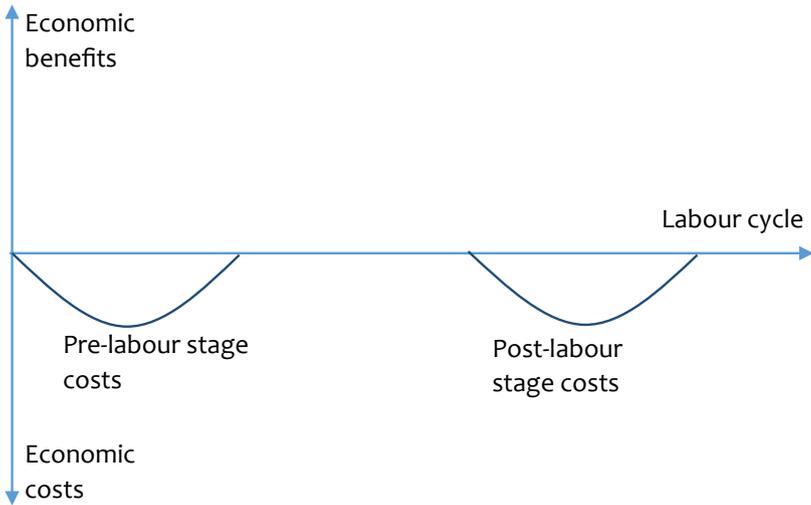
Costs = 0 (as pre-labour and post-labour cost is incurred by labour sending economy)

Therefore, net economic benefits for labour receiving economy = surplus labour value

Economic cost benefit appraisal of labor sending country

The less developed economies are the regular supplier of labour in the global labour market. These economies are consistently providing labour force for more developed economies for various reasons. Firstly, they have excess supply of labour in the domestic labour market either due to rapid population growth or due to underutilization of its economic resources in the domestic production. Secondly, the saying 'something is better than nothing' applies here as well. If they send their labour force in the foreign land, at least they could earn some money. So, in the short run, sending domestic labour force in the foreign land is nothing but simply a cost minimizing approach. They can utilize the remittance income earned from abroad for the maintenance of labour force for the pre-labour and post-labour stage. But, in the long run, they are the losers of international labour migration as the surplus value generated from the labour force is taken away by the labour receiving economy. Despite this fact, still the less developed economies are sending their labor force in the foreign land just because they are in money illusion. There is no real gain in economic terms for the labour sending economy by sending its labour force in the foreign land but due to strong foreign exchange rate of foreign currency, the wage differentials between the labour receiving and sending nations seems significantly positive (high) and the labour sending economy gets trapped into this money illusion. Furthermore, less developed economies push labour force from the domestic labour market to the global labour market also because they do not have the capacity to utilize their own labour force in the domestic economy.

Net economic benefits for labour sending economy



Mathematically, when an economy sends international labour,
Benefits = 0 (as surplus labour value is taken away by labour receiving economy)
Costs = pre-labour stage costs + post-labour stage costs
Therefore, net economic benefits for labour receiving economy = 0 – costs
= negative

Trade of labour in between labour receiving and labour sending countries: mutual interaction of the forces

The excess (surplus) labour forces of less developed economies are traded in the global labour market. More developed economies demand international labour to fill the gap of labour scarcity existing in their domestic economy. As per the demand, the less developed economies supply their excess (surplus) labour. This trade has been eased by the concept of liberalization and globalization which emerged after 1970s and took momentum after 1990s. And, at present, the trade of labour has become a global –and often debatable– economic issue for both the labour receiving countries and the labour sending countries as these

economic phenomena has several unexpected social, cultural and political consequences all over the world. Yet the trade of labour is flourishing at an alarming rate.

Potential viability of trade of labour in the future

Despite hot debate on the issue of international labour migration, it is still happening in its usual fashion. Two factors are playing pivotal role in its continuity. The first thing is there is excess (surplus) supply of labour. There is less employment opportunities in the less developed economies but employment opportunities are high in more developed economies, at least for the labour force coming from less developed economies, as the domestic labour force is unwilling to do that kind of work. The second thing is that the exchange value of foreign currency is strong in the less developed economies. Due to the appreciation of foreign currency and other reasons, the wage rate for international labour is better in more developed economies as compared to domestic market wage rate of the less developed economies. This positive wage differential (as argued by the neo-classical theory of international migration) between more developed economies and less developed economies is constantly causing temporary migration of labour from labour excess less developed economies to the labour scarce more developed economies. Liberalization and globalization have even triggered this phenomenon. If, in the future, the fundamental nature of presently existing economies- both the less developed economies and more developed economies- changes, then the present nature of international labour migration obviously changes. Otherwise this unidirectional international labour migration would become an unavoidable and inevitable economic force in the world in the future as well.

Summary and Conclusion

Liberalization and globalization have accelerated the rate of international labour migration at an alarming rate from less developed economies to the more developed economies. The understanding of three stages in the life cycle of labour is very important in assessing the economic cost and benefits incurred by the economy from its labour force. The economy

has to spend resources on its labour forces during the pre-labour and post-labour stage while it gains surplus value from its labour forces in the matured labor stage. The more developed economies received labour force from less developed economies during that period when the labour force are in the mature (active) stage and, thus, extract all surplus value generated from the services of labour. So, international labour migration is a profit making business for the more developed economies while it is a loss bearing game for the less developing economies. Despite being a loss bearing game, less developed economies again participate in international labour market (as a supplier of labour) just because these economies are trapped in the money illusion caused by high monetary wage differentials and labour forces are underutilized in those economies.

In conclusion, more developed economies have two types of advantages from international labour migration: they can solve the issue of labour shortage and can take the surplus value generated from the services of labour. While less developed economies earns nothing additional value besides the basic compensation for the services of its labour. The viability of this form of international labour migration largely depends on the fundamental structure of the economies and fluctuations in such structure.

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Allocation, Utilization and Outcomes of Targeted Group Budget in Local Government: A Study at Gorkha Municipality¹

❖-Bhola P. Bhattraï, Bishal Gurung, Laxman Pokhrel, Ramesh Pathak, Salauna Bajracharya, Santosh Siwakoti and Yak Raj Bhandari

Introduction

Before the restructuring of the Nepali state but after the devolution of power the then local bodies like District Development Committee (DDC), Municipality and Village Development Committee (VDC) were major actors for developmental works at local levels. Specifically, after the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990, the powers and development functions to local bodies were devolved through the enactment of Local Self-Governance Act (LSGA, 1991) and of Local Self Governance Regulation (LSGR, 1992). These acts empowered the local bodies . Hence, local bodies started getting government grant to fulfill the financial requirement for the development projects/programs.

The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) provided grants to local bodies annually to carry out development activities. Different regulatory frameworks like Local Body Grant Directive -2000, Local Body Block Grant Implementation Procedures -2006 and Grant Mobilization Procedures -2011 were designed to manage the government grants in an effective, participatory and inclusive manner maintaining transparency and accountability at local level. Moreover, people belonging to marginalized and vulnerable communities, children and women needed to be especially focused in the development process. Therefore, their involvement

1 *Though this article is based on study of local bodies before the state restructuring came into force. It is still relevant because the problems discussed in the article are still prevalent. Some mechanisms in local bodies still exist even after the state restructuring.*

was very crucial in the decision making regarding planning, monitoring and implementation of government budgets at local level. In addition, municipalities and VDCs had to encourage and ensure the communities for the participation in the development activities in an inclusive, transparent and democratic manner sufficiently.

This study focuses on exploring the details about the access and control on budget of targeted group (women, children and other marginalized people including Dalits, IPs, person with disabilities etc) at local level development process at that time. We primarily did the field based evaluation research and critically reviewed the policy and practices of allocation, utilization and outcomes of the targeted budget in the municipality. Though these bodies do not exist anymore after restructuring of the state, it will be useful to the students and development practitioners to learn the findings of this study. The restructuring of the state has created much more powerful local bodies which are popularly called local government these days.

Essential Background

Local Self Governance Act, 1999 provisioned the devolution of power, responsibilities, means and resources from the center governance system to the local government. The basic objectives or the principles of LSGA were to build and develop institutional mechanism and functional structures in local level. Likewise, it focused to develop local leadership for transparent practice, public accountability and people's participation in local development. Furthermore, LSGA had given local development roles to local bodies including primary health, basic education, local infrastructures and other socio economic activities. Whereas, the central government provided the conditional and unconditional grants as well as mobilized donors support for local development.

Many positive outcomes were achieved by the government in decentralization and local governance after implementation of LSGA. According to the Local Level Resource Mobilization Guideline (2012), there were developmental programs for targeted communities. Whereas gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) was concerned, there was one of the priority programs under it. According to the guideline, 35 percent of the development budget had to be allocated to women, children and other marginalized communities to uplift their life and livelihoods. Out of

35%; 10% had to be allocated to women empowerment and development, 10% for children and other 15% for marginalized people for their social and economic development.

Furthermore, guideline defined that targeted communities were the beneficiaries of these programs. According to the definition socially and economically back warded people were targeted communities of the program. They were women, children and marginalized people including indigenous peoples, old aged, Dalits, differently able people, Madhesi, Muslim etc.

There were clear provisions in annex 3 of the guideline which described the possible activities for targeted communities. The program could support women, children and other marginalized peoples' development activities in which infrastructure development, capacity building, skill development and organizational development were incorporated.

According to the guideline, 70% of the total budget of targeted program had to be utilized by the same communities or by their organizations. But on the other hand, there was absence of elected people's representative for about 20 years, so there was assumption that the policy and guidelines were not effectively implemented at the local level. the program was implemented all over the country. However, this study is based on evaluation only in then Gorkha Municipality, Gorkha.

The research is qualitative in nature with some use of quantitative resources. The review was carried out largely based on existing secondary resources available on the budgeting of Gorkha municipality for three years (2014-2016). Such resources included annual and mid-term budget plans and reviews, budget formulation guidelines, decision minutes and other studies and publications produced by municipality. Specifically, fiscal years plans of the three years was considered for the study. Informant Interviews (II), Focused Group Discussion (FGD), Case studies and Observation were the tools implied for the primary data collection from the field. Our key findings primarily depended upon the data gathered from the above tools. We used formal and informal interviews and case study approach to collect data during this study.

Some of the Findings of the Study

Allocation of budget for targeted people in Gorkha Municipality

Study team studied the allocated budget for the children, women and marginalized people based on Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria, namely, relevancy, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact and accountability. According to the Local Resource Mobilization Guidelines (2012) under the Self Governance Act, the local bodies had provision to allocate 10%, 10% and 15% of the total budget of social development to children, women and marginalized group for their development respectively. In this section, we have analyzed the budget of targeted people from the perspective of allocation in connection to DAC principles.

1.1 Relevancy of the program and activities of the allocated budget

While monitoring the allocation of the budget of targeted groups for the fiscal years 2013/2014; 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 separately, the first two years' allocation to children, women and marginalized groups was not justifiable. In other words, in these years, the target beneficiaries did not get the programs for their upliftment socially. Rather, the whole budget was allocated to the infrastructure development. In contrast, it was found that the budget allocation for fiscal year 2015/2016 to the targeted people was utilized as per the guidelines and as per the need of the right holders. In children's case, 10% of the budget that they were supposed to get was provided as per the demand of the children although all children clubs were not equally active and benefitted in the municipality.

Similarly, the case of women was similar to that of children. In the first two years, the budget was not allocated as mentioned in the guidelines. Likewise, marginalized people also were not exception. They also could not get any programs that directly give benefit to them although they received the budget in the third year. Despite of following the bottom up approach in full fledged, top down dominance was still existed in the budget allocation.

1.2 Effectiveness of the targeted budget in terms of allocation

Regarding the budget and the procedure to allocate it to the targeted

people, there was weak mechanism of “Right to Information” as the most of the participants in the Focused Group Discussion (FGD) were not aware about how much budget they should have got in their name and how that allocation was decided. This was reflected in the voices of the people from marginalized, disadvantaged people, women and children in the FGDs and case studies. Moreover, most of the programs and activities did not fulfill the demand of the targeted people rather they delivered them on the basis of supply.

1.3 Efficiency in the allocation

The budget allocation was not adequate to carry out the activities and the procedure was lengthy. On the one hand, the people in the discussion reported that they became busy in agricultural works in the time of Municipality’s planning process although there were 220 different community based institutions supposed to involve in the budget allocation. On the other hand, the budget allocation was not sufficient for the implementation of the activities and programs. Therefore, the completion of the developmental activities as planned for the targeted people was questionable. Furthermore, even the members of the community based organizations did not exactly know how much budget was allocated. In this regard, the elite people and major political parties misinterpreted the policies so as to fulfill their own demand or twist the budget allocation. Hence, the efficiency in the budget allocation was weak in the municipality.

1.4 Sustainability of the allocated budget

There were question marks from the point of view of sustainability of the budget allocation since there was variation in the policies and practices in the municipality. In our study, we found that the whole budget was allocated in the infrastructural development without considering the targeted people. In contrast, children, women and marginalized people advocated for many programs in the fiscal year 2015/2016 but they got few programs and activities because of the manipulation of the political leaders and the officials of Municipality. Hence, allocation of the budget to the programs and sustainability remained doubtful until and unless the local government officials and leaders of the political parties were accountable to the local development.

1.5 Impact of the allocation of the budget and programs to the targeted people

Community based organizations especially child clubs, women groups seemed to be able to raise voices for their rights and developmental activities targeted to them. For example, the municipality claimed that children clubs in the municipality were doing unique practice because they had formed their own networks and brought five point demands to the municipality that would ensure their rights. In the discussion, women participations were greater in number and they were explicitly sharing their demands. It showed the impacts of institutional building and budget allocation for their cause had been able to empower them to some extent. Contrary to this, the marginalized such as Muslims, person with disabilities were still lagging behind in terms of their collective voice and budget allocation for their cause.

1.6 Replicability of the budget allocation

There were not as such programs which were replicable except for the demands put forward by the children clubs.

1.7 Accountability of the budget allocation

The local bodies at the level of Gorkha Municipality did not seem accountable in terms of budget allocation to the targeted people because they did not provide the budget to the targeted people in the first two years. However, in the third year i.e. in the fiscal year 2015/2016, the budget was allocated as per the policies to the targeted people.

2. Utilization of budget for targeted people

According to the budget guideline, targeted budget needed to be utilized in two ways: knowledge, skill based program and infrastructure development for the targeted people. The chief executive officer said that the allocated budget was mostly used in the advocacy and empowerment. The head of the Social Development section of the municipality argued that, in some particular areas, the target budget would not be enough.

About the utilization of allocated budget the budget for the children were utilized mainly for nutrition and clothes. Support for children were provided as lunch at community schools targeting children from poor family backgrounds which mainly included Dalit children and differently able children.

2.1 Relevancy of targeted budget utilization

The allocated budget of targeted community in Gorkha Municipality was spent. Specially, the women were utilizing the amount for their empowerment and skill based training like jam, candle, soap, making training. The most of the allocated budget was utilized for old aged people and the rest on infrastructure development like road construction. Communities like Dalits got capacity building trainings. In that sense, relevance of the budget utilization can be seen and in the fiscal year 2016/17 most of the targeted budget regarding women and other categories was well allocated. However, the budget allocated for children was utilized in the infrastructure rather than the empowerment and skill development in the past.

2.2 Effectiveness of targeted budget utilization

The effectiveness of the budget can only be seen when the beneficiaries get satisfied. In this case, the people were satisfied with utilization of it on infrastructure. However, the program was not on the basis of the demand of the beneficiaries. For example, instead of road construction and honoring programs, it would have been better to utilize it on day care center for the aged people. Instead of play grounds that budget could be utilized on construction of public library and school based trainings.

2.3 Efficiency of targeted budget utilization

Though the budget was allocated, it was released at the end of the fiscal year. By that time, they had to accomplish their programs within a short period of time. Therefore, the quality and output of the program was questionable.

2.4 Sustainability of targeted budget utilization

The institutions of the targeted community which are formed in the Municipality could be sustainable. There was a possibility of the sustainability of the institutions that had been formed by using the budget. But the institutionalization of those is still not satisfactory.

A Story of Gaurav Rana Magar, Chairperson of a Child Club in Gorkha

Gaurav Rana Magar, 15, had different perspectives on different aspects of the society. He is chairpersons of one of the child clubs. He was from ward no. 6 of the Municipality. He is studying in Grade 9 in one of the public schools in Gorkha. His father worked as a plumber and mother runs tailoring shop. He had an elder brother 3 years older to him His grandmother already crossed 80. Although Gaurav deserved the power to advocate child development related issues; he seemed to be passive and not properly oriented.

It was an irony person holding power did not know what that power was about and how to use it. He was chosen as a chief of the child club two years earlier but he still did not know why it was actually formed and how it ran. . While asking about his selection, he said:

"There was a rumor that all children will be distributed football jerseys by the ward and I went there to take that jersey but no one got any jersey. Surprisingly, it was a kind of meeting where all children had to participate. They spread this false news to attract children and make them participate in a meeting. They suddenly announced that they were going to form a children club and that meeting was held to choose a chief of the club. One of the members of the ward asked "who wants to lead the club?" Only few including myself raised their hands. Then again, he asked "who can talk better and convince people?". Other friends put their hands down. I was the only one to raise the hand. In this way, I was chosen as the chief of the children club from ward 6. "

Moreover, he reported that from the municipality they received the information that the Municipality was going to make a small sitting room in near future to conduct the meetings for the children club. There was no place as such to conduct child club meetings till then. Local hotels had

become their meeting place. Regarding the meeting he said:

"Only few of the members out of thirty in total attend the meeting. They come to participate in a meeting only for discussing about specific agenda. It appears that they come for tea and lunch since the payment of the hotel bill is supported by the UNICEF."

Regarding the agendas he said, "Till now we have made total five agendas which have been forwarded to the Municipality that includes: skill development trainings, sanitary pads for girl in schools, National Days, public awareness programs and extra activities ".

He further said, "We are in a starting phase and have no sufficient orientation and knowledge to address the issues. We made this club without having strong motives and knowledge. It will be better if some would guide us about what we should do, what are our real needs and how can we get that through this club." He was very indifferent towards the budget that they can get for their demands and needs. Even he was not well informed about the importance of participation in the ward meetings.

It's a kind of trend that we could find in other children clubs. Unfortunately, the elite capture and their dominance in the activities was clearly seen in the targeted budget and its allocation. As a result, equity is rarely achieved in the development of such people. Hence, some handful of people seemed to be taking advantages of such programs purposed by the government at the local levels that helped to create the status quo in the society.

The budget had been utilized for the skill based training like soap and candle making for which the raw materials needed to be imported from the Kathmandu and other cities. Hence these programs were not sustainable.

2.5 Accountability of the targeted budget utilization

Accountability of the targeted budget utilization was on the basis of the technical inputs of the Municipality. But the need based technical support were not sufficiently provided. The skill development programs were not contextual. Programs such as soap and candle making training are embedded programs.

3. Outcomes of Budget for Targeted People

Major outcomes of the project were measured based on the objectives of the program. The objectives of the program were supporting the women, children and other marginalized communities, including Dalits, Indigenous Peoples (IPs), and differently able people, old aged people to secure their human and development rights. As per the self-governance act and local resource mobilization guideline of government, there was provision of 10% budget to children, 10 % for women and other 15% for marginalized communities. This evaluation was focused on the budget allocation, utilization and the outcomes of the targeted budget of Gorkha Municipality, Gorkha. This chapter focuses on major findings of the outcomes of allocated targeted budget of Gorkha Municipality, Gorkha.

3.1 Allocation and utilization of resources for targeted communities:

During evaluation of the program, it is observed that municipality council has been changing their decisions in terms of targeted communities. In the year of 2013, council did not allocate the budget to targeted communities. The budget was used for infrastructure development, but after 2014/15, the targeted programs got the budget for capacity building, livelihood, infrastructure development and other requirements planned by the communities. The allocation of the budget, use, relevancy, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact and replicability will be discussed in the following parts.

3.2 Increasing commitment of municipality in budget allocation

During the three years, Gorkha municipality was allocating budget for all targeted communities as per the provisions of guideline. As per the decisions of municipal council, it is found that allocated budget was increasing in each year. The details are as follows:

Budget Allocation for Targeted Group (FY 2014-1017)										
Year	No of Planned Activities		Women	No of Planned Activities		Children	No of Planned Activities		Marginalized Communities	Total Allocated Budget
	WL	ML		WL	ML		WL	ML		
2014	WL1	35	2,360,000	WL	38	2,365,000	WL	61	3,550,000	8,275,000
	ML 2	7		ML	5		ML	10		
2015	WL	29	2,500,000	WL	32	2,419,000	WL	60	3,594,000	8,513,000
	ML	7		ML	5		ML	5		
2016	WL	40	4,830,950	WL	44	4,830,950	WL	60	7,246,423	16,908,325
	ML	9		ML	10		ML	10		

Source: field work, 2017

Note: 1 WL: Ward level programs demanded by Targeted Communities

2 ML: Municipality level Plan

During our evaluation process, staffs from Gorkha municipality stated that budget allocation to targeted communities was increasing each year. According to the data, in 2014 the total amount of NRs. 8,275,000 was allocated for targeted program. Likewise, in 2015 the amount was NRs 85, 13,000 and in 2016, the targeted budget increased to NRs.1,69,08,325. Moreover, it was reported by the women participants during Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and informants interviews that budget was allocated but that was not sufficient to achieve the real needs of the communities.

3.3 Institutional involvement in planning process

It was also reported that there were 220 community based institutions, which were already established by the municipality.

The figure of community based organizations formed in municipality:

Local Institutions Formed	Number
Tole Level Organization	153
Ward Citizen Forum	15
Community Awareness Centre	15
Child Club	22
Child Protection Committee	15
Total	220

There were 153 Tole Samiti (Committees working in certain community), 15 Ward Citizens Forum (WCF), 15 Community Awareness Center (CAC), 22 Children Club (CB) and 15 Children Protection Committee (CPC) under the municipal government. Municipality staffs claimed that representatives from those institutions had to involve in planning process. Hence, during our face to face meeting with representatives from different institutions argued that planning process is dominated by the political elites and that the roles of common participants were very weak. In contrast to this argument, one of the female participants of this evaluation process argued that planning process of targeted communities was unique in terms of participation, because they could speak what they want.

3.4 Crucial role of women, children and marginalized people during planning process

One of the participant- 51 (female), ex-political representative in Gorkha Municipality shared her experiences with us. She claimed that the role of women, children and marginalized communities were very crucial during budget allocation. Male members of the political mechanism always had more significant roles in the decisions. Mostly, they brought the the agenda and took the decision without much discussion. During her tenure, she was only one female in that Samyantra (mechanism). Therefore, she argues that equal or majority of women or children are needed to allocate the budget to the respective sector.

Moreover, representative of the Children network, Gaurav Rana-15 mentioned that children were never consulted and informed about their rights of participation in planning and budget allocation process. In contrast to this, Bijay Tiwari from municipality claims that child participation was one of the exemplars of social mobilization in Gorkha Municipality. He further argues that other people are visiting Gorkha municipality to learn from them.

3.5 Social mobilization to increase access in targeted budget

There are 22 social mobilizers under the municipality. They are responsible to inform and engage community people including women, children, Dalits, IPs and other marginalized categories in developmental activities.

Likewise, women health volunteers are also mobilized by district health office in partnership with municipality. They are also directly working with women, children and other marginalized peoples to empower them so that they can claim their rights.

During field visit, it was explained that role of social mobilizers was very important to organize, mobilize and empower locals. It was also observed that social mobilizers were playing very important role to educate and empower women to raise their voice according to their needs. However, the top-down approach of the government imbedded programs failed to make significant achieve according to the context of the society.

Shanti Devi Shahi-61 (female) was treasurer of Namrung Mahila Samuha (Namrung Female Group). There were 33 women members in their Samuha. The month before, she was invited to participate in Jam making training from municipality. She went and took three days training. After this training, she wanted to share the learning and produce fruit jam but she did not have any fruits in her farm and it was very difficult to get sufficient fruits in her village. She realized that jam making training was not relevant to them. Furthermore, she explained that they had actually demanded for soap making or candle making training but they were persuaded to take part in Jam making training.

Conclusion and Ways forward

From the study, there existed strong contradiction between the policy and practices undergoing in Gorkha Municipality. Such traditions exist even until now even after the restructuring of the state. Although the demand and voice of the targeted people are brought in the forum, handful of people get to take advantage of the allocated budget. Still majority of targeted people particularly marginalized ones are not in the access of the socio development program. To some extent, the targeted people are trying socio development practice but political leaders and elite group of the society control and manipulate the allocation and utilization of the budget. Hence, outcome as expected by the Local Level Resource Mobilization Guideline (LLRMG, 2012) of the targeted people was not achieved.

Based on the evaluation, the team has come up with the following recommendations.

1. The targeted communities and the right holders needed to be sensitized and made aware about the policy provisions. In addition they also needed the capability building programs so that they can have claim over their entitled rights.
2. Since social mobilizers are the people who are direct in touch with the right holders of targeted communities, it seems outmost necessity to develop their capability so that they can play their roles effectively and efficiently.
3. Regular short term, medium term and long term monitoring criteria should be developed and applied for developing regular and effective monitoring mechanism.
4. Transparency during the planning process of any projects and interventions should be ensured through the reasonable participation of the right holders of the targeted communities. There is a need of separate planning mechanism to targeted communities before selection of the program.
5. Municipality office administration should develop, maintain and update the systematic and transparent data system so that the concerned stakeholders can have easy and timely access.
6. The guidelines endorsed by the government and concerned with the targeted people should be properly applied and the municipality should perform its activities based on it.
7. Institutionalization and development of 230 CBSs formed by the municipality is required.

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Book Review¹

Systemic Alternatives, Pablo Solón ed., La Paz (Bolivia): Fundación Solón / Attac France / Focus on the Global South (2017);

English translation by Karen Lang, José Carlos Solón, Mary Louise Malig.

Assertion of the book: Humanity is facing a complex set of crises, including environmental, economic, social, and above all civilizational crisis: The crises identified by the writers of the book 'Systemic Alternatives' are the crisis resulting from the brutal form of capitalism. Although there is a share of the failure of socialism in this, but the book focuses more on capitalism than the failure of different kind of implementation of socialism in the world. The writers have rightly argued for and presented with logical ideas, but the neoliberals would argue otherwise.

Is the current state of the world affairs sustainable? If not, what are the systemic alternatives? With its seven chapters, the search for system alternatives are described. These seven chapters include Vivir Bien ('live good'), de-growth, the commons, ecofeminism, the rights of mother earth, de-globalisation and complementarities.

The book is suggesting that the Washington consensus (or neo-liberalism) is not a single truth and alternatives are possible in line with the post-modern discourses. In fact, the triumph of the liberalism described by Francis Fukuyama, in his book 'the end of history', is the end Fukuyama (Edward Said in his lecture 'The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations'). In that sense the book Systemic Alternatives does not add more logics against the neoliberalism and its single truth. The idea of Vivir Bien 'live good', however, is noteworthy and it is presented as overarching systematic alternatives in the book.

Readers of the book, however, must wait page 24 to learn about the concept of Vivir Bien while the chapter start page 13 (this I will call technical pitfall). One can agree with the writer that 'live good' is possible through

1 Katal Malla, Associate professor Umeå University Sweden, LLD international Law Stockholm University Sweden.

complementarity, and I would argue including different disciplines of knowledge.

What are those system alternatives discussed in the book? Readers need to wait up to the last chapter for alternatives. In the last chapter 'Complementarity' Pablo Solón enlists different visions of Vivir Bien. As well in its first Chapter the idea of 'live good' Pablo Solón is presents it as a debate and controversy. Suffice to say that no single person or discipline of knowledge can provide such alternatives, collective work across various disciplines of knowledge is necessary.

The seven chapters complement each other's, at least in terms of narratives. At the same time, one wonder what difference the terminologies, e.g. de-growth, ecofeminism, de-globalisation, does make as they have existed in other forms and contexts, sustainable growth, feminism, gender equality and global social justice.

The term 'real democracy' has also find place in the book in hidden form behind the narratives. Readers would expect robust discussion; e.g., democracy on whose term and what is the systematic alternatives to the current form of democracies in the north or global south? What is happening to the idea of inclusive and identity politics in terms of building alternatives? Above all, the question to be assessed is; whether the democracy we understand today is sustainable to face the environmental, economic, social to civilizational crisis?

It is well-known that there is not trickle-down effect from privatisation/ neoliberal capitalism and/or globalization based on the Washington consensus, as it works only for a few rich at the cost of many. The term "degrowth" used (page 53) by Geneviève Azam 'is provocative and almost blasphemous in nature. It is a watchword that prods people's consciences in a world dominated by the cult of growth for the sake of growth – or, in other words, the pursuit of profit for the sake of profit'. But, what is the problem with the term sustainable growth? We should acknowledge that word can have not only meaning but power. Alternative narratives provoke the readers to ask, e.g. what is the wrong with the concept of sustainable development, whole defining de-growth?

In fact, both the capitalism and socialism were and are based on the exploitation of the earth resources. The interesting issues discussed in chapter the Rights of Mother Earth also by Pablo Solón is 'Earth Jurisprudence and wild life,' which may include plant jurisprudence also an idea evolved in the early 1980s. In this regard, the constitutions of Ecuador and Bolivia are highlighted. The question remains, however, that without system alternatives the current system does not seem being any helpful enhancing the earth jurisprudence.

On 'de-globalisation' Pablo Solón writes about 'deconstructing globalisation', introducing changes to human relationship with the system of planet Earth. This is nothing new, in my view, the book 'small is beautiful' 1973, Ernst Friedrich Schumacher has already suggested so decades earlier. The Chapter 'Complementarities' 'is the final Chapter by Pablo Solón, wherein the explored issues are how to deal with the systemic crisis is described. It is stated that 'we cannot overcome capitalism if we do not address productivism that is deeply rooted in the extractivism of nature and in the reproduction of the plutocratic and patriarchal structures of power.' Equally important is transformation of power and counter-power, this is where I believe lies the key argument, finding system alternatives.

The chapter 'Commons' by Christophe Aguiton makes me think why the term common must start with Magna Carta while all societies have the origin of the term? Water, sea, environment, biodiversity and climate are global common heritage or collective common concern, and there are concept of common property relating living resources of the sea. Indigenous people's rights and inclusive democracy are becoming part of negative debate in recent years in Nepal and south America and elsewhere. Right question is being raises: What are the elements that constitute it? How do we strengthen real democracy so that it does not end up being co-opted or distorted by political parties or State actors?

Eco-feminism by Elizabeth Peredo Beltrán is a much-needed critical method of finding alternatives. Ecofeminism in India and south America has depended its root, and 'essentialist' feminism concludes that sustainability and care for life are guaranteed by women's qualities and their relationship with nature, as women produce life. Intersectionality, the importance of social class and ethnicity is also addressed in this chapter, which is the

contribution of the critical approach too. Here one can find the means of finding alternatives by and through the critical approach. However, ecofeminism is not without challenges; Vandana Shiva is being quoted that 'one of the currents that has contributed the most to the comprehension of the systemic coordination between the financial system, the pillaging of nature and patriarchy.'

No one scholar and no single disciplines of knowledge can find system alternatives today when humanity is facing a complex set of crises. It should be a collective social consensus, critical approaches and redefining ideas when/where they have become irrelevant. Overall, the book is a positive contribution in challenging the old terminologies and building new ideas/narratives, finding system alternatives. Personally, I think that we should start what Yanis Varoufakis says, 'Capitalism will eat democracy — unless we speak up'.

By Katak Malla

Book Review

Failed States: The Abuse of Power and Assault on Democracy,
Noam Chomsky. Metropolitan Books, 2007.

Noam Chomsky in his book "Failed States" basically can be argued to hover around two sayings of two famous personalities. Thucydides said "stronger do what they like, weaker accept what they must" and former US Attorney General John Ashcroft said that the US freedoms are "not the grant of any government or document, but . . . our endowment from God". Divided into six chapters the book devoids no escape for the cruel policies inaugurated by the US government to dominate the world till 2007 (the time the book was published).

The first chapter "Stark, Dreadful' Inescapable" is the part that begins with the unequal economic policies of rich nations and the poor nations. The US denial to humanitarian aid to the poor African nations can be found in it. Also the allegations of various criminals with the US government is another example found in the book. Louis Posada Carriles is such an example of a terrorist who was found in bombing of a Cuban Airliner killing 73 civilians who was later taken to the CIA payroll to run the covert operation in Nicaragua. Besides, the US sale of weapons in its client states are the facts mentioned in the books. The US has been backing countless dictators till the times they favor US. With their use is over they are eliminated. Saddam Hussain is such an example. Saddam was found guilty of human right violations but the Americans do not dare to say "Saddam committed genocide with our support." Also every revolutionary movements are judged based on the US interests. Chomsky says that North Korea signed NPT in 1980s still it is a threat to the World Peace, on the other hand Israel and India are running their nuclear programs without the concern to the global community. Still they are fine because they are the US clients. Chomsky even puts the fact that the US and UK had backed Saddam Hussain with internationally banned biotoxins, banned by Biological and Toxicin Weapons Conventions (BTWC).

The second chapter "Outlaw State" talks on the overall denial of the international laws and rules by the US government. US has been violating the international laws as per its interest. The backing of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet for example was totally against the norms of democracy.

Earlier Salvador Allende, a Marxist had won the election out of the people's vote. Yet the Chilean dictatorship was a valid idea under the pretext of the US hegemony. The backing of Israel's settlement in the captured land of Palestine makes the similar concessions under the tutelage of the US. So can be the case with the hospitals or civilians attack justified under the pretext of the explanations of the global hegemon the USA. Had the actions been performed by any anti US element, US would be the first to condemn it in the pretext of crimes against the humanity. Another interesting fact Chomsky presents is the Richard Nixon's order to bomb in Vietnam during the Vietnam Genocide "Anything that flies on anything that moves." This is a heinous crime but out of the discussion. Chomsky brings the nutritional level to the further limelight. The nutritional level of the civilians of various "hostile" nations got worsened with the US atrocities, either through direct aggression or through economic strangulation. Iraq was the best example then, which instead of weakening the rule of the tyrant Saddam Hussain rather strengthened him. And the civilians were to suffer the miseries of strangulations. On the other hand, the US had backed from Trujillo to Duvalier to Suharto till the time of their death or abdication or assassination. This has always been a paradox in the ruling circles of the US. Another fact that can be found in the book is the US denial of ElBaradei's proposal to put crude fissile uranium under the inspection of UN Defense Commission. ElBaradei was awarded Noble Peace Prize for it, that would keep the nuclear programs under the surveillance of the international community. Unfortunately, George W Bush, the then US president was the first to deny it. So was the case of Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT, FISSBAN).

The third chapter "Illegal but Legitimate" again speaks on the attacks on the various nations in the name of anticipatory self defense by the US or in the name of War Against Terrorism from Nuremberg Tribunal to 9/11 Attack of 2001. US denunciation of Kuwait is equally heinous as the US attack on Mexico aggrandizing its one third land. The entire phenomena is found to hover around a quote: "When history is crafted in a service of a power, evidence and rationality are irrelevant."

The fourth chapter is "Democracy Promotion Abroad". Chomsky provides multiple pretexts the US designed to dominate the world. From the classical ages to the modern, the European conquerors always invented a cause to dominate the world. Citing Japanese Emperor Hirohito, "We declared war on America and Britain out of our sincere desire to ensure Japan's self preservation and the stabilization of the east Asia, . . ." Which is quite more

like the American Monroe Doctrine. Under the similar pretexts, Americans are right and Japanese are wrong. Secondly, to cite a 1979 figure, "the soviets were influencing only 6% of world's population and 5% of the world GNP" out of the Soviet border. But the invented "Soviet" threat extended from Asia to Africa and was used by the US to invade anywhere it liked. The traditionally run economy of India was devastated totally by the British intervention which was taken as an act of "novelty" by JS Mill. So can be the US pretext in the current scenario. The devastation of Panama in 1989 to catch a thug Manuel Noriega remained unnoticed in the mainstream media. He worked for the US earlier. Almost 10,000 civilians lost their lives. The rhetoric of global domination kept on changing. By 1994, "terrorist states" were expanded include "rogue nations" and later added "failed states". And later with the evolution of Iran-Venezuela relationship was framed "axis of evil". Woodrow Wilson's "Gunpoint Diplomacy" of 1915 is another example of US promotion of the democracy abroad, Chomsky writes. It can be argued that the misery of Haiti started with it.

The fifth chapter is "Supporting Evidence: The Middle East". It talks about the US enrolment in multiple land and aerial raids either in Lebanon or Palestine or Egypt or anywhere as a pro Israel stance. The illegal settlement in Gaza, West Banks are always the subject of International Condemnation and US support. Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat had offered the full peace treaty to Israel in 1971, that was discarded. Later it was accepted in the form of Camp David Accord 1979. Golda Meir's government had rejected Sadat. With the Accord, the Americans hyped that Egypt had not accepted the terms earlier and was brought to the track by US Israel; a false propaganda.

And finally, in the last chapter, "Democracy Promotion at Home" Chomsky talks about the US surveillance of the lives of the citizens. People are made to believe that they live in a democratic society but are fully under inspections. Edward Snowden can be the best recent example who has been living in Russia after he fled the USA since 2014. "His case is 95% political and 5% criminal" says Ben Wizner, his American Civil Liberty Unioun ACLU lawyer. The Espionage Act of 1917 by which he is charged speaks the condition that "if a citizen sells the information of national security to the foreigners",. Yet Snowden had revealed it to the common US citizens. So the Act ought not to work in the case.

Chomsky takes John Dewey that the fundamental social changes are to be brought to bring meaningful social changes for the smooth running of democracy. Aristotle in "Politics" opined that poor are always hostile

to the wealth of the rich. So basic social welfare programs should be run for the poor to ease the tension. Chomsky opines, paradoxically the US government is indulged in crushing the democratic institutions than to feed the poor.

Throughout the book Chomsky is openly critical and hostile to the actions performed by the US Government and the pretext of democracy which the US uses to invade others. Still his criticism appears less harsher. It can be also applicable to anti-American tyrants. Secondly, throughout the book he uses the word 'war' in the case of Vietnam or Iraq or Afghanistan. Despite the fact they were the acts of genocides, more than a war. War is fought in between equals and the use of it justifies the invasion to a bigger extent. Otherwise the book is a perfect phenomena to understand the American geopolitics. The book provides ample to prove US as terrorist by its own definition, "Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience."

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Nepal Centre for Contemporary Studies (NCCS) set up in 1995 as a non-partisan, non-profit making and non-governmental organization undertakes studies/research on subjects and issues of national and transnational nature and dimensions. The emerging socio-economic and political trends and opportunities to be generated by new developments come within the scope of NCCS. The pluralistic nature of Nepali society and polity demands greater understanding and cooperation among political forces and others engaged in dealing with the issues of democratic consolidation. The Center gives priority to local development and other areas of national concerns. Policy analyses, in-depth studies of national and regional issues and development, and their likely impacts on Nepal and other regions, especially south Asia, are some of the principal agendas of the Center. One of its objectives is to assist the young social scientists to enhance their research capabilities.

NCCS, through organizing seminars at local, central and regional levels, has provided a forum for dialogue among the experts, professionals, stakeholders, policy makers, parties' leaders/workers and people's representatives to elected bodies on pertinent national and regional issues e.g. on Political Consensus, Electoral Reforms, Decentralization, and State Restructuring. The Centre has credit of producing several books i.e. Political Leadership in Nepal, 2001; Local Leadership and Governance, 2004; Nepal: Political Parties and Parliament, 2004; Election and Governance in Nepal, 2005; Nepal: Quest for Participatory Democracy, 2006, Non-traditional Security: State, Society and Democracy in South Asia, 2006 and Nepal: Facets of Maoist Insurgency, 2006.

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South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy, Nepal (SADED-Nepal), a non-profit/non-governmental organisation registered at District Administrative Office, Kathmandu on January 10, 2011, has been born out of work wider collaborative and creative involvement by many individuals and organizations forming a network or web of efforts, which does not have one epicentre. SADED-Nepal encompasses democratic control of natural resources and looks upon it as integral to the deepening and expansion of democracy and to the survival of humankind. The concept of 'Ecological Democracy' is central to the work undertaken in the SADED (India) framework. All the dimensions of life, also of democracy within them, are inter-linked and so focusing on any one leads to the others. Since the ecological crisis is a special one for our times, and yet is inadequately recognized, SADED-Nepal envisages strengthening the idea of comprehensive democracy through 'Ecological Democracy'. The notion of Ecological Democracy incorporates a democratic relationship between human beings and nature as well as an equitable distribution of nature's resources among human being within a nation and between nations.

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