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(सार्वजनिक प्रशासनसम्बन्धी जर्नल)

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(The Nepalese Journal of Public Administration)

वर्ष ५५, अङ्क २, पूर्णाङ्क १३८, २०८० मंसिर
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प्रशासन १३८

नेपाल सरकार
सङ्घीय मामिला तथा सामान्य प्रशासन मन्त्रालय
सिंहदरबार, काठमाडौं

१३८

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२०७८-२०८२

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संस्करण

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आवरण तस्वीरः सङ्घीय मामिला तथा सामान्य प्रशासन मन्त्रालय

यस जर्नलमा प्रकाशित लेखमा व्यक्त धारणा लेखकका स्वतन्त्र एवम् निजी हुन् । यसप्रति सम्पादन मण्डल र प्रकाशक जवाफदेही हुने छैनन् । प्रकाशित लेखबारे आफ्नो प्रतिकृया व्यक्त गर्न चाहने पाठक वर्गलाई यस मन्त्रालयको प्रशासन सुधार तथा व्यवस्थापन परीक्षण शाखामा पठाउन अनुरोध गरिन्छ । प्राप्त प्रतिक्रियाका सम्बन्धमा सम्बन्धित लेखकलाई जानकारी दिई सम्भव भएसम्म जवाफसमेत प्रकाशित गरिनेछ । व्यक्तिगत रूपमा आरोपित र लाञ्छनायुक्त प्रतिक्रिया प्रकाशन गर्न सम्पादन मण्डल बाध्य हुने छैन ।

सम्पादकीय

सङ्घीय मामिला तथा सामान्य प्रशासन मन्त्रालयबाट प्रशासन जर्नल प्रकाशन सम्बन्धी कार्यविधि, २०८० बमोजिम प्राज्ञिक जर्नलको रुपमा प्रशासन जर्नलको १३८औं अङ्क प्रकाशित भएको छ। सार्वजनिक प्रशासन तथा सार्वजनिक व्यवस्थापन, सार्वजनिक नीति तथा विकास नीति, विकास प्रशासन तथा व्यवस्थापन, आर्थिक तथा सामाजिक विकास, शासन प्रणाली, शासकीय सुधार, सुशासन, सार्वजनिक सेवा प्रवाह, सार्वजनिक प्रशासनमा सदाचार, शिष्टाचार र सकारात्मक सोँच लगायत समसामयिक अन्य विषयहरुलाई जर्नलमा समावेश गर्ने कार्यविधिको व्यवस्था बमोजिम विभिन्न विचारमूलक तथा अनुसन्धानमूलक/तथ्यमूलक लेख यस अङ्कमा समावेश गरी पाठकसमक्ष पुऱ्याउन पाउँदा हामीलाई अत्यन्त खुसी लागेको छ।

जर्नलमा प्रकाशित लेख/रचनाको विषयविज्ञ समीक्षा (Peer Review) तथा बौद्धिक चोरी परीक्षण (Plagiarism Check) सहित प्रकाशित यस जर्नल प्राज्ञिक क्षेत्रको रोजाईमा पर्ने विश्वास हामीले लिएका छौं। डिजिटल प्रविधिको बढ्दो प्रयोगसँगै प्राज्ञिक क्षेत्रको पहुँचमा पुऱ्याउन जर्नललाई विगतदेखि नै NepJOL (Nepal Journals Online) मा आबद्ध गरिएको छ। यसले गर्दा जर्नलप्रतिको रुचिमा बढोत्तरी भएको हामीले पाएका छौं। यस अङ्कका लेखहरुको भाषा सम्पादन गरिदिनु भएका त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय, भाषाविज्ञान केन्द्रीय विभागका उपप्राध्यापक डा. भीमलाल गौतमप्रति हार्दिक आभार व्यक्त गर्दछौं।

सार्वजनिक चासो र सरोकारहरुलाई नजिकबाट हेर्दै आउनु भएका बौद्धिक पाठकहरूको रोजाइमा यस जर्नललाई पुऱ्याउन समयानुकूल परिमार्जन र परिस्कृत गर्रिंदै आइएको छ। आगामी दिनमा यस जर्नललाई अझ पठनीय बनाई उचाईमा पुऱ्याउन सार्वजनिक प्रशासन सम्बद्ध अध्ययन अनुसन्धानमा रुचि राख्ने सबै बौद्धिक वर्ग तथा पाठकहरूका पृष्ठपोषण, सद्भाव र सहयोग हाम्रा लागि मार्गदर्शन हुनेछन्।

प्रकाशकीय तथा सम्पादकीय नीति

(क) प्रायोगिक, अनुसन्धानमूलक, तथ्यपरक, सैद्धान्तिक अवधारणामूलक एवम् मौलिक लेख/रचना तथा कृति समीक्षालाई प्राथमिकता दिइनेछ।

(ख) लेखकबाट प्राप्त भएको लेखको पाण्डुलिपी तथा लेखकको परिचय लगायतका विषय जर्नल प्रकाशन पूर्व सम्पादन मण्डल तथा जर्नल प्रकाशनका क्रममा खटिने कर्मचारी बाहेक गोप्य रहनेछ। अस्वीकृत लेख/रचना तथा लेखकको परिचय सार्वजनिक गरिने छैन।

(ग) प्रकाशनका लागि लेख/रचना स्वीकृत वा अस्वीकृत गर्ने अधिकार सम्पादन मण्डलमा रहनेछ। अस्वीकृत भएका लेखका लेखकलाई सोको जानकारी गराइनेछ।

(घ) सम्पादन मण्डलबाट स्वीकृत सबै लेख एकै अङ्क वा पछिल्लो अङ्कमा क्रमश: प्रकाशन गर्न सकिनेछ।

(ङ) प्रकाशनका लागि छनौट हुने सबै लेखको विषयविज्ञ समीक्षा (Peer Review) गरिनेछ।

(च) प्रकाशनमा औपचारिक भाषाशैली प्रयोग गरिनेछ। कुनै व्यक्ति वा समुदाय वा सम्प्रदाय विशेषको प्रतिष्ठामा आँच पुग्ने गरी लेखिएका लेख/रचना समावेश गरिने छैन।

(छ) कुनै राजनैतिक विचारप्रति प्रत्यक्ष झुकाव राख्ने लेख/रचना प्रकाशनमा समावेश गरिने छैन।

(ज) अन्यत्र प्रकाशन भइसकेको लेख/रचना स्वीकार गरिने छैन।

(झ) अन्यत्र प्रकाशित लेख रचनाको कुनै अंश वा खण्ड हुबहु नक्कल गरेको लेख/रचना समावेश गरिने छैन। तर त्यस्ता लेख रचनाको कुनै अंश वा खण्ड लेख/रचनामा समावेश गर्दा तोकिएको ढाँचामा अनिवार्य रुपमा स्रोत खुलाउनु पर्नेछ।

(ञ) प्राप्त लेख/रचनाको बौद्धिक चोरी परीक्षण (Plagiarism Check) गरिनेछ। यस्तो परीक्षणमा असफल लेख/रचनालाई समावेश गरिने छैन।

(ट) संयुक्त रूपमा लेखिएका लेख रचनामा मूल लेखक तथा सहलेखकको परिचय तथा आबद्धता स्पष्ट रूपमा खुलाउनुपर्नेछ।

(ठ) प्रचलित नेपाल कानुन, सरकारका घोषित नीति तथा कार्यक्रम प्रतिकूलका लेख/रचना जर्नलमा समावेश गरिने छैन। तर उल्लिखित विषयमा अनुसन्धानमूलक, तथ्यपरक र आलोचनात्मक दृष्टिले लेखिएका लेख/रचना समावेश गर्न बाधा पुग्ने छैन।

(ड) प्रकाशित हुने लेख/रचनाको प्रतिलिपि अधिकार प्रचलित कानुनबमोजिम मन्त्रालयसँग रहनेछ।

(ढ) प्रकाशित लेख/रचनामा व्यक्त धारणा सम्बन्धित लेखकको निजी धारणा हुनेछ। यसप्रति प्रकाशक तथा सम्पादन मण्डल जवाफदेही हुने छैन।

लेख रचनाका प्राथमिकताको विषयक्षेत्र

(क) सार्वजनिक प्रशासन तथा सार्वजनिक व्यवस्थापन,

(ख) सार्वजनिक नीति तथा विकास नीति,

(ग) विकास प्रशासन तथा व्यवस्थापन,

(घ) आर्थिक तथा सामाजिक विकास,

(ङ) शासन प्रणाली,

(च) शासकीय सुधार,

(छ) सुशासन,

(ज) सार्वजनिक सेवा प्रवाह,

(झ) सार्वजनिक प्रशासनमा सदाचार, शिष्टाचार र सकारात्मक सोच,

(ञ) समसामयिक अन्य विषयहरु।

विषयसूची

शीर्षक

नेपाली खण्ड

अङ्ग्रेजी खण्ड

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सुशासनका लागि डिजिटल मुद्रा तथा विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणाली

टिकाराम ढकाल*

लेखसार

वस्तु तथा सेवाको विनिमयमा विश्वभर नै प्रयोग हुने वस्तु मुद्रा हो। कुनैपनि देशको आर्थिक प्रणाली त्यस देशको मुद्रा तथा भुक्तानी प्रणालीमा प्रत्यक्ष निर्भर रहेको हुन्छ। नेपाल लगायत विश्वभरी परम्परादेखि नै नोट तथा सिक्काको रुपमा भौतिक मुद्राको प्रयोग हुँदै आएको पाइन्छ तर पछिल्लो समयमा क्रिप्टोकरेन्सीको प्रयोग समेत बढ्दै गएको छ भने केन्द्रीय बैंकले निष्काशन गर्ने डिजिटल मुद्राको प्रयोग पनि बढ्दो छ। नेपाल लगायत विश्वका अधिकांश मुलुकहरुमा हालको भौतिक मुद्रा बैंक खातामा राखी सो बराबरको रकम विभिन्न प्लेटफार्म प्रयोग गरी विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट कारोबार तथा रकम भुक्तानी हुने गरेको पाइन्छ। कुनैपनि विनिमयमा कारोबार तथा भुक्तानी हुने भौतिक मुद्राको प्रयोग हुँदा यसको गलत प्रयोग हुन सक्ने, गैरकानुनी तवरले रकम नगदको रुपमा व्यक्तिले राख्न सक्ने गुन्जायस रहन्छ तर डिजिटल मुद्राको अवलम्बन गरी शतप्रतिशत विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट भुक्तानी तथा कारोबार हुन सकेमा सबै कारोबार कानुनी दायरामा आइ सरकारको कर प्रणालीमा सुधार हुने, राजस्व वृद्धि हुने तथा भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण हुन टेवा पुग्ने देखिन्छ। यो लेख तयार गर्दा राष्ट्रिय तथा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय रुपमा प्रकाशित लेख रचनाहरु एवम् विभिन्न प्रतिवेदनको अध्ययन तथा विश्लेषण गरी डिजिटल मुद्राको प्रयोग सुरुवात गरेका केही राष्ट्रहरुले यस्तो प्रणाली लागु गरेपश्चात प्राप्त गरेका पृष्ठपोषण र सुधारका प्रयासहरुको समेत अध्ययन गरी निष्कर्ष निकालिएको छ।

* *उपसचिव, नेपाल सरकार*
इमेलः teekaram.dhakal@nepal.gov.np

ढकाल, टिकाराम, २०८०

शब्दकुञ्जीः उपभोग मुद्रा (Currency), केन्द्रीय बैंक डिजटल मुद्रा (Central Bank Digital Currency), विमुद्रीकरण (Demonetization), विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणाली (Electronic Payment System), सुशासन (Good Governance)

पृष्ठभूमी

कुनै पनि वस्तु तथा सेवा विनिमयको माध्यमको रुपमा प्रयोग गरिने वस्तु वा लिखतलाई मुद्रा भनिन्छ। यसलाई वस्तु तथा सेवाको भुक्तानी तथा ऋणमोचनको लागि सामाजिक एवम् कानुनी रुपमा स्वीकार गरिएको हुन्छ।नगदको रुपमा चालु रहने धातु वा धातुहरुको समिश्रणबाट बनेको मुद्रालाई सिक्का र कागज वा यस्तै प्रकारको वस्तुबाट बनेको नगदको रुपमा रहने मुद्रालाई नोट भनिन्छ। मुद्रालाई क्रेडिट कार्ड, करेन्सी नोट, पोस्टल अर्डर, मनी अर्डर, प्रतित पत्र, चेक, ड्राफ्ट, ट्राभलर्स चेक, प्रतिज्ञापत्र समेत भनेर बुझिन्छ। यसका अतिरिक्त कुनैपनि देशको ढुकुटी व्यवस्थापन गर्ने जिम्मा पाएको केन्द्रीय निकाय जस्तै राष्ट्र बैंकले सूचना मार्फत जानकारी गराई प्रयोग हुने अन्य उपकरणलाई समेत मुद्राको रुपमा लिन सकिन्छ। प्राचीन कालमा वस्तु विनिमयको मात्र प्रयोग हुने गरेकोमा मानव सभ्यताको विकाससँगै सो कार्यको सहजीकरण गर्ने क्रममा मुद्राको विकास भएको पाइन्छ।

विश्वमा मुद्राको इतिहास हेर्ने हो भने इसापूर्व ५००० ताका इराकमा चाँदीको सिक्काबाट बनेको मुद्राको प्रयोग भएको पाइन्छ। नेपालमा भने इसापूर्व पाँचौं शताब्दीमा मानदेवले मानाङ्क नामको मुद्रा निकालेर प्रचलनमा ल्याएको र पछि राजा महेन्द्र मल्लको पालामा महेन्द्र मल्ली नामका एक तोला तौल भएका चाँदीका सिक्का प्रचलनमा ल्याएको पाइन्छ। प्राचीन तथा मल्ल कालमा धातुका सिक्का मात्र नभएर छालाबाट बनेका मुद्रा समेत प्रचलनमा ल्याएको पाइन्छ। पछि आएर विक्रम सम्बत् १९९० मा जुद्ध शमशेरले सदर मुलुकीखानाको स्थापना गरे पश्चात खज्जाञ्ची जनकराज पण्डितको पालामा पाँच, दश र एक सयका कागजी नोट छापिएको र वि.सं. २००२ असोज १ गतेबाट नेपालमा आधिकारीक कागजी नोट लागु भएको पाइन्छ। त्यस ताका मुलुकीखानाले भारतको नासिक स्थित ईन्डिया सेक्युरिटी प्रेसलाई जिम्मा दिएर नोटहरु छाप्ने गर्दथ्यो। हाल आएर नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकले नोट छपाइ तथा सिक्का टकमरी निर्देशिका, २०६५ बमोजिम विभिन्न नोट छपाइ तथा सिक्का टकमरी गर्ने गर्दछ।

भौतिक मुद्राको प्रचलनका कमजोरीहरु

वि.सं. २००२ बाट हालसम्म भौतिक मुद्रा छपाइ तथा टकमरी गर्दा ठूलो धनराशि खर्च हुने गरेको छ। हालको बजार मूल्य अनुसार एक रुपैयाँ तथा दुई रुपैयाँको सिक्का छाप्न सिक्काको मोल भन्दा महँगो छपाइ पर्न जाने गरेको छ। नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकको नोट छपाइ तथा सिक्का टकमरी निर्देशिका बमोजिम अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तरको बोलपत्र मार्फत गत वर्ष छाप्न दिएको मुद्राको मूल्य तालिकामा उल्लेख गरिएको छ।

<u>नोट तथा सिक्का छपाइ खर्च (सन् २०२२)</u>

रुपैयाँ	प्रति गोटा छपाइ खर्च (रुपैयाँमा)	कहाँ छापियो	गत वर्षको छपाइ संख्या (करोडमा)	छपाइ खर्च (रु.करोडमा)
१	२.४०	पोल्याण्ड	३०	७२
२	२.७३	संयुक्त अधिराज्य	१०	२७.३
५	१.६८	चीन	३०	५०.४
१०	१.४०	चीन	३४	४७.६
२०	१.७३	चीन	२४	४१.५२
५०	२.६७	फ्रान्स	२३	६१.४१
१००	२.९९	संयुक्त अधिराज्य	४०	११९.६
५००	४.६८	चीन	१९	८८.९२
१०००	३.३७	चीन	३१	१०४.४७
			जम्मा	६१३.२२

स्रोतः नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंक, २०२२

नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकले प्रत्येक तीन वर्षमा नयाँ नोट छाप्ने गर्दछ। यसरी नोट छाप्दा विगत दुई वर्षमा प्रयोग भएका नोट र सिक्काको मात्रा, कुल ग्राहस्थ उत्पादन र राष्ट्रिय योजना आयोगको प्रक्षेपण एवम् मूल्यवृद्धिको दर विश्लेषण गरेर संख्या एकिन गरी छाप्ने गरिन्छ।

यसरी हेर्दा नेपाल सरकारको अरबौं रुपैयाँ त मुद्रा छपाइमै खर्च हुने गरेको देखिन्छ भने छपाइकर्ताले निश्चित स्थानसम्म मात्र ढुवानी गरिदिने हुँदा सो स्थानबाट विभिन्न स्थानसम्म सुरक्षित ढुवानी गर्न लाग्ने खर्च, ढुवानीमा प्रयोग हुने जनशक्ति तथा सुरक्षा व्यवस्था, भण्डारण तथा भण्डारण स्थलको व्यवस्थापन र सुरक्षा खर्च अत्यधिक हुने गरेको छ। फेरि यस्ता भौतिक नोटहरु हराउने, आगलागीमा पर्ने, च्यातिने, भिज्ने, रंग लाग्ने तथा केरमेट हुने, धुजा धुजा हुने, प्रयोगकर्ताले यसलाई जतन नगर्ने, धार्मिक-वैदिक कार्यमा चढाउने, नदीमा फ्याँक्ने, शिलान्यास लगायतको कार्यमा जमिनमुनी गाड्ने गरेको पाइन्छ। जसको कारणले मुद्राको सुरक्षा गर्न, जतनका साथ राख्न र बजारमा गएको संख्या एकिन गर्न समेत कठिन पर्ने गरेको छ र यस्तो परिप्रेक्ष्यमा पुनः छपाइ गरिरहनु परेको अवस्था छ। अर्को तर्फबाट हेर्नेहो भने यसको नक्कली नोट छापेर बजारमा भित्रिने, गैरकानुनी आर्जन गरेर समेत राख्न र प्रयोग गर्न मिल्ने, अनौपचारिक बजार एवम् कारोबारमा प्रयोग गर्न सकिने हुँदा सरकारको औपचारिक अर्थतन्त्र एवम् राजस्व प्रणालीमा नआउने समस्या रहेको छ। भौतिक नोटको छपाइ, ढुवानी, बाँडफाँट, सुरक्षा लगायतको व्यवस्थापनमा प्रयोग हुने सरकारी तथा गैर सरकारी अधिकारीको खर्च समेत जोड्ने हो भने यसको प्रयोग गर्दा सरकारको अत्यधिक खर्च हुने गरेको छ।

डिजिटल मुद्रा

भौतिक रुपमा हाम्रो खल्ती वा थैलीमा नराखी विद्युतीय वा इलेक्ट्रोनिक माध्यमबाट प्रयोग गर्न सकिने मुद्रालाई डिजिटल मुद्रा भनिन्छ। यो नगद मुद्राको विद्युतीय वा डिजिटल रुप हो। यसलाई नोट वा सिक्का जस्तैः प्रयोगमा ल्याउन सकिने नगद सम्पत्तिको रुपमा लिन सकिन्छ, जुन कम्प्युटर तथा इन्टरनेट प्रणालीबाट व्यवस्थित तवरले भण्डारण तथा स्थानान्तरण गर्न सकिने हुन्छ। माईकल कुमहफ तथा क्लारे नुन (२०१८) का अनुसार यो एउटा केन्द्रीय बैंकको विद्युतीय मुद्रा हो जुन नगद भन्दा धेरै कारोबार योग्य, नोटभन्दा बृहतरुपमा प्रयोग गर्न सकिने, प्रत्येक व्यक्ति तथा संस्थाले आफ्नै विद्युतीय खल्ती (E-Wallet) मा राखी आवश्यकता पर्दाका बखत तिर्न तथा अन्य खाता वा विद्युतीय खल्तीमा पठाउन सकिने हुन्छ। भौतिक मुद्राको प्रचलन विश्वमा धेरै पहिलेदेखि चलेको भए पनि डिजिटल मुद्राको प्रयोगको भने त्यति लामो इतिहास छैन।

विश्वमा सर्वप्रथम सन् १९८३ मा अमेरिकी कम्प्युटर वैज्ञानिक डेभिड चाउमले डिजिटल मुद्राको अवधारणा ल्याएका हुन्। त्यसको केही समयपछि सन् १९९३ मा फिनल्याण्डले एभान्ट कार्ड (Avant card) मार्फत प्रिपेड विद्युतीय मुद्राको प्रयोगको प्रयास गरे पनि यो सफल एवम् स्थापित हुन सकेन। पछि चाउमको अवधारणालाई आधार मानी सन् २००९ मा जापानी लेखक सन्तोषी नाकामोटोले विकेन्द्रित डिजटल मुद्राको रुपमा बिटकोईनको प्रस्ताव अघि सारे। हाल यो क्रिप्टोकरेन्सीको रुपमा प्रचलित छ। बिटकोईनको अलावा हाल विश्वभरीनै लाईटकोईन, मोनेरो, इथेरियम, डोगकोइन, टेथर जस्ता क्रिप्टोकरेन्सीहरु प्रयोगमा रहेका छन्। यस्ता मुद्राहरु कुनै पनि सरकारी बैंकबाट जारी नभई सानो झुण्डले सञ्चालन तथा प्रयोग गरिरहेको भएपनि अधिकांश देशले हालसम्म कानुनी मान्यता दिएका छैनन्। डिजिटल मुद्राको प्रयोग सम्बन्धमा विश्वभरी नै विभिन्न देशहरुले अध्ययन अनुसन्धान गर्ने क्रममा उरुग्वेको केन्द्रीय बैंकले सन् २०1४ मा पाइलटिङको रुपमा ई-पेशो डिजिटल मुद्रा सुरु गरेको थियो तर यसले निरन्तरता पाउन सकेन। आधिकारिक रुपमा विश्वमा पहिलो पटक केन्द्रीय बैंकद्वारा जारी (Central Bank Digital Currency- CBDC) डिजिटल मुद्राको रुपमा क्यारेबियन देश बहामसको केन्द्रीय बैंकले आम नागरिकको लागि पूर्ण रुपमा प्रयोग गर्न मिल्ने गरी स्याण्ड डलर (Sand Dollars) को नामबाट निकालिएको मुद्रा नै प्रयोगका हिसाबले विश्वको पहिलो आधिकारिक डिजटल मुद्रा हुन पुगेको छ।

हाल अमेरिका, बेलायत लगायत विश्वका २४ भन्दा बढी देशहरुले कानुनी रुपमै केन्द्रीय बैंकले जारी गरेर डिजटल मुद्राको आंशिक प्रयोग गरिरहेका छन् भने नेपाल लगायत ४७ भन्दा बढी देशहरुले यसको अवलम्बन गर्न अध्ययन अनुसन्धान गरिरहेका छन्।नेपालमा पनि मौद्रिक नीति, २०७८ मा डिजिटल मुद्रा सम्बन्धी विषय समावेश गरी नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकले वि.सं. २०७९ साल आश्विनमा अध्ययन प्रतिवेदन तयार गरी प्रकाशन समेत गरिसकेको छ। विश्वभर नै डिजिटल मुद्रा निष्काशन गरी लागु गर्ने होडबाजी नै चलेको भए पनि विविध कारणबश पूर्ण रुपमा भौतिक मुद्राको विस्थापन कुनैपनि देशमा हुन सकेको छैन।

भुक्तानी प्रणाली

आर्थिक कारोबारको सम्बन्धमा कुनै एउटा व्यक्ति वा संस्थाको स्वामित्वबाट अर्को व्यक्ति वा संस्थाको स्वामित्वमा भएको रकम वा स्रोतको हस्तान्तरण भुक्तानी हो। यो लेनदेन, चुक्ता गर्ने काम, फछ्र्यौट वा तिर्नु बुझाउनुपर्ने कार्यसँग सम्बन्धित छ। हामीले वस्तु तथा सेवाको खरिद गरेवापत रकम तिर्दछौं,

सरकारलाई कर तिर्दछौं, आफूले काम गरेको निकायबाट तलव भत्ता बुझ्दछौं, सामाग्री खरिद बिक्री गर्दा रुपैयाँ पैसाको लेनदेन गर्दछौं। यी सबै कार्यहरु भुक्तानीका उदाहरण हुन्। बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्थाहरुको सर्वत्र उपलब्धता नभएको अवस्थामा यस्तो भुक्तानी नगदमा हुने गर्दथ्यौ भने हाल आएर नगद, चेक वा विद्युतीय माध्यमको प्रयोग गरी खातामा रकम लेनदेन गर्ने गरिएको छ। यसरी बैंकिङ् प्रणालीबाट भएको लेनदेन बराबरको रकम जुनसुकै बखत बैंकमा गई निकालेर नोट तथा सिक्कामा परिणत गर्न सकिन्छ।

यहाँ चर्चा गर्न खोजिएको विषय माथि उल्लिखित भुक्तानी प्रणालीहरु मध्ये विद्युतीय माध्यमको प्रयोग गरेर हुने भुक्तानी प्रणालीको बारेमा हो। विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट हुने भुक्तानीलाई पनि दुई किसिमबाट हेर्न सकिन्छ। पहिलो, प्रयोगकर्ताको खातामा भएको भौतिक मुद्राको सीमा अनुसार गरिने भुक्तानी हो भने दोस्रो, आफ्नो स्वामित्वमा रहेको डिजिटल मुद्रा (CBDC) को विद्युतीय भुक्तानीको विषय हो। यी दुबै प्रकारका भुक्तानीमा डेविड वा क्रेडिट कार्ड, मोबाइल बैंकिङ् तथा ई-बैंकिङ्, ई-मनी वा विद्युतीय वालेट एवम् एजेण्टमार्फत आफ्नो खाताबाट स्वामित्वमा रहेको स्रोत घट्ने गरी कारोबार गर्न सकिन्छ। उदाहरणको रुपमा व्यक्तिले कुनै बैंकको खातामा रहेको रकमको सीमाभित्र रही मोबाइल बैंकिङ्, विद्युतीय वालेट, कनेक्ट आईपिएस जस्ता विद्युतीय माध्यम प्रयोग गरी सामान किनेको बिल, हवाईजहाजको टिकट, बिजुली तथा पानीको बिल आदि भुक्तानी गर्न सक्दछ।

अबको दिनमा भौतिक मुद्राको रुपमा छापिएर सम्बन्धित बैंकमा रहेको नगदलाई अनलाइन कारोबार गर्नुभन्दा भौतिक मुद्रा नछापी डिजिटल मुद्रा कारोबार गर्दा विभिन्न तवरले राज्य तथा व्यक्तिलाई समेत सहज हुने देखिन्छ। पूर्ण रुपमा डिजिटल मुद्रा प्रचलनमा ल्याई विद्युतीय कारोबार गर्ने प्रणाली स्थापना गरेमा देशमा वित्तीय सुशासन कायम गर्न सकिने विषय यहाँ चर्चा गर्न खोजिएको छ।

कसरी लागु गर्ने ?

नेपालमा विद्यमान भौतिक मुद्रा प्रणाली प्रयोगमा रहेको छ। यद्यपी भौतिक मुद्रा बैंक तथा वित्तीय संस्थामा जम्मा गरेपछि सो बैंकको विद्युतीय प्रणाली, मोबाइल बैंकिङ् प्रणाली तथा कनेक्ट आईपिएस प्रणालीबाट वा मोबाइल वालेटमा आफ्नो पैसा लोड गरेर विद्युतीय माध्यमको प्रयोग गरी भुक्तानी गर्न मिल्ने प्रावधान रहेको छ। यस लेखमा भौतिक मुद्राको रुपमा रहेका नोट तथा सिक्काहरु छपाइ नगरी सिधै डिजिटल मुद्रा निष्कासन गर्ने र हाल प्रचलनमा रहेका सम्पूर्ण भौतिक मुद्रालाई विस्थापन गरी

शतप्रतिशत विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणाली लागु गर्न अवलम्बन गर्नुपर्ने तौरतरिका, यसका फाइदा एवम् सुशासनमा पुग्ने टेवा, यसका सीमितता तथा चुनौतीहरु लगायत सुझावहरु निम्नानुसार चर्चा गर्न खोजिएको छ।

क. वर्तमान मुद्राको विमुद्रीकरण तथा डिजिटल मुद्रा जारी गर्ने

नेपालमा हाल के कति संख्यामा नोट तथा सिक्काहरु रहेका छन् भन्ने एकिन गर्न कठिन छ। नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकले ७८ वर्ष सम्म छपाइ गरेका नोट तथा सिक्काहरु मध्ये कति संख्यामा झुत्रा भएर नष्ट भए, कति संख्यामा हराए, कतिपय सिक्का तथा नोटहरु धार्मिक वैदिक परम्परामा माटोमा पुरिए भने कति नदिमा बगाईएका हुन सक्छन्। कति संख्यामा गैर कानुनी किसिमबाट आर्जित रकम नगदको रुपमा बैंकिङ् प्रणालीमा नआएर अबैध रुपमा संचित भएका हुन सक्दछन्। यसरी नेपाल सरकारले जारी गरेको मुद्रा औपचारिक प्रणालीमा देखा नपर्नु भनेको मुलुकमा विभिन्न दृष्टिकोणबाट राष्ट्रिय अर्थतन्त्रमा क्षति हुनु हो। हाम्रो छिमेकी राष्ट्र भारतमा सन् २०१६ मा पुराना ५०० र १००० दरका नोटको विमुद्रीकरण अर्थात पुराना मुद्रालाई मान्यता नदिई (नोटबन्दी गरी) नयाँ मुद्रा जारी गरिएको थियो।त्यस बखत व्यक्तिले लुकाएर राखेका करोडौं नोटहरु विमुद्रीकरण प्रक्रियामा आएको विषय सञ्चार माध्यमका हेडलाइन बनेका थिए। यस्तो प्रक्रियाबाट कालो धनको रुपमा व्यक्तिसँग रहेको पैसा सरकारी प्रणालीमा आएको थियो। भारतमा जस्तै नेपालमा पनि निश्चित समय दिएर बजारमा भएका पुराना सबै नोट तथा सिक्काहरु सरकारले खिच्ने र सो वापत भारतमा जस्तो नयाँ नोट छपाइ नगरी नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकबाट डिजिटल मुद्रा जारी गरी सो बराबरको रकम स्वामित्व विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट सम्बन्धित वाहक व्यक्तिलाई उपलब्ध गराउन सकिन्छ। यसो गर्दा बजार तथा व्यक्तिसँग भएका सम्पूर्ण नयाँ तथा पुराना मुद्रा एवम् रकम स्रोत खुलाउन लगाउने, यदि सो को वैधानिकता प्रमाणित भएमा सोही बराबरको डिजिटल मुद्रा उपलब्ध गराउने। कुनै व्यक्तिले आफुसँग भएको मुद्राको स्रोत खुलाउन नसकेमा पैसा शुद्धिकरण (Money laundering) को अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मापदण्डको सीमामा रही कार्यविधि तर्जुमा गरी एक पटकको लागि सो रकमलाई वैधता दिन सकिन्छ। स्रोत नखुलेको रकमको समेत शुद्धिकरण कानुन बमोजिम रकम सीमा र सो वापत लाग्ने करको सीमा एकिन गरी सम्बन्धित वाहकले राजस्व तिरेपछि बाँकी हिस्सा निजले पाउने गरी व्यवस्था गर्न सकिन्छ। विमुद्रीकरण गर्दा देशका दूरदराजमा रहेका नगद एवम् विदेशमा रहेका मुद्रा समेत जम्मा गर्नुपर्ने भएमा यसको लागि व्यक्तिलाई स्वःघोषणा गर्न उचित समय दिन सकिन्छ।

ख. बैंक खाता एवम् विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट भुक्तानी अनिवार्य गर्ने

नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकका अनुसार सन् २०२१ मा नेपालमा विभिन्न वर्गका बैंकहरुका जम्मा ५ हजार ६९४ शाखाहरुमा बचत, चालु, मुद्दती लगायतका गरी कुल ३ करोड ६३ लाख ६६ हजार ४१ खाताहरु रहेका छन् भने १६ लाख ८२ हजार ८४५ ऋण खाताहरु रहेका छन्। जसमध्ये १ करोड भन्दा बढी संख्यामा मोबाइल बैंकिङ् एवम् करिब १० लाखको संख्यामा इन्टरनेट बैंकिङ् प्रयोगकर्ता रहेका छन्।यो तथ्याङ्क वार्षिक रुपमा बढोत्तरीको क्रममा रहेकोले हाल उक्त संख्यामा उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि भएको हुन सक्छ। आगामी दिनमा नेपाल सरकारले विमुद्रीकरण गर्ने बेलामा सबै नागरिकको अनिवार्य रुपमा बैंक खाता खोल्न लगाउनु पर्दछ। खाता खोल्न नागरिकता प्राप्त नगरेका व्यक्तिहरुको लागि अन्य सरकारी परिचयपत्रको आधारमा खोलिदिनुपर्ने र यसरी खाता खोलिसकेपछि डिजिटल मुद्रा विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट भुक्तानी गर्ने गरी सो खातामा वा प्रणालीमा उपलब्ध गराइदिनु पर्दछ।

सबै नेपालीको बैंक खाता र विद्युतीय प्रणालीमा पहुँच भएको खण्डमा सम्पूर्ण कारोबार क्यू.आर. कोड, डिजिटल वालेट, मोबाइल बैंकिङ्, ई-बैंकिङ्, कनेक्ट आईपिएस लगायतका माध्यम मार्फत कारोबार हुने व्यवस्था अनिवार्य गर्नु पर्दछ। यसरी शतप्रतिशत अनलाइन मार्फत मात्र कारोबार हुने भएपछि नुनदेखि सुनसम्म, हलोदेखि हाईड्रोसम्म, तरकारीदेखि सवारीसम्म, नाङ्ले पसल देखि साङ्ले पसल (Chain and Online Shopping) सम्म, फलदेखि होटेलसम्म, दैनिक उपभोग्य वस्तुदेखि घरजग्गासम्म, औषधी उपचारदेखि जीप कारसम्म, शिक्षादेखि भिक्षासम्म, दक्षिणादेखि सरकारी करसम्म पैसाको कारोबार हुने जुनसुकै स्थानमा पनि अनिवार्य अनलाइन कारोबार र अनिवार्य बीजक जारी गर्नुपर्ने व्यवस्था लागु गर्नुपर्दछ। कर गणना गर्नुपर्ने अवस्था जस्तैः पसलमा सामग्री किन्दा होस् या घर जग्गा कारोबार गर्दा भुक्तानी भएको सबै रकमको हिसाबले सरकारलाई स्वःचालित प्रणालीबाट कर जम्मा हुने व्यवस्था मिलाउनु पर्दछ।

ग. उपकरण तथा प्रणाली स्थापना तथा व्यवस्थापन गर्ने

डिजिटल मुद्राको विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट कारोबार गर्न सुरुमा सबै व्यक्तिहरुलाई गाह्रो हुन सक्छ। हुन त सुरुमा स्मार्टफोन आउँदा चलाउन जान्ने मान्छेको संख्या नै न्यून थियो। यस्तो फोन किनेर ल्याए पनि अरुसँग सिक्नुपर्ने हुन्थ्यो।हाल आएर बालबालिका देखि वृद्धवृद्धासम्म सबैले स्मार्टफोनको प्रयोग गर्न थालेका छन्। त्यस्तै किसिमले यो प्रणाली स्थापना गरी सञ्चालन गर्दा सुरुमा अंग्रेजी नजान्नेको लागि नेपाली माध्यमबाट चल्ने प्रणाली विकास गरिदिनु पर्दछ, यसो गर्दा झन्झट बिनानै भुक्तानी लिन र दिन सकिने गरी सरल प्रणाली स्थापना गर्नु पर्दछ। हाल नेपालमा ४ करोड ८ लाख ८९ हजार मोबाइल

टेलिफोन प्रयोगकर्ता रहेका छन्। जस मध्ये ३ करोड ८३ लाख इन्टरनेटको प्रयोगकर्ता छन्। यसरी हेर्दा कुल जनसङ्ख्या भन्दा मोबाइल तथा इन्टरनेट प्रयोगकर्ताको संख्या धेरै देखिन्छ। मोबाइलको पहुँच नभएकाहरुलाई पनि यो प्रणाली चलाउने गरी पहिलो पटकको लागि सरकारले सहुलियत मूल्यमा मोबाइल तथा सिम कार्ड उपलब्ध गराउने वा अनुदानमा दिन पनि सकिन्छ। यसो गर्दा लाग्ने रकम हालको भौतिक मुद्रा प्रणाली विस्थापन गरी डिजिटल मुद्रा प्रणाली अपनाउँदा बचत हुने रकमको नगन्य मात्रामा खर्च हुने भएकोले सरकारले यस्तो रकम व्यहोर्दा समेत घाटा नहुने देखिन्छ।

मोबाइल नेटवर्क तथा इन्टरनेटको पहुँच सबै ठाउँमा नपुगेको अवस्था र प्रणाली सञ्चालन गर्न प्रयोगकर्ताले व्यहोर्नुपर्ने शुल्कको विषय कसरी व्यवस्थापन गर्ने भन्ने प्रश्न आउन सक्छ। यसको लागि हाल नेटवर्क विस्तार नभएको स्थानमा सरकारले क्रमशः पहुँच विस्तार गर्दै लैजानु पर्ने हुन्छ। दूरसञ्चार सेवा प्रदायक सबै कम्पनीहरुको सामाजिक उत्तरदायित्व अन्तर्गत रहने गरी सो प्रणाली निःशुल्क सञ्चालन गर्न सकिने व्यवस्था गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। यो प्रणालीबाट कारोबार गर्ने प्रयोजनार्थ ग्राहकले इन्टरनेटको पहुँच भएको भए सो निःशुल्क प्रयोग गर्ने र इन्टरनेट पहुँच नभएको भए स्वचालित रुपमा एसएमएस प्रणालीबाट निःशुल्क भुक्तानी प्रणाली चल्ने व्यवस्था मिलाउनुपर्ने हुन्छ। मोबाइल प्रयोग गर्न नजान्ने अशिक्षित वर्गलाई लक्षित गरी आम सञ्चारका माध्यमबाट अभियान चलाउन पनि सकिन्छ। भुक्तानी गर्दा अर्काको गोप्य कोड वा उपकरण प्रयोग गरी अनाधिकृत व्यक्तिले फाइदा नउठाउन भनेर कुनै पनि व्यक्तिको खातामा पैसा जम्मा हुँदाका बखत स्रोत अनिवार्य खुल्नुपर्ने र स्रोत खुलाउन नसके त्यस्तो रकम जुन खाताबाट आएको हो सोही खातामा फिर्ता गर्ने वा सरकारले जफत गरी त्यस्तो व्यक्तिलाई कारबाहीको दायरामा ल्याउने हो भने चोरी हुने सम्भावना हट्न सक्छ। कसैले अत्यावश्यक परेर सापट लिनु पर्ने अवस्थामा निश्चित अवधिभित्र सोही बराबरको रकम खातामा फिर्ता हुनुपर्ने यदि एक आर्थिक वर्षमा फिर्ता भएको रहेनछ भने लेखा परीक्षण हुने समयमा पेश गर्ने गरी नेपाल सरकारको तोकिएको निकायमा पर्याप्त आधार र कारण पेश गरी सापटी लेनदेनको प्रमाणित गरेर राख्नुपर्ने व्यवस्था लागु गर्नुपर्दछ।

घ. संक्रमणकालीन तथा वैकल्पिक व्यवस्था

डिजिटल मुद्राको विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणाली अपनाउँदा सबै ठाउँमा सबै व्यक्तिलाई कठिनाई हुन सक्ने कुरालाई मध्यनजर गरी यो शतप्रतिशत अवलम्बन गर्नुपूर्व केही अवधि सम्म संक्रमणकालीन व्यवस्था स्वरुप एक सय रुपैयाँ सम्मका मात्र नोट बजारमा चल्न दिने प्रावधान लागु गर्न सकिन्छ। यसो गर्दा

समेत एक व्यक्ति वा संस्थाको स्वामित्वमा एक पटकमा निश्चित रकम भन्दा धेरै रकम नगद बोक्न नपाईने गरी सीमा निर्धारण गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। सानो दरका नोटहरुको प्रयोग गर्न मिल्ने प्रावधान लागु गर्दा प्रविधिप्रति अभ्यस्त हुन नसकेका वर्ग, सानोतिनो नाङ्ले व्यवसाय गर्ने व्यक्तिहरु एवम् कृषक वर्ग लाभान्वित हुन जान्छन्। पाँच सय र एक हजार दरका भौतिक नोट छाप्न बन्द गरी बजारमा यस्ता नोट अवैध गर्दा गैरकानुनी कारोबार हुने सम्भावना पनि न्यून रहन्छ।

नेपालमा आउने विदेशी व्यक्तिको लागि अध्यागमनको समयमा निजको पासपोर्टमा उल्लेख गरी नगदै न्यून मात्रामा छापिएका साना नोटहरु उपलब्ध गराउन सकिने वा सोही समयमा अस्थायी रुपमा कारोबारका लागि भुक्तानी प्रणाली (खाता) खोल्न लगाउने र उनीहरुसँग भएको विदेशी मुद्रा सो प्रणालीमा जम्मा गरी कारोबारको पहुँच दिन सकिन्छ। यस्ता व्यक्तिहरुलाई क्रेडिट कार्डजस्ता नगदरहित भुक्तानी प्रणालीको प्रयोग अनिवार्य रहेको जानकारी अग्रीम दिएमा पनि निजहरुले आफै व्यवस्थापन गर्न सक्दछन्। डिजिटल मुद्रा लागु नभएको देशको मुद्रा सटही गर्न साना दरमा छापिएका नोटहरुबाट व्यवस्थापन गर्न सकिन्छ भने डिजटल मुद्रा लागु भएका देशसँग अन्तरदेशीय भुक्तानी व्यवस्थापन गर्न सम्झौता गरी सहज गर्नुपर्दछ। नेपाली प्रयोगकर्ता विदेश जानुपर्ने भएमा समेत निजलाई आफ्नो कार्डमा लोड गरी अनलाइन प्रणाली विदेशमा प्रयोग गर्न मिल्ने गरी डलर खाता लिनुपर्ने व्यवस्था गर्न सकिन्छ। यद्यपी यी सबै व्यवस्थाहरु संक्रमणकालीन छोटो अवधिका लागि मात्र गरी दीर्घकालीन रुपमा विद्युतीय प्रणाली मात्र स्थापित गर्नुपर्दछ।

ङ. लेखा परीक्षण तथा साईबर सुरक्षा प्रणाली स्थापना गर्ने

यो प्रणाली अपनाईसकेपछि सरकारी निकायले प्राथमिकताका साथ यसको नियमन तथा निगरानी गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। यसको लागि निश्चित रकम भन्दा माथि कारोबार भएका सबै खाताहरुको र बाँकी खाताहरु मध्ये नमूना छनौट गरी निश्चित संख्यामा व्यक्तिगत खाताहरु निगरानी तथा लेखा परीक्षण गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। लेखा परीक्षण तथा निगरानी गर्न अधिकार सम्पन्न निकाय गठन गर्ने वा नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकको सम्बन्धित विभागबाट गराउन सकिन्छ। निगरानी तथा लेखा परीक्षणको क्रममा कारोबार भएको पुष्टी हुने कागजात जाँचबुझ गरी गैरकानुनी रकम लेनदेन भएको रहेछ भने कानुन बमोजिम कारबाही र रकम असुल उपर तथा जफत गर्ने संयन्त्र बनाउनुपर्ने हुन्छ। यस्तो प्रणाली पूर्णतया इन्टरनेटमा निर्भर हुने भएकोले नेपालभित्र यसको आफ्नो छुट्टै इन्ट्रानेट स्थापना गरी सञ्चालन गर्न सकिन्छ वा विश्वब्यापी सञ्जालको इन्टरनेट प्रयोग गर्न पनि सकिन्छ। प्रणाली सुरक्षाको लागि विश्वका ठूला अनलाइन कम्पनीहरुले

अवलम्बन गरेको साईबर सुरक्षा प्रणाली र त्यस्ता कम्पनीहरुसँग सम्झौता गरी सुरक्षित बनाउन सकिन्छ। व्यक्तिगत तवरमा भने यस्तो भुक्तानी प्रणाली नेपाली माध्यमको सफ्टवेयर मार्फत गर्ने व्यवस्था गरी बायोमेट्रिक सुरक्षा प्रणाली, एसएमएस एवम् ओटिपीको प्रयोग जस्ता सुरक्षा व्यवस्था अपनाउनुपर्ने हुन्छ। कारोबारको लेखा परीक्षण तथा सुरक्षा प्रणाली स्थापना गर्न लाग्ने खर्च समेत हाल प्रयोग भईरहेको भौतिक मुद्रा प्रणालीको व्यवस्थापनमा भईरहेको अनावश्यक खर्च कटौती भई बचत हुन आउने न्यूनतम् रकमबाटै सम्भव हुन्छ।

डिजिटल मुद्रा तथा विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणालीका फाइदाहरु

नेपालमा हाल चालु रहेको भौतिक मुद्रा प्रणालीलाई विस्थापन गरेर शतप्रतिशत विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट भुक्तानी तथा कारोबार गर्ने व्यवस्था गर्न सके राज्य तथा नागरिकको स्तरमा सहजता आउने हुन्छ। सो प्रणालीको प्रयोग गर्दा समग्रतामा शासकीय व्यवस्थालाई निम्नानुसार फाइदा पुग्न जाने देखिन्छ।

क. भ्रष्टाचार न्यूनीकरण तथा सुशासन कायममा टेवा पुग्नेः

यो प्रणाली अवलम्बन गरेमा सरकारी एवम् गैरसरकारी क्षेत्रमा हुने रकमको कारोबार शतप्रतिशत अनलाइन हुन गई कुनै व्यक्ति वा समूहले कारोबारमा छलकपट गरी गैरकानुनी रकम आर्जन गरेर अनाधिकृत रकम जम्मा गर्न सक्ने अवस्था रहँदैन। अनौपचारिक व्यापार तथा कारोबार, गैरकानुनी लेनदेन, भड्किलो चुनावी खर्च, न्यून बीजकीकरण, अबिजकीकरण, विचौलियाले रकम लेनदेन गर्ने परिपाटी, मिटर ब्याज, ढुकुटी तथा हुन्डी मार्फत हुने रकमको लेनदेन लगायतका गैरकानुनी कारोबार नियन्त्रणमा आउने हुँदा यो प्रणालीको प्रयोगबाट आर्थिक पारदर्शीता एवम् वित्तीय सुशासन कायम हुने देखिन्छ। हाल नेपालमा बढीरहेको भ्रष्टाचार, घुसखोरी प्रथा, सरकारी पदाधिकारीबाट पदको दुरुपयोग गरी हुने गैरकानुनी लेनदेन, घरजग्गा विक्री तथा बहालमा हुने लेनदेन एवम् यस्तै प्रकारको कारोबारमा मूल्याङ्कन रकम न्यूनतम राखी सरकारी राजस्वमा थोरै शुल्क बुझाउने प्रवृत्ति लगायतका आर्थिक कार्यहरुको अन्त्य हुन गई भ्रष्टाचार न्यूनीकरण भई देशमा सुशासन कायम हुन जान्छ।

ख. स्रोत साधन र समयको बचत हुनेः

डिजिटल मुद्रा एवम् विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणाली अवलम्बन गर्दा भौतिक मुद्राको छपाइ, ढुवानी, भण्डारण तथा वितरणमा हुने राज्यको ठूलो राशि वचत हुन्छ। नेपालमा ढुकुटीको सुरक्षाको लागि नेपाली सेना लगायत ठूलो संख्यामा सुरक्षा संयन्त्र परिचालन गरिएको छ। यस्तो सुरक्षा व्यवस्थामा भईरहेको खर्च

डिजिटल मुद्रा प्रणालीमा शून्य प्रायः हुन जाने भएकोले राज्यलाई आर्थिक रुपमा फाइदा हुने देखिन्छ। भौतिक मुद्रा तीन देखि चार वर्षमा धुलिने एवम् नष्ट हुने र नोटहरु आवधिक रुपमा छपाइ गर्दा हुने अर्बौं खर्च रकम वचत हुने देखिन्छ। साथै मुद्रा छपाइ तथा व्यवस्थापनमा र राजस्व सङ्कलनमा खटिने जनशक्ति कटौती भई सो का लागि हुने राज्यको आर्थिक दायित्व बराबरको रकम वचत हुन्छ। जाली नोटको कारोबार, अवैध कारोबार, राजस्व छली नियन्त्रण, भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण लगायतको संयन्त्रका लागि नेपाल सरकारले स्थापना गरेका निकाय एवम् जनशक्तिमा पनि कटौती हुन गई हाल भइरहेको खर्च वचत हुन्छ। डिजिटल भुक्तानीमा चेकबाट हुने कारोबारको तुलनामा छिटो छरितो तवरले भुक्तानी गर्न सकिने, पैसा जम्मा गर्न तथा झिक्न बैंक तथा बित्तीय संस्थामा जानुनपर्ने हुँदा समयको वचत समेत हुन्छ। यसबाट अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मुद्रा सटही तथा कारोबारलाई पनि छिटो, सस्तो र भरपर्दो बनाउँदछ।

ग. सरकारी भुक्तानीमा सहजता एवम् राजस्व वृद्धि हुनेः

यदि केन्द्रीय बैंकद्वारा जारी डिजिटल मुद्रा (CBDC) को पूर्ण प्रयोग गर्ने हो भने सरकारी तथा गैरसरकारी भुक्तानी सहज हुन जान्छ। हाल अन्तर बैंक हुने क्लियरिङ् अवधी घट्ने र सरकारले गर्नुपर्ने भुक्तानीहरु जस्तैः कर फिर्ता, तलव भत्ता भुक्तानी, सामाजिक सुरक्षा रकम भुक्तानी, वस्तु तथा सेवाको खरिदवापत हुने भुक्तानी आदि एक क्लिकमा तत्काल हुने र सोको जानकारी सम्बन्धित प्रयोगकर्ताले एसएमएसबाट तत्कालै पाउने हुन्छन्। यसबाट रकमको हिसाब मिलान पनि तत्कालै गर्न सकिन्छ। यस्तो कारोबार हुँदा न्यून बीजकीकरण गरेर वा न्यून मूल्यांकन गरेर सरकारलाई न्यून राजस्व बुझाउने प्रवृत्ति तथा दर्ता नभएका व्यवसायबाट हुने बीजक बिनाको लेनदेनलाई निस्तेज गरी विद्युतीय कारोबारको बखत भएको सानो देखि ठूलो भुक्तानीको समेत सफ्टवेयरको माध्यमबाट सरकारी राजस्वमा स्वतः कर जम्मा भएपछि मात्र भुक्तानी हुने अवस्था रहन्छ। यसबाट राजस्व छलीको समस्या निराकरण भई सरकारको राजस्वमा वृद्धि हुन पुग्दछ। यस्तो प्रणाली अपनाउन सकेमा कम समय र जनशक्तिबाट अधिक राजस्व सङ्कलन गर्न सकिन्छ र राजस्व सङ्कलन लागत समेत घट्न जान्छ।

घ. सुरक्षित तथा सहज उपलब्धता हुनेः

भौतिक मुद्रा व्यक्ति वा संस्थासँग रहँदा हराउने, चोरी हुने, आगलागीमा पर्ने, भिज्ने, च्यात्तिएर धुजा पर्ने लगायतको समस्या आउने हुन्छ तर डिजिटल मुद्राको प्रयोग गरेमा यस्तो गुन्जायस रहँदैन। भौतिक मुद्राको चोरी एवम् गैरकानुनी कारोबार गरी अनाधिकृत भण्डारण तथा कारोबार गर्न मिल्छ

तर यो प्रणाली लागु भएपश्चात डिजिटल मुद्रा कोही कसैले गैरकानुनी रुपमा लैजान नसक्ने र कथमकदाचित रकम गए पनि लेखापरीक्षण तथा अनुसन्धानको क्रममा प्रमाणित हुन नसकेमा त्यस्तो रकम फिर्ता वा जफत हुन जाने हुँदा यसको प्रयोग अत्यन्तै सुरक्षित रहेको छ। डिजिटल मुद्रामा चौबिसै घण्टा व्यक्तिको पहुँच रहन्छ। जुनसुकै समय र अवस्थामा पनि यस्तो रकम कारोबार गर्न सकिने हुन्छ। यसले गर्दा अत्यावश्यकीय कारोबारका लागि कार्यालय खुल्ने दिन तथा समय कुरेर रकमको व्यवस्थापन गर्नुपर्ने अवस्थाबाट मुक्ति मिल्दछ।

ङ. संक्रमणरहित भुक्तानी गर्न सकिनेः

डिजिटल मुद्राको विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट भुक्तानी गर्दा स्वास्थ्यमा हुन सक्ने संक्रमणबाट पनि सुरक्षा हुन जान्छ। हामीले कोभिड १९ को महामारीको बेलामा भौतिक मुद्राको न्यूनीकरणको अभ्यास गरेका थियौं। यस्तो कारोबारमा कुनै व्यक्ति अर्को व्यक्तिसँग भौतिक रुपमा सम्पर्कमा नआई अनलाइनबाट कारोबार हुने हुँदा यसको प्रयोगले सरुवा रोगको संक्रमणबाट पनि बच्न सकिन्छ।

च. विप्रेषण तथा आम्दानीको उचित प्रयोग हुनेः

नेपालमा हाल बैदेशिक रोजगारी तथा विदेशमा पेशा व्यवसाय गरी आय आर्जन भएको रकम सरकारी प्रणालीबाट एवम् बैंकिङ्ग च्यानलबाट न्यून मात्रामा आउने गरेको पाइन्छ। विश्व विकास सूचक, २०२२ को प्रतिवेदन अनुसार अधिक विप्रेषण भित्र्याउने विश्वभरका दश देशभित्र नेपाल पनि पर्दछ। नेपालको कूल ग्राहस्थ उत्पादन (GDP) मा यसको हिस्सा करिब पच्चीस प्रतिशत रहेको पाइन्छ। हाल नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकबाट विभिन्न ५१ वटा संस्थाहरुले विप्रेषण कारोबार गर्ने अनुमति लिएको भए पनि आधिकारिक माध्यम प्रयोग गरी विदेशबाट पैसा पठाउँदा शुल्क धेरै लाग्ने, नेपालमा सम्बन्धितले रकम प्राप्त गर्न औषतमा पाँच दिन सम्म समय लाग्ने गरेको जस्ता कारणबाट प्राय नेपालमा बिचौलिया मार्फत वा हुन्डीको प्रयोग गरी यस्तो विप्रेषण आउने गरेको छ। अब हामीले डिजिटल मुद्राको प्रयोग तथा विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणाली लागु गरेमा प्रेषक तथा प्रापकले चाहेको बेलामा न्यून सेवा शुल्कमै रकम प्राप्त गर्न सक्ने अवस्था रहन्छ र सो वापत नेपाल सरकारलाई आउने नियमानुसारको शुल्कहरु पनि सरकारी खातामा नै जम्मा हुन सक्छ।

चुनौती, समस्या तथा सीमाहरु

केन्द्रीय बैंक डिजिटल मुद्रा (CBDC) को प्रयोग विभिन्न देशहरुले प्रचलनमा ल्याएको भएता पनि यसको प्रयोगका जटिलताहरुको कारणले पूर्ण रुपमा प्रयोग गरी भौतिक मुद्रा विस्थापन गर्न सकेका भने छैनन्। तर अबको डिजिटल युगमा यस्तो मुद्राको प्रयोग गर्नुको विकल्प पनि रहँदैन यद्यपी यो कार्य चुनौतिरहित भने छैन। नेपालमा डिजिटल मुद्राको पूर्ण रुपमा विद्युतीय प्रयोग गर्न निम्नानुसारका चुनौती, सीमा वा समस्याहरु हुन सक्दछन्।

- नेपालको परिवेशमा सुहाउँदो प्रयोगमैत्री सफ्टवेयर तथा प्रणालीद्वारा स्मार्टफोन एवम् साधारण मोबाइलमा समेत सजिलै प्रयोग हुन सक्ने गरी विश्वब्यापी प्रयोग हुने प्रणाली स्थापना गर्नु। साथै प्रत्येक नेपालीको हातमा मोबाइल लगायतका सञ्चार साधनको उपलब्धता गराउनु।
- यसको प्रयोग एवम् फाइदाको बारेमा सर्वप्रथम राज्यको मुद्रा व्यवस्थापनमा संलग्न हुने सरकारी तथा गैर सरकारी निकायका पदाधिकारी र सो पश्चात आम जनस्तरमा सुसूचीत गरी प्रयोगमा सहजता ल्याउनु।
- हाल विश्वमा प्रयोगमा रहेका विभिन्न क्रिप्टोकरेन्सीहरु एवम् केन्द्रीय बैंक डिजिटल मुद्राहरुको सञ्जालमा जोडिई सो को प्रयोग सम्बन्धी कानुनी तथा संस्थागत संयन्त्र स्थापना गर्नु।
- ग्राहकले पहिले नै मोबाइल प्रयोग नगरेको र डिजिटल मुद्रा व्यवस्थापन प्रयोजनकै लागि मात्र मोबाईल खरिद एवम् सञ्चालन गर्नुपर्ने भएमा जनतालाई सञ्चालन खर्च महंगो पर्ने।
- डिजिटल मुद्रा तथा विद्युतीय भुक्तानी प्रणालीको सर्भर डाउन हुने, सफ्टवेयर ह्याक हुन सक्ने भएकोले साईबर सुरक्षा गर्नु।
- विभिन्न अध्येताहरुका लागि परम्परागत भौतिक सिक्का सङ्कलन गरी अध्ययन अनुसन्धान कार्य गर्न भौतिक मुद्रा उपलब्ध नहुनु।

निष्कर्ष

केन्द्रीय बैंक डिजिटल मुद्रा (CBDC) को पूर्ण प्रयोग तथा विद्युतीय प्रणालीबाट हुने भुक्तानीलाई अनिवार्य गर्ने हो भने नेपालमा प्रशस्त सम्भावना रहेका छन्। नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकले यसको लागि अध्ययन गरी अवधारणा प्रतिवेदन समेत सार्वजनिक गरिसकेको र मौद्रिक नीतिमा समावेश गरिसकेको अवस्थामा विद्यमान छ। तत्काल राज्यले कानुनी व्यवस्था गरी यसको लागि संस्थागत कार्यप्रणाली स्थापना गर्नुपर्ने

देखिन्छ। यो प्रणाली नेपालमा लागु गर्नुपूर्व यसको सफल प्रयोग भैसकेका देशहरुबाट सबल पक्ष, सुधारोन्मुख पक्षहरु तथा चुनौतीहरुको अध्ययन गरी सोही अनुसार नेपालमा कार्य प्रक्रिया अघि बढाउँदा उपयुक्त हुन्छ। प्रणाली पूर्ण रुपमा अपनाउन सके देशमा हाल चलनमा रहेको अनौपचारिक आर्थिक गतिविधी नियन्त्रणमा आउने, निर्वाचनको क्रममा हुने खर्च व्यवस्थित हुने, सरकारको कर प्रणाली सुदृढ भई राजस्व वृद्धि हुने हुँदा देशमा वित्तीय सुशासन कायम हुनेमा दुईमत रहँदैन। यसको लागि राज्यका सबै निकायमा कार्यरत सरकारी अधिकारीहरु तथा राज्य सञ्चालनका साझेदारहरु समेत प्रतिबद्ध हुन जरुरी छ।

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व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठाको कसीमा निजामती सेवा

दिनेश प्रसाद थानी*

लेखसार

निजामती सेवामा व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठाको वर्तमान स्थिति र यसको प्रयोगको अवस्था हेर्दा यससँग सम्बन्धित नीतिगत तथा कानुनी व्यवस्था, सिद्दान्त र व्यवहारमा मेल खाएको देखिंदैन। हाल निजामती सेवा निकै अप्ठ्यारो स्थितिमा गुज्रिरहेको देख्न सकिन्छ। यसले शुरुवात देखि हालसम्म प्राप्त गरेको साख जोगाइ राख्नु र सेवाकै दिगो निरन्तरता समेत चुनौतीपूर्ण नहोला भन्न सकिन्न। यसो हुनुको पछाडि राजनीतिक नेतृत्व मुख्य रुपमा जिम्मेवार त छँदैछ, निजामती सेवा हाँक्ने पदमा बसेका अधिकांश अधिकारीहरु पनि कम जिम्मेवार छैनन्। निजामती सेवाको संरक्षक राजनीतिक नेतृत्व नै हो, यसमा विवाद छैन तर राजनीतिक नेतृत्वको प्रकृति अस्थायी हुन्छ, तसर्थ स्थायी सरकारको रुपमा रहेको प्रशानिक नेतृत्वले नै निजामती सेवामा कसरी व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा कायम गर्न सकिन्छ र कसरी यसको थप विकास गर्न सकिन्छ भन्ने तर्फ विशेष ध्यान दिन जरुरी हुन्छ। निजामती सेवाको उच्च पदमा रहेका प्रशासकहरुको व्यवहार र कार्यशैली हेर्दा यस वारेमा पटक्कै ध्यान नदिएको आरोप नागरिक तह र आमसञ्चार माध्यमबाट लाग्ने गरेको छ। निजामती सेवामा कार्यरत सचिवहरु, सह-सचिवहरु, उपसचिवहरु लगायत शाखा अधिकृत, नायव सुब्बा, खरिदार र कार्यालय सहयोगी सम्मै राजनीतिक पार्टी र त्यसका फ्रन्ट लाइनका नेताहरुको चाकडी गरेर मालदार मन्त्रालय, विभाग र कार्यालयमा सरुवा तथा पदस्थापना हुने मात्र होइन, मुलुक बाहिर समेत पदस्थापना हुन सकिने विभिन्न स्थान प्राप्त गर्न लागिपरेको जस्ता आरोपहरु सर्वसाधारण जनताबाट लाग्ने गरेको छ। निजामती सेवाको विशिष्टीकृत कानुनका रुपमा रहेको निजामती सेवा ऐन र नियमावलीमा भएका प्रावधानहरुको व्यवहारमा कार्यान्वयनको स्थिति निकै फितलो देखिन्छ। पदस्थापना, सरुवा, बढुवा र कार्यसम्पादन मूल्यांकन जस्ता विषयहरुमा निश्चित मापदण्ड बनाइएको छैन जसका कारण यी विषयहरु सधैंजसो विवादित भईनैरहेका छन्। यसले गर्दा निजामती सेवाको मूल्य र मान्यता नै धरापमा पर्न सक्ने

* *उपसचिव, नेपाल सरकार*

इमेलः dinesh.thani76@gmail.com

खतरा छ। जनतालाई उपलब्ध गराउनुपर्ने सेवाको प्रभावकारिता पनि सन्तोषजनक देखिंदैन। यी र यस्ता विविध कारणले गर्दा सिंगो निजामती सेवा प्रति नै जनताको दृष्टिकोण त्यति सकारात्मक देखिएको छैन। वर्तमानमा देखिएको यस्तो स्थितिलाई तत्काल सुधार गरी जनताको नजरमा निजामती सेवाको साख कायम राख्न र जनमैत्री सेवाका रुपमा स्थापित हुन निजामती सेवामा व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा महत्वपूर्ण हुन्छ। यसका लागि शासकीय र प्रशासकीय दुवै पक्ष उत्तिकै जिम्मेवार हुनुपर्ने र आ-आफ्ना कार्यव्यवहार र कार्यशैली राष्ट्रिय हित र जनमैत्री बनाउँदै संविधान र कानुनको पूर्ण परिपालना गरी जनतालाई छिटो छरितो र कम लागतमा प्रभावकारी सेवा उपलब्ध गराई जनताको विश्वास जित्न अपरिहार्य देखिन्छ।

शब्दकुञ्जीः व्यवसायिकता, निष्ठा, संरचना, जनअपेक्षा, सेवाप्रवाह।

पृष्ठभूमि

स्थायी सरकारको रुपमा चिनिएको निजामती सेवा र यससँग सम्बन्धित प्रशासन, राज्यको ऐना हो। यसले प्रदान गर्ने सेवाको मापनबाट सरकारको छवि देखिन्छ। लोकसेवा आयोगको प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक परीक्षा पास गरेर स्थायी नियुक्ति भई सेवा प्रवेश गरेका व्यक्तिहरु रहने गरी बनेको सेवा हो निजामती सेवा। सार्वजनिक सेवाको मियोको रुपमा स्वीकारिएकोले पनि यसले आफु अब्बल हुने मात्र होइन, अन्य सरकारी सेवाको पथ प्रदर्शक बन्नुपर्ने जिम्मेवारी समेत बोकेको छ। अझ त्यति मात्रले पनि यसको बृहत स्कोपलाई प्रतिनिधित्व गरेको पर्याप्त मान्न सकिंदैन, निजामती सेवाले अन्य गैर-सरकारी क्षेत्र, संगठित संघ संस्थालाई पनि मार्गदर्शन प्रदान गरेको हुन्छ। विशेषत : सरकार सञ्चालन गर्ने आधिकारिकता पाएको निर्वाचित राजनीतिक नेतृत्वलाई आधार प्रदान गर्ने, सुचना उपलब्ध गराउने, नियम र कानुनका बारेमा जानकारी गराउने र आवश्यकताका आधारमा रचनात्मक सुझाव समेत दिने जस्ता विविध जिम्मेवारी बोकेको स्थायी संगठनको रुपमा निजामती सेवालाई बुझ्नु पर्ने हुन्छ। यसले जनताका अपेक्षालाई सरकार सम्म र सरकारका निर्णयहरु जनता समक्ष पुर्‍याई जनता र सरकारलाई जोड्ने काम गर्दछ।

नेपालको संविधान को धारा २८५ मा गरिएको परिभाषामा नेपाल सरकारले देशको प्रशासन सञ्चालन गर्न सङ्घीय निजामती सेवा र आवश्यकता अनुसार अन्य सङ्घीय सरकारी सेवाहरुको गठन गर्न सक्ने र त्यस्ता सेवाहरुको गठन, सञ्चालन र सेवाका सर्त सङ्घीय ऐन बमोजिम हुने कुरा उल्लेख गरिए संगै राज्य सञ्चालनमा निजामती सेवाको भूमिका महत्वपुर्ण रहेको कुरा प्रष्टै छ। निजामती सेवालाई बढी सक्षम, सुदृढ, सेवामुलक र उत्तरदायी बनाउन निजामती सेवाको गठन, सञ्चालन र सेवाका सर्त सम्बन्धी व्यवस्था गर्न २०४९ सालमा

निजामती सेवा ऐन जारी गरियो जुन हालसम्म कार्यान्वयनमा रहेकै छ। ऐनका प्रावधानहरु व्यवहारमै कार्यान्वयन गर्न २०५० सालमा निजामती सेवा नियमावली समेत ल्याइएको देखिन्छ। वर्तमान अवस्था हेर्दा राज्यले अंगालेको सङ्घीय प्रणाली अनुरुप प्रशासनिक पुनर्संरचनाको कार्य टुङ्गोमा पुग्न सकेको देखिंदैन, न त यसलाई मार्गदर्शन गर्ने सङ्घीय निजामती सेवा ऐन नै सरकारले जारी गर्न सकेको छ। यसैगरी निजामती सेवाको सोचपत्र, २०६३, राष्ट्रसेवक कर्मचारीको आचारसंहिता, २०६५ र निजामती कर्मचारीको आचरण सम्बन्धी नियमावली, २०६५ जारी हुनुका साथै समय समयमा प्रशासन सुधारका लागि विभिन्न आयोग, समिति आदि गठन गरेको देखिन्छ।

व्यावसायिकताले आचरण, व्यवहार र गुणहरूलाई बुझाउँछ जुन कुनै पनि पेशामा संलग्न सक्षम र नैतिक व्यक्तिको विशेषता हो। सकारात्मक मनोवृत्ति कायम राख्नु, समयनिष्ठ हुनु र नैतिक मानकहरूको पालना गर्नु पनि व्यावसायिकताका खास पक्षहरू हुन्। यसका मुख्य विशेषताहरूमा विश्वसनीयता, निष्ठा, प्रतिष्पर्धी क्षमता, अरुप्रति सम्मान, प्रभावकारी संचार, र निरन्तर सिकाइका लागि प्रतिबद्धता आदिलाई लिन सकिन्छ। निजामती सेवामा व्यवसायिकता भन्नाले सेवा सञ्चालनका लागि कार्यान्वयनमा रहेको ऐन, नियमावली, कार्यविधि र आचारसंहिता आदिमा राखिएका प्रावधानहरुको व्यवहारमै पालना गर्नुका साथै प्रभावकारी ढंगले कार्यसम्पादन गरी कम लागत र यथासक्य छिटो जनतालाई उनीहरुले चाहे जस्तै सेवा प्रदान गर्नु हो। निजामती सेवालाई व्यवसायिक बनाउन तालिमको व्यवस्था, भिन्न भिन्न भूगोल तथा कार्यालयहरुमा सरुवा, स्वदेश भित्रै र वैदेशिक अध्ययनको अवसर, थप जिम्मेवारी प्रदान, कार्यसम्पादन मुल्यांकनको व्यवस्था, कार्यकुशलताका आधारमा पुरस्कारको व्यवस्था आदि प्रावधानहरु यसलाई निर्देशित र नियमन गर्ने निजामती सेवा ऐनमा व्यवस्था गरिएको छ। यसैगरी ऐनको दफा ३ मा विभिन्न १० वटा सेवा रहने व्यवस्था छ भने दफा ६ मा राजपत्राङ्कित विशिष्ट श्रेणी सम्मै नै सेवा विशिष्टीकरण गर्ने प्रयोजनका लागि विभिन्न ६ वटा सेवाको समूहीकरण गरिएको छ। यसबाहेक नीति निर्माण र विकासमा प्रत्यक्षरुपमा संलग्न हुनुपर्ने कार्य जिम्मेवारी बोकेका राजपत्राङ्कित दर्जा/ पदका लागि सेवा प्रवेशसँगै निश्चित अवधिको तालिमको व्यवस्था छ भने बढुवा हुन समेत अनिवार्य सेवाकालीन तालिम लिनुपर्ने प्रावधान ऐनमा राखिएको पाइन्छ। त्यति मात्र नभई सेवामा कार्यरत राजपत्राङ्कित अधिकृतहरु उपसचिव र सहसचिव पदमा लिखित प्रतियोगितात्मक परीक्षामा सफल भै बढुवा हुँदा होस् अथवा जेष्ठता र कार्यसम्पादन मुल्याङ्कन वा कार्यक्षमताको मूल्याङ्कनद्वारा हुने बढुवामा समेत कार्य प्रारम्भ गर्नु अघि नेपाल प्रशासनिक प्रशिक्षण प्रतिष्ठान मार्फत केही दिनको अभिमुखीकरण तालिम दिईदै आएको छ।

निष्ठा भन्नाले कुनै पनि व्यक्तिले आफ्नो जीवनका सबै पक्षमा इमान्दारी र नैतिक सिद्धान्तहरू कायम राख्नु हो। निष्ठावान् व्यक्तिहरू भरपर्दो र जवाफदेही हुन्छन्। साथै निष्पक्षता र न्यायको भावना कायम राख्दछन्। यसका मुख्य चरित्रहरुमा इमान्दारी, विश्वसनीयता, स्थिरता र बलियो नैतिक चरित्र आदि पर्दछन्। निजामती सेवामा निष्ठाको चर्चा गर्दा यसका मूल्य र मान्यताहरु यससँग जोडिन आउँछन्। सार्वजनिक सेवाका मूल्य मान्यताहरु नै निजामती सेवाका मूल्य मान्यताहरु हुन् भन्ने कुरामा विवाद छैन किनकि निजामती सेवा नै सार्वजनिक सेवाको मियो हो जसले सार्वजनिक सेवालाई निर्देशित गरेको हुन्छ। निजामती सेवामा निष्ठा भनेको सेवा प्रति नैतिकवान हुनु, इमान्दार हुनु, सेवाका मूल्य र सिद्धान्तहरुको व्यवहारत पालन गर्नु आदि विषयहरु प्रमुख मानिन्छ। यसैगरी यो विषयले संगठनको उद्देश्य प्राप्तिका लागि मनै देखी गरिने प्रयास र त्यसको निरन्तरता, धैर्यता, निष्पक्षता, तटस्थता र शिष्टता जस्ता विविध पक्षलाई समेत समेट्छ। तर निजामती सेवामा आबद्ध सबै श्रेणी र तहका कर्मचारीहरुमा निष्ठा छ वा छैन भन्ने विषय सेवा भित्र र बाहिर छलफलमा आउने गरेको छ।

नीतिगत तथा कानुनी व्यवस्था

हालसम्म निजामती सेवाको राष्ट्रिय नीति नै बन्न सकेको छैन, तसर्थ व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठाको सवालमा छुट्टै नीतिगत व्यवस्था हुने कुरै भएन। निजामती सेवा सञ्चालन गर्ने मुख्य जिम्मेवार निकायको रुपमा रहेको सङ्घीय मामिला तथा सामान्य प्रशासन मन्त्रालयले समय समयमा गर्ने निर्देशन र परिपत्रहरुलाई नै व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा कायम गर्न नीतिगत मार्गनिर्देशनका रुपमा बुझ्ने गरिन्छ। यसैगरी सेवा सञ्चालन गर्ने विभिन्न मन्त्रालयहरु, प्रधानमन्त्री तथा मन्त्रिपरिषद्को कार्यालय लगायत प्रदेशका मुख्यमन्त्री तथा मन्त्रिपरिषद्को कार्यालयका साथै प्रदेश मन्त्रालयहरुबाट समय समयमा गरिने परिपत्रहरुले नै नीतिगत मार्गनिर्देश गर्ने गरेका छन्। अझ बृहत रुपमा भन्दा नेपालको संविधानको प्रस्तावना र राज्यका नीतिहरु अन्तर्गतका विषयहरुलाई यससँग जोड्न सकिन्छ।

निजामती सेवामा व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा कायम गर्न छुट्टै ऐनको व्यवस्था छैन। यी विषयलाई सम्बोधन गर्न र मार्गनिर्देश गर्न हाल कार्यान्वयनमा रहेको निजामती सेवा ऐन, २०४९ र नियमावली, २०५० लाई नै विशिष्टीकृत कानुनको रुपमा मानिएको छ। यसैगरी ऐन र नियमावली अन्तर्गत बनेका अन्य कार्यविधिका साथै निजामती सेवाको सोचपत्र, २०६३ र निजामती कर्मचारीको आचरण सम्बन्धी नियमावली, २०६५, राष्ट्रसेवक कर्मचारीको आचारसंहिता, २०६५ आदिमा भएका व्यवस्था र प्रावधानमा समेत व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा सँग सम्बन्धित विषयहरु संलग्न गरिएका छन्। यसैगरी विभिन्न समयमा गठन गरिएका प्रशासन सुधार आयोग, प्रशासन सुधार सुझाव समिति, प्रशासन सुधार सुझाव कार्यान्वयन तथा अनुगमन समिति तथा संसदीय विशेष

समिति आदिले दिएका महत्वपूर्ण सुझावहरु अन्तरगत पनि यी विषयहरुलाई सम्बोधन गर्ने गरिएको पाईन्छ। केही वर्ष पहिले सदाचारिता ऐनको भने मस्यौदा तयार भएको विषय चर्चामा रहेको थियो।

हालको अवस्था

संविधानले सङ्घीय राज्यप्रणाली अवलम्बन गरे सँगै सङ्घ, प्रदेश र स्थानीय तहमा राजनीतिक पुनरसंरचना गरी ३ तहका सरकार रहने व्यवस्था मात्र गरेन, सबै तहका सरकारलाई कानुन बनाउने सम्मको अधिकार संविधानमै व्यवस्था गरी सहकार्यात्मक मोडेलको सङ्घीयताको अभ्यास गर्दै आइरहेको छ तथापी नेपालको सन्दर्भमा सङ्घीयताको उपयुक्तताका वारेमा भने सार्वजनिक रुपमै बहस चलिसकेको छ। सङ्घीयताका ३ मुख्य पिलरहरु राजनीतिक सङ्घीयता, प्रशासनिक सङ्घीयता र वित्तीय सङ्घीयता मध्ये प्रशासनिक सङ्घीयताका सवालमा नेपालको राजनीतिक नेतृत्व खासै जिम्मेवार देखिएको छैन। यसबाट सहजै अनुमान गर्न सकिने कुरा के छ भने सरकारमा रहने जुनसुकै दलको राजनीतिक नेतृत्व पनि विद्यमान निजामती सेवा अर्थात् नेपालको कर्मचारीतन्त्र प्रति विश्वस्त छैन वा निजामती सेवा स्थायी भएकोमा र आफु अस्थायी भएकोमा उसलाई इर्ष्या छ। अर्को तर्फ हेर्ने हो भने निजामती सेवामै रहेर पनि सेवाको हितमा हैन, नितान्त आफु अनुकुल स्थितिको सिर्जना गर्ने र सधैं राजनीतिक नेतृत्वको नजिक रहेर आफ्नो बर्चस्व स्थापित गरिरहने कर्मचारीहरु पनि यसमा कम जिम्मेवार छैनन्।

विद्यमान अवस्था हेर्दा राजनीतिक नेतृत्व र निजामती कर्मचारी बीचको सम्बन्ध जसरी विकसित हुँदै गैरहेको छ, न त्यसले निजामती सेवाको साख वृद्धि गर्दछ, न सेवामा व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा कायम गर्न सघाउँछ, न दिगो रुपमा यी दुइ बिचको सम्बन्ध सुमधुर बनाउन भूमिका नै खेल्न सक्दछ। राजनीतिक नेतृत्वले आफ्नो अकर्मण्यता लुकाउन कर्मचारीहरुलाई दोषारोपण गर्ने, नियम र कानुन विपरीतका कामहरु अघि बढाउन दबाब दिने, आफ्नो वरिपरि घुम्न बाध्य बनाउने वातावरण निर्माण गर्ने, आफ्नो सहयात्रीका रुपमा नभई सहयोगीका रुपमा व्यवहार गर्ने, आफ्नो हित अनुकुल निर्णय नगरे धम्क्याउने र त्यतिले मात्र नपुगे अदृश्य रुपमा आफ्ना कार्यकर्ता उचालेर कर्मचारीहरुलाई दुर्व्यवहार गर्ने गरेका प्रशस्तै उदाहरण नेपालको निजामती सेवाले भोग्दै आइरहेको देखिन्छ। यसले गर्दा कर्मचारीतन्त्रमा व्यवसायिकताको विकास हुन सक्ने आधार भत्काइराखेको छ, जसका कारण निजामती सेवामा निष्ठाको संकट प्रष्टै देख्न सकिन्छ। निष्ठा विना सुशासनको परिकल्पना समेत गर्न नसकिने हुँदाहुँदै पनि शासकीय र प्रशासकीय दुवै पक्षमा अपेक्षित निष्ठा कायम गर्न भने सकिएको देखिदैन।

निजामती सेवालाई मार्गनिर्देश गर्न बनेको हाल कार्यान्वयनमा रहेको निजामती सेवा ऐनले वर्तमान शासकीय प्रणाली अनुरुप प्रशासनिक संरचनाको प्रतिनिधित्व गर्दैन। त्यसैले यो ऐनले निजामती सेवामा आबद्ध कर्मचारीहरुको व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा स्थापित गर्ने अथवा त्यसको विकास गर्ने सन्दर्भमा व्यवस्था गर्न सकेको देखिदैन। ऐन, नियम, कार्यविधि, निर्देशिका र आचारसंहितामा यस विषयमा केही प्रावधानहरु उल्लेख गरिएका भए पनि कार्यशैली र कार्यव्यवहारमा निजामती सेवामा व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा जनताको नजरमा धमिलो नै छ। सरकारी सेवा प्राप्त गर्न सर्वसाधारण जनतालाई अझै पनि सहज र सरल पहुँच छैन। जनतालाइ मात्र हैन, सरकारी सेवामै कार्यरत रहेकालाई समेत सरल र सहज सेवा प्राप्त गर्न बिना चिनजान मुश्किल छ। चिनजान र भनसुन बिना यदि कुनै सेवा सहजै प्राप्त भयो भने त्यो ठूलै प्राप्ति हो भन्ने आभास जो कोहीलाई हुने अवस्था विद्यमान छ। अर्कोतिर सेवा प्राप्त गर्न सरकारी कार्यालय जाने सर्वसाधारण जनताको कर्मचारीप्रतिको नकारात्मक दृष्टिकोणका कारण पनि सेवा वितरणमा कठिनाइ आइरहेको छ। जनताले पनि आफ्नो अधिकारको कुरा मात्र गर्ने तर आफ्नो कर्तव्य पालन नगर्ने प्रवृत्ति देखिन्छ। यसो हुनु भनेको जनता र निजामती सेवाका कर्मचारीबीच एक अर्कामा विश्वासको वातावरण बन्न नसक्नु हो। यसमा राजनीतिक नेतृत्वले सकारात्मक भूमिका खेल्नुपर्नेमा व्यवहारमा त्यस्तो देखिंदैन। मुख्य कुरा त मुलुकले अवलम्बन गरेको शासकीय प्रणाली अनुरुप निजामती सेवालाई गाइड गर्ने निजामती सेवा ऐन नै बन्न सकेको छैन।

निजामती सेवाको अझ भनौं सार्वजनिक सेवाकै अभिभावकत्व बोकेको राजनीतिक नेतृत्वले जनतालाई सहज र प्रभावकारी सेवा प्रवाह गर्ने कार्य जिम्मेवारी बोकेको निजामती कर्मचारीतन्त्रलाई निष्ठावान र व्यवसायिक बनाउनुको साटो आफूप्रति लिप्त र आश्रित बनाउन लागिपरेको आरोप कर्मचारीतन्त्र भित्रका केही कर्मचारीहरुले लगाइराखेका छन्। निजामती सेवाको व्यवसायिकता भत्काए मात्र यो सम्भव छ भन्ने मानसिकता राजनीतिक पात्रहरुमा रहेको शंका गर्न सकिने प्रशस्तै उदाहरणहरु पनि विभिन्न संचार माध्यमका समाचारमा पढ्न र देख्न पाइन्छ। यी विविध कारणले गर्दा सरकारले दिन प्रति दिन क्रमश नागरिकहरुको विश्वास गुमाइरहेको हो कि भनेर शंका गर्न सकिन्छ। अर्को तर्फ निजामती सेवा भित्रका कर्मचारीहरुमा अनुशासन खस्कँदो अवस्थामा छ। पदसोपनका आधारमा आफ्नो दायित्व र उत्तरदायित्व वहन गर्नुपर्ने कर्मचारीहरु आफु र आफ्नो जिम्मेवारी प्रति पनि जिम्मेवार नभएको देख्न सकिन्छ। सचिव देखि खरिदार सम्मैको पदस्थापना, सरुवा, तालिम तथा अन्य सेवा सुविधामा कुनै आधार र मापदण्ड छैन। यी सबैका लागि राजनीतिक नेतृत्वकै आशिर्वादले काम गर्ने हुँदा निजामती सेवाका कर्मचारीहरु आफ्नो सुपरिवेक्षक प्रति उत्तरदायी नभएको देखिन्छ। यसो हुनु पनि अस्वाभाविक भने देखिंदैन किनकि अधिकांश सुपरिवेक्षकले आफ्नो मातहतका कर्मचारीहरुलाई खासै संरक्षण गर्ने गरेको अभ्यास देखिंदैन।

निजामती सेवामा पदस्थापना र सरुवाको प्रवृत्ति हेर्दा विशिष्ट श्रेणी सचिव पदमा पुगेको निजामती सेवाको कर्मचारीलाई समेत बिना आधार राजनीतिक नेतृत्वले जगेडामा राख्ने र उनीहरुको इच्छा अनुसार मन्त्रालय दिने, मन लाग्दा राख्ने, नलाग्दा सरुवा गर्ने प्रवृत्ति निरन्तर चलिरहेकै छ भने सो भन्दा मुनिका पदहरु सहसचिव, उपसचिव, शाखा अधिकृत लगायत सो मुनिका पदहरुको हालत के होला, सबै उदाङ्गै छ। यसले निजामती सेवा भित्रको निष्ठा र व्यवसायिकतामा गहिरो आघात पारेको छ। अर्कोतर्फ निजामती कर्मचारीहरुको पनि सेवा प्रतिको निष्ठामा कमी छ, अनुशासनमा कमी छ, सेवाप्रवाह चुस्त छैन, प्रतिष्पर्धात्मकता छैन। अरु धेरै कुरा भन्नु भन्दा पनि सामान्य कुराहरु जस्तो कार्यालय समयको परिपालना, पोशाक लगाउने विषय जस्ता कुराहरुमा पनि समस्या देखिएको छ। यसैगरी निजामती सेवाले जनताको मात्र विश्वास जित्न नसकेको अवस्था होइन, कर्मचारी कर्मचारीबीच पनि विश्वासको संकट छ। ट्रेड युनियनका कारण त कर्मचारीतन्त्र यसै विभाजित छ, अझ त्यसमा पनि सुपरभाइजर र मातहतका कर्मचारीहरुबीचको सम्बन्ध सुमधुर नहुँदा निजामती सेवाले नतिजा दिन नसकेको कुरालाई बल पुऱ्याएको छ। यसले गर्दा सेवा भित्र रहेका कर्मचारीहरु पनि सेवामै रहिरहन कठिन हुने र प्रतिभावान व्यक्तिहरु निजामती सेवामा प्रवेश नै नगर्ने स्थिति देखापरेको छ।

निजामती सेवामा ध्यान पुऱ्याउनुपर्ने विषयहरु

सरकारलाई नीति निर्माण गर्न आवश्यक सूचना उपलब्ध गराउने, नीति विश्लेषणमा सहयोग गर्ने, रचनात्मक सुझाव प्रदान गर्ने, उपयुक्त नीति तर्जुमा गर्न प्रेरित गर्ने जस्ता विविध विषयहरु निजामती सेवाको कार्य र भूमिका अन्तर्गत पर्दछ। निर्माण भैसकेका नीतिको प्रभावकारी कार्यान्वयनका लागि स्रोत साधनको व्यवस्थापन, कार्यान्वयन संरचना निर्माण, कर्मचारी व्यवस्थापन, जोखिमको अनुमान र त्यसलाई कम गर्ने उपाय जस्ता विविध विषयहरु अवलम्बन गरी नीतिले लिएको लक्ष्य र उद्देश्य बमोजिम नतिजा प्राप्त गर्न निजामती सेवाको अहम भूमिका हुन्छ। यसका निम्ति निजामती सेवा निष्ठावान र व्यवसायिक हुनु जरुरी हुन्छ अन्यथा सम्भव हुँदैन। यसका लागि ध्यान पुऱ्याउनुपर्ने निम्न विषयहरु प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ,-

१. शासकीय प्रणाली अनुरुपको निजामती सेवा ऐन

राज्यले अवलम्बन गरेको शासकीय संरचना अनुरुप निजामती सेवा ऐन जारी गरी तत्काल कार्यान्वयनमा ल्याउनुपर्नेमा अझैंसम्म सरकारले ऐन ल्याउनै सकेन। यसले सङ्घीय निजामती सेवा कस्तो हुने, प्रदेश र स्थानीय तहमा कस्तो सेवा हुने भन्ने अन्यौल सिर्जना गरेको पनि ८ वर्ष नाघिसक्यो। संविधान जारी गरिएसँगै तत्काल जारी

गरिनुपर्ने सङ्घीय निजामती सेवा ऐन हालसम्म पनि नआउँदा संविधानले दिएको कानुन बनाउने अधिकारको प्रयोग गरी केही प्रदेशहरुले प्रदेश ऐन जारी गरी कार्यान्वयनमा ल्याइसकेका छन्। यसले सृजना गरेको दायित्वलाई अब बन्दै गरेको सङ्घीय निजामती ऐनले कसरी सम्बोधन गर्ला भन्ने विषयले चुनौती सिर्जना गरेको छ। सङ्घीय निजामती सेवाको पदमा लोकसेवाको प्रतिष्पर्धात्मक परीक्षा पास गरेर नियुक्ति भएका केही कर्मचारीहरुलाई प्रदेश र स्थानीय तहमा समायोजन गरिएकाहरुको वारेमा सङ्घमा फर्किन पाउने वा नपाउने भन्ने अन्यौल नै छ। यसैगरी तिनै तहबीच सहकार्यात्मक सम्बन्ध स्थापित भैरहन र संघले अभिभावकीय भूमिकामा रहिरहनका निम्ति प्रदेश र स्थानीय तहका कुन कुन पदमा सङ्घीय कर्मचारीको प्रतिनिधि रहने भन्ने कुरा नयाँ ऐनमा आउनुपर्छ। यसैगरी सरुवा, बढुवा लगायत वृत्ति विकासका अन्य सबै विषयहरुमा आधार र मापदण्ड किटान गरिनुपर्छ।

२. निजामती सेवामा राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप

निजामती सेवामा कार्यरत कर्मचारीहरुको मनोबल गिराउने, कानुन र नियम विपरित काम गर्न बाध्य पार्ने, आफ्नो अनुकुल काम नगरे सरुवा गर्ने वा जिम्मेवारी खोस्ने जस्ता विविध खालका कार्य राजनीतिक नेतृत्वबाट हुने गरेको छ अहिले त यस्तो सम्म भैसक्यो कि छिटपुट केही बाहेक सिंगो कर्मचारीको सरुवा राजनीति नेतृत्वले नै गर्छ। यसले कर्मचारीतन्त्रको नेतृत्त्व र पदसोपनको मर्मलाइ भत्काएको छ। कुनै पनि मन्त्रालयको सचिवले आफ्नो मातहतका कर्मचारीको स्वतन्त्रपूर्वक उनीहरुको योग्यता र अनुभवका आधारमा पदस्थापना र सरुवा गर्न तथा कार्य जिम्मेवारी तोक्न सक्ने अवस्था छैन। यी हरेक विषयमा मन्त्रीको हस्तक्षेप हुने गरेको देखिन्छ। स्थानीय तहको प्रमुख प्रशासकीय अधिकृतका सन्दर्भमा सम्बन्धित पालिकाको मेयर वा अध्यक्षको तजबीजमा मात्र हाजिर हुन पाउने वा नपाउने अवस्था बनेको छ। कानुन राजनीतिक प्रतिनिधिले नै आफै बनाउँछन् तर त्यही कानुन र नियम अनुसार कर्मचारीहरुलाई काम गर्न दिंदैनन। यसले गर्दा राजनीति र कर्मचारीतन्त्रले आ-आफ्नो कार्य जिम्मेवारी स्वतन्त्र ढंगले बहन गर्न पाउने वातावरण बन्न सकेको छैन, यो तुरुन्त रोकिनुपर्छ।

३. कर्मचारी कर्मचारी बीचको सम्बन्ध

निजामती सेवामा आबद्ध सबै कर्मचारीको सेवाका सर्त र विषयहरु समान हुने भएकोले सबै कर्मचारीको सेवा प्रतिको भाव एउटै हुनुपर्दछ। वर्तमान ऐनले कर्मचारीहरुको एउटै मात्र संगठन रहने भन्ने बाध्यात्मक व्यवस्था गर्न नसकेको कारण कर्मचारीहरु विभिन्न राजनीतिक दलका भातृ संगठनका रुपमा भिन्दाभिन्दै संगठनमा विभक्त छन्, जसका कारण उनीहरुबीचको सम्बन्ध सुमधुर छैन। एउटा संगठनमा आबद्ध कर्मचारीलाई अर्को संगठनमा

आबद्ध कर्मचारीले शत्रुकै नजरले हेर्छ। यसले गर्दा निजामती सेवामा विशेषगरी पदस्थापना र सरुवामा समस्या नै सिर्जना गरेको छ। अर्को तर्फ शुरु पद देखि उच्च पदस्थ सबै कर्मचारीहरुको सरुवा र अन्य सुविधाका लागि राजनीतिक नेतृत्वकै आशिर्वाद आवश्यक देखिनुले कर्मचारीतन्त्रमा सुपरभाइजर र सबअर्डिनेट बीचको कार्यसम्बन्ध अर्थपूर्ण हुन सकेको छैन। तसर्थ यस्ता समस्या र प्रवृत्तिहरुको अन्त्य गर्न आवश्यक पहल गरी निजामती सेवामा उच्च पदस्थ अर्थात नेतृत्वमा रहेका कर्मचारीहरुले प्रभावकारी भूमिका निर्वाह गर्न आवश्यक देखिन्छ।

४. कर्मचारी र जनताबीच विश्वासको वातावरण

निजामती कर्मचारीका वारेमा जनतामा यतिसम्म नकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण बनिसक्यो कि जनताले कर्मचारीलाई कामचोर, भ्रष्टाचारी र आफुले तिरेको करबाट तलब खाने आदि विभिन्न खालका आरोपहरु लगाउने गरेका छन्। यसो हुनुमा निजामती सेवामा रहेका सानो संख्यामा केही कर्मचारीहरु जिम्मेवार होलान तर त्यो भन्दा बढी राजनीतिक नेतृत्वमा रहेकाहरुले आफ्नो अक्षमता लुकाउन कर्मचारीहरुलाई जनताको नजरमा दोषी देखाउन गर्ने गरेका क्रियाकलापका कारण कर्मचारी र जनता बीच विश्वासको वातावरण बन्न सकेको देखिंदैन। राजनीतिमा रहेका अन्य तहका नेताहरुको त कुरै छोडौं, पूर्व प्रधानमन्त्री र वर्तमान प्रधानमन्त्रीको समेत कर्मचारीतन्त्र प्रति समय समयमा आउने अभिव्यक्तिहरु यसमा जिम्मेवार छन् भन्न हिच्किचाइरहनै पर्दैन। यसैगरी जनतालाई सेवा वितरण गर्दा सरल र सहज रुपले गर्ने, जनतासँग राम्रो व्यवहार गर्ने जस्ता कुरामा कर्मचारीतन्त्र पनि बढी चनाखो हुनैपर्छ। तसर्थ कर्मचारी र जनताबीच विश्वासको वातावरण बनाउन कर्मचारीहरुको कार्यशैली सुधार गर्नु त छँदैछ, त्यो भन्दा बढी राजनीतिक नेतृत्वले यसमा पहल गर्नुपर्ने देखिन्छ।

५. भ्रष्टाचारको न्यूनीकरण र सुशासन प्रवर्द्धन

मुलुकले विकासको गति समात्न र समृद्धि हाँसिल गर्न सुशासन नै मुख्य सर्त हो। यसका निम्ति शासकीय र प्रशासकीय दुवै पक्ष त जिम्मेवार छन् नै, जनताको पनि उत्तिकै जिम्मेवारी रहन्छ असल जनता, स्वतन्त्र नागरिक समाज, प्रतिबद्ध राष्ट्रसेवक कर्मचारी र जिम्मेवार राजनीतिक नेतृत्व भए मात्र सुशासन प्राप्त गर्न सम्भव हुन्छ। यसो भयो भने भ्रष्टाचार न्यूनीकरण गर्न गाह्रो पनि छैन तर यसका लागि वर्तमानमा देखिएका कार्य व्यवहारमा भने सुधार गर्नैपर्छ। न्यायाधिश नियुक्ति र अख्तियार दुरुपयोग अनुसन्धान आयोग लगायतका संवैधानिक निकायहरुमा नियुक्ति गर्दा हाल देखिएको विकृतिको सुधार गरी स्वच्छ र प्रतिभावान व्यक्तिहरु मात्र नियुक्त गर्न विशेषत राजनीतिक नेतृत्व प्रतिबद्ध हुनैपर्छ। यसैगरी राजनीति र प्रशासनबीचको सीमाको दुवै पक्षबाट पालना

गर्नैपर्छ। स्थायी कर्मचारीतन्त्रको समानान्तर रुपमा बनाइएका विभिन्न आयोग, बोर्ड, परिषद, समिति जस्ता संरचना लगायत विभिन्न मन्त्रालय, विभाग र कार्यालयहरुमा करारमा कामकाज लगाइएका गरी झन्डै निजामती कर्मचारीकै हाराहारीमा राजनीतिक नियुक्ति गरिएका कर्मचारीहरुको संख्या घटाई अर्थतन्त्रमा परेको चाप घटाउन आवश्यक छ। अर्को महत्वपूर्ण विषय भनेको निजामती कर्मचारीलाई बजार मूल्यका आधारमा र अन्य अर्ध-सरकारी तथा गैरसरकारी संगठनको तुलनामा उच्च तलबमान दिनु उपयुक्त हुन्छ।

६. जनतालाई सरल र सहज सेवा प्रवाह

स्थायी सरकारका रुपमा मानिंदै आएको निजामती सेवाको कार्य जिम्मेवारीहरुमा नीति निर्माण र त्यसको कार्यान्वयनसँग सम्बन्धित विषय मात्र नभई जनतालाई आवश्यक सेवा सुविधा सरल र सहज रुपमा वितरण गर्नु हो। यसको प्रमुख जिम्मेवारी स्थानीय तहहरुलाई संविधानले नै दिएको छ। परराष्ट्र मामिला, आर्थिक मामिला सम्बन्धी केही विषयहरु, नागरिकता र राहदानी जस्ता केही विषयहरु मात्र संघले आफू मातहत राखेको छ। जनताको नजिक अर्थात् घरदैलोमा नै रहेका स्थानीय तहहरुबाट नै सेवाप्रवाह गर्दा समेत जनताले आशा गरे जस्तो सेवा सहज रुपमा प्राप्त गर्न नसकेको गुनासो आउन छोडेको छैन। यसका लागि राजनीतिक नेतृत्व, कर्मचारी प्रशासन र जनताबीच एक आपसमा अन्तरक्रिया र छलफल गरेर कस्तो कस्तो सेवा, कसरी र सेवाको लागत कति हुने भन्ने जस्ता विषयहरुमा निर्णय निर्माण गरी सो अनुरुप सेवा दिने र लिने गर्दा उपयुक्त हुन्छ। यसका लागि जनता र कर्मचारी बीचको हालको एक अर्का प्रतिको दृष्टिकोणमा भने परिवर्तन गर्न आवश्यक देखिन्छ।

निष्कर्ष

निजामती सेवाले जनतालाई सर्भिस डेलिभरी मात्र गर्दैन, यसले पोलिसी डेलिभरी र डेभलपमेन्ट डेलिभरी पनि गर्दछ। निजामती सेवा जति सक्षम, सुदृढ, सेवामुखी र उत्तरदायी हुन्छ, त्यति नै सरल, सहज र प्रभावकारीरुपमा जनताले सेवा प्राप्त गर्न सक्दछन, नीति कार्यान्वयनबाट लाभ प्राप्त गर्दछन र विकासको प्रतिफल न्यायोचित रुपमा पाउँछन्। यसका निम्ति निजामती सेवा तटस्थ, प्रतिबद्ध र नैतिकतामा आधारित भएर मात्र पुग्दैन, यसमा व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा जरुरी हुन्छ। हरेक राजनीतिक व्यवस्था परिवर्तन भएसँगै निजामती सेवालाई थप सबल र सुदृढ बनाउनुको साटो यसमाथि राजनीतिक तवरबाट यसलाई प्रहार गर्ने प्रवृत्ति देखिन्छ। निजामती सेवाको व्यवसायिकतामा आँच पुऱ्याउने, कार्यरत कर्मचारीहरुको उत्प्रेरणामा नकारात्मक असर पुऱ्याउने जस्ता विविध कार्य मार्फत सेवामा निष्ठा कायम रहेको अवस्था छैन। यही स्थिति रहिरहने हो भने सुशासन प्राप्त गर्ने, जनताले सहज र सुलभ सेवा प्राप्त गर्ने र सुखी नेपाली र समृद्ध नेपालको सपना साकार हुने कुरामा शंका पैदा गर्ने हुन्छ।

थानी, दिनेश प्रसाद, २०८०

निजामती सेवामा अझ भनौं सार्वजनिक सेवामा निष्ठा कायम गर्न, सदाचार ऐनको मस्यौदा समेत तयार गरिएको विषय बाहिर आयो तर उक्त ऐन जारी गरिएन। उक्त ऐन जारी गरिएको भए त्यसले केही सुधार भने पक्कै गर्थ्यो होला भन्ने विश्वास गर्न सकिन्छ। तर अब बन्ने निजामती सेवा ऐनमा सो विषयलाई समावेश गर्न भने छुटाउनु हुँदैन। निजामती सेवामा व्यवसायिकताको विकासका निम्ति ऐनमा नै व्यवस्था गरेर योग्यता र अनुभवका आधारमा पदस्थापना र सरुवा, अनुमानयोग्य वृत्तिपथ, ब्याच प्रमोशन, जिम्मेवारीसँग सम्बन्धित विषयमा तालिमका अवसर, उत्प्रेरणाका विषयहरु र उपयुक्त कार्य वातावरण निर्माण गर्न आवश्यक देखिन्छ। यसका लागि निजामती सेवालाई राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेपबाट मुक्त गर्न गरुरी हुन्छ। साथै ट्रेड युनियनको उचित व्यवस्थापन गर्न पनि आवश्यक देखिन्छ। निजामती सेवाको नेतृत्वलाई नै सबल बनाए मात्र सिङ्गो कर्मचारीतन्त्र सबल हुने र त्यसले सक्षमतापूर्वक कार्यसम्पादन गर्न सक्ने कुरामा विश्वास गर्न सकिन्छ। यसका लागि नेतृत्वले पनि आफू मातहतका कर्मचारीहरु बीच विना भेदभाव व्यवहार गर्नुपर्दछ, अवसरको समान वितरण गर्नुपर्दछ, योग्यता र क्षमताका आधारमा कार्य जिम्मेवारी तोक्नुपर्दछ। तबमात्र निजामती सेवामा व्यवसायिकता र निष्ठा कायम हुन सक्दछ।

सन्दर्भ सामग्री

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स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको वातावरण बनाउन के गर्ने ?

नेत्र सुवेदी "प्रयास"*

लेखसार

यस लेखमा स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको नीतिगत तथा कार्यक्रमगत प्राथमिकता एवम् सीप विकास तथा सदुपयोगको अवस्था सम्बन्धमा वि सं २०७७ देखि २०७९ को अवधिमा स्थानीय तहका राजनीतिक पदाधिकारी एवम् कर्मचारीहरुसँग गरिएको अलग अलग दुई अध्ययनबाट प्राप्त भएका निष्कर्षहरु समेटिएको छ। दुवै अध्ययनमा अध्ययन विधिको रुपमा समूह छलफल र प्रश्नावलीको प्रयोग भएको छ। अध्ययनबाट प्राप्तनिष्कर्षका आधारमा भन्नुपर्दा फुटकररुपमा विभिन्न कार्यक्रमले स्थानीय आर्थिक विकाससँग सरोकार राखेको देखिएपनि स्पष्ट नीतिगत खाका र संरचनागत पहल भने भएको भेटिएन। त्यस्तै सीपमूलक जनशक्तिको माग र आपूर्तिबीच खाडल छ। यो अध्ययनले स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको लागि सबै स्थानीय तहहरुले आआफ्नो क्षेत्रमा सम्भावना विश्लेषण गरी कृषि, उद्यम विकास र पर्यटन गतिविधिमा सबै पक्षबाट सहयोग जुटाउनुपर्ने निष्कर्ष निकालेको छ भने सीप विकासतर्फ सीपको नक्शाङ्कन गरी व्यवसायिक योजना विकास गर्न समेत सिकाई रोजगारी तथा आय वृद्धिको प्रत्याभूति गर्नुपर्दछ।

शब्दकुञ्जी : स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास, नीतिगत खाका, संरचनात्मक पहल, सीप नक्शाङ्कन, व्यवसायिक योजना।

विषय प्रवेश

नेपालको सन्दर्भमा स्थानीय तहहरुले आफ्ना नीति तथा कार्यक्रम तर्जुमा गर्दा वा कार्यान्वयनमा लैजादा आर्थिक आयामलाई के कसरी समेट्नुपर्दछ र स्थानीय तहहरुमा यी विषयमा के कस्तो झुकाव वा प्राथमिकता दिने गरिएको छ भन्ने सम्बन्धमा अध्ययन गरियो। साथै सीपयुक्त जनशक्तिको आवश्यकता र

* *सहसचिव, नेपाल सरकार*
इमेलः netra.prayas@gmail.com

हाल स्थानीय तहमा रहेको उपलब्धताको विषयमा समेत अध्ययन भयो। लेखकबाट सङ्घीयता कार्यान्वयनका क्रममा भएको स्थानीय चुनावपछिको तेश्रोदेखि पाँचौ वर्षको अवधिमा स्थानीय तहमा ती दुईवटा लघु अध्ययन भएका थिए। कुन स्थानीय तहलाई अध्ययनमा समावेश गर्ने भन्ने विषय अध्ययनकर्ताले स्वनिर्धारण गरेको स्वविवेकीय चयन विधि थियो। पहिलो अध्ययनमा स्थानीय तहहरुले हाल लागू गरेका नीति कार्यक्रम तथा स्थानीय तहको आर्थिक विकासको सम्भावना सम्बन्धमा बढी केन्द्रित थियो भने दोश्रो अध्ययनले स्थानीय बजारमा माग भएका सीपहरुमा स्थानीय तहभित्र जनशक्ति उपलब्धताको अवस्था र सीप विकास कार्यक्रमको अहिलेको प्रवृत्ति सम्बन्धमा अध्ययन गरिएको थियो। ती अध्ययनबाट प्राप्त विवरणलाई विश्लेषण गरी प्राप्त नतिजालाई समेत आधार मानी स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको हालसम्मको अवस्था र त्यसभित्र पनि प्रमुख सीपयुक्त जनशक्तिको अवस्था सम्बन्धमा यस आलेखमा चर्चा गरिएको छ।

एउटा सन्दर्भबाट लेखको शुरुवात गरौं। स्वीडेनका विद्यालयमा पढ्ने विद्यार्थीहरुले सानातिना संरचना बनाउन, बिग्रेको चिज मर्मत गर्न, घरको वाइरिङ्ग, प्लम्विङ्ग लगायतका काम गर्न सक्छन्। इन्जिनियरिङ्ग अध्ययन गरेकाहरुले घर डिजाइन मात्र गर्दैनन् आफ्नो लागि घर आफै तयार गर्न सक्छन्। वास परियोजनामा समुदायमा भिजेर काम गरेका र पटकपटक युरोपेली राष्ट्र स्वीडेन, जर्मनी लगायतका थुप्रै विकसित देशहरुको अवलोकन भ्रमण गरिसकेका युवा व्यक्तित्व आनन्द गौतम भन्छन् हाम्रो ज्ञान र सीप सिकाई नै अधुरो खालको छ। हामी अक्षर बढी सिकाउँछौ तर आवश्यकता भने व्यावहारिक सीपको छ। (आनन्द, २०८०)

अर्को शव्दमा भन्नुपर्दा उसको जीवनको गुणस्तरमा सुधार हुन्छ। समाजमा उसको स्थान बलियो हुन्छ र अरुलाई सहयोग गर्न सक्ने अवस्थामा पुग्दछ।सीपयुक्त व्यक्तिको जीवनमा समस्या नै पर्दैन भन्ने त होइन तर कतिपय समस्याहरु हल भएर जाने हुँदा जीवनमा सरलता देखापर्दछ। थोरै थोरै गरी धेरै आर्जन सम्भव हुने र समग्रमा आत्मनिर्भरता दिने शक्ति पनि रोजगारीमा अन्तरनिहित हुन्छ। आफै लगानी गरी सम्भव तुल्याइएको स्वरोजगार होस् वा अरु कुनै रोजगारदाताले दिएको रोजगारीकै माध्यमबाट नै किन नहोस् व्यक्ति, परिवार, समाज र देशकै लागि काम गर्ने व्यक्तिले नै योगदान गरिरहेको हुन्छ।

स्थानीय तहहरुका कार्यक्रमहरु र कार्यप्रगतिलाई नियाल्दा आयआर्जन हुने र स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासका लागि सहयोगी हुने कार्यक्रम कि त सञ्चालनमा छैन कि त सञ्चालनमा भएपनि सफल छैन वा प्रभावकारी छैन। सञ्चालनमा रहेको र सफल रहेको उदाहरण विरलै मात्र भेटिन्छ। यस्तो हुनु पक्कै पनि सुखद विषय होइन।स्थानीय तहमा गतविगतमा जे जस्ता कारणले अर्थव्यवस्थामा परेका व्यवधानबाट पाठ सिकेर आगामी दिनमा अलि सिर्जनात्मक र कामायवीढङ्गले काम अगाडि वढाउनुपर्ने देखिन्छ। अबको कृषि पेशा, अबको उद्यम र अबको समग्र अर्थव्यवस्था सम्बन्धमा सबै सरोकारवालाले गम्भीर भएर सोच्नुपर्ने र व्यवहारमा उत्रनुपर्ने अवस्था छ। यसो गर्दा स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको लागि नीतिगत खाका दिने कार्य सङ्घीय तहबाटै हुनुपर्दछ। सङ्घीय तहबाट जारी भएका गरिबी निवारण तथा रोजगारी सिर्जना सम्बन्धी नीति समेतका आधारमा स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासका गतिविधि सञ्चालन सम्बन्धी कार्यविधिका साथै स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्बन्धी स्वमूल्याङ्कन कार्यविधि कार्यान्वयनमा आउनु जरुरी छ।

नेपालमा स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको नीतिगत र कार्यगत खाका सम्बन्धमा हालसम्मको प्रगति समीक्षालाई संक्षिप्तरुपमा तालिका १ मा देखाइएको छ।

तालिका १. स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासका लागि सङ्घीय तहबाट भएका कार्यको समीक्षा

हालसम्म भएका कार्यहरु	हुन बाँकी कार्यहरु
• स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्बन्धी स्वमूल्याङ्कन कार्यविधि तयार भएको • नवप्रवर्तनमा आधारित स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन कार्यविधि, २०८० पारित भएको • राष्ट्रिय र प्रदेशस्तरीय अन्तरक्रिया कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गरिएको • सोह्रौ योजनाको अवधारणापत्रमा समेत प्रदेश र स्थानीय तहको आर्थिक विकासको विषय समेटिएको।	• तीनैतहमा रहनुपर्ने योजना तथा रणनीतिक खाका एवम् संरचनाका सम्बन्धमा स्पष्ट र वाध्यकारी व्यवस्था (समिति शाखा र सम्पर्क व्यक्ति) हुनुपर्ने। • राष्ट्रिय तहमै जागरण अभियान सञ्चालन गर्न सबै खालका समूहलाई उत्पादन तथा वजार श्रृङ्खलासँग आवद्ध गरिनुपर्ने। • प्रदेश र स्थानीय तहका उत्पादनमूलक कार्यक्रममा सङ्घीय तहबाट समेत साझेदारी हुनु आवश्यक।

स्रोत : सङ्घीय मामिला तथा सामान्य प्रशासन मन्त्रालय

स्थानीय तहले गरेका कामहरुलाई नियाल्दा स्थानीय उत्पादनलाई स्वदेशकै मुख्य वजारहरुको पहुँचमा पुऱ्याउने सुनियोजित र औपचारिक प्रयत्न समेत कमै मात्र भएका छन्। कुनै कुनै स्थानीय तहबाट केही वस्तुहरुको देशवाहिर पनि निर्यात भएको छ तर गुणस्तर र स्केलको कमी हुँदा दिगोपना कायम गर्न नसकेको अवस्था छ। उदारहणको लागि नेपालभित्रै उत्पादन र उपभोग हुने गरेको पेय पदार्थको कुरा गरौं। **स्थानीय पेय पदार्थ**लाई ब्राण्डिङसहित आकर्षक प्याकेजिङ गर्दा सामुदायिक उत्पादनको रुपमा प्रवर्द्धन हुन सक्ने देखिन्छ। साथै उत्पादन र वजारीकरण समेत भइसक्दा विदेशबाट आयात हुने ब्राण्डेड पेय पदार्थको मात्रा घट्न जाने जस्तो सकारात्मक नतिजा देखापर्नेछ। यस्तै खालका अन्य थुप्रै वस्तुहरुको उत्पादन र वजारीकरण हुन सकेमा स्थानीय मात्र हैन राष्ट्रिय अर्थतन्त्रमा समेत टेवा पुग्ने देखिन्छ।

सान्दर्भिक साहित्यको पुनरावलोकन (Literature Review)

स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास एउटा त्यस्तो प्रक्रिया हो जसबाट दिगो विकासका लागि अनुकूल वातावरण तयार हुन्छ, साना तथा मझौला उद्यम विकास र विस्तार सम्भव हुन्छ र मर्यादित श्रम र मानवीय विकास प्रवर्द्धन सम्भव हुन्छ (Mahat, 2021)।

अन्तराष्ट्रिय श्रम संगठनको सहयोगमा रामेछाप र धनुषा जिल्लामा नेपालमा स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास:आर्थिक वृद्धि र रोजगारीका माध्यमबाट शान्ति स्थापना नामक कार्यक्रम सन् २००७-२०१० को अवधिमा कार्यान्वयनमा रहेको थियो। उक्त कार्यक्रमले मूलत: स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास मञ्चको माध्यमबाट सार्वजनिक निजी साझेदारीमार्फत विपन्न परिवारलाई सक्षम बनाउने उपायको खोजी र प्रयोग गरिएको थियो भने पहिचान भएका लक्षित परिवारलाई सीप विकास, बजार पहुँचमा सहयोग पुऱ्याइएको थियो, मूल्य श्रृङ्खला निर्माणका साथै स्थानीय पर्यटन र कृषि व्यवसायका माध्यमबाट ग्रामीण भेग र सहरवीच प्रभावकारी अन्तरसम्बन्ध स्थापित गर्ने कार्य भएको थियो। जम्मा १९ करोड ४७ लाख खर्च भएको उक्त कार्यक्रम सफल भएको कार्यसम्पन्न प्रतिवेदनमा उल्लेख भएको छ।

सम्भावनाको खोजी

मुलुकभरी रहेका ७५३ वटा स्थानीय तहहरुका आआफ्नै सम्भावना र चुनौतिहरु रहेका छन्। केही समस्याहरु साझा पनि हुन सक्छन्। त्यस्तै साझा सम्भावना भएका तहहरुवीच सहकार्यको पनि गुन्जायस रहन पनि सक्छ। धेरै कामले खर्चको माग गर्दछन् र खर्चका लागि आवश्यक पर्ने स्रोतका लागि आमदानीको स्रोत बढाएर जानुको विकल्प छैन।

स्थानीय जनजीवन, संस्कृति पनि आफैमा सम्पत्ति नै हो। त्यस्ता खालका स्थानीय मौलिक कला, संस्कृतिको अध्ययन र संरक्षण गर्नुपर्दछ। जस्तो कि आदिवासी जनजातीको रुपमा रहेका मगर, गुरुङ, राई, लिम्बु लगायतका समुदायको कला, संस्कृति एवम् चालचलनको संरक्षण र सम्बोधन गर्नका लागि सामुदायिक होमस्टे तथा संग्रहालयको विकास गर्न सकिन्छ। प्राकृतिक पानीका मुहान, खोलानाला एवम् विभिन्न प्राकृतिक साधन र श्रोतहरुको तिनको उचित व्यवस्थापन र सदुपयोग पनि उत्तिकै महत्वपूर्ण छ। सिंचाईको सम्भावना भएको क्षेत्रमा सिञ्चाई नहर र कुलो बनाई खाद्यान्न र तरकारी खेती बढाउन सकिन्छ। ट्रेकिङ्ग तथा हाइकिङ्गको रुट विकास गरेर आन्तरिक तथा बाह्य पर्यटकलाई आकर्षण गर्न सकिन्छ। पर्यटकीय सम्भावना भएका स्थानहरु र धार्मिक सांस्कृतिक पहिचान रहेका सम्पदाको उचित संरक्षण र प्रचार प्रसार गर्न सकिन्छ। बहुमूल्य जडीबुटीहरुको व्यवसायिक खेती तथा जडीबुटी उद्योग सञ्चालन साथै गर्न सकिन्छ। पार्क निर्माण तथा हरित क्षेत्रको विकास गरी पर्यापर्यटन प्रर्वद्धन हुन सक्छ। कृषिलाई उद्योगसँग आवद्ध गर्ने सम्भावनाको प्रयोग आवश्यक छ। कृषि उपजको उचित बजारीकरणका लागि कृषि एम्बुलेन्सको व्यवस्था, कृषि उपज सङ्कलन तथा बिक्री केन्द्रको व्यवस्था गर्नुपर्दछ। कृषि उत्पादन उपलब्धता सम्बन्धी सूचना पनि सार्वजनिक गर्ने प्रणाली विकास गर्न सकिन्छ। गाउँपालिका क्षेत्रमा पर्यटकीय होटल, रिसोर्ट तथा पार्कको पहिचान र निजी क्षेत्रलाई लगानीका सहकार्यको मोडल विकास गर्न सकिन्छ। पर्यटन गुरुयोजना तर्जुमा गरी गतिविधि सञ्चालन गर्न सकिन्छ। उदाहरणको लागि भरतपुर महानगरपालिकाले सन् २०२४ लाई भरतपुर भ्रमण वर्ष घोषणा गरी विभिन्न गतिविधि गर्दै आएको छ। त्यस्तै हाट बजार, पशु, बधशाला, शवदाहगृह सञ्चालन गर्न सकिन्छ। विदेशबाट फर्केकाले आर्जन गरेको सीप र दक्षताको आधारमा उद्यम तथा व्यवसायमा आवद्ध गर्न रिटर्नी फाउण्डेसनसँग सहकार्यसम्भव हुन्छ। यसो गर्दा वातावरण विग्रन दिनुहुँदैन।

पहिलो अध्ययन

अध्ययनको विषय : स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्बन्धी अध्ययन, २०७८

अध्ययन भएको स्थानीय तह: ८ वटा स्थानीय तह

अध्ययनकर्ता : लेखक स्वयम्

अध्ययन विधि : स्थानीय तहमा पुगी राजनैतिक पदाधिकारी तथा जिम्मेवार कर्मचारीसहितको उपस्थितिमा स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्बन्धी प्रस्तुतीकरण गरी प्रश्नावलीको आधारमा सामुहिकरुपमा र केही सहभागीसँग व्यक्तिगतरुपमा सोधपुछ गरी धारणा सङ्कलन गर्ने। यसमा प्राथमिक तथ्याङ्क तथा जानकारी

सङ्कलन भएको थियो भने स्थानीय तहबाट प्रकाशित स्मारिकालाई समेत द्वितीयक तथ्याङ्कको स्रोतको रुपमा लिइएको थियो। अध्ययन गरिएका स्थानीय तहहरु यसप्रकार रहेका थिए :

१. उत्तरगया गाउँपालिका, रसुवा, २. विदुर नगरपालिका, नुवाकोट ३. थाक्रे गाउँपालिका, धादिङ्ग४. गौरीगंगा नगरपालिका, कैलाली ५.रत्ननगर नगरपालिका, चितवन ६. कोन्जोसोम गाउँपालिका, ललितपुर७. कानेपोखरी गाउँपालिका, मोरङ्ग ८. मध्यविन्दु नगरपालिका, नवलपरासी सुस्ता पूर्व स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको अवस्था विश्लेषण गर्नका लागि स्थलगतरुपमा स्थानीय तहमा पुगी तहाँ उपस्थित राजनैतिक र प्रशासनिक पदाधिकारीहरुसँग प्रस्तुतीसहित छलफल गरिएको थियो। स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासका विभिन्न चरणमध्ये प्रारम्भिक चरणमा आवश्यक पर्ने पूर्वाधार विकास, सीप सिक्ने अवसर र प्राविधिक शिक्षाको अवसरका साथै उत्पादित वस्तु विक्रीका लागि के कस्तो प्राथमिकता छ, न्यूनतम प्रवन्ध छ कि छैन भन्ने सम्बन्धमा प्रश्नावलीको आधारमा उपस्थित सहभागीहरुबाट प्राप्त भएका विवरणको आधारमा चारवटा स्थानीय तहहरुको संक्षिप्त विश्लेषण तालिका २ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ।

तालिका २. स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासका लागि आधारहरुभूत पक्षहरु

स्थानीय तह	आवधिक योजना		सबै वस्तिमा विजुली		सबै वडा कार्यालयसम्म सडक सुविधा		कृषि र उद्यममा अनुदान		सीपमूलक तालिम		साना तथा मझौला उद्यम		प्राविधिक शिक्षा		बजारीकरणको प्रवन्ध	
	छ	छैन	छ	छैन	छ	छैन	छ	छैन	छ	छैन	छ	छैन	छ	छैन	छ	छैन
कानेपोखरी गाउँपालिका		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓			✓
कोन्ज्योसोम गाउँपालिका	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓			✓
विदुर नगरपालिका	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓			✓
रत्ननगर नगरपालिका	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	

स्रोत : स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्बन्धी अध्ययन, २०७८

माथि तालिका १ मा देखाइएको आधारभूत विवरण हेर्दा अध्ययनमा समावेश गरिएका ४ वटा स्थानीय तहहरु मध्ये २ गाउँपालिका र २ नगरपालिका छन्। विश्लेषणका लागि आधार लिइएका ८ वटा विषयमध्ये ८ वटैमा सकारात्मक अवस्था रहेको स्थानीय तह रत्ननगर नगरपालिका हो। विदुर नगरपालिकामा बजारीकरणको प्रवन्ध हालसम्म नभएको, कानेपोखरी गाउँपालिकामा आवधिक योजना तयार नभएको तथा वजारीकरणको प्रवन्ध नभएको देखिन्छ भने ललितपुर जिल्लामा पर्ने कोञ्जोसोम गाउँपालिकामा पनि बजारीकरणको कार्य भैनसकेको देखिन्छ। यति हुँदाहुँदै पनि विश्लेषण गरिएका चारवटै स्थानीय तहमा विजुली, सडकको सुविधा, व्यावसायिक कार्यका लागि केही न केही अनुदानको प्रवन्ध, सीप विकास तथा उद्यमशीलता विकासका लागि पहल तथा प्राविधिक धारका विद्यालयहरु सञ्चालन प्रारम्भ हुनु सकरात्मक विषय नै हो। *(स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्वन्धी अध्ययन, २०७८)।*
अध्ययन १ अन्तर्गत अध्ययन गरिएका स्थानीय तहहरु मध्ये सर्वेक्षणमा प्रयोग गरिएको अनुसूचीको प्रश्नावलीबाट सामूहिकरुपमा सोधेर प्राप्त विवरणलाई प्रशोधन गरी तीनवटा स्थानीय तहहरुको विवरणलाई यसप्रकार संक्षेपीकृत गरिएको छ :

उत्तरगया गाउँपालिका, रसुवा

रसुवा जिल्लाका ५ वटा स्थानीय तह (गाउँपालिकामात्र)मध्ये उत्तरगया गाउँपालिका एक हो। यो नुवाकोटको विदुर नगरपालिकासँगै जोडिएको छ। यो पालिकाले आफ्नो विकासको सोँचलाई दिशानिर्देश गर्नका लागि वि.सं. २०७४ बाट निर्वाचित गाउँसभाले "सभ्य समृद्ध उत्तरगया हाम्रो शान, कृषि जलस्रोत पर्यटन विकासको अभियान" भन्ने नारा तय गरेको थियो। (स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्बन्धी अध्ययन, २०७८) कृषि तथा पशुपालन फर्महरुलाई प्राविधिक सेवा पुऱ्याउन गाउँपालिकाले प्राथमिकता दिएको छ। आलु, मकै, धान, बाख्रापालन, भैँसीपालन, कुखुरापालन, बंगुरपालनका लागि समेत गाउँपालिकाबाट सहयोग प्राप्त भएको सहभागीहरुले बताउनुभयो। साथै वहाँहरुकै अनुसार नेपाली कागज र ढाका कपडा सम्बन्धी उद्योग सञ्चालनको सम्भावना यो स्थानीय तहमा रहेको छ। प्राविधिक शिक्षाको रुपमा कम्प्युटर साइन्सको पढाइ हुने गरेको छ। उत्तरगया धाम पर्यटकीय आकर्षणको रुपमा विकसित हुन सक्ने र चिराइतो तथा लोक्ता खेती गरी बिक्रीबाट आम्दानी बढ्न सक्ने सम्भावनाका सम्बन्धमा समेत अध्ययनमा सहभागीहरुले विचार राख्नुभएको थियो। *(स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्वन्धी अध्ययन, २०७८)।*

थाक्रे गाउँपालिका, धादिङ्ग

धादिङ जिल्लामा पर्ने १३ स्थानीय तह (२ नगरपालिका र ११ गाउँपालिका) मध्ये काठमाण्डौ मुग्लिङ सडकसँगै जोडिएको गाउँपालिका हो थाक्रे गाउँपालिका। २५ वर्ष अवधिको सोँचपत्र समेत तयार पारेको यो पालिकामा डकर्मी, सिकर्मी, प्लम्विङ, वेल्डिङ लगायतका अन्य समसामयिक सीपविकासको लागि पर्याप्त सोधपुछ गरी चयन गर्ने, अभिमुखीकरण गर्ने, व्यवसायिक कार्ययोजना बनाउन सिकाउने लगायतका पक्षमा ध्यान दिई तालिम सञ्चालन गरिएको र हाल आफ्नो पालिकामा रहेका तालिमप्राप्त कामदारहरुले पालिकालाई पुग्ने भएतापनि उनीहरुमध्ये कतिपय गाउँपालिका वाहिर कार्यरत रहँदा यहाँ पनि बाहिरबाट पनि कामदार आउनुपर्ने अवस्था छ। कतिपय सीपमूलक तालिमहरु व्यवसायमा नउत्रेको यथार्थ यहाँ पनि देखिन्छ। जस्तो कि क्रिस्टल बनाउने तालिममा सर्वोत्कृष्ट भएकै सहभागीले उक्त सीपलाई व्यवसायसँग जोड्नुभएन।(स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्वन्धी अध्ययन, २०७८) गाउँपालिका क्षेत्रमा सञ्चालनमा रहेका व्यवसायिक फर्महरुको बारेमा उल्लेख गर्नुपर्दा वडा नं ११ को आग्रा महेश कृषि फर्म, वडा नं २ को दुग्ध उत्पादन सहकारी, वडा नं ८ को महाकालेश्वरी कृषि फर्म, बागमती ब्रिडिङ गोट फाराम, वडा नं ७ को ट्राउट माछापालन, वडा ७ कै कालो उँखु खेती र वडा ९ र १० को अदुवा खेतीलाई प्रमुखरुपमा लिइदो रहेछ। गाउँपालिकाभित्रकै महादेववेशी र सिम्लेमा हाटवजार लाग्ने गरेको छ। साथै गंगाजमुना झरना र मिनी लुम्बिनीको निर्माण र प्रवर्द्धनले पर्यटकीय क्रियाकलाप बढ्न गइ आयआर्जनमा सघाउ पुग्ने स्थानीय जनप्रतिनिधिहरुको दावी छ।

गौरीगंगा नगरपालिका, कैलाली

कैलालीका स्थानीय तहमध्ये पूर्वपश्चिम राजमार्गको दुवैतिरको भूभाग समेटिएर बनेको ११ वडासहितको गौरीगंगा नगरपालिका पनि एक पर्न आउँछ। कृषि क्षेत्रको महत्व हुँदाहुँदै पनि सडक पूर्वाधार र भवन निर्माणका तुलनामा कृषिले पाएको प्राथमिकता कमजोर देखिन्छ। रोजगारमूलक सीप विकासको अवसरको कुरा गर्दा नगरपालिकाको आफ्नै कार्यक्रमबाट वर्षभरिमा एक हजारभन्दा बढीले सीप सिकेको जानकारी प्राप्त भयो। नीति, कार्यक्रम तथा वजेट कार्यक्रमको कार्यान्वयनमा सहकारी संस्था र वन उपभोक्ता समूहसँग सहकार्य भएको भएतापनि उद्योगी तथा व्यापारीहरुको संस्था उद्योग वाणिज्य संघसँग भने सहकार्य भएको पाइएन। धान, तरकारी, घाँस, उन्नत पशु लगायतको बीउको लागि अनुदानको व्यवस्था गरी पकेट क्षेत्र निर्धारण गर्ने कार्य पनि प्रारम्भ भएको छ। नगरपालिका क्षेत्रमा खासगरी दाना उद्योग, प्लास्टिक तथा इटाका उद्योगहरु, बीऊ संरक्षण सम्बन्धी उद्योग, अगरवत्ती बनाउने

उद्योग सञ्चालनमा रहेको जानकारी पाइयो। त्यस्तै दुग्ध विकास संस्थानले पनि आफ्नो शाखा सञ्चालनमा ल्याउने तयारी भैरहेको छ। मातृ तथा बाल स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, खानेपानी, विपद् व्यवस्थापनका क्षेत्रमा प्रभावकारीरुपमा नै काम भएको दावी पदाधिकारीहरुको रहेछ। प्राविधिक शिक्षाका केही कोर्सहरु विद्यालयमा समावेश गरिनु, सीप विकास तालिम सञ्चालन हुनु र खेतीमा केही अनुदानको व्यवस्था हुनुले केही अर्थ राख्ने भएतापनि आर्थिक रुपान्तरणका लागि अन्य पालिकाका लागि नमूना बन्ने गरी काम हुन भने बाँकी छ। विशेषज्ञ सेवासहितको ५ दिने स्वास्थ्य महोत्सव गर्न सफल यो नगरपालिकाले खरको छाना विस्थापन गर्न प्रति घर रु ५०,००० सम्म खर्च गरेको छ। हालसम्म १३८ साना उद्यमीलाई रु ५० हजारसम्म अनुदान दिई प्रोत्साहन गरिएको र यदि २० जनाको समूह बनाएर कुनै सीपमूलक तालिमको माग गरी आएमा माग बमोजिम तालिम सञ्चालन गर्ने नीति लिएको पाइयो।

मध्यविन्दु नगरपालिका, पूर्वी नवलपरासी

पूर्व पश्चिम राजमार्गको दुवैतिर लाम्चो गरी फैलिएको पूर्वी नवलपरासीमा पर्ने एक स्थानीय तह हो मध्यविन्दु नगरपालिका। एक स्थानीय तह एक उत्पादन कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत कागती र केरा खेती गरिएकोछ। लघु उद्यम विकास कार्यक्रम लागू भएको छ। कतिपय परियोजनामा निजी क्षेत्रसँग समेत सहकार्य हुने गरेको छ। सर्वेक्षण गरेको अवधिभित्र नगरपालिकाभित्र पशुपालन फर्म १६५ र कृषि फर्म ३१२ दर्ता भएका छन्। *(स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्वन्धी अध्ययन, २०७८)* नगरपालिकाको दीर्घकालीन सोंचपत्र (Vision Paper) र आवधिक योजना प्रयोगमा रहेको छ। मध्यबिन्दु स्वरोजगार कार्यक्रम सञ्चालनमा रहेको र हालसम्म ६० जना लाभान्वित। बीमा फिर्ता उद्यमका लागि मध्य लगानी गर्न ADB सँग सहकार्य समेत भएको। २ वटा प्राविधिक शिक्षालय सञ्चालनमा रहेका छन्। १२० जति व्यक्तिले सरकारी/गैरसरकारी/निजीबाट तालिम दिने व्यवस्था गरेको छ। फोहोरमैला व्यवस्थापन केन्द्र सञ्चालनमा आई समयमा नै Recycle हुने गरेको छ। मध्यविन्दु स्तम्भ तथा रिफ्रेस्मेन्ट सेन्टरको परिकल्पना अनुसार डिपीआर तयारी भएको छ। हाटबजार ७ वटा सञ्चालनमा रहेका छन्। यसरी सारमा भन्नुपर्दा स्थानीय तहहरु आर्थिक विकासका लागि दीर्घकालीन सोंच (Vision), आवधिक योजना, आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण एवम् स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासको स्थायी संयन्त्र निर्माण तथा आर्थिक गतिविधि सम्बन्धी कार्यक्रम समावेश गर्नमा त्यति रुचि राखेको देखिदैन जबकी यी विषय महत्वपूर्ण आधार हुन्। पूर्वाधार विकासको अलावा सीप विकास, पकेट क्षेत्र स्थापना, उत्पादन अनुदान, बजारीकरणको पहलका फुटकर कामहरु नभएका होइनन्।

निष्कर्षः

१. आर्थिक विकासका लागि पूर्वाधार निर्माण तथा अनुकूल खालको नीति वातावरणको आवश्यकता पर्दछ।

२. स्थानीय तहलाई अगाडि वढाउने भिजन तथा आवधिक योजनाका साथै योजना, बजेट तथा कार्यक्रम निर्माणमा तथा कार्यान्वयनमा समेत नागरिक सहभागिताको पनि विशेष अर्थ रहन्छ।

३. उत्पादनमा सरिक हुने वा त्यस्ता उद्यममा कामदारहरुले रोजगारी पाउने, आयआर्जन बढ्ने र उपभोग एवम् पोषण अवस्थामा सुधार हुने देखिन्छ।

४. सीपसिकाइबाट हुने फाइदाको कुरा गर्दा जब कुनै व्यक्तिले सीप प्राप्त गर्दछ उसले सीपसँग सम्बन्धित काम गर्न सक्छ जसले गर्दा ऊ कि त स्वरोजगार हुन्छ वा रोजगारी प्राप्त गर्दछ, उसको आयआर्जन वढ्छ र दिनचर्या परिवर्तन हुन्छ।

सिफारिसः

१. नगरपालिकाको पार्श्वचित्र समयमानै तयार तथा अद्यावधिक गर्ने, आवधिक योजनाको समीक्षा गर्ने तथा आवधिक योजनाको एउटा परिच्छेदका रुपमा स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासका विविध विषयहरु समेटिनु राम्रो हुन्छ।

२. मागअनुसारको स्तरीय र पर्याप्त सीपमूलक तालिमको व्यवस्था हुनु आफैमा महत्वपूर्ण कार्य हो। धर्मशाला, पुस्तकालय, सभागृह सञ्चालनमा ल्याउन सकिन्छ। वातावरण परीक्षण गराई ढुङ्गा,गिट्टी, बालुवा आदिको बिक्री वितरणबाट आम्दानी हुन सक्छ।

३. पहाडको ढुङ्गाको गुणस्तरको अध्ययन गरी सिमेन्टको लागि कच्चा पदार्थको रुपमा प्रयोग गर्न सकिने सम्भावना छ। पिकनिक स्थलको व्यवस्था र प्रचारप्रसार गरेर पनि आमदानी बढाउन सकिन्छ।

अध्ययनको विषय : सीपयुक्त जनशक्ति विकास र उपयोग सम्बन्धी अध्ययन, २०७९

अध्ययन भएको स्थानः मकवानपुर जिल्लाका ४ वटा स्थानीय तह

अध्ययनकर्ता : लेखक स्वयम्

अध्ययन विधि : स्थानीय तहमा पुगी राजनैतिक पदाधिकारी तथा जिम्मेवार कर्मचारीसहितको उपस्थितिमा सीप विकासको अवधारणा प्रस्तुतीकरण गरी प्रश्नावलीको आधारमा सामुहिकरुपमा र केही सहभागीसँग व्यक्तिगतरुपमा सोधपुछ गरी धारणा सङ्कलन गर्ने। यसमा प्राथमिक तथ्याङ्क तथा जानकारी सङ्कलन

भएको थियो भने स्थानीय तहबाट प्रकाशित स्मारिकालाई समेत द्वितीयक तथ्याङ्कको स्रोतको रुपमा लिइएको थियो।

विगतमा लघु उद्यम विकास कार्यक्रम सम्बन्धी निर्देशिका र स्रोत पुस्तिकामा केही सीपको सूची समावेश थियो। हाल आएर सङ्घीय मामिला तथा सामान्य प्रशासन मन्त्रालयबाट स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास मूल्याङ्कन निर्देशिकाको मस्यौदामा ३० वटा प्रमुख सीपहरु समावेश छन् जुन यसप्रकार छन् : प्लम्बिङ्ग, हाउस वाइरिङ्ग विद्युतीकरण, वेल्डिङ्ग, भवननिर्माण, भवनको रंगरोगन, टाईल लगाउने, ढुङ्गा छपाई, फर्निचर निर्माण, राफ्टिङ्ग डोजरचालक, सवारी साधन मर्मत, कब्बल सडक निर्माण, पशुउपचार, साधारण थेरापी, साईकल तथा मोटरसाईकलमर्मत, फर्निचरनिर्माण, पुष्पव्यवसाय, सिलाईकटाई, कपालकाट्ने, मिथिला कला निर्माण, थाङ्का चित्र, गलैंचा बुनाई, अचार बनाउने, हाते कागज निर्माण, पाउरोटी बनाउने, मैनबत्ती बनाउने, ढाका बुनाई, घडी, रेडियो तथा मोबाईल मर्मत, अन्यविविध। (स्रोत: *स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास सम्बन्धी मूल्याङ्कन कार्यविधी, २०७८, सङ्घीय मामिला तथा सामान्य प्रशासन मन्त्रालय)*

दोश्रो अध्ययनमा मकवानपुर जिल्ला अन्तर्गतका चारवटा स्थानीय तह समेटिएको छ। यस अध्ययनमा स्थानीय तहमा आवश्यक पर्ने सीपहरुको पहिचान, विकास र प्रयोगको अवस्था सम्बन्धमा प्रश्नावलीको आधारमा विवरण सङ्कलन गरिएको थियो। विवरण सङ्कलन गर्दा प्रश्नावलीका आधारमा सामूहिक र व्यक्तिगत रुपमा विचारहरु सङ्कलन गरिएको थियो। अध्ययन गरिएका स्थानीय तहहरु यसप्रकार रहेका छन् :

१. कैलाश गाउँपालिका
२. इन्द्रसरोवर गाउँपालिका
३. बकैया गाउँपालिका
४. मनहरी गाउँपालिका
५. मकवानपुरगढी नगरपालिका

मकवानपुरका स्थानीय तहहरुले सीप विकास कार्यक्रमलाई आफ्नो नीति कार्यक्रम र वजेटमा के कसरी समेटेका छन् र के कसरी सीप विकासको कार्य अघि वढेको छ भन्ने सूचना सङ्कलन गर्नु नै अध्ययनको उद्देश्य रहेको थियो। यस अध्ययनमा समेत स्थानीय तहको कार्यालयमा पुगेर राजनैतिक तथा प्रशासनिक

पदाधिकारीहरुको सहभागिता रहने गरी प्रस्तुती एवम् छलफल गरी विवरण सङ्कलन गरिएको थियो। साथसाथै सहभागीमध्ये केहीबाट प्रश्नावलीमा आधारित सोधपुछ समेत गरी विवरणहरु सङ्कलन भएका थिए। अध्ययन गरिएका चारवटा स्थानीय तहको सीपयुक्त जनशक्ति विकास र उपयोग सम्बन्धी विवरण तालिका ३ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ।

तालिका ३. सीपको माग र उपयोग सम्बन्धमा तुलनात्मक विवरण

विश्लेषणका विषय	इन्द्रसरोवर	मकवानपुरगढी नगरपालिका	मनहरि	कैलाश
धेरै माग रहेका १० सीपहरु	प्लम्विङ्ग, बेकरी, कुक, डेरी, ड्राइभिङ्ग, जुत्ता सिलाउने, सवारी मर्मत, होजियारी, जडीबुटी प्रशोधन, मोवाइल मर्मत, पुष्पखेती।	बाँसकला, काष्ठकला, कुक, बेकरी, साबुन बनाउने, इटा/टायल बनाउने, कपाल काट्ने, पुष्प व्यवसाय, दुग्ध सामग्री बनाउने।	कपाल काट्ने, हाउस वायरिङ्ग, मोवाइल मर्मत, अचार बनाउने, टायल लगाउने, सवारी मर्मत उद्यमशीलता, मस्यौरा बनाउने, थान्का बनाउने, पुष्प व्यवसाय, दुनाटपरी बनाउने।	वायरिङ्ग, मोवाइल मर्मत, प्लम्विङ्ग, स्यानिटरी प्याड बनाउने, बेकरी, मोटरसाइकल मर्मत, सिलाइकटाई, ट्याक्टर मर्मत, कृषि पशुपालन, होजियारी।
पर्याप्तमात्रामा सीपयुक्त जनशक्ति रहेका सीप समूह	सवारी चालक (पुरुष), वोट चलाउने, स्काभेटर अपरेटर, सिकर्मी, डकर्मी।	ड्राइभिङ्ग, प्राविधिक जनशक्ति।	सिलाइबुनाई व्युटिपार्लर, डल बनाउने, ड्राइभिङ्ग (पुरुष), डोजर चलाउने (पुरुष)।	डकर्मी, सिकर्मी।
न्युन आयस्तर भएका	च्याउ खेती, होटल व्यवसाय,	लघु उद्यम, कृषि तथा	विदेश जानेलाई पनि सीप सिकाएर	शिक्षा, पशुपालन।

घरपरिवारलाई अल्पकालमा आयआर्जनसँग जोड्न सकिने सीप	कृषिमा आधारित उद्यम।	पशुपालन।	पठाएमा कमाइ बढ्ने, इच्छा स्रोत र बजार हेरेर कुनै।	
सीप सिकेका व्यक्तिलाई स्थानीय तहमा अधिकतम उपयोग र सञ्चालन गर्न सकिने कार्यक्रमहरु	कोशेली घर स्थापना, कृषि उत्पादनलाई उद्योगसँग जोड्ने। जस्तो कि जुस कारखाना।	प्रविधि पूँजी माग सिर्जना।	वित्तीय स्रोतको व्यवस्था, छुटको व्यवस्था।	कुन सीप कहाँ कसरी सिक्ने भन्ने जानकारी र सीपयुक्त जनशक्तिलाई स्वरोजगार तथा रोजगारी प्राप्तिका लागि सहजीकरण।
विविध	तरकारी खेती र फलफूल खेतीको सम्भावना छ। शितभण्डार निर्माण र सञ्चालन।	दुध उत्पादन केरा र तरकारीमा अग्रणी।	तालिम दिने संस्थाले तालिमको घुम्ती सेवा सञ्चालन भए राम्रो।	पूर्वपश्चिम लोकमार्ग र सदरमुकाम हेटौडा जोड्ने सडक बाह्रैमैना चल्ने हुनुपर्दछ।

स्रोत : सीपयुक्त जनशक्ति विकास र उपयोग सम्बन्धी अध्ययन, २०७९

माथि तालिका ३ मा उल्लेख भएका विवरणहरु देख्दा विवरणात्मक छन् तथापि ती विवरणले हाल ती पालिकाको सीपको आवश्यकता र प्रयोगका सम्बन्धमा जानकारी प्राप्त गर्न सकिन्छ। वेरोजगारहरुको तथ्याङ्क सङ्कलन र आंशिक रोजगारीका लागि हरेक स्थानीय तहमा तथ्याङ्क प्रणाली छन्। जस्तै इन्द्रसरोवर गाउँपालिमा सूचीकृत बेरोजगार ६४८ मध्ये आ.व. २०७८/७९ मा १२६ जनाले छोटो अवधिको रोजगारी पाएको जानकारी प्राप्त भयो।

१. अध्ययनको निष्कर्ष निश्चित खाका नभएको कारण स्थानीय तहहरुले गर्दै आएका पहलमा एकरुपता छैन।

सिफारिसः

१. कुन कुन सीपयुक्त जनशक्ति कुन स्थानीय तहमा छन् र ती स्थानीय तहमा खाँचो रहेका सीप कुनमा कति भनेर वर्गीकृत तथ्याङ्क राख्ने र तत् तत् स्थानीय तहका वेबसाइटमा र कुनै सूचना प्रणालीमा उपलब्ध गराउन सकेमा मात्र माग र आपूर्ति बीच उचित सन्तुलन ल्याउन सहयोगी हुने देखिन्छ।
२. विकासका विभिन्न पात्रहरुले विभिन्न कार्यक्रमका नाममा सीप विकास कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गर्ने तर तालिम पाएपछि उद्यम वा व्यवसाय वा रोजगारीमा आवद्ध हुने वातावरण बनाउन स्थानीय तहहरुले स्थानीय आर्थिक विकासका गतिविधिलाई सुनियोजित रुपमा सञ्चालन गर्नु आवश्यक छ।
३. अहिले आएर स्थानीय तहहरुले आफ्नो सन्दर्भमा मुख्य सीपको सूचीलाई आधार मानेर आ आफ्ना अत्यावश्यक सीपको सूची बनाउनु पर्ने देखिन्छ।

उपसंहार

यस लेखमा समावेश केही स्थानीय तहको सन्दर्भमा गरिएका दुईवटा लघु अध्ययनको निष्कर्षले सबै स्थानीय तहहरुलाई स्थानीय आर्थिक विकास र सो अन्तर्गत पनि सीपको विकास र सदुपयोग सम्बन्धमा गम्भीर हुनुपर्ने देखाएका छन्। अध्ययनका क्रममा विवरण उपलब्ध गराउने स्थानीय तह सम्वद्ध पदाधिकारी एवम् कर्मचारीमा कृतज्ञता ज्ञापन गर्दै आगामी दिनमा यस अध्ययनमा समेटिएका र नसमेटिएका सबै स्थानीय तहहरुले आर्थिक विकासका गतिविधिमा प्राथमिकता पूर्वक अग्रसर हुने वातावरण तयारीका लागि सङ्घीय तहको मन्त्रालय, प्रदेश तथा स्थानीय शासन सहयोग कार्यक्रम र स्थानीय तहको नेतृत्वसमक्ष आग्रह गर्नु उपयुक्त नै होला।

आर्थिक गतिविधिलाई प्रेरित गर्ने, उत्पादन बढाउने, सीपको माग र सीप विकास बीच सम्बन्ध स्थापित गर्ने, रोजगारी र आय बढाउने, स्थानीय तहको आम्दानीमा योगदान पुग्ने खालका नीति, कार्यक्रम, क्रियाकलाप आवश्यक रहेको तर्फ अध्ययनको निष्कर्षले इङ्गित गरेका छन्। दोश्रो पटकको स्थानीय तहको निर्वाचनबाट प्राप्त जनमतलाई आफ्नो नीति कार्यक्रम कार्यशैली र कार्यव्यवहार मार्फत प्रत्याभूत

गर्ने क्रममा आर्थिक विकासको एजेण्डाले प्राथमिकता पाउने अवस्था सिर्जना हुनुपर्ने अध्ययनकर्ताको सिफारिस रहेको छ।

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Transformation of Public Service: Rise of Technology, AI and Automation

Aarati Neupane*

Abstract

The rapid advancement of technology has proven beneficial for enhancing efficiency, transparency, responsiveness, and effectiveness in the administration of public services. The internalization of technological innovations, including AI and automation, has become imperative to address the increasing needs and expectations of citizens in modern governance. Various developed and developing countries have revolutionized public services through the adoption of AI and automation. Nepal has made strides in digital governance, advancing from a paper-based form of governance to digital governance. Moreover, the Digital Nepal Framework aspires to restructure the economy through increased service delivery, production, and productivity by harnessing digital technology. The issues of the digital divide, ethical and responsible adoption of AI, citizen engagement and participation, and inclusiveness have been challenging. The government should prioritize investments in digital infrastructure, encourage tech innovations, and promote capacity development in the field of technology.

Keywords*:* public service delivery (PSD), artificial intelligence (AI), automation, digital governance, digital transformation.

Introduction

This article delves into the transformative impact of technological advancements, inducing artificial intelligence (AI) and automation, on public service and administration. It highlights the evolution of technological integration into the public sector and the monumental role played by AI and automation in modern governance. It explores how various Asian countries, including India, Singapore, Philippines, and South Korea, as well as other countries like Estonia, Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom, have harnessed the advantages of technological development and digital governance to revolutionize public administration and service delivery.

The objective of this paper is to comprehensively examine the transformative impact of AI, automation, and technology in public service. The article discusses the challenges and concerns posed by the adoption of AI and automation, emphasizing issues such as data privacy, bias, security,

* *Under Secretary, Government of Nepal*
Email: aarati.neupane2020@gmail.com

and the digital divide. It showcases the role of citizen engagement and participation in shaping the future of governance through technology, emphasizing open data initiatives, virtual public hearings, and user-friendly online platforms.

Additionally, the article underscores the importance of responsible AI adoption, highlighting exemplary regulatory frameworks, for instance, in the European Union, Canada, and Singapore. It emphasizes the need for informed consent and comprehensive training programs for public officials to maximize the benefits of AI. The paper provides insights into digital transformation efforts in Nepal, highlighting the country's progress and outlining the necessary steps for embracing technological development.

In conclusion, the article outlines a strategic roadmap for governments, including the prioritization of national security, regular AI algorithm audits, and ethical guidelines. It stresses the importance of investing in technological education and digital literacy to empower citizen and bridge the digital divide, ultimately paving the way for a more equitable and technologically inclusive future.

AI and Automation in Public Service

Public service, a cornerstone of democracy, plays a significant role in ensuring citizens' needs and rights are fulfilled. Public administration fuels the engine for delivering services in a more efficient and equitable way. Public services have undergone transformation through technological advancements and modernization while accomplishing shifting public demands and expectations. Initiatives like e-governance, data analytics, and big data have dramatically changed the administration of public services. Governments have embraced open data, digitalization of services, and data-driven decision-making to make government services easily accessible to citizen.

The unprecedented pace of technological progress and the influence of automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in government operations has emerged as a boon to the public sector. AI and automation are smart techniques for achieving more effective and efficient results through the application of technology. AI aims to simulate many aspects of human intelligence with the intelligence of computers. It enables robotics, computer systems, and machines to comprehend and recognize patterns, learn from data, and make decisions. Now, AI has revolutionized every sector and industry, holding significant implications for our future.

Countries like the United States, China, South Korea, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and others have been extensively utilizing AI and automation technologies across various sectors. Moreover, China aims to become a global AI leader by 2030, overtaking the United States. Similarly, the US has made significant investments in research and development related to AI. The Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) seeks to harmonize AI technology with democratic values and human rights. Additionally, the US plays a pivotal role in ensuring the alignment of the mission of GPAI and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

History of Technological Integration

Historically, governments sought ways for efficient management of records and communication. The evolution of the printing press in the 15th century revolutionized the government information system. Similarly, the emergence of industries commenced with the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century and necessitated government regulation. Thus, the government expanded structures and bureaucracy to manage the increasing technological innovations. The invention of electronic digital computers in the mid-20th century enabled data processing and record-keeping in a more efficient and effective way. The easy and fast retrieval, storage, and analysis of information led to improved administrative efficiency. Moreover, simulation and modeling eased policy analysis and informed decision-making.

The birth of the World Wide Web (WWW), one of the most pivotal moments in technological history, revolutionized global communication and information. It enabled public agencies to embrace e-government initiatives leading to online services, citizen engagement, and direct dissemination of information. Similarly, the invention of smartphones in the 2000s has enabled more accessible and responsive government services with the use of mobile apps and websites. The evolution of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter in the early 21st century emerged as powerful tools for citizen engagement. Moreover, the intervention of blockchain technology with the launch of Bitcoin in 2008 is expected to enhance trust and confidence and reduce fraud. Public administration can leverage blockchain to enhance supply chain management, smart contracts, public procurement, secure identity verification, and record-keeping.

Modern cloud computing has allowed public sectors to reduce significant costs and investments in IT infrastructure, data centers, and servers. Cloud services facilitate remote work, e-government initiatives, and online delivery of services, enhancing citizen accessibility, collaboration, and convenience. Similarly, the concept of big data analytics, which gained prominence in the early 21st century, has offered governments data-driven decision-making, predictive analytics, fraud detection, program evaluation, and resource allocation. Thus, technologies have abundant potential to transform public administration to be more flexible and responsive while making it trustworthy, transparent, and accountable.

Public Sector and Administration: Impact of AI

The pre-20th century traditional Nepalese bureaucracy relied on manual record-keeping and filings and paper-based circulars and correspondence. The technological investment expanded after the democratic transformation in the 1950s with the introduction of telephones, radio, and typewriters. Communication and postal services have become significantly easier since the 1980s with the introduction of fax machines. Similarly, the introduction of computers and IT in public administration enhanced administrative efficiency and public service delivery. The initiation of e-government initiatives in the 2000s enabled online services, digital citizen registration, tax payments, information systems, and digital signatures. Moreover, public administration has had an instrumental impact due to the expansion of internet connectivity.

In this 21st century, the global rise of (AI) in public administration stands as a defining hallmark of modern governance. The adoption of AI and automation emerges with no alternative; moreover, it is imperative to develop citizen-centric public service. The incorporation of automation and AI offers tremendous opportunities for public authorities. Innovations in digital governance aim to create efficient services and cost-saving efforts while maintaining the quality of public service delivery. The automation of routine functions has reduced administrative burdens, while data, trends, and patterns analyzed by AI have led to improved data-driven decision-making.

AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants used in healthcare organizations, banking and financial services, and e-commerce companies streamline the processes through prompt responses to citizen inquiries. While excelling in data analytics, AI systems reduce decision-making errors and minimize the risk of incorrect assessment. Government security agencies deploy AI in predictive policing for analyzing past crime data, anticipating potential areas that lead to proactive prevention and control of crime. Thus, the rapidly evolving technologies have validated their potential to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness of public services. While the demands of citizen in modern governance have escalated, AI and automation have become instrumental.

Global Rise of AI and Automation

According to the Republic of Estonia, Estonia offers an e-residency program that provides non-residents with chip-embedded ID cards, enabling remote access to public services. This simplifies bureaucratic procedures, reduces administrative burdens, and promotes entrepreneurship within the EU. Additionally, it allows entrepreneurs and freelancers from around the world to operate online businesses within the European Union. Estonia has leveraged automation and AI technology in various areas, including application processing, business registration, and digital contracts and signatures.

Estonia's X-Road stands as a testament to its leadership in digital governance. This advanced, secure, and efficient data exchange infrastructure facilitates seamless information flow between the government and other sectors. The platform provides a digital highway for the exchange of information while ensuring strong authentication and user authorization to maintain confidentiality and integrity (e-Estonia, 2023).

Canada has committed to transforming its immigration system by increasing automated services to meet the growing demand for study permits, work permits, and temporary residency. The Department for Immigration in Canada, specifically, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), has been using automation in a points-based immigration program called the Express Entry System. This program utilizes AI algorithms to efficiently process immigrant applications and select candidates for permanent residency based on factors like age, work experience, education, and language competency assessment. Moreover, automated systems assist in predictive analytics for application volumes, visitor visa processing, fraud detection, and decision support (International Bar Association, 2023). Australia has also implemented automated visa processing to expedite and streamline the application process.

The United States focuses on digital government strategy through the adoption of automation in Internal Revenue Services (IRS) for tax processing and AI in the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) for patent examination. Automated systems have enhanced the accuracy and efficiency of revenue services, reduced processing time, and detected errors. Similarly, AI algorithms enable prompt analysis of patent databases, reducing the cost of patent examination and accelerating approvals. While leveraging the power of technological advancements, AI, and automation, the Government of the U.S. emphasizes data security and privacy through strong data encryption protocols, strict access controls, regular security audits and testing, and data minimization (IBM, 2023).

The Government Digital Services (GDS) have revolutionized public services in the United Kingdom through digital platforms such as "gov.uk," providing simplified access to government information. This user-centric portal allows citizen engagement through intuitive design, reduced cost, and improved efficiency of services. GDS's commitment to open data and digital inclusion ensures the accessibility of services to all citizens and enables third-party developers to innovate. Similarly, the National Health Services (NHS) deploys AI algorithms for the diagnosis of patients and scheduling of appointments. This has reduced waiting times for patients and optimized healthcare resources. NHS has enabled telemedicine and telehealth by expanding remote patient monitoring and online medical consultations (gov.uk, 2023).

Revolutionizing Governance and PSD in Asia

According to the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Singapore's Smart Nation Initiative, launched in 2014, reflects the government's commitment to digital governance and services. The initiative focuses on building digital infrastructure, including high-speed broadband networks and 5G connectivity. Moreover, it aims to leverage data analytics and AI in government decision-making. Singapore prioritizes smart mobility solutions, including autonomous vehicles, real-time traffic management, and innovations in healthcare, such as telemedicine. Citizens can access digital government services, including tax payments, through the "SingPass" platform under the Smart Nation Initiative.

South Korea employs AI-powered surveillance systems to enhance public security through the prediction, prevention, and detection of crimes, traffic monitoring and management, and disaster preparedness and response. AI is used to analyze suspicious activities and identify potential security threats in real-time, as well as to process crime data and identify hotspots. Additionally, AI systems facilitate the prompt response to accidents, traffic violations, and obstructions, ensuring road safety and reducing traffic congestion. Automation supports disaster response efforts, including weather forecasts and the assessment of natural disaster impacts (APO, 2021).

India has streamlined the delivery of public services through an ambitious project known as the Aadhar System. This system assigns a unique 12-digit identity number to every resident of India, linking it to their biometric and demographic data. AI is used to verify identity during the Aadhar enrollment process by matching the Aadhar database with biometrics. This initiative has enrolled over a billion individuals in the system, reducing administrative burdens and facilitating financial inclusion. It enables direct government funds to reach eligible beneficiaries through digital payments and financial services while eliminating intermediaries (APO, 2021).

Meanwhile, the Government of India introduced and linked the Goods and Services Tax (GST) with the national ID system, ultimately integrating it with people's bank accounts for tax enforcement and compliance. This electronic tax filing provision has now broadened the tax base to 3.4 million additional indirect taxpayers in just six months. The success of the Aadhar digital ID program has triggered other Asian countries leading to the introduction of the e-KPT card in Indonesia, the NADRA system in Pakistan, and MyKad in Malaysia. The government of India has been implementing blockchain technology in Andra Pradesh as one of the significant initiatives to reduce fraud and corruption in the land management system (APO, 2021).

The Philippines leverages crowdsourcing to enhance the quality of public education through the CheckMySchool (CMS) initiative. CMS, launched in 2011, is a groundbreaking community monitoring technique that partners with the Department of Education to produce reports on public educational programs, services, and infrastructures. It allows students, guardians, and community members to have real-time access to information and holds authorities of schools accountable. Through CMS, citizens can advocate and raise their concerns regarding necessary changes and improvements in school facilities. This has played a significant role in reducing corruption and mismanagement of public education. Moreover, this project has expanded to thousands of schools across the Philippines, while also inspiring other citizen-led monitoring efforts in other sectors beyond education (APO, 2021).

Nepal´s Journey of Digital Governance in Public Service

In the early stages of the development of e-government worldwide, Government 1.0 aimed to utilize dedicated websites and government portals to provide public service information. Similarly, Government 2.0 prioritized public involvement in policymaking, openness, efficiency, and better user access to services, ensuring interoperability among government ICT systems via service-oriented architecture. Government 3.0 focused on integrating communication channels, establishing pervasive e-government, and building an e-infrastructure for advanced automation to anticipate users' needs. In Nepal, Government 1.0 represented a conventional, paper-based form of government that utilized limited technology. The Government 2.0 stage utilized the internet, information portals such as websites, email, and basic online services.

Digital governance in Nepal has advanced towards Government 3.0, although it hasn't fully reached this stage. Nepal has made efforts to advance its digital governance infrastructure through the adoption of open government data, data-driven decision-making, and online public service delivery. It has also worked on digitizing government operations through e-government initiatives, enabling the provision of online public services. Additionally, Nepal aims to establish a digital identity system through the National Identity Card (NID), similar to India's Aadhaar system. This system is expected to integrate various government services, including driver's licenses, banking services, tax payments, the social security system, and voter registration. Data analytics techniques have been employed for evidence-based decision-making in various government agencies.

The Government of Nepal has been progressing in the digital landscape, implementing policy and institutional frameworks, including the National Broadband Policy 2015, Information and Communication Technology Policy 2016, Telecommunication Act 1997, and The Electronic Transactions Act 2008. According to the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, the Digital Nepal program was expected to contribute up to NPR 800 billion to GDP growth by 2022. The government of Nepal introduced the Digital Nepal Framework (DNF) plan in 2019 with the goal of restructuring the economy through increased service delivery, production, and productivity by harnessing digital technology. DNF aspires to promote socioeconomic growth through eight sectors, namely digital foundation, education, energy, agriculture, health, tourism, finance, and urban infrastructure, along with eighty digital initiatives. DNF aims to expand the 5G network, public Wi-Fi hotspots, the National optical fiber network, and spectrum availability (Digital Nepal Framework, 2019). Key government entities such as the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Department of Information Technology, National Information Technology Centre, Office of the Controller of Certification, Nepal Telecommunication Authority, and other institutions play pivotal roles in implementing and regulating digital initiatives.

Nepal requires enormous political, financial, and administrative preparation to embrace Government 4.0 and Government 5.0. This leverages automation, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, the Internet of Things (IoT), big data analytics, 5G and connectivity, Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR). For that, investment in technology infrastructure that supports AI, IoT, and 5G is indispensable. A comprehensive assessment of technological advancements and the contemporary status of digital governance is essential to develop a vision and strategic plan for the adoption of innovations in public service. Moreover, data governance and cybersecurity policies, which ensure ethical, secure, and responsive utilization of data, hold a significant foundation for the future of public service. The government needs to partner with the private sector, research institutions, academia, and intellectuals to embrace the further stages of digital governance. Furthermore, international strategic collaboration is required.

Challenges and Concerns

While AI and automation offer a paradigm shift in the public sector and society at large, they also pose certain risks. Ethical considerations, legal issues, and societal implications have been raised. As the public sector increasingly relies on data-driven decision-making, questions about the role and function of government have arisen. A vast amount of data collected, stored, and used by AI may lead to a breach of privacy, sensitivity, and confidentiality. AI algorithms may inherit biased data which ultimately influences policy formulation and later discriminatory outcomes. Moreover, ensuring algorithmic fairness, equity, and unbiased training of data in algorithmic decision-making is more challenging (European Journal of Information Systems, 2022).

According to the United Nations, 2.9 billion people in the world are still out of reach of the internet. Advancements in digital technology are deepening inequalities and the digital divide through unequal access to digital services and the benefits of AI and automation. Contrary to the motto of sustainable development goals, digital technologies are leaving nearly half of humanity behind. The barriers to accessing social services such as healthcare and education have significantly excluded certain populations and marginalized them further. AI and automation systems face vulnerabilities in security, such as cyberattacks, hackings, data breaches, data piracy, and deep fakes.

Nepal had 11.51 million internet users, accounting for 38.4% of the total population. The data reveals the growth of 822 thousand internet users, marking a 7.7% increase from 2021 to 2022 (Datareportal, 2022). The majority of internet users in Nepal, at 72%, access the internet through mobile devices, with 55% using mobile connections and 17% using broadband. Notably, internet banking has connected 1.5 million citizens, while mobile banking has reached 33% of the population. However, digital governance in Nepal faces persistent challenges, including the institutional development of digital payment, payment gateway, digital inclusion, and data centers.

The Digital Nepal Framework primarily concentrates on digital service flow; however, it neglects crucial factors such as digital footprints, data security, interconnectivity, and open government data. The existing legal framework falls short in addressing significant aspects of the digital economy, including digital entrepreneurship, digital investment, quality of data, and currency regulation. Organizational and individual resistance to change, weak digital infrastructure and technological incompetency, digital illiteracy, regulatory shortcomings in the private IT sector, and internet security vulnerabilities contribute to these challenges.

Responsible AI Adoption

The administrative routine tasks of public officials are at stake as most jobs are expected to be displaced by automation and AI. This requires the formulation of a strategic human resource development plan, including reskilling and uplifting competencies in accordance with the transforming technological development. Public employees should equip themselves with enhanced systems thinking, leadership, creativity, and emotional intelligence. The horizons of knowledge and competencies regarding digitization, data analysis, software development, and cybersecurity should be enhanced by public officials.

Several nations have introduced various regulatory frameworks and guidelines for the responsible and ethical deployment of AI technologies. The European Union (EU) seeks to regulate the use of AI across member countries of the EU through the AI Act while ensuring the safety of AI systems. Canada has introduced a directive on automated decision-making. Moreover, it has implemented the Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy for advancing research and promoting collaboration between academia and industries. Singapore has published guidelines for data protection, accountability, and ethical adoption of AI (The Data Privacy Group, 2023).

United States deploys the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to work on guidelines and ethical frameworks for the regulation of AI, automation, and technological development. UK´s Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation (CDEI), an independent advisory body, focuses on ensuring the ethical and responsible implication of data-driven technologies, Artificial Intelligence, and Machine learning (The Data Privacy Group, 2023).

The openness and transparency of the use of AI in decision-making processes help maintain the trust and credibility of citizen towards the government. Good governance today is governance that ensures fair and equitable use of automation and AI in public administration and public service delivery. Prioritizing data privacy and security, along with a strong code of conduct and regulations for data protection, is instrumental.

Citizen Engagement and Participation

AI has the potential to foster inclusive service-making. The development of user-friendly online platforms and portals allows citizens to access government information, receive services, and provide essential feedback. E-consultation and online surveys gather public opinions from a wider audience regarding public service delivery. The collected citizen feedback can be further analyzed for decision-making. Virtual public hearings, live streamings, and interactive features assist in policy discussions, enhancing participation. Open data initiatives automate indexing, classifying, and analyzing enormous datasets, making government data accessible to all stakeholders. It ensures transparency by enabling citizens to access and use available data while holding public officials accountable.

Conclusion and Strategic Way Forward

It should be ensured that the data required by AI should be obtained with informed consent. It is essential to emphasize national-level training programs and workshops for empowering public officials with AI and automation skills. Employees must be sharpened with adequate skills and competencies for leveraging the opportunities unlocked by AI and automation. It is essential to ensure that public service providers and receivers are capable of utilizing the opportunities unlocked by AI.

Investment in AI Research and Development (R&D) agencies should be prioritized. The widened social inequalities and excluded populations caused by the digital divide should be considered while formulating public policies. Policy-makers should be mindful of technological inclusivity, promoting digital literacy, and strengthening digital infrastructure. The government should put forward serious efforts to verify the technologies critical to national interest and security.

A periodic audit of the AI algorithm should be conducted to rectify biases and ensure fair assessments. Ethical guidelines related to the enforcement of AI should be introduced. The academic sector and educational institutions should focus on producing future human resources in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Investment in digital education also enables access to technology, utilization of AI and automation, and leads to bridging the digital divide.

The transformative power of big data analytics is essential for reshaping policy-makine processes (Digital Nepal Framwerk, 2019). The success of ´Digital Nepal´ depends on how strategically digital innovations and technological advancement are internalized by all the three tires of the government. It is imperative to consider the pivotal role of the digital economy in the Digital Nepal Program. The challenges and opportunities posed by the technological development should be addressed with the concrete policies, plans and strategies. The policymakers should prioritize unleashing the advantages of digitization, study and prepare legal and institutional framework for embracing AI and automation in future.

Nepal should prioritize investment in digital infrastructure such as high-speed internet networks, power supply, technological education, and training related to automation and AI. The government should encourage startups and innovation related to technology through funding provisions. Moreover, it should focus on establishing a conducive environment for digital investments. It is essential to focus on cybersecurity education and infrastructure. Moreover, international partnerships and collaboration should be enhanced for technology transfer and capacity building in this field.

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Do Bilateral Relations Affect the Treatment of Migrant Workers? A Study of Nepal

Shasta Kansakar*

Abstract

Unfair treatment of migrant workers is a major problem in the migrant governance system. Migrants often endure harsh working conditions, poor wages, and in some cases, untimely deaths. This brings the question, "What can countries do about the poor treatment of their people in destination countries?" This research analyzes the role of bilateral relationships between countries and concludes whether stronger bilateral relations affect the condition of migrant workers in destination countries. The hypothesis is that bilateral relations do not matter but the destination country's domestic human rights condition is a bigger determinant of migrant treatment. The case studies of Malaysia and Japan in relation to Nepal through a series of quantitative and qualitative analysis however disproves the hypothesis and shows that bilateral relations do matter in determining the treatment of migrant workers.

***Keywords**:* migrant workers, bilateral relations, human rights, diplomacy.

Background

Between 2008-2017, 3.5 million Nepali workers immigrated to 153 countries in search of foreign employment (Nepal et al., 2021). In 2021 itself, 22.7 % of the Nepali GDP was obtained through remittance from migrants. This is drastic compared to 20 years ago in 1999 when only 1.7% of the GDP was made up from remittances (Personal Remittances, Received (% of GDP)- Nepal, n.d.). This reflects how important migrant workers and their remittances have become to the Nepali economy. Nepal as a migrant-sender nation could potentially have the potency to influence destination nations to treat Nepali workers better. However, poor treatment of migrants, and discrimination which sometimes leads to death has been a global issue. Migrant labourers were partially highlighted in Nepali after over 6500 Nepali workers died preparing stadiums in Qatar for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, prompting immediate government intervention (Pattinson & McIntyre, 2021). This research seeks to examine whether bilateral relations with destination countries might influence and improve the human rights condition of migrants. The hypothesis is that the bilateral

** Researcher*
Email: shasta.kansakar7@gmail.com

relations of two countries are irrelevant but rather the domestic human rights conditions influence the treatment of migrant workers.

This paper aims to analyse whether bilateral relations between migrant-sending and receiving countries influence the treatment of migrant workers in the recipient country. The hypothesis will be tested through a comparative analysis between Malaysia and Japan in relation to Nepal

Literature Review and Theoretical background

The literature review explores and sets the scope of three aspects pertaining to this research: human rights, bilateral relations and the migrant governance system.

Human Rights

Human rights comprise human decency and integrity in aspects such as education, healthcare, and equal opportunity amongst many other fields. While it can be interpreted in different ways depending on individuals, communities or states, the International Bill of Human Rights is considered to be a universally accepted comprehensive manifesto of human rights law. It consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Both of these cover civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and also extend protection to migrant workers. The UDHR was accepted by all UN states in 1948 with only 8 countries abstaining to vote and the ICCPR has 173 ratified states and 6 signatories (OHCHR, n.d.). The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CRMW) is another convention affiliated with the UN that is exclusively for migrants but it is lesser known than the International Bill of Human Rights. It has 58 ratified countries and 11 signatories (OHCHR, n.d.). For the purpose of this study, the UDHR, ICCPR and CRMW will be the framework covering migrant human rights on the basis of universality and all-inclusivity.

The table below shows these declarations and covenants pertaining to migrant worker protection. Many overlaps regarding the prohibition against slavery, unjust punishments and unfair detention as well as freedom of religion and movement can be observed in all three documents. Meanwhile, the CRMW is more holistic and also includes protection for families of migrant workers. There are clauses for deportation (Article 22), greater protection against discrimination from nationals and equal rights (Articles 14, 15, 18, 25, 43).

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CRMW)

Article 4: Prohibits anyone from being held in slavery or servitude.	Article 8: Prohibits anyone from being held in slavery or servitude.	Article 8: Provides the right to leave any country including the state of origin and allows re-entry to the state of origin at any time for migrants and their families.
Article 5: Prohibits inhumane and cruel punishments.	Article 9: Prohibits arrest and detention without evidence.	Article 9: Provides the right to life for migrants and their families.
Article 13: Provides the right to leave any country and allows the freedom of movement in the place of residence.	Article 10: Prohibits inhumane treatment of detained individuals.	Article 10: Prohibits inhumane and cruel punishments.
Article 19: Provides freedom of religion and religious practices.	Article 12: Provides freedom of movement within or outside the state.	Article 11: Prohibits anyone from being held in slavery or servitude.
Article 22: Provides the right to social security.	Article 18: Provides the right to religion and practices.	Article 12: Provides freedom of religion and religious practices. Prohibits coercion to adopt another belief.
Article 23: Provides the right to work and provides protection against unemployment, favourable working conditions, and reasonable pay.	Article 27: Provides the right to one's own culture, community, and language.	Article 13: Provides the freedom of expression and to voice one's opinions.
Article 24: Provides right to leisure time from work and		Article 14: Prohibits unlawful attacks or interferences in the lives of migrants and

periodic holidays from work.		their families.
Article 25: Provides the right to enjoy cultural practices.		Article 16: Provides state protection against violence and prohibits arbitrary detention against migrants and their families.
		Article 17: Prohibits detention of migrants without evidence. If detained, workers must be treated with dignity.
		Article 18: Provides equality for migrants and their families on par with the nationals of the destination country before the courts.
		Article 22: Prohibits collective expulsion of migrants and their families. Only competent authorities have the right to expel individuals.
		Article 25: Provides right to equal treatment at work for migrants and their families on par as nationals of the destination country in terms of remuneration, working conditions, overtime, and holidays.
		Article 43: Provides right to equal treatment at work for migrants and their families on par as nationals of the destination country in terms of access to education, vocational training, housing, and health services.

Sources: (United Nations, 1948, art. 21.3; United Nations, General Assembly, 1966, art. 25(b); United Nations, General Assembly, 1990).

Strong Bilateral Relations

Beyond human rights, another primary component is the bilateral ties between any two countries. Bilateral relations can be further categorized into economic relations and diplomatic relations. Economic relations include the flow of aid, trade and investment and diplomatic relations mean ambassador visits, the number of embassies and bilateral agreements. These two components determine the strength of bilateral relations.

Diplomatic relations are referred to as the ability or competence to connect with other states. The Vienna Convention is one of the first modern and widely accepted documents that codifies diplomatic relationships. Article 27 states, "The receiving State shall permit and protect free communication on the part of the mission for all official purposes." This means that diplomats and ambassadors must be protected and their mission to communicate with the state should be respected. It is also insinuated that diplomatic missions are pursued through ambassadors. Similarly, Article 22 states, "The premises of the mission shall be inviolable. The agents of the receiving State may not enter them, except with the consent of the head of the mission." This emphasizes the significance and sovereignty of embassies in maintaining diplomatic ties. The embassy or ambassador's property cannot be interfered with in the host country and it should be seen as a representative of the country that the ambassador represents (United Nations, 1961). Hence, it is evident that the availability and ubiquity of an embassy, consulates and ambassador visits play a significant role in strengthening bilateral connections and consolidating bilateral treaties and agreements.

Secondly, economic diplomacy is characterized by the contact of countries which would lead to enhanced economic security for both parties involved (Lee & Hocking, 2010). In the modern day, providing and receiving investments and foreign aid, exports and imports, recruiting migrants to fill the labour gap, and obtaining remittance through migrants abroad can be considered to be economic diplomacy. Hocking (2004) further adds that diplomatic and economic relations are integrated since there is a multitude of actors such as the government ministry, foreign ministry, civil sectors, private sectors and civilians will are impacted by bilateral relations. Hence, diplomatic and economic relationship leads to form bilateral ties between states.

Migrant Governance System

Global migration comprises a broad category of labour migrants, refugees, migrants who go abroad for education, state-nominated migrants or irregular migration. Hollifield (2004) argued that in the contemporary world, migration is key to a state's functions. Similar to war and trade, migration has become another component in bilateral and multilateral state relations (Adamson & Tsourapas, 2019). The framework to organize migration, in other words, the 'migrant governance system' is characterized by migration policies, laws and regulations regarding global migration on a national, sub-national or global level. For instance, in Nepal, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) looks after labour migration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) deals with labour diplomacy and Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) handles remittance (Bashyal & Subedi, 2021). All of these can be considered to be migrant governance on a national level. On the contrary, some argue that the migrant governance system is not a new phenomenon as migration has been regulated since the existence of states and boundaries. Jewish citizens from the Soviet Union being barred from emigration during the early years of the cold war is an example (Peretz, 2017).

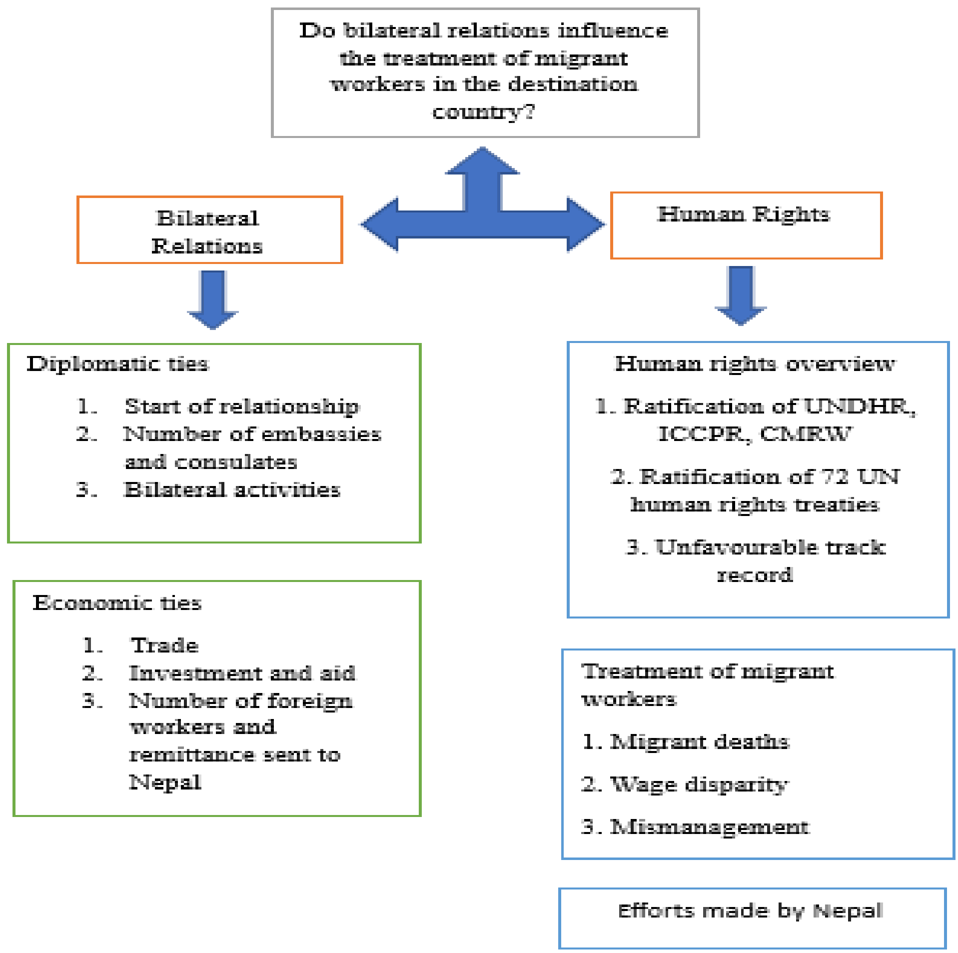
Furthermore, Adamson and Tsourapas (2019) adds that the migrant governance system is dictated by power relations between the receiving states of migrants and states that provide migrants. Recipient states have the power to dictate laws that affect migrants from foreign nations. States that send migrants enjoy remittance but bear the burden of a dwindling workforce. Immanuel Wallerstein's World-systems theory is key in exploring the power dynamics and hegemony of the migrant governance system. According to Dos Santos (1971), the world's hierarchy can be categorized into three groups: core, periphery and semi-periphery. In brief, core countries can exert power over or exploit semi-periphery and periphery countries of resources, capital and labor for their own economic benefit.

Core or dominant states are rich industrialized countries such as the OECD states. They are economically and technologically advanced, with flourishing manufacturing industries and big infrastructures. In contrast, peripheral or satellite states are countries with poorer infrastructures and economic development. The global south is usually considered to be the peripheries. Despite the peripheries' lower hierarchy in the world, core nations need them to supply resources and cheap labor to uphold the current systems in core countries (Chirot & Hall, 1982). On the other hand, periphery nations remain impoverished due to their exploitation (Pankaj, 2005). Semi-periphery states on the other hand are a mix between core and periphery. While these countries still act as peripheries for core nations, they exploit other peripheries for their development. Several South East Asian countries (semi-periphery) underpay South Asian (periphery) labourers while their own lower end against the West is an example (Huang, 2011).

The principle of the world system carries over to the migrant governance system. In the current socio-economic climate, globalization as a consequence of capitalism is the driver of migration. Cross-boundary interactions are not more ubiquitous than before (Wallerstein, 1974). Wallerstein says that receiving nations exploit benefits through migrants from peripheries as they can underpay them and retain higher profits. There are several core nations such as Japan with labour shortages due to low birth rates or a large number of senior citizens or are undergoing industrialization, hence requiring more labourers, like in Malaysia. In such cases, migrants are in fact holding the social security system of the destination country (Jones & Mielants, 2015). Meanwhile, migrants from the peripheries have the shorter end of the stick. The impaired economies in periphery nations compel people to find work abroad where they are likely underpaid (Pankaj, 2005). There is also the case of cultural oppression. Edward Said, the author of Orientalism (1978), said that migrant workers from poorer Asian or African nations are seen as the 'other' by the West. The 'othering' of migrants leads to scrutiny from people in the core nations.

Methodology

This paper is particularly based on the methodology give in the following chart.



The hypothesis is that bilateral relations do not matter but rather the human rights policies in the destination determine the condition of migrant workers. In order to test this hypothesis, a comparative analysis of two migrant-receiving countries, Malaysia and Japan has been done in relation to Nepal. These countries are chosen as subjects given the generally high number of Nepali emigrants in these countries and remittances exchanged with them. The two oppose economically as Malaysia is a middle-income country and Japan is a developed one and also has varying socio-cultures. The case study has two parts: bilateral relations and human rights (pictured above). The first section analyzes the bilateral strength of the subject country and Nepal through the study of diplomatic and economic relationships. The second section investigates the human rights condition in the subject country, the treatment of Nepali migrants in said country and the efforts made by the Nepali government to improve the situation. Finally, after ranking both Japan and Malaysia, it will be examined whether the bilateral relationship with the destination country does in fact impact improvements in migrant treatment or not. The same data sources have been as much as possible for both countries to ensure consistency. Quantitative and qualitative methods have been used. Variables such as 'unfavorable human rights' can be arbitrary and require a qualitative approach. At the same time, variables such as trade and investment can be quantified, hence both methods have been utilized in combination. All the data and information were accessed through World bank and other statistics data banks as well as journal articles, newspapers and reports. Lastly, since the primary focus is Nepal, Malaysia and Japan, the scope of this research is limited to these countries.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Case Study 1: Malaysia

Bilateral relations between Malaysia and Nepal

Diplomatic relations

Bilateral relations between Nepal and Malaysia were established on January 1, 1960. There is a Nepali Embassy in Kuala Lumpur and a Consulate in Selangor (Honorary Consulate General of Nepal in Selangor, Malaysia - Embassy WorldWide, 2014). There is one Malaysian Embassy in Kathmandu and no Consulates. The Embassy in Nepal frequently holds events promoting bilateral trade and tourism and A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on employment, worker rights and recruitment exists between the two. They also signed an Air Service Agreement in 2007, consolidating air connectivity through direct flights. High-profile visits include Former Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr Mahathir Mohamad who visited Nepal in 2014 (Embassy of Malaysia in Kathmandu, Nepal, 2014; Nepal Malaysia Relations, n.d.).

Economic relations: Trade, Investment, Aid and Foreign Workers

In terms of trade and investment, Nepal exported 1656 (US$ Thousand) worth of goods and imported 99,154 (US$ Thousand) worth of goods to Malaysia in 2016. Nepal primarily exports vegetable products, apparel and handicrafts and imports machinery and intermediate goods like oil and plastic. Additionally, Malaysia has also invested over $466 million in 27 industries in Nepal. (World Integrated Trade Solution, 2017). Finally, given Malaysia's status as a middle-income nation, they have provided aid in the form of scholarships to Nepali citizens under their Malaysian Technical Cooperation Program. However, perhaps the most significant point of contact between Malaysia and Nepal is the migration of labourers from Nepal. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that there are 700,000 Nepali workers in Malaysia (*Nepal- Malaysia Relations*, n.d.). By 2018, 22% of the migrant worker population in Malaysia included Nepalis (Yi et al., 2020). It is estimated that 9.7% of the total remittance arrives from Nepali migrants in Malaysia as of 2019/20 (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, 2022).

Therefore, Malaysia and Nepal have a functioning diplomatic relationship with regular contacts and even more intimate trading and economic partnership.

Human Rights in Malaysia

Malaysia's Constitution adheres to some fundamental international human rights laws. As per the UNDHR and ICCPR, the constitution also allows for the right to personal liberty against unlawful detention (Article 5), prohibits slavery (Article 6), the right to freedom of speech (Article 10) and the right to religion (Article 11). Article 8 states that the constitution covers citizens and non-citizens including migrant workers regardless of their documentation status. Hence, migrant workers are liable to receive the same human rights treatment as the residents of Malaysia (Malaysia Constitution, 1957). It can be interpreted that Malaysia follows the baseline standard of human rights on paper. It is to be noted however that Malaysia has not signed the ICCPR and CRMW. They have either signed or ratified 18 out of 72 United Nations treaties[*] related to human rights (Ratification of International Human Rights Treaties - Malaysia, n.d.). Human Rights Watch reports an unfavourable track record of human rights in Malaysia. The lack of sufficient freedom of media, police brutality, treatment of asylum seekers, LGBTQI rights and women's rights are in particular criticized (Malaysia: Events of 2021, 2022).

Treatment of migrant workers

Nepali migrants suffers from untimely deaths, wage disparity and a corrupt recruitment process that risks their labour rights. The Nepal Labour Migration Report (2022) reports that 175 Nepali migrant workers died in 2019/20. 80 deaths were attributed to suicide, 20 to workplace accidents, 14 to heart attacks, and 22 to cardiac arrest amongst other reasons such as covid and natural death. Wage disparity and the mismanaged recruitment process contribute to the abusive system that migrants endure. Migrant workers have lower pay than their native counterparts. As per data from 2016, migrant labourers in 'low-skill' jobs earned RM970 (USD 210) - RM1200 (USD 259) per month (Yi et al., 2020). In comparison, the 2016 median income for Malay nationals with no education and primary level education was RM1153 (USD 249) and RM1327 RM (USD 287) every month

[*] International human rights compiled by the University of Minnesota Human Rights Library 72 bills under the: International Bill of human rights, Prevention of Discrimination on the Basis of Race, Religion, or Belief; and Protection of Minorities, Women's Human Rights, Slavery and Slavery-Like Practices, Protection from Torture, Ill-Treatment and Disappearance, Rights of the Child, Freedom of Association, Employment and Forced Labour, Education, Refugee and Asylum, Nationality, Statelessness, and the Rights of Aliens, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, Genocide, and Terrorism, Law of Armed Conflict, Terrorism and Human Rights, U.N. Activities and Employees, Regional Conventions and African Regional Conventions

respectively (*Salaries & Wages Survey Report, Malaysia, 2016*, 2017). There have been some improvements since Malaysia had to increase migrant wages as one of the conditionalities to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) in 2017 (Pattisson, 2022).

Moreover, the recruitment process requires improvement. Typically, agencies mediate labour supply to Malaysia. They are granted the “Visit Pass (Temporary Employment)” (VP(TE)) status on their visa which differs from the “Employment Pass” reserved for highly skilled ex-pats. The employers are required to compensate VP(TE) workers for their housing, insurance and medical bills. However, many employers and agencies skip the legal procedures, preferring the short-hiring time and avoiding the costs. This would render the workers to be irregular or undocumented workers (Yi et al., 2020). Irregular workers are not covered by domestic laws such as the Employees Provident Fund Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, Employment Act and the Employee Social Security Act that protect legal migrants (Raj-Hashim, 1994). They are also subject to violence and removal. For instance, 323 undocumented Nepali migrants were arrested in 2020 and faced further discrimination during Covid (Ramli, 2020; (BBC News, 2020) The MOHR has however announced plans to phase out recruitment agencies from 2019 onwards (Zainul, 2018).

Efforts by Nepal

During Malaysian Home Minister Saifuddin Nasution Ismail's visit to Nepal on February 2023, the Nepali delegation urged for the proper implementation of the “zero-cost” migration policy. The “zero-cost” policy, originally agreed upon in the 2018 memorandum, enforces employers in Malaysia to handle the costs of airfare, visa, insurance, security screenings and recruitment fees. In practice, however, the migrants bear these costs instead of the employers (Pandey, 2023). If the policy is executed diligently, employers will have to be more accommodating towards migrant workers, who can have a smooth transition to Malaysia. Few -fruitless- efforts have been made by the Nepali delegation.

Case Study 2: Japan

Bilateral relations between Japan and Nepal

Diplomatic relations

A formal diplomatic relationship between Japan and Nepal was established on September 1, 1956. Prior to this, there are historical records of Nepali students being sent to Japan for educational purposes during the Rana regime. There is a Nepali Embassy in Tokyo and two Consulates in Osaka and Fukuoka prefectures. There is one Japanese Embassy in Nepal. Bilateral contact between the two countries is frequent, especially with the commencement of the 'Bilateral Consultative Mechanism' in 2015 regarding development and trade. Bilateral Agreements have also been made on the 'Agreement on Technical Cooperation', 'Air Service Agreement' and 'MoU on Training Nepali Industrial Workers in Japan'. Moreover, recent high-profile visits include Former Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pradeep Kumar Gyawali's visit to Japan in 2018 and Former Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taro Kono's visit to Nepal in 2019 (Nepal-Japan Relations, n.d.)

Economic Relations: Trade, Investment, Aid and Foreign Workers

In 2016, Nepal exported 9343 (US$ Thousand) worth of goods to Japan including pashmina products, handicrafts, silverware and paper products. They imported 64,806 (US$ Thousand) worth of goods such as vehicles. Electronics, machinery and medical products. Japan has invested USD 30 million in foreign direct investment up to 2017/18 (World Integrated Trade Solution, 2017). Japanese foreign aid dates back to the 1950s when they supplied bilateral grants to support technical development in Nepal. Japan has been involved with historically important technical development projects such as the Tanahun Hydropower Project (Nepal-Japan Relations, n.d.). As of 2018, Japan has provided 121.30 billion yen in grants and 78.64 billion in technical cooperation, amounting to 199.94 billion yen (USD 1.8 billion[*]) (Japan-Nepal Relations (Basic Data), n.d.). Finally, Japan hosts Nepali 118,196 workers with diverse job, skill and pay portfolios; 20.3% per cent of the migrant population in Japan comprises Nepalis as of 2022 (Record 1.8 Million Foreign Workers in Japan as of 2022, 2023). It is estimated that 7.5% of the total remittance arrives from Nepali migrants in Japan as of 2019/20 (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, 2022). Therefore, Japan has invested heavily in Nepal and has an engaging diplomatic relationship.

Human Rights in Japan

As per the UNDHR and ICCPR, Japan incorporates fundamental human rights laws in their constitution. Article 18 prohibits slavery and working in bondage, Article 20 allows freedom of religion and 33 prohibits the arrest of civilians without a warrant (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, 1947). Furthermore, the Supreme Court ruling of the 1978 'McLean Visa Renewal' case ensured that human rights laws would be extended to foreign nationals too (Kondo, 2008). Japan has ratified the ICCPR but not the CRMW. They have either signed or ratified 34 out of 72 United Nations treaties related to human rights (Ratification of International Human Rights Treaties - Japan, n.d.). However, inadequacies in their human rights credentials include discrimination against migrants, women, refugees, ethnic Koreans and the LGBTQI community. Hate crimes and speech against ethnic Koreans residing in Japan, unlawful detention of foreigners and prohibition of same-sex marriage are some major problems (Amnesty International, 2022).

Treatment of Migrant Workers

A few migrant deaths, wage disparity and an exploitative training program are some key problems relating to the treatment of Nepali migrants in Japan. The previous year, there were 9 recorded deaths of Nepali migrants in Japan due to traffic accidents or Covid (Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022, 2022). As of 2020, foreign workers in Japan earned 73% of what their Japanese counterparts did. This disparity was higher among blue-collar jobs and migrants working part-time or through a traineeship (Juntaro, 2020).

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[*] Average closing exchange rate of 2018 1 USD= 110.34 Japanese Yen was applied.

As for the recruitment system, private companies in Nepal are not allowed to recruit and send workers to Japan. A G2G model has been codified in the memorandum of cooperation in 2019 and is monitored strictly (Mandel, 2019). Only 206 accredited organizations are authorized to send individuals for the TITP visa program (*ネパール　送出機関一覧（JITCOとのR/Dに基づく）*, n.d.). This makes for a seamless and there is a controlled flow of management for both Japanese employers and Nepali workers. Nepali workers primarily enter Japan through two systems: The Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) Visa and the Technical Intern Training Program (TITP) Visa. The former is for industry specialists and the latter is a training program for technological and skill transfer purposes. However, the premise of TITP has been questioned in recent years. Despite being a training module, workers are treated as cheap labour under the TITP. They are also unable to change jobs and usually uninformed about their labour rights, creating grounds for abuse from employers (Zuo, 2019). The government has been in favour of ending the TITP and opting for a different module for migrant labourers (Tauchi, 2023). In addition, in 2023, the Japan System for Special Highly Skilled Professionals (J-Skip) program was launched for researchers, engineers, and high-level managers who wish to work in Japan. The workers under J-Skip would receive a lucrative income of 20 million yen (USD 150,000) and preferential treatment in their point system (Exum, 2023). Given that J-Skip is for high-skilled professionals, it would exclude working-class migrants.

Efforts by Nepal
In 2019, Nepal signed a memorandum of cooperation with Japan, agreeing upon a G2G model of labour recruitment. This would ensure that companies would not be able to send Nepali workers to Japan without authorization (Mandel, 2019). Similarly, the Japanese Ambassador to Nepal, Masamichi Saigo signed the memorandum of agreement which would require an increment of the monthly salary of migrant labourers to Rs. 200,000 (USD 1512). The agreement also provides work benefits to migrant workers on par with their Japanese counterparts (Nepal, Japan Sign Labor Agreement, 2019). Clear improvements can be observed in the situation of Nepali migrants in Japan through intervention.

Result and Discussion

Analysis of bilateral relations

	Parameters in relation to Nepal	**Malaysia**	**Japan**	**Who has a stronger relationship with Nepal?**
Diplomatic Relations	Start of bilateral	January **1960**	September **1956** (Informal relation during	Japan

	relationship		Rana regime)	
	Embassy/ Consulates in the destination country	**2** Kuala Lumpur and Selangor	**3** Tokyo, Osaka and Fukuoka	Japan
	Bilateral agreements	**2** 1. MoU on recruitment, worker rights and employment 2. Air Service Agreement	**4** 1. Bilateral Consultative Mechanism 2. Agreement on Technical Cooperation 3. Air Service Agreement 4. MoU on Training Nepali Industrial Workers	Japan
Economic Relations	Trade	2016 Nepal imported: **99,154** Nepal exported: **1656** (In US$ Thousand)	2016 Nepal imported: **64,806** Nepal exported: **9343** (In US$ Thousand)	Malaysia
	Investment and aid	Total of **$466 million** up until 2017. Aid is limited to **scholarships**	**$30 million** in FDI. Grants and technical assistance of **$ 1.8 billion** up until 2018	Japan
	Migrant workers	**700,000** in 2022 22% of the migrant population in Malaysia	**118,196** in 2022 20.3% of the migrant population in Japan	Malaysia
	Remittance received (% of GDP in Nepal)	**9.7%** of total remittance	**7.5%** of total remittance	Malaysia

As per the findings, Japan has stronger diplomatic ties with Nepal than Malaysia does. Japan has had a long-shared history, more points of contact (consulates and bilateral agreements) and most importantly, a bilateral consultative mechanism that allows for a consistent channel of communication with Nepal. In contrast, Malaysia enjoys a slightly stronger economic relationship with Nepal as per the bigger volume of trade and greater number of Nepali migrants and remittances. That being said, Japan has invested and provided aid in billions and has a substantial trade volume and Nepali migrant population. Hence, it can be concluded that while Malaysia has a stable and well-functioning bilateral relationship with Nepal; in tally, Japan edges them out in terms of a more compelling diplomatic connection and economic investment.

Analysis of Human Rights

		Malaysia	**Japan**	**Notes**
Human rights Overview	Ratification (or agreement) of ICCPR, CRMW and UNDHR	UNDHR**- Yes** ICCPR**- No** CRMW**- No**	UNDHR**- Yes** ICCPR**- Yes** CRMW**- No**	**None** have ratified CRMW
	UN Human Rights (72 treaties)	**18**/ 72 (Signed or Ratified)	**34**/ 72 (Signed or Ratified)	**None** have signed or ratified 50% of the treaties
	Unfavourable track record	Discrimination against the **LGBTQI** community, **misogyny**, and treatment of **asylum seekers.**	Discrimination against the **LGBTQI** community, **ethnic Koreans**, **misogyny**, and detention of **foreign nationals**.	Discrimination against migrant workers is a big problem
Treatment of migrant workers	Deaths of Nepali workers (in 2022)	**175 deaths** (Through suicide, workplace accidents, cardiac arrests, and others)	**9 deaths** (Through traffic accidents or Covid)	**Japan** has significantly fewer deaths though it is to be noted that Japan has fewer Nepali immigrants than

				Malaysia.
	Wage Disparity	**84%-90%** of what Malay nationals earned in 2016. Migrants USD 210- 259 Malaysian nationals USD 249- 287	**73%** of what Japanese nationals earned in 2020.	**Malaysia** has a lower range of wage disparity than with national counterparts.
	Mismanagement	Exploitative **recruitment agencies** and **irregular workers**.	**TITP system** is exploitative towards working-class migrants.	
Efforts for improvement by Nepal		Requested Malaysia to implement the **"zero-cost" migration policy.**	Agreed on a **G2G model** to ensure proper flow of labour recruitment. Requested for **increased salary** for migrant workers.	

Overall, Japan appears to have a better track record of human rights given its compliance with the ICCPR and a greater number of UN human rights treaties. However, both Malaysia and Japan have not signed or ratified the CRMW, a key international treaty protecting migrant workers. Despite signing more UN treaties in comparison to Malaysia, Japan has not signed more than half the treaties. Both countries also have issues of discrimination against marginalized groups including foreign workers. Hence, the overall human rights trend in both countries is concerning for migrant workers.

As a result, mistreatment of Nepali migrant workers is observed in both countries. However, an improvement can be observed in Japan. In Malaysia, recruitment agencies and inflexible visas lead to the creation of irregular workers who are exempt from legal protection. There is a high number of Nepali deaths, many due to suicide and workplace accidents. This means that working as a migrant in Malaysia might not be ideal. Similarly, there is a higher rate of wage disparity in Japan than in Malaysia for migrants. However, in contrast, there has been an increased salary for Nepali workers recently after agreements were made on a state level. Nepal and Japan's bilateral agreements had also outlawed mediators like recruitment agencies, which is an ongoing problem in Malaysia. The Japanese TITP system is exploitative but efforts are being made to remove the system. Moreover, there are a significantly lower number of Nepali deaths in Japan. (However, it is to be noted that Malaysia hosts a larger number of Nepali immigrants.) This progress was possible through the G2G model and the bilateral consultative mechanism that Japan and Nepal have adopted.

Revisiting the hypothesis, while there are concerns about the treatment of Nepali migrant workers in Japan, it is observed that having a clear channel of communication and consistent diplomatic contact can improve the situation of migrant treatment. This situation parallels Malaysia where a poorer bilateral relationship has led to a stagnant treatment of Nepali migrant workers. Nepali officials have had to reiterate the terms of agreements such as the “zero-cost” migration policy to Malaysian officials. Therefore, bilateral relations affect the treatment of migrant workers; disproving the hypothesis.

Conclusion: Policy Recommendations

In conclusion, since bilateral relations do impact the human rights of migrant workers, here are some policy recommendations for Nepal:

1. Establish G2G contact or bilateral consultative mechanisms with migrant-receiving countries so as to open a channel of consistent communication.
2. Be proactive and insistent when requesting for fair pay, reparations for deaths, and transparency for migrants on rights and work conditions during meetings with the destination country.
3. Create a contact point between the embassy or consulates and migrant workers. Provide access to legal support and means to return to Nepal.
4. Create domestic laws illegalizing recruitment agencies. Allowing authorized organizations who are transparent about the procedure to deal with potential emigrants.

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The Study of Performance of Provincial Governments: Does Frequent Transfer of Officials Matter?

Tara Prasad Kharel* and Rajendra Adhikari†

Abstract

Nepal is federal country with three levels of governments, viz. federal, province and local. Among these, province government is new structure and its performance is important for the stability of province and the federal system. The performance of province is mainly determined by the frequency of transfer of top level bureaucrats and the availability of the staffs in province ministry. This study establishes the relation between frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats, availability of staffs and the performance of province government further digging out other factors affecting the performance of province government. The purpose of the study is to examine data from secondary sources, focus groups, field observations, interviews with key informants, and other sources that includes both quantitative and qualitative data. The study established the relation between performances of province government with frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats of province ministries of Lumbini Province. There has been effect of such frequent transfer of the top level bureaucrats in the performance of Lumbini Province government to the large extent in planning, implementation, resource management, risk management, liability management, accountable management, effectiveness of office, coordination among other staffs and offices, and policy making. But the impact on daily office operation has been found very low. Federal and province governments are suggested to reduce the frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats and manage the full staffing condition of province ministries.

***Keywords**:* Provincial government, performance, frequent transfer, bureaucracy

Introduction

Nepal is a country of geographical, cultural and lingual diversity. Ever since King Prithvi Narayan Shah unified the country, Nepal has operated under a unitary form of government. In the course of managing and implementing development agenda, federalism has been found an apt practice for

** Deputy Director of Studies, Nepal Administrative Staff College*
Email: kharel47@yahoo.com

† Director of Studies, Nepal Administrative Staff College
Email: rajendra2063@gmail.com

Nepal. So, the nation has changed from a centuries-old unitary system of governance to a federal structure with the goal of equitable and inclusive development in all geographic regions of the nation and the vision of proper distribution and use of resources by reducing economic, social, and religious prejudice. Federalism is a form of government where a central authority and different tiers of government share power, either equally or unequally. A country under federalism has two levels of government: a federal government at the federal level and additional provincial or municipal governments at the state and local levels. According to Bhattachan (2003), federalism is the practice of the system which guarantees freedom, equality, prosperity and human rights curing the problems like inequality and imbalance. The history also shows that the government of Licchavis, Bajjis, Videhas and Mallas etc. are in the form of confederation during the 4th century BC (CA, 2009). The 240-year monarchy in Nepal was officially ended in 2063 with the adoption of the 5th amendment to the interim constitution (Reliefweb, 2007). It was the first official document to refer to Nepal as a Federal Democratic Republic nation. According to the concept of a federal system, after the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal (2015), Nepal has been divided into 7 provinces, 77 districts and 753 local levels. Hence, there are 753 local governments, 7 provincial governments and a central 'federal' government.

The chief minister heads the provincial government. Six ministers accompany the chief minister from ministry of Internal Affairs and Laws, ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning, ministry of Industries, Tourism, Forest and Environment, ministry of Social Development, ministry of Physical Development and ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives. The office of Chief Minister is supported by Principal Secretary and other ministries are supported by secretaries as head of the Administration. These secretaries and principal secretaries are appointed from the pool of senior federal bureaucrats and are accountable towards federal governments. But as the chief of provincial bureaucracy, they have to participate, energize and implement the plans, policies, laws and other development agenda of provincial governments. The availability and stability of such secretaries and principal secretaries is crucial for the development, implementation and monitoring of plans, policies, laws and public service delivery of the provincial government. But, while reading the daily national newspapers and discussion of/with ministers and chief ministers of province, it is found that there has been frequent shuffling and or transfer of such "top level bureaucrats" in the province ministries. Such shuffling may be due to conflict of interest or any other reasons. DRCN (2019) points out that the provincial governments are unable to function as expected because of the frequent transfers of employees and also focus about the stability of the employees. Hence, it is immensely important to study the impact of frequent transfer of secretaries in provincial level.

The main purpose of this study is to explore and compare the impact of frequent transfer of top-level bureaucrats of provincial government in the area of public service delivery, policy decision making and planning and programming. For this, the study only focuses on frequent transfer of top-level bureaucrats (principal secretaries and secretaries) and effects caused on service delivery, policy decision making, planning, and programming of provincial government. Other probable effects will not be analyzed in this study. In addition, this study focuses on Lumbini province only and the political economy of frequent shuffling and transfer of such top-level bureaucrats of provincial government is beyond the scope of this study.

Literature Review and theoretical background

Measurement of Government Performance

It is not simple to assess government performance. Although evaluating government performance is popular, there doesn't seem to be agreement on what constitutes "performance," and there are numerous approaches, techniques, and methodologies available for evaluating a government agency's "performance" (Trivedi, 2017). He also makes the following three frequently used classifications of agency performance management system: a) partial versus comprehensive; b) ex-ante versus ex-post; and c) managerial versus agency performance measurement systems.

According to Rahman & Mohtar (2020), the most popular definition of performance measurement is the systematic process of gathering, evaluating, and reporting data to management. It may also be thought of as the process of gauging prior performance.

The five criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of public reporting and government service delivery are made clear in the 2020 Australian Government Productivity Commission Report on Government Services. The report claims that by aiding in the clarification of government goals and duties, encouraging analysis of the connections between agencies and programs, enabling governments to coordinate policy within and across agencies, increasing performance transparency by educating the public, giving governments performance indicators for policies and programs over time, and promoting continuous performance improvements in service delivery and effectiveness by emphasizing innovations and improvements, it creates incentives for better performance.

According to the study carried out on civil servants in India (Marianne Bertrand, Robin Burgess, Arunish Chawla, and Guo Xu, 2020), the civil servants towards the time of their retirement, who are expected to retire without their promotion (stated as “glittering prize” by authors), may have lower motivation preventing to exert enough effort for performance. Jiang, J. (2018) argued, by examining economic performance of local governments in China, that government performance can be improved by using patron–client relations that helps to resolve principal–agent problems that prevails in political hierarchies. Another study by Rivera (2020) shows that party alignment and emergence of career concerns plays an important role for bureaucratic behavior and their performance.

Importance of Government Performance Measurement

While referring to the entrepreneurial government, to carry out the business in government sector also, the individual performance is considered an important factor. Because of the paradigm shift, both public and private sectors are now treated like their business counterparts. According to Rahman & Mohtar (2020), the governments are under a constant pressure to be responsive and accountable to not just the departmental head, ministers and the parliament, but also to all of its clients involved.

No matter how they are owned, all organizations, according to Hoque (2012), must create metrics or indicators to evaluate their performance. These metrics are also supposed to inform business managers' choices regarding employee incentive or reward programs and the organization's ability to express its expectations for employee behavior as well as how it expects it to be observed and assessed.

As to Joseph Wholey (1997), the current focus on performance assessment in government agencies and nonprofits is in reaction to the demands of citizens worldwide for evidence of the effectiveness of programs. In support of their performance monitoring argument, Wholey and Harry (1992) note that systems are beginning to be used for more than just employee motivation and government service and citizen-government communications; they are also being used for budget formulation, resource allocation, external accountability, and performance contracting. According to Wholey and Newcomer (1997), performance evaluations can be carried out more often to enhance management and program efficacy or yearly to increase public accountability and policy decision-making.

According to Harty et al. (1990), the Governmental Accounting and Standards Board recommends that performance measures be used in the following ways: establishing goals and objectives; organizing program activities to achieve these goals; assigning resources to these programs; keeping an eye on and assessing the outcomes to ascertain whether the goals and objectives are being met; and adjusting program plans to improve performance.

According to Ammons (1995), local government performance measurement has made the promise that more complex measurement systems will support management procedures, improve the decision-making process for allocating resources, strengthen legislative oversight, and boost accountability.

Performance measurement, according to Osbome and Peter (2000), gives authorities the power to hold companies accountable and impose performance-related penalties. It gives managers the information they need to enhance performance and assists citizens and consumers in evaluating the value that government generates for them.

According to Behn (2003), managers of public agencies may utilize performance assessment as part of their overall management strategy to assess, regulate, budget, inspire, promote, celebrate, learn, and become better.

Government Performance Evaluation

It appears that one of the most crucial topics in contemporary public administration is the assessment of government agencies' performance. (Suleimenova, Kapoguzov, Kabizhan, & Kadyrova, 2018). Leoveanu (2016) asserts that a crucial component of the New Public Management is the performance evaluation of government entities. Performance assessment is viewed as a method of quantifying the efficacy and performance of activities, and it is a component of the total performance management system (Salem 2003; Hansen 2017). Although there are several other contributing elements, Talbot (2010) claims that the assessment system's adoption aids in improving government agencies' real performance.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Management of government performance is intricate. Decision-makers in government have access to a wide variety of data sources. According to Parmenter (2012), performance management systems have many different measurement indicators, such as Key Performance Indicators (KRIs) that assess key performance outcomes, Result Indicators (RIs) that assess activities, Performance Indicators (PIs) that identify areas for improvement, and KPIs that assess how performance can be significantly improved.

Creating meaningful KPIs may be quite difficult. A performance indicator, also known as a key performance indicator (KPI), is a kind of performance evaluation that is used to increase the effectiveness and accountability of government, according to Carol (1990). Decisions may occasionally be made based on inaccurate or inadequate information, which makes forecasts unreliable and increases the possibility that an unexpected outcome may arise from the choice chosen. Thus, it's essential to use performance indicators correctly to minimize risk and prevent errors of this kind (Dolence, 1990). According to Austin (1996), when workers adhere to the prescribed metrics at the price of the true quality or worth of their job, KPIs can potentially result in perverse incentives and unforeseen repercussions.

The Study

Taking into account the goals, research question, and theoretical framework of the study, a research design that includes desk review, key informant interviews, group discussions, and field observation technique has been chosen. The literature review related data, transfer related data from annual reports and documents form the province ministries was collected by desk review. Similarly, information related to the performance and factors affecting the performance of the top level bureaucrats was collected during key informant interview and group discussion. In this study, attempt is made to analyze and interpret the collected data, to answer the principal research questions and fulfill the objectives of the study, within the principles of government performance. The framework of analysis is based mainly on the Constitution of Nepal as the foundation, within and beyond the principles of public service delivery, good governance and federalism. As the study is primarily based on the analysis of the effect of frequent transfer of top level officials of province government, qualitative approaches with analysis of documents is best suited and for the statistical analysis, quantitative analysis has also been used. Interview and reports are analysed using qualitative approach whereas frequency and tendency of frequent transfer are analyzed using quantitative approaches. Information is gathered using both primary and secondary data gathering techniques. Semi-structured interviews with top-level officials (secretaries, principal secretary, and others) are used to gather primary data. Separate group discussion has been scheduled in each ministry with 5-7 officials considering the GESI lens. The interview is made in Nepali Language for simplicity which is translated in to English latter during data coding. Secondary data is collected from various sources such as annual reports, newspapers/media reporting, project documents etc. Approved number of officials, recruited (appointed) and vacant number has also been collected as secondary source of information. According Creswell (2009), researchers have a responsibility of protecting research participants and the promotion of integrity of the research. So, prior permission with participants to carry out interview was taken and also explained that the information obtained is used only for the research purpose. They received clear information about their voluntary participation in the study and their right to discontinue participation at any time throughout the interviews if they felt uncomfortable. Additionally, they received clear information regarding their voluntary engagement and the non-manipulation of their data. Similarly, their privacy is not disclosed in this report. All the steps and consideration has been made to preserve quality concern on the study report.

Findings and Discussions

Number and Frequency of Transfer of Top Level Officials

As per the requirement of the research objectives, the analysis of the number and frequency of the transfer of top level officials has been carried out. The number of transfer and their average stay in the concerned ministry is provided in Table 1. This statistics cover the data from the date of first appointment of Principal Secretary and Secretaries to the last date of observation 15th Falgun 2077. Furthermore, if the last official in the list is in his/her position for less than 6 months or yet in position during field visit, then it is not included for counting the average tenure.

Table provided below clearly indicates that average tenure of the Principal Secretary/Secretary is found to be less than 1 year (except in Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives) and another interesting fact found is the third (excluding the exception of Second *Nimitta Sachib* of Ministry of Physical Infrastructure Development) the third tenure is more stable and is around 1 year tenure. This is because the government of Nepal has made mandatory provision of minimum 1 year province level experience for joint secretary (Secretary of province) to be eligible for promotion in Secretary. The minimum tenure of province secretary is 5 months and maximum tenure is 18 months. In an average tenure of the principal secretary and secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law has approximately 8 months, four ministries (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning, Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Physical Infrastructure Development) has 9 months, Office of the Prime Minister and

Council of Ministers has 12 months and Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives has 13 months.

Table 1: Number of Principal Secretary and Secretaries and Their Tenure

S.N	Ministry	No. of Principal Secretary/Secretary	Duration (in months)	Average (in months)	Remarks
1	Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers	1	6	11.67 (Approx. 12)	The fourth is excluded from calculation.
		2	13		
		3	16		
		4*	2		
2	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law	1	6	7.8 (Approx. 8)	
		2	5		
		3	10		
		4	9		
		5*	9		
3	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning	1	13	9	
		2	5		
		3	11		
		4*	7		
4	Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives	1	15	13	
		2	6		
		3*	18		
5	Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment	1	6	9.25 (Approx. 9)	
		2	13		
		3	12		
		4*	6		
6	Ministry of Social Development	1	9	9.25 (Approx. 9)	
		2	10		
		3	12		
		4*	6		
7	Ministry of Physical Infrastructure Development	1	8	9	Second is not included in calculation.
		2	1		
		3	10		
		4	12		
		5*	6		

* Indicates that the Principal Secretary/Secretary was on tenure during field visit.

While taking consideration of the performance of the province, it is very difficult to relate the frequency of transfer of top officials with performance of the province government, ministries and other government agencies. But indirectly, during Key informant's interview and focus group discussion, all officials participating came on common consensus that such frequent transfer of top officials has adverse effects on efficiency and effectiveness on designing, planning and implementation of policies, rules, projects and other regular service delivery.

Status of Availability of Officials in Province Government

The study also revealed that beside the frequent transfer of top officials (bureaucrats) of province government, the availability of the other officials is also crucial determining the performance of the province government. Table 2 presents the status of availability of officials in province government. Here, Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment contains total number including ministry itself and its department and other offices whereas other ministries contain the status of officials within ministry only.

Table 2: Status of Availability of Officials in Province Government

Ministry	**Approved**	**Available**		**Vacant**		**Availability Ratio**
		No.	%	No.	%	
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law	57	38	67	19	33	2/3
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning	48	26	54	22	46	½ (Approx.)
Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives	74	44	60	30	40	3/5
Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment	1333	986	74	347	26	¾ (Approx.)
Ministry of Social Development	54	38	70	16	30	7/10
Ministry of Physical Infrastructure Development	56	34	60	22	40	3/5

While considering the approved and available number of staffs in each ministry, no any ministry is fully equipped with the approved number of *darabandi*. Comparatively, Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment has highest percentage (74%) of available officials whereas Ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning has lowest percentage (54%) of available officials. According to the officials, such condition of the ministry has created the environment where officials have to work under pressure due to which they can not complete the assigned work either as in expected quality or in designated time. Delay in completion of work is being regular, according to them. To avoid such situation and increase the performance of the province ministry have hired the temporary and contract staffs. According to their record, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law has 33%, Ministry of Land Management has 12%, Agriculture and Cooperatives and Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment has 9% of staffs either temporary or in contract out of total approved *darbandi*. The study further revealed that, even though ministry has managed staffs as mentioned above, all seats need to be full yet. Hence, despite of such, these ministries, based on the perception of officials included in Key informant's Interview and Focused Group Discussion, are still in under performance. So, understaffing might be another reason affecting the performance of the province government.

Perception of Officials towards Government Performance

Based on the studied literatures, authors have prepared 10 indicators to determine the Province Government Performance. These indicators are: Planning, Implementation, Resource management, Risk Management, Liability Management, Accountability Management, Effectiveness, Coordination among others, Policy making and Daily office operation.

Seven group discussions and 17 key informant's interview also included a perception survey containing these 10 indicators and 5 options in scale of 0 – 4. The survey was carried out in individual basis and latter verified with group discussion. There was slight deviation in the response in group from the individual response. But for the purpose of this study, the individual response provided by 52 respondents on the effect of frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats has been tabulated in table 3.

Table 3: Perception of Officials towards Government Performance

Factors	Very Large Extent (4)	Large Extent (3)	Moderate (2)	Very Less (1)	No effect (0)	Total
Planning	37	13	2	0	0	52
Implementation	32	15	3	2	0	52
Resource management	35	10	7	0	0	52
Risk Management	42	7	2	1	0	52
Liability Management	40	4	6	2	0	52
Accountability Management	33	10	8	1	0	52
Effectiveness	30	13	7	2	0	52
Coordination among others	42	9	1	0	0	52
Policy making	34	10	6	2	0	52
Daily office operation	1	3	7	9	32	52

The above perception table clearly revealed that among 10 factors causing the effect on the performance of province government, nine factors are highly important whereas daily office operation has less effect due to the frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats. Out of 52 respondents, 32 said there has been no effect on daily office operation due to frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats. Whereas in remaining nine factors, no one agreed that there will be no effect due to frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats. Majority of them agreed that there will be effect on very large extent due to frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats on these nine factors. Among these nine factors having effect on very large extent, risk management and coordination among others have higher value (40) and effectiveness has lower value (30). This supports that the effect on the government performance and frequent transfer of top level of bureaucrats is deeply related.

Other Factors Affecting on Performance of Province Government

Beside of individual perception survey, the studied carried semi structured interview and group discussion to identify other factors affecting the performance of the province government. Even though the effect caused by these factors cannot be quantified and claimed as they have high effect on performance, these factors also cannot be excluded from the study, hence, discussed hereunder.

Newly Established Structure and Working on Odd Situation

It has been the fact that the province governments were formed after the election only some 3 years ago. After the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal, province governments were structured according to the constitutional provision of federal system governance. This is very new structure being functional from 3 years ago, so, many functional areas are yet to be clear. Similarly, these governments are functional in very odd situation where all political, social and functional structures are in transition state. The focus group discussion and key informant's interview also argued about this factor associated with the poor performance of the province government.

Interest of Bureaucrats and Political Leadership

The study revealed that another factor affecting the performance of province government is interest of both political and bureaucratic leadership. Top level bureaucrats are selected and designated for province government by the federal government. Hence, their accountability not only remains towards province government but also remains towards federal government. Another important fact is that the carrier growth of such bureaucrats is solely dependent on the federal government. Interestingly, many such officials, according to most of the respondents, have very less interest to remain in province government for longer duration and they are always intended to transfer from province government as early as possible. Hence, they do not have more interest for improving their own and province government performance, when they are at province. Similarly, political leadership, according the study, also neither have powerful control over bureaucrats nor play the influential role to engage and motivate the bureaucrats to perform as per requirement making the performance of the province government better. Similarly, there is lack of consistency of policy and programmes with political wills which further supporting the temporary mindset of designated bureaucrats. The political leadership of the province level failed to instutionalize the province governance system (function) which failed to make bureaucrats accountable towards province government.

Systematic Error

The constitution of Nepal has provisioned the power and authority of each level of governments scheduled in schedules 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 consisting both concurrent and shared powers. But there has been lack of role clarity between federal and province level. Lack of coordination between federal and province governments for functional assignment has been causing the low performance of the province government, according to the focus group discussion. Similarly, centralized mentality and lack of proper transition management plan, failing to implement right man in right place are also fueling this systematic error. Another example of systematic error is we have still those people who worry for post carrier and do not function the present carrier, however, they surrender to political leadership for their carrier growth, the study revealed. Another interesting example, as mentioned in key informant’s interview, is that we take the feudal system as role model, grown up in subsistence agriculture system and entered in the capitalist wage economy based bureaucracy.

Lack of Experience and Ownership

The study further revealed that due to the frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats, there is lack of experience and ownership. When a official joins the province government, it takes some time to understand the province government and political leadership of the province government as well as the policies, programmes and priorities of the province. As of new comers, according to most of the respondents, there will be no ownership and stake on the plans, policies and programmes designed before. Some of the respondents, in contrary to this, argued that this could not be a problematic factor for affecting the performance of province government as long as institutional memory has been maintained. But there has been problem on institutional memory too because of such frequent transfer. An officials makes an annual programme along with implementation plan back up in his/her mind. But when s/he is transferred and the newcomer will know about the programme only but does not know about the implementation plan due to lack of institutional memory. This ultimately reduces the ownership towards such programme. Similalry, study also revealed that political leadership also do not have experience of province level. They also just willing to pass their tenure as most of them were, before, in central level and have interest to jump back to federal politics. This ultimately reduced the ownership of political leadership too.

Conclusion

Province government is the part of federal system provisioned by the constitution of Nepal. Failure of province government to produce its performance ultimately affects the newly established federalism in Nepal. The performance of the province government has been dependent on many factors. Among such factors, frequent transfer of top level bureaucrats is important factor. Province government is newly established structure comparison to the pre-existing federal (as central) and local governments (as local bodies). Hence, functionally and structurally province government is experiencing the low performance. There has been transfer of top level bureaucrats in Lumbini province in an average of 8 months to 13 months. This seems to be quite stable if compared with other provinces. But this frequent transfer has affected the performance of province government to large extent except to its daily office operation. Beside of this, all ministries are not provided with 100% staffs. Their availability has been ranged from 54% to 74% of the approved number. This also has been affecting the performance of the province government. Similarly, there have been some other factors affecting the performance of Lumbini province. These factors include the newly established province structure working on odd transition situation, lack of will and interest of both bureaucrats and political leadership, existence of the systematic error and lack of experience and ownership of both political and bureaucratic leadership. Regardless of these facts, the influence of transfer of officials on government performance should be weighed against completion time of projects, income generation, physical and financial performance, number of laws drafted, and so on. However, the study was conducted a few years after the founding of the province government, therefore there was a shortage of such essential data and information. As a result, another research should be conducted once the election cycle has completed two or three terms of the province government.

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Public Sector Corruption in Nepal: Causes and Consequences

Udaya Ranamagar*

Abstract

The research paper discusses corruption in Nepal's public sector, a significant challenge in the development agenda. The main objective of this study is to find the causes and consequences of corruption in the public sector. This study used primary and secondary data to determine the causes and consequences of corruption in Nepal. The results found that the political, court, and administration sectors are the most corruption-prone zones, losing the government's credibility. The leading causes of corruption are non-compliance with existing rules and regulations, lack of political commitment, transparency, accountability, consistency, and institutional weaknesses. Corruption reduces competitiveness and increases the cost of living, becoming a significant obstacle to economic growth, social development, and political stability. The government has taken various measures to combat corruption, including establishing anti-corruption bodies and laws. However, these measures have yet to be effective in curbing corruption, and there is a need for more significant reforms. The political leader, bureaucrats, civil society, and media should take responsibility for controlling corruption in the public sector of Nepal.

***Keywords**:* corruption, cause and consequence, public sector

Background

Corruption is a pervasive issue found in both public and private sectors, as well as in profit and non-profit organizations. It is prevalent in developing and developed nations, with a higher incidence in developing countries.

Corruption is defined as the misuse of public office for private gain, encompassing bribery, extortion, fraud, embezzlement, nepotism, and influence peddling. It erodes trust, weakens democracy, hampers economic development, and exacerbates inequality, poverty, and social division. Corruption can have wide-ranging effects, including undermining the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, hindering economic growth, and decreasing popular accountability and political responsiveness.

** Joint Secretary, Government of Nepal*
Email: rana_udaya@yahoo.com

Corruption is a dishonest, fraudulent, or even criminal act of an individual or organization, using entrusted authority or power to make a personal gain or other unethical or illegal benefits. It happens not only in political fields but also in social and economic fields, such as business, education, and media. A lack of transparency and effective regulations are often the leading causes of Corruption. Corruption undermines institutions' reputations, prevents economic development, distorts individuals' freedom and rights, and attacks democracy and justice. Instituting rules that prevent gray areas and establishing transparent processes are some solutions to combat Corruption.

Anna (2003) mentions that corruption hurts people experiencing poverty by diverting funds intended for development, undermining a government's ability to provide essential services, feeding inequality and injustice, and discouraging foreign aid and investment. Corruption is a crucial element in economic underperformance and a major obstacle to poverty alleviation and development. Similarly, according to Mathew and Barnabas (2012), Corruption consequently ranges from the broad terms of misuse of public power and moral decay to strict legal definitions of Corruption as bribery involving a public servant and a transfer of tangible resources.

Corruption is a pervasive and detrimental issue in Nepal, affecting both the public and private sectors. It hampers economic development, undermines trust in public institutions, and disproportionately impacts the enjoyment of human rights, particularly by marginalized groups. Widespread Corruption, cumbersome bureaucracy, and inconsistent implementation of laws deter potential investment in the country. Corruption is evident in various sectors, including public procurement, the judiciary, and the police, reducing competitiveness and increasing business costs. Despite the government's shared commitment to attracting foreign investment, a lack of understanding of international business standards and practices and a legal and regulatory framework that is only partially aligned with international norms continue to impede foreign investors. Corruption in Nepal is a multifaceted challenge that requires comprehensive measures to address its far-reaching impacts on governance, economic growth, and social development.

Expert opinions on Corruption in Nepal highlight that it is a deeply rooted and substantial social issue rather than just an economic and legal problem. However, Nepal has launched several legal and administrative frameworks to control Corruption. Nepal's Media and Civil society have been continuously exploring corruption news and raising questions to the government. Anti-corruption agency Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) has been raided frequently in bribery cases. However, the rate of corruption control mechanism could be more practical for controlling. This is not only the government's responsibility; everyone has a responsibility to it, but Nepalese society is encouraged to corrupt and become a culture. The main reason for Corruption is its social recognition. The community cares only about money, no matter its sources. Black or white money is equally worshiped, and rich people are always respected. Transparency Internal Report (2020) shows that Nepalese ranks in the corruption perception index are 117th worldwide. It shows that Corruption is a significant problem for various reasons. Expensive elections, economic disparity, political instability, educational inequality, and social security are the main reasons for Corruption in Nepal. Corruption is widespread, and various studies have analyzed Nepal's level, pattern, and trend. Corruption is considered one of the effects of the black market caused by excessive state interventionism. Low bureaucrat salaries are one of the main reasons for Corruption. Corruption, laws limiting the operations of foreign banks, lingering challenges in the repatriation of profits, controlled currency exchange facilities, and government control over specific sectors of the economy, such as electricity transmission and petroleum distribution, undermine foreign investment in Nepal.

This study focuses on the causes and consequences of Corruption in Nepal and is divided into several sections, including literature reviews, objectives, methodology, result discussion, and recommendations. The study aims to determine the reasons behind Corruption in Nepal and its impact on the country's development. The literature review examines the existing research on Corruption in Nepal, while the objectives outline the specific goals of the study. The methodology section describes the research design, data collection, and analysis methods used in the study. The result discussion section presents the study's findings, while the suggestions section provides recommendations for addressing Corruption in Nepal.

This study aims to identify the primary cause of corruption in the public sector in Nepal and explore the conceptual and theoretical issues of corruption. The study seeks to determine the significant responsibility for controlling corruption in Nepal, the area most affected by corruption in society, and the ranking of the corruption-privileged sector in Nepal. The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- Identifying the primary causes contributing to corruption in Nepal and assigning responsibility.
- Determining the sectors or regions within Nepali society most adversely affected by corruption.
- To discover the ranking of the sectors in Nepal most prone to corruption.
- To identify suitable solutions and recommendations for effectively controlling corruption in Nepal.

Literature Review and Theoretical background

According to Koltgaard (1991), corruption can be represented by the following equation: C = E+D–A where, C=Corruption, E=Economic Rent, D=Discretion, and A=Accountability. The equation suggests that corruption increases when an individual has discretionary power over the control of goods or services of a country with little or no accountability and decides who gets it when he gets it, and how much the receiver receives. Corruption takes various forms, including bribery, embezzlement, fraud, and extortion, and it is a systemic phenomenon that affects governance, development, and economic growth. Corruption hampers the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, undermines the quality of goods and services, and increases inequality. It is necessary to subvert the arithmetical signs of the corruption equation by regulating monopolies, limiting the discretion of the civil service, and increasing transparency. Additionally, the probability of being caught committing a corrupt act must increase, which can be achieved through horizontal control and reducing permissive culture. Corruption is a multifaceted challenge that requires comprehensive measures to address its far-reaching impacts on governance, economic growth, and social development.

Sarah and Timilsina (2020) stated that corruption is a significant problem that costs individuals and businesses an estimated USD 1.5 trillion annually in bribes, while the health sector alone loses USD 500 billion to corruption, which is more than the total cost of Universal Health Coverage. Corruption, theft, and tax evasion cost developing countries USD 1.6 trillion annually. Transparency International's (2020) report shows that Asian countries face a significant corruption problem, with nearly three people out of 20 believing that most or all parliament members are corrupt. Additionally, one out of five Asians has paid a bribe in the last 12 months, and one out of seven citizens has been offered a bribe in exchange for votes in the past five years. According to estimates by the World Economic Forum, the global cost of corruption is at least USD 2.6 trillion, or 5% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Corruption erodes trust, weakens democracy, hampers economic development, and exacerbates inequality, poverty, social division, and the environmental crisis. Corruption can take many forms, including public servants demanding or taking money or favors in exchange for services, politicians misusing public funds or granting general jobs or contracts to their sponsors, friends, and families, and corporations bribing officials to get lucrative deals. Corruption can happen anywhere, involve anyone, and adapt to different contexts and changing circumstances. It is necessary to embrace transparency, expose corruption, and hold the corrupt accountable.

According to the Transparency International Report (2020), New Zealand is in the first position, then our neighbor countries China, 78th, India 86th, and Nepal, 117th position, scored 33 in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). While Nepal scored 29 in its CPI in 2014 (measured on a 1-100 scale), it scored only 27 in 2015 and 31 in 2017 and 2018. TI is in 124th position in the ranking of 180 countries in 2018. TI reported that in 2018 and 2019, Nepal's rank was 134th, as shown in Table 1. Nepal's corruption rank fluctuates from 2009 to 2022.

Table 1. *Trend of Corruption Perception Index and Rank of Nepal*

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Rank	121	143	146	154	139	116	126
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Rank	130	131	122	113	117	117	110

Source: Transparency International

TI report (2020) shows that water costs are 30% higher, and available products cost 20% more than the actual price due to corruption. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that corruption costs more than 5% of the global GDP (Nearly 2.6 trillion USD) and money laundering is almost 500 billion USD annually, affecting countries' inability to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

According to a report by the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), corruption complaints in Nepal are most prevalent in the local government sector (32.72%), followed by the education sector (15.61%), land management (9.09%), forest and environment (5.01%), health and population (3.93%), Ministry of Finance (2.09%), fake certificates (5.61%), illegal property earning (3.38%), and others (12.25%) in the fiscal year 2076/77. The total number of complaints received was 22,625, with 14,532 complaints addressed within the same fiscal year.

Corruption in Nepal is challenging despite various rules and regulations aimed at controlling it. The country has implemented several anti-corruption laws, such as the Prevention of Corruption Act of 2002, the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority Act of 1991, the Judicial Council Act of 2017, the Money Laundering (Prevention) Act 2008, and the Revenue Leakage (Investigation and Control) Act, 1996. Additionally, Nepal has established different agencies, including the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority and the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, to serve as watchdogs and oversight bodies. However, the effectiveness of these agencies in combating corruption has been questioned, and corruption continues to be a significant problem in Nepal's public sector. The prevalence of corruption in Nepal has been attributed to various factors, including a culture of impunity, political instability, and widespread bribery and embezzlement. Corruption in Nepal is a multifaceted and pervasive issue that hampers economic growth, social development, and political stability. Despite anti-corruption laws and institutions, the enforcement and effectiveness of these measures still need to be improved, leaving the levels of corruption primarily challenged. The significant challenges sector for corruption controls are discussed in the following section:

Political and Governance Sector

The political system in Nepal is more favorable for corruption, and political leaders and parties often fail to fulfill their commitments to the people. The election system in Nepal is becoming more expensive, fueling corruption, and Nepal's politics has become a money-generating industry. Most facilities are centralized in the capital city, Kathmandu Valley, leading to migration from outside the valley. To fulfill this requirement, employees, politicians, and businesspersons start to earn more money by being involved in illegal activities, including corruption. Corruption is one of the significant reasons for Nepal's underdevelopment, and it has hit Nepal's political, economic, social, and environmental development. Corruption is a symptom of a country's deep-seated and fundamental economic, political, and institutional weaknesses and shortcomings. Corruption is on the rise in Nepal because of the changes. Nepalese society is going through, and it is recognized as one of the causes of Nepal's underdevelopment. The causes of corruption are a terrible system of governance, wrong incentives, and a weak civil society. Corruption is pervasive throughout the nation, leading to inflation, secretiveness to trade, and underdevelopment.

Socio-cultural Sector

Corruption is becoming a culture in Nepalese society, and corrupt officials and politicians enjoy social recognition. The Nepalese community is quite reluctant to raise its voice against corruption, and a zero-tolerance policy in the public sector confines it to a slogan. Joseph E. Stiglitz (2012) states that greater equality and improved economic performance are complements. One of the reasons for the poor financial performance in many countries in recent years is the high and growing level of inequality. Corruption is pervasive throughout the nation and has led to inflation, secretiveness to trade, and underdevelopment. Corruption is a moral and cultural problem among individuals in their dealings. It has become a part of life accepted publicly as corrupt officials and politicians walk freely. Corruption is visible in every sector, and some ministries are considered gold mines for corruption.

Economic Sector

Economic factors such as unequal opportunities in employment, unequal distribution, weak regulations in the market, unnecessary state intervention, inadequate infrastructure, discrimination, lack of reward and punishment, mass poverty, and economic insecurity stimulate corruption. Lambsdorf (1919) researched corruption in empirical research and found that corruption commonly goes along with policy distortions, income inequality, and lack of competition. Corporate governance has become weak, and intermediaries, black marketing, smuggling, prostitution, kidnapping, drug, and human trafficking have soon flourished. Nepalese society has become over-crazy about money and forces corruption.

Administrative and Legal Sector

According to British politician Acton (1902), absolute power corrupts absolutely, and other incentives and motivations can influence employees to be corrupted. Those with power can misuse it and create insecurity among the people. Nepalese citizens often try to maximize their benefits by paying bribes to corrupt officials. Corruption is one of the major, if not the principal, reasons for Nepal's underdevelopment, and it has hit Nepal's political, economic, social, and environmental development. Corruption is a symptom of a country's deep-seated and fundamental economic, political, and institutional weaknesses and shortcomings. Corruption reduces competitiveness and leads to moral decay, which is more dangerous than corruption. Corruption has been pervasive throughout the nation, leading to inflation, secretiveness to trade, and underdevelopment. The multiparty system in Nepal has contributed to the bloom of corruption, and the lack of information can lead to bribery. Nepalese society can be blamed for being silent about government irregularities and weaknesses, which may be due to historical and socio-political reasons.

Human Behavior Sector

Degradation in morality, lack of accountability, integrity, and transparency at the individual, professional, or organizational level has led to corruption. Nepalese political leaders and others who hold power only make money by posting and transferring employees rather than focusing on employee welfare. At the grass-roots level, people are reluctant to do their duty toward society and the country, enjoying cheating others, suffering others, and trying their best to grab all the opportunities for themselves. Human behavior is one of the essential tools for corruption control, and if there are obedient and honest people, there is less corruption. Corruption is a transnational phenomenon that affects all societies and economies, and it is the enemy of rule, accountability, and good governance. Corruption erodes trust, weakens democracy, hampers economic development, and exacerbates inequality, poverty, and social injustice. Corruption is rightly called one of the most insidious social phenomena, and it has a disproportionate impact on the enjoyment of human rights, particularly by people who belong to marginalized or disadvantaged groups. Corruption may take many guises beyond bribes, such as conflicts of interest.

Based on the literature reviewed, it found that Nepal's governance system remains weak, as evidenced by Nepal's fluctuating rank in the Corruption Perception Index from 2009 to 2022. This fluctuation underscores the urgent need to address the governance system's shortcomings as dissatisfaction with government policies prevails. Identifying the primary causes of corruption in Nepal's public sector is crucial, as corruption control poses a significant challenge for any government. By understanding the root causes of corruption, effective measures can be implemented to combat corruption in Nepal's public sector. Therefore, this study holds significant importance in the present context, as it aims to shed light on the causes of corruption and contribute towards addressing this pressing issue.

Methodology

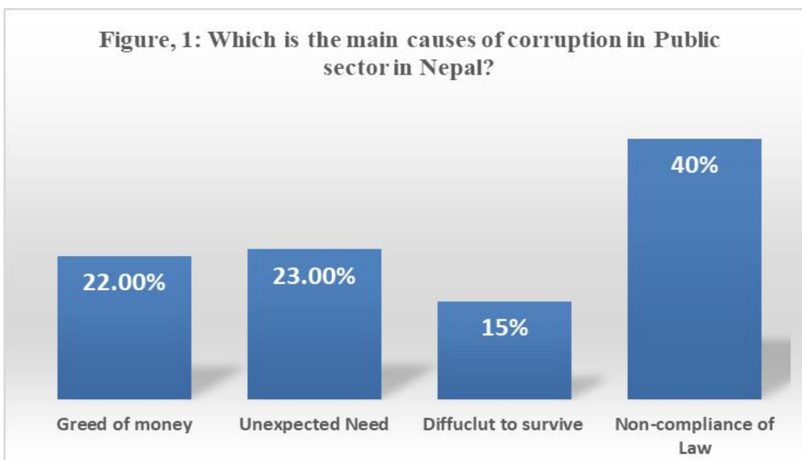
This research understands Nepal's corruption determinants using inductive and descriptive approaches. The study collected data about corruption through a questionnaire from different societies in Nepal, with 100 respondents involved in the interview based on the questionnaire. The study used Survey Monkey software to collect and analyze data. The primary source of information was academic research, and the corruption data were taken from Transparency International, which uses the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). The secondary data were from the World Bank Data Set, Asian Development Bank (ADB), and Economic Surveys of Nepal published by the Ministry of Finance (MOF). The study aims to identify the primary cause of corruption in the public sector in Nepal, find the significant responsibility for controlling corruption in Nepal, see the more affected areas from corruption in the society of Nepal, find the rank of the corruption privilege sector in Nepal, and provide appropriate solutions and recommendations for corruption control in Nepal.

The study employed qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to achieve its results. The quantitative method used descriptive analysis to find the relationship between two variables. Corruption is a transnational phenomenon that affects all societies and economies, and it is the enemy of rule, accountability, and good governance.

Results and Discussion

This study discusses different dimensions or aspects of Nepal's corruption control in the public sector. The primary cause of corruption in Nepal's public sector is poor governance and weak institutional frameworks. Nepalese bureaucracy is often criticized for being inefficient, opaque, and lacking accountability, which creates corruption opportunities. Political instability, low salaries, and limited resources also contribute to the prevalence of corruption in the public sector. Nepalese citizens have reported that corruption is often seen as a norm and a way of life, making it difficult to combat. However, this survey report shows in Figure 1 that there are many reasons for corruption in the public sector of Nepal; among them, major corruption cases have been found non-compliance with the existing rule of law. Almost 40% of respondents replied that non-compliance with the law is the leading cause of corruption in the public sector in Nepal. However, it is not only one reason for corruption; there are many more reasons. Twenty-three percent of respondents replied that political leaders and bureaucrats have an unexpected need from the public sector, which is the other reason for corruption.

According to the survey report, 22% of respondents replied that the greed for money of public sector employees and Nepal's political leaders is another reason for corruption. In the context of Nepal, which served for a short period in the public post, many political leaders became millionaires. Political leaders and some civil servants also collect more money by using their public positions.



Similarly, difficulty to survive was scored only 15%. It means that this is one of the reasons for corruption. However, it is a low-priority cause. Compared to other countries, the salaries of political leaders and civil servants are small in Nepal. So, in some cases, public servants need help surviving in the expensive market regarding their compensation.

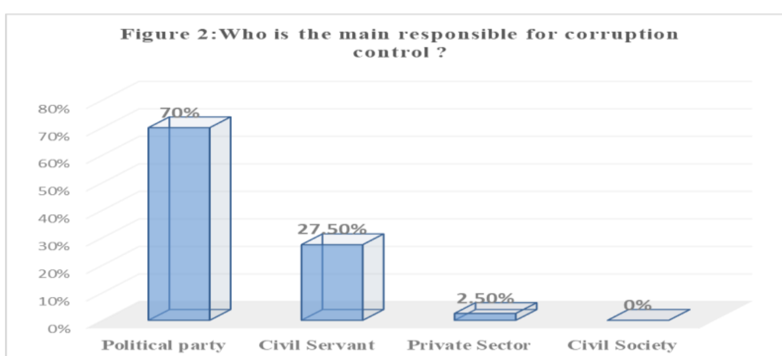


Figure 2 illustrates that 70% of respondents believe political leaders should take primary responsibility for controlling corruption, while 27.5% attribute this responsibility to civil servants. Additionally, 2.5% of respondents hold the private sector accountable for supply-side corruption. The study emphasizes the need for civil society to play a more effective role in combating corruption in Nepal. The prevalence of corruption in the country has hindered its development and progress, impacting various sectors such as education, health, and public services. Despite the government's efforts to address corruption, it remains a significant challenge, affecting good governance, economic growth, and political stability. The study's findings underscore the importance of strengthening anti-corruption measures and promoting transparency and accountability across all sectors of Nepalese society.

Figure 3 demonstrates that respondents identified the economic sector as the most prevalent site of corruption, with a 33% score. The "Strengthening Democracy" process received a 23% score, while the government sector scored 30%. Social equality and harmony were prioritized by 15% of respondents. Corruption undermines trust in political parties, leaders, democracy, and the governance system. Efficient, effective, and reasonably priced public administration is essential. It should not permit organized crime, terrorism, and policy capture. The study emphasizes the need for public administration reform and the efficient use of resources to combat corruption in Nepal. The findings highlight the importance of addressing corruption in various sectors, including the economy, democracy, and government, to ensure sustainable development and progress in the country.

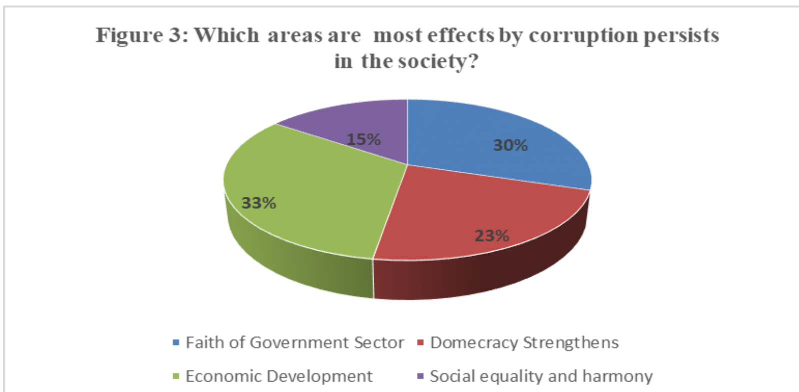


Figure 3: Which areas are most effects by corruption persists in the society?

The study identified three main categories of sectors affected by corruption and surveyed to determine the most prevalent ones. The results showed that 87% of respondents identified the political, court, and administration sectors as the most corrupt ones.

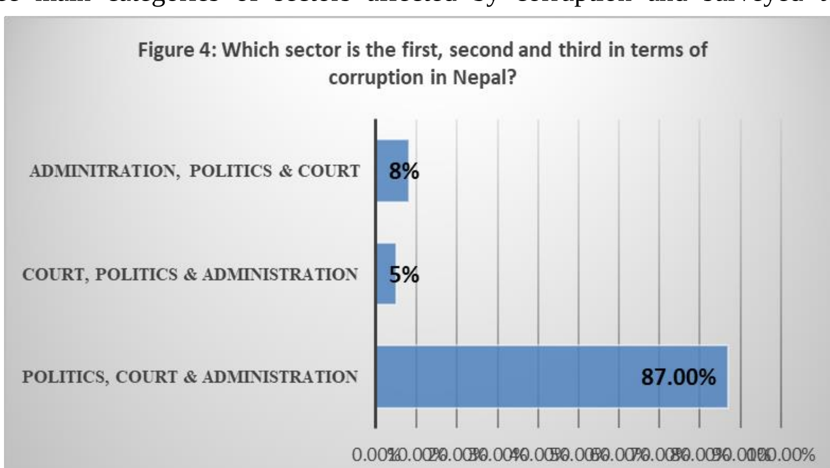


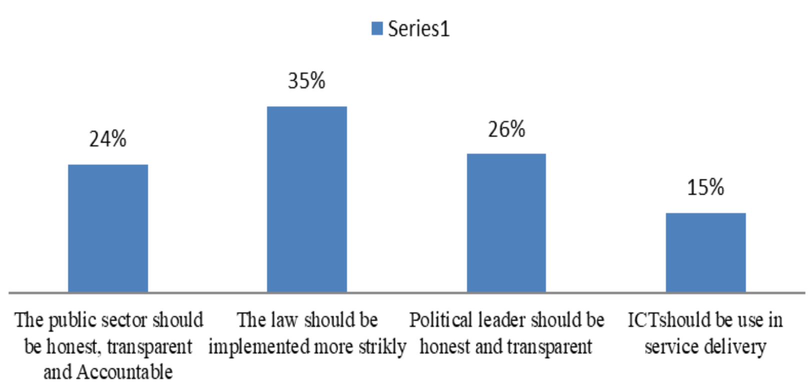
Figure 4: Which sector is the first, second and third in terms of corruption in Nepal?

The result shows that the administration, politics, and court category is the second most corrupted sector, with an 8% score, and the court, politics, and administration sectors are the third, with only 5% of respondents attributing high levels of corruption to these areas. These results underscore the urgent need to address corruption in the political and administrative spheres to ensure good governance, the rule of law, and the effective functioning of democratic institutions in Nepal.

Figure 5 presents the results of a survey on the reform priorities for controlling corruption in Nepal's public sector. The study identified five essential categories for reducing corruption, and respondents were asked to prioritize them. The results showed that almost 35% of respondents suggested prioritizing the strict implementation of anti-corruption laws. This underscores the importance of enforcing existing anti-corruption measures and promoting transparency and accountability in Nepal's public sector. Other categories identified by respondents included the promotion of ethical values and integrity (25%), the strengthening of anti-corruption institutions (20%), the improvement of public service delivery (15%), and the enhancement of public participation and awareness (5%). The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions and reforms to address the root causes of corruption and promote good governance in Nepal.

The survey results indicate that 26% of respondents believe political leaders should be honest and transparent, while 24% prioritize honesty, transparency, and accountability in the public sector. ICT in service delivery received the lowest percentage of responses at 15%. However, it is still considered an essential tool for controlling corruption in Nepal. The study emphasizes the need for strict implementation of anti-corruption laws and the promoting of ethical values and integrity in the public sector.

Figure 5: What should be done to reduce public sector corruption in Nepal?



It concluded that nearly 40% of participants indicated non-compliance with the law is the primary catalyst for corruption in Nepal's public sector. As for accountability, 70% of respondents believed political leaders should bear the primary responsibility for curbing corruption. The economic sector is the most prevalent breeding ground for corruption, as identified by 33% of respondents. Furthermore, the survey revealed that 87% of participants considered the political, court, and administration sectors the most corrupt domains. Additionally, almost 35% of respondents recommended prioritizing the rigorous enforcement of anti-corruption laws.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study confirms the pervasiveness of corruption in Nepal's political, judicial, and administrative sectors, aligning with previous research and media reports. Trade unions often exert influence, leading to unfair practices in appointing and transferring public employees. The Nepalese constitution guarantees equal and easy access to state-provided services and facilities. Fairness, competence, impartiality, transparency, accessibility, accountability, and public participation should be necessary to control the corruption.

The study strongly recommends that the government make it a priority to enforce anti-corruption laws effectively in Nepal. Adopting ICT in service delivery is crucial for combating corruption. Targeted interventions and reforms are necessary to tackle the root causes of corruption and promote good governance throughout the country. The findings underscore the significance of rigorously implementing existing anti-corruption measures and fostering transparency and accountability within Nepal's public sector. Therefore, policy recommendations should prioritize the strict implementation of anti-corruption laws in the following sectors:

Reform in the Politics and Governance Sector

The study's results indicate that corruption in Nepal's public sector has eroded public trust in the government. The relationship between the government and the people should strengthen, a democratic system of governance must be ensured, and the election system should be free and fair. All public institutions should be developed effectively, and accountability and transparency should be maintained. Good governance requires transparency, accountability, and integrity in political parties, and the financial transactions of political parties must be transparent. The government of Nepal should have emphasized the need for strict implementation of anti-corruption laws and (ICT) in service delivery to control corruption in Nepal.

Reform in the Economic Sector

The study's findings reveal that Nepalese employees are significantly underpaid, leading to their inability to meet basic needs such as providing food, education, and healthcare for their families. Therefore, ensuring fair compensation for employees and regularly monitoring the labor market is essential. The economic cost of human creativity, innovation, and productivity cannot be compared to the financial cost of employee compensation. The private sector is the engine of growth and economic development, so it should have formulated private sector-friendly economic policies. It is necessary to develop robust regulatory agencies.

Reform in the Socio-cultural Sector

This study shows that Socio-cultural encompasses the way of life for an entire society, including codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, arts, and more, culture. Ethics, integrity, and honesty are included in this way of life. It is essential to provide moral education to children from school to graduation. Society must be supportive, cooperative, and creative in the anti-corruption campaign. Social exclusion of corrupt and corrupt cultures should be promoted. Developing people as honest is crucial. The members of society should adopt a zero-tolerance policy against corruption.

Reform in the Administrative and Legal Sector

This study found that law and order, rules, and regulations without compromise are crucial. However, the study shows that non-compliance with the rule of law is the leading cause of corruption. There are more active Acts and Regulations for corruption control. Therefore, accountability, integrity, and transparency at all levels of governance should be developed and strictly implemented. Quality services to the people should be guaranteed. Designing an appropriate strategy against corruption is equally vital for corruption control. It suggests that the use of resources and techniques must be chosen according to the strengths of corruption. Moreover, anti-corruption enforcement measures such as oversight bodies and more efficient law courts will only be effective with a serious effort to address the fundamental causes.

Reform in the Technological Sector

The study's results indicate that while technology received a low score from respondents, it remains essential for controlling corruption. Delayed service delivery, defined as corruption by the Anti-corruption Act of Nepal, often leads to customer blame. Technological innovation can provide a foundation for delivering breakthrough services. Forensic and engineering labs are essential for combating corruption, and high technology, such as CCTV surveillance and cybercrime investigation, is a crucial success factor. The study recommends that the government focus on implementing more technology in the public sector to reduce corruption in Nepal. Policymakers should consider these findings when formulating corruption control measures using technology in the public sector.

Finally, it concludes that comprehensive reforms in multiple sectors are needed to address corruption in Nepal. It highlights the importance of strengthening politics and governance, ensuring fair compensation in the economic sector, promoting ethical values in the socio-cultural sector, improving administrative and legal frameworks, and leveraging technology. The study recommends the preventive part of corruption control by the government, especially on the executive head of the government and strict implementation of anti-corruption laws, promoting transparency and accountability, and fostering a zero-tolerance policy against corruption. Prioritizing these reforms will help control corruption, enhance good governance, and restore public trust in Nepal's public sector.

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Relationship between Capital and Recurrent Expenditure with GDP Growth in Nepal: An Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) Approach

Umesh Raj Rimal*

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between Capital and Recurrent Expenditure with GDP Growth in Nepal. Employing a multivariate autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL) approach to the data from 1974 to 2020, the empirical findings reveal a strong long-run relationship between recurrent and capital expenditure with the nominal GDP. Interestingly, the impact of recurrent expenditure is higher than that of capital expenditure on GDP in the long run. However, the analysis highlights no clear short-run relationship. The weak short-term relationship observed may be due to the leakage of multipliers and the concentration of a major portion of expenses towards the end of the year. Consequently, the study calls for reforms in the implementation of the government budget, ensuring the even distribution of expenses throughout the fiscal year. Also, the government can increase the efficacy of its spending in the short run by pursuing policies that plug in the leakages of the spending multiplier. The outcomes of this research contribute to the broader discourse on the optimal allocation and implementation process of government resources and provide valuable insights for policymakers in Nepal seeking to bolster economic growth and development.

***Keywords**:* Capital expenditure, Revenue expenditure, Gross Domestic Product, An Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL), Government of Nepal.

1. Background

Nepal's fifteenth periodic plan (2019/20-2023/24) aims to achieve economic growth through efficient, equitable, and result-oriented management of public expenditure. It focuses on allocation and spending efficiency while managing resources. The plan states that the objectives of public expenditure shall be met by enhancing good governance through more transparency, efficiency, accountability, and results orientation of the spending system. The plan also envisages directing the

** Under Secretary, Government of Nepal*
Email: umesh.rml@gmail.com

public expenses toward human and social capital formation that have an important bearing on the expansion of output.

In Nepal, government spending can be broadly classified into three categories: finance, capital, and recurrent. Recurrent expenditure encompasses payments for employee compensation, social security, office materials and services, maintenance of capital items, interest, and monitoring expenses. These expenses are for running day-to-day administration and generally the benefits expire within a year. Capital expenditure is incurred for the acquisition of fixed assets, infrastructure construction, major improvements in assets, and research and development, with benefits expected to remain for a long period. Financial provisions relate to investment, borrowing, and their redemptions.

The government of Nepal has implemented various policy reforms to enhance the effective management of public spending. A planned development approach through detailed planning of the economic activities by the government has been followed for the last seven decades. The planning document identifies priority areas for expenditure, particularly for capital investments. The Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) serves as a crucial link, aligning the annual budget with long-term plans and facilitating multi-year budget allocation for high-priority projects. Expenditures are categorized into priorities based on indicators such as their contribution to growth, employment generation, regional balance, and strategic importance. This classification enables comprehensive evaluation and decision-making.

Additionally, a participative approach, bottom-up planning strategy, and measures to control non-budgetary expenses have been adopted. The government has also introduced mechanisms such as an expenditure tracking system, prevention of capital fund diversion, strengthened audit systems, and real-time project monitoring through the action room. These efforts collectively aim to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of the expenditure management system in Nepal.

Despite continuous reforms and technical assistance from the developing partner countries, the yield of the expenses remains below the expectation. The performance never equals the objectives even in terms of the allocated monetary targets let alone the physical progress[*]. The government statistics over the last twenty years show that only seventy-three percent of the total allocation is actually spent[†]. The qualitative aspects of the spending such as long-term outcome, sustainability, and return from the investment do not receive adequate priority in the plan and budget evaluation. In this context, this article tries to explore how the recurrent and capital expenditure are associated with the nominal GDP in Nepal.

2. Objective of the Study

This research attempts to investigate the short- and long-term relationships of capital and recurring expenditures with Nepal's economic performance as measured by GDP. To achieve this objective, an

[*] Annual Economic Surveys by Ministry of Finance Nepal
[†] Author's calculation from last 20 year's estimated and actual budget of Government of Nepal

empirical approach is adopted, utilizing data spanning from 1974 to 2020. The data availability for the period prompted the choice of the study period for this research, taking into consideration any changes in the expenditure classification system over this period. Using time series econometric techniques, this study aims to examine how expenditures correlate with the economic performance of the nation.

Recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure have different characteristics and thus have different kinds of relationships with GDP. Recurrent expenditure has an immediate impact in the short run, while capital expenditure influences GDP over a more extended period. By comparing the relative effects of these two types of expenditures, the study aims to determine their respective contributions to economic growth. The deeper analysis of expenditure dynamics will help the government make informed decisions regarding spending plans and better understand how changes in expenditures can shape the overall economy. Ultimately, the study aims to offer valuable insights into how government spending influences economic performance in Nepal.

The remaining part of this paper follows the following structure. Section 3 provides a literature review categorized into three subtopics: theoretical perspectives, empirical perspective, and Nepalese context. Section 4 describes the econometric methods used for the analysis, specifically focusing on the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) method. In Section 5, the data and its descriptive characteristics are presented. Section 6 presents the econometric analysis, including unit root tests, ARDL analysis, and diagnostic checking. Finally, Section 7 summarizes the study's findings and offers policy implications based on the results.

3. Literature Review & Theoretical Background

3.1 Theoretical perspectives:

The Keynesian approach to macroeconomics puts much emphasis on government spending as it is viewed as a growth-propelling intervention. Keynes (1936) showed the importance of government interference in lifting aggregate demand, especially in the times of recession. However, Classical and neoclassical economic perspectives regard government spending as essentially transferring resources from the more efficient private sector to the less efficient public sector. According to them, high taxation and borrowing aimed at strengthening the government's spending capability create inefficiencies that harm economic growth. Therefore, government involvement should be kept at a minimum, focusing primarily on basic public goods such as defense, justice, and administration. Neo-classical models however do not disapprove of the influence of government spending on the level of income in the short-run. What they doubt is the impact on the long-run growth.

Solow (1956) argued that the increase in per capita GDP hinges on three fundamental elements: the accumulation of capital, the availability of labor, and technological advancement. Public expenditure plays a significant role in enhancing output through all three channels. Investments made in areas such as the salary of teachers and doctors, free medicines, health insurance, immunization programs, skill development programs, and social assistance effectively improve the quality of the labor pool, which is a vital input to the production process. By prioritizing these areas, governments can positively impact the overall productivity and efficiency of their workforce.

Furthermore, public investment in infrastructure development, including roads, bridges, hydropower stations, drinking water facilities, public housing, and machinery, not only adds to the physical capital stock available in the country but also enhances the quality of private investment. Governments can foster a conducive atmosphere for business growth by establishing and maintaining dependable infrastructure, attracting both domestic and foreign investment. This, in turn, contributes to increased economic growth and development (World Development Report 1994, 1994; Foster et. al, 2022).

Moreover, the government plays a vital role in maintaining law and order, enforcing contracts, and safeguarding property rights, functions crucial for effective governance. By upholding the rule of law and providing a stable and secure environment for businesses and individuals, governments lay the groundwork for economic growth. This encourages private investment, stimulates innovation, and fosters entrepreneurship (Acemoglu & Johnson, 2005; Dam,2007; Davis et al, 2008; Haggard & Tiede 2011; Eicher &Newiak, 2013)

Additionally, providing subsidies for the adoption of new technology and allocating resources towards research and development can greatly influence overall factor productivity. (Habib et al., 2019; Beugelsdijk et al, 2018). By supporting the development and adoption of cutting-edge technologies, governments can fuel innovation and drive productivity gains across various sectors of the economy. This, in turn, leads to increased efficiency, competitiveness, and overall economic growth.

Expenditures impact on growth also channels through the correction of market failures (López & Islam, 2008). Markets fail to produce an efficient level of goods having positive externalities as their private benefits fall short of the social benefit. Government spending can correct this market failure by provisioning funding through subsidies. These functions of the government help promote growth in the short and long run.

Many argue that an increment in consumption expenditures by the government doesn't lead to an increase in consumption regardless of the sources of funding used by the government. If government finances through tax, then the citizens will have an equivalent less amount at hand to spend for. If financing is made by way of debt, citizens' expectation of more taxes in the future motivates them to save more in the current period. Therefore, the government's effort is neutralized, and hence no multiplier effect (Bernheim, 1989; Barro, 1990; Barro, 1989; Cunningham and Vilasuso, 1994).

AD-AS model

An increase in any of the variables comprising the GDP computation identity Y = C + I + G + (X - M) leads to a rightward shift in the aggregate demand (AD) curve when the increase stems from factors other than price. The government's decision to increase consumption or capital expenditure increases the G shifting the demand curve to the right and settling the economy in a new equilibrium with a higher level of output. Capital expenditure doesn't just influence the short-run aggregate supply (AS) curve through factors like increasing firm productivity but also extends its impact to the long-run by shifting the supply curve to the right, thereby enhancing the overall potential of the economy. Therefore, both recurrent and capital expenditures energize the economy to march toward full employment (Fields & Hart, 1996).

The new growth theory by Paul Romer (1994) advocated a new dimension in the economic growth model. Continuous improvement in productivity and hence growth is possible through ideas and knowledge. The role of government becomes prominent in employing the resources for research and development that contribute to the creation of ideas and knowledge. Also, governments can invest to diffuse and propagate knowledge and ideas.

It is evident that recurrent expenditure helps growth by raising the aggregate demand and maintaining capital goods, upholding the rule of law and property rights and provisioning public goods. Capital expenditure increases the stock of infrastructure, technology and stock of physical capital that promotes growth.

3.2 Empirical perspectives

Past studies demonstrated varied results. The government's size is inversely proportional to the performance of the economy in the USA (Mitchell, D. J. 2005). Fouladi, M. (2010) applied the Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model to simulate the response of the Iranian economy to the change in government expenditure with different scenarios. The response of the economy was negative not only to the consumption expenditure but also to the investment expenditures barring investment in oil and service sectors. Consumption expenses also reduce the level of employment and investment.

Some researchers have attributed the quality of spending and economic growth relationship to the effectiveness of governance. Keefer and Knack (2007) opined that the quantum of public spending should not be linked with productivity as the quality of the government is instrumental to the relationship between public spending and growth. Efficient governments despite relatively less spending can make more growth-oriented impacts. Butkiewicz and Yanikkaya (2011) found that in developed countries, there exists a negative correlation between total expenditure and growth. Additionally, they concluded that in developing nations, despite governance challenges, capital expenditure can positively impact economic growth.

Mazorodze, B. T. (2018) suggests that both consumption and investment expenditures contribute positively to economic growth. Therefore, recommendations from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reduce expenses could potentially harm the Zimbabwean economy.

3.3 Nepalese Context

Studies on Nepal's experience have discovered a positive association between expenditure and growth. According to Shrestha (2009), investment in physical infrastructure is productive. However, the share of contribution to the growth is declining. Nepal has gone through fundamental shifts in its economic landscape since then necessitating a fresh study appending the period after 2009.

Rasaili and Paudel (2019) utilized the Johansen cointegration test and VECM approach to examine the interrelationship between national income and government expenditure in Nepal. While VECM showed a positive and significant long-run causality running from the capital and recurrent expenditure to national income, the Granger causality test showed no short-run causality between income and expenditure. The government introduced a new expenditure classification method in the fiscal year 2002/03 causing a structural break in that year. This study has not taken this reality into account.

Adhikari and Kharel (2021) concluded that public spending responds positively to economic growth in Nepal. They further classified the spending into regular, capital, health, education, and miscellaneous groups and found that while regular and education expenditures have a positive association, capital expenditure has a negative association with the real GDP. However, their model is misspecified as the analysis is based on the ordinary least square method (OLS) of I (1) variables. OLS is likely to produce a spurious relationship in the presence of unit roots.

Overall, experimental findings have as much variation in the conclusions as there is in the theoretical analysis. Therefore, the effect of public spending on growth seems quite contextual and country-specific and should be tested with the evidence from the country under study.

4. Methodology:

This study utilizes the widely employed neoclassical Cobb-Douglas production function as its basis, with slight variations in the representations of capital and technology. This functional form serves as the foundation for various neoclassical growth theories, including the Solow-Swan Model (Solow, 1956; Swan, 1956), Endogenous Growth Theory (Romer, 1990), Ramsey-Cass-Koopmans Model (Stokey, 1989), AK Model (Romer, 1986), and Overlapping Generations Model. The role of population in economic development has long been recognized (Malthus, 1798), thus the population is used as a proxy for labour since data on the employed labour force is not available for the study period. To address the objectives of the study, recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure are utilized as substitutes for capital and technology, respectively. Recurrent expenditure helps to maintain, if not increase, the productive capacity of capital, while capital expenditures primarily aim to augment the stock of physical capital. Given these considerations, the following functional form is proposed for this study.

GDP = f (capital expenditure, recurrent expenditure, population)

Not only does the spending cause the output to grow, but the other way around is also possible as the growth in GDP leads to a higher amount of money available for spending through increased taxation. When the economy grows, tax revenues generated from increased economic activity also tend to rise. This provides governments with more funds that can be used for various purposes, including additional spending or investment. So, there is the possibility of a two-way relationship between GDP and spending.

Several regression methods are available for the analysis of intricacies among the time series. Multivariate models such as VAR, VAR in difference, VECM, and ARDL are some of them. However, the selection of a particular method rests on the purpose of the study and the nature of the variables' relationship.

We start by considering the VAR model (Sims 1980) at the outset. A VAR (Vector Autoregressive) model is a type of multivariate model in which all variables are interrelated and determined together within the system. VAR captures the true relationship when the variables are stationary. Utilizing VAR necessitates that all variables are stationary at level.

The ARDL model, introduced by Pearson et al. (1999), is a multivariate time series model that allows for a combination of I (0) and I (1) variables. It has become widely popular in econometrics for estimating and testing the long-term relationships between variables. With the ARDL bounds testing approach, we can estimate the model by examining both short-term fluctuations and long-term equilibrium relationships. Then, we conduct a bounds test to see if certain values are significant, which helps us determine if there is a long-term relationship among the variables. If the variables are found to be cointegrated from the bound test result, both short-run ARDL and long-run ECM can be estimated whereas only the short-run (ARDL) model is estimated should the variables are found to be not cointegrated.

In this analysis, variables such as Log_gdp, log_capital, and log_recurrent are found to be non-stationary at the level but change into stationary after first differencing. On the other hand, Log_pop remains stationary at the level, featuring both a trend and an intercept. This allows us to use the ARDL model.Three different sets of tests namely Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF), Phillips-Perron (PP), and Kwiatkowski-Phillips-Schmidt-Shin (KPSS) are utilized to test check the stationarity of the variables. The ADF test (Dickey & Fuller, 1979) is widely used to ascertain the existence of a unit root in a time series. Its null hypothesis posits that the series possesses a unit root. The PP test (Phillips & Perron, 1988) considers autocorrelation and heteroscedasticity in the error term, providing a robust analysis of stationarity. The KPSS test (Kwiatkowski et al., 1992) specifically focuses on testing trend stationarity in the time series.

Since the variables are of mixed order of I (0) and I (1) and none of them are integrated of order 2, ARDL method is chosen as the appropriate approach for further analysis. The generalised equation for ARD(p,q) is given by;

$$Y_t = \alpha + \sum_{i=1}^{p} \beta_i Y_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q} \delta_i X_{t-i} + \varepsilon_t \text{.......................................} (1)$$

where Y is the dependent variable X is the vector of independent variables. α is constant and β and

δ are coefficients of dependent and independent variables respectively. ε is the error term. p and q are the optimal lags. ARDL with log_gdp, log_capital , log_recurrent and log_pop takes the following form;

$$log\_gdp_t = \alpha + \sum_{i=1}^{p} \beta_i \mathrm{log\_gdp}_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q1} \delta_{1,i}\, log\_capital_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q2} \delta_{2,i} \mathrm{log\_reurrent}_{t-i} + \sum_{i=0}^{q3} \delta_{3,i} \mathrm{log\_pop}_{t-i} + \varepsilon_t \text{..........} (2)$$

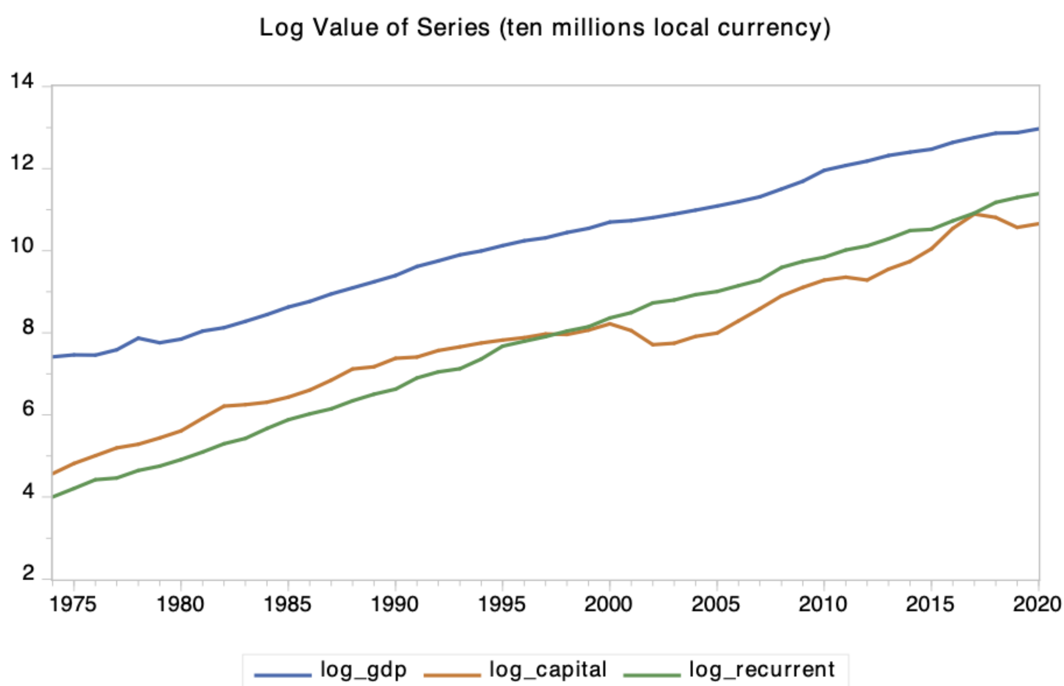
5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The GDP data is retrieved from the public finance section of the macroeconomic dashboard of the Ministry of Finance. The government's expenses data are extracted from the annual budget speech document of the government of Nepal. All the budget speech documents can be found on the website of the Ministry of Finance. The population data is sourced from the data repository of World Development Indicators.

The method of classification and compiling of government statistics has been changed in the fiscal years 2002/03 and 2010/11. The nature of the spending unit would determine the type of expenditure before 2002/03. Most of the expenses of development administration offices were classified as development expenditures even if the purpose of the expenses was for consumption. Likewise, expenses of general administration offices were coded as regular expenses. This categorization has been reformed with a new system GFSM 2001 framework developed by IMF that classified the expenses on the basis of their purpose regardless of the nature of the spending unit. Three categories namely recurrent, capital, and principal repayment would characterize the government expenses under the new system.

In 2010/11 again a new system GFSM 2014, an upgraded version of GFSM 2001 was implemented. The new system introduced a new category- financial provision- in addition to recurrent and capital expenses repealing the previous repayment of the principal category. Subsequently, all the investments, redemption of investments, all kinds of debt be they domestic or foreign, and repayment of debts were separated from the group of capital expenditure and put in financial provision category.

Changes in 2002/03 rearranged the expenses heading in such a way that it is almost impossible to reengineer the series according to the old classification by simply looking at the details in the published documents. So, to account for this change in the policy, a dummy variable named dum_2002 is included in the model as an exogenous variable. Since the regular expenditure (before 2002/03) included debt servicing; both interest and principal repayment but recurrent expenditure after 2002/03 excluded principal repayment, the same should be added to the series of recurrent expenditures. Similarly, many expenditure items such as capital grants to the local level were classified as capital expenses before 2010/11. They should be deducted from the recurrent series and included in the capital series. Also, governments' share and loan investments, classified as a financial provision after 2010/11 are added to the capital expenditure.

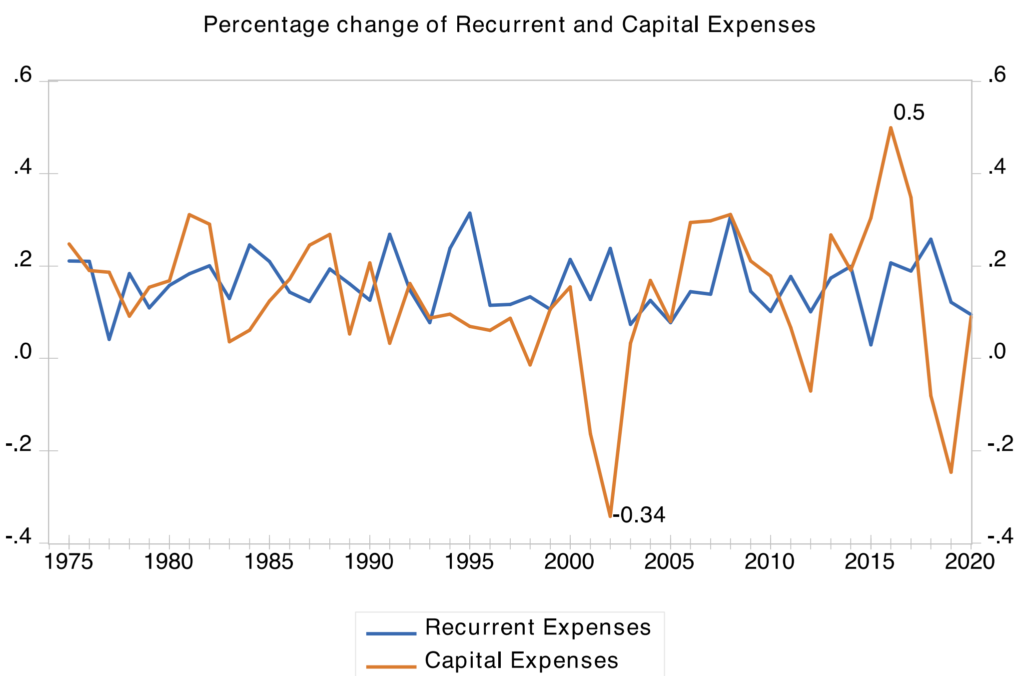


fig(a)

Fig(a) shows the series of logarithmic values of nominal GDP, capital expenditure, and recurrent expenditure expressed in ten million in local currency. The GDP series is increasing continuously except in the years 1976 and 1979. However, there are seemingly structural breaks in 1993, 2000, 2010, 2015, and 2018. Vibrations in the economy faded after the announcement of the midterm election in 1993 which entailed a period of instability with a series of formation and dissolution of governments almost every year. The civil war was more intensified after 2000 plunging the already beleaguered economy. The Gorkha earthquake and obstruction in the Indian border loosen the momentum of growth in 2015. 2019 brought yet another downward swing to the economy thanks to the Covid19. Although there are periods of ups and downs in income growth, some due to historical events and others due to the operation of trade cycles, no extreme value has crossed even 1.5 standard deviation from the mean.

Recurrent expenditure is ever increasing though the rate of growth is not uniform. However, that is not the case with regard to the Capital expenditure. The graph shows that it used to be above recurrent expenditure before being overtaken by recurrent expenditure in 1998.

Capital spending takes a reversal turn from 1997 albeit slowly until 2003. The principal responsible factor was the civil war that started in Feb 1996 necessitated more resource diversion toward security expenses of recurrent nature. Several breaks are conspicuous in the recurrent expenditure series. 1983, 1993, 1999, 2010, and 2017 are prominent among them.



fig(b)

As shown in Fig(b), capital expenses decreased in 2002 by 34 percent due to a change in the expenditure classification method. A dummy is introduced to deal with this situation. Likewise, capital expenditure shot up in 2016 because of massive expenses for the reconstruction of infrastructure destructed by the 2015 earthquake and remained in a high trajectory until the reconstruction is complete. Another dummy dum_2016 was used for the period 2016 to 2020.

Table 1. Summary Statistics of vairalbes

Summary statistics of variables				
	Δlog_gdp	Δlog_capital	Δlog_recurrent	Δlog_pop
Mean	0.1206	0.1322	0.1606	0.0166
Median	0.1187	0.1544	0.1464	0.0197
Standard Deviation	0.0668	0.1546	0.0646	0.0077
Minimum	-0.1123	-0.3422	0.0292	0.0018
Maximum	0.2810	0.4994	0.3144	0.0279
Range	0.3933	0.8416	0.2852	0.0261
Correlation				
Δlog_gdp	1			
Δlog_capital	0.2314	1		
Δlog_recurrent	0.1912	0.0190	1	
Δlog_pop	0.0125	-0.0980	0.1078	1

Although the correlation between spending and GDP is above 0.95 in raw data form and above 0.98 in logarithmically transformed form, the correlation between their growth is weak. The table shows that the correlation coefficient between GDP growth and capital expenditure growth is 0.2314 and that between GDP and recurrent expenditure is 0.191. The growth of the population exhibits weak correlations with the growth of other variables.

6. Empirical analysis

6.1 Unit root test

Table 2 shows the result of the unit root and stationary test of variables under ADF, PP and KPSS methods.

Table 2: Unit root test

Specifications	Variables	ADF	PP	KPSS
At level: with intercept	log_gdp	-0.2376	-0.2389	0.8852***
	log_capital	-0.6831	-0.9042	0.8625***
	log_recurrent	-0.7098	-2.0151	0.8932***
	log_pop	-0.1747	-3.9004***	0.8630***
At level: with trend and intercept	log_gdp	-1.8842	-2.2891	0.0971
	log_capital	-2.5515	-1.9824	0.1065
	log_recurrent	-2.6445	-2.5689	0.1848**

	log_pop	-5.4938***	-0.1300	0.2241***
At 1st difference: with intercept	log_gdp	-6.3522***	-6.3493***	0.0971
	log_capital	-4.0734***	-3.8260***	0.1637
	log_recurrent	-7.6843***	-8.9027***	0.2474
	log_pop	-2.9358*	-1.1708	0.6437**
At 1st difference: with trend and intercept	log_gdp	-6.2913***	-6.2862***	0.0940
	log_capital	-4.0281**	-3.7750**	0.1450*
	log_recurrent	-7.6313***	-9.9902***	0.2836***
	log_pop	-1.1109	-1.1834	0.1166

*(Note: ***, **, and * denote significance levels of 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively).*

In the ADF and PP tests, the null hypothesis suggests that the variable possesses a unit root, whereas, in the KPSS test, the null hypothesis indicates that the variable is stationary. ADF and PP tests show consistent results for the variables log_gdp, log_capital and log_recurrent. They are non-stationary at their levels with intercept. Results are the same with trend and intercept as well. After first differencing, they become stationary at 1% level of significance for both the cases intercept and trend and intercept. KPSS test shows log_gdp, log_capital and log_recurrent trend stationary. For log_pop variable, the result varies with the types of the test. ADF test finds log_pop stationary at level with trend and intercept whereas the PP test shows the variable stationary at level with intercept only. KPSS test indicates the log_pop trend stationary, the same result as the other three variables.

6.2 Bounds tests for Cointegration

After estimating the ARDL model, bounds test for cointegration is conducted to see the long run relationship. Separate ARDL models and corresponding bound tests are performed allowing each variable in the model as the dependent variable.

Function	Lag applied	Lag selected(AIC)	F-statistics	Decision
F_{log_gdp}(log_gdp/log_capital,log_recurrent,log_pop)	3	(1,0,3,2)	7.9416***	Cointegrated
$F_{log\_capital}$(log_capital/log_gdp, log_recurrent,log_pop)	3	(2,0,3,2)	4.8649*	Not cointegration
$F_{log\_recurrent}$(log_recurrent/log_capital,log_gdp,log_pop)	3	(2,3,0,3)	15.2451***	Cointegrated
F_{log_pop}(log_pop/log_recurrent,log_capital,log_gdp)	3	(3,0,3,1)	1.2121	Not cointegrated

(Table 3)

(Note: ***, ** and * respectively indicates that the test statistic is above 1%, 5% and 10% upper critical value of the Pesaran *et al*.(2001))

Table 3 shows the results of the bound test for cointegration which shows that long run relationship exists only in two instances first when the log_gdp is the dependent variable and the second when log_recurrent is the dependent variable. This study is concerned with how government expenditures are related to the GDP. Therefore, we proceed to analyze solely the first cointegrating relationship, which involves GDP alongside capital expenditure, recurrent expenditure, and population.

6.3 Long-run relationship

The long-term relationship with log_gdp as a dependent variable can be estimated because the associated ARDL system is cointegrated as shown in Table 3. The results depict that changes in capital expenditure and recurrent expenditure have significant positive long-term impacts on the growth of the GDP.

Dependent Variable: log_gdp		
Regressor	Coefficient	P-value
log_capital	0.2756	0.0113
log_recurrent	1.5542	0.0003
log_pop	-0.5251	0.4679

(Table 4)

As shown in Table 4, a one percentage increase in capital expenditure is associated with a 0.27 percentage increase in GDP, while recurrent expenditure exhibits a higher impact of 1.55 percentage. The finding of recurrent expenditure having a greater long-term effect on GDP than capital expenditure might appear contrary to common assumptions about their nature. However, this could be attributed to the relatively higher weight of recurrent expenditure in the overall spending mix. Another plausible explanation is that recurrent expenditure encompasses salaries for teachers and healthcare workers, as well as investments in training and development. Although categorized as recurrent, these expenses contribute to the development of human capital, thereby benefitting the economy for many years to come. It is possible that the returns on investing in human capital outweigh those of investing in infrastructure and machinery in Nepal. The growth of population is negatively associated with the GDP but the outcome is not significant.

6.4 Short-run relationship

The results from Error Correction Form are presented in Table 5.

Dependent Variable: Δlog_gdp		
Regressor	Coefficient	P-value
Δlog_recurrent	0.4815	0.0003
Δlog_recurrent (-1)	-0.5136	0.0005
Δlog_capital	-	-

Δlog_pop	-3.8390	0.5516
Δlog_pop(-1)	21.1813	0.0855
Δlog_pop(-2)	-21.9846	0.0092
dum_2002	0.0254	0.5048
dum_2016	-0.1510	0.0012
trend	-0.0840	0.0000
ECM	-0.5654	0.0000

(Table 5)

Capital expenditure doesn't appear in the model, suggesting its limited impact in the immediate term. On the other hand, On the other hand, recurrent expenditure exhibits a notable and statistically significant relationship. However, drawing a definitive conclusion is challenging due to the conflicting nature of the impact observed in the differenced and first-lagged differenced forms.

The population variable demonstrates a mixed effect on GDP, indicating that its relationship with economic output is not straightforward. Additionally, the coefficient of dum_2002, the dummy representing the time when a different method of recognizing government expenses was adopted, shows a positive relationship although the anticipated relationship was negative because many expense headings under the capital block were moved to the recurrent block after 2002. Similarly, the dum_2016, a dummy variable introduced to capture the introduction of the federal system of governance, displays the negative short-term impact on GDP. This period coincides with the aftermath of the devastating Gorkha Earthquake in 2015 and the subsequent disruptions caused by the six-month-long Nepal-India border blockade. These events resulted in negative growth in economic output.

6. 5 Diagnostic checking

6.5.1 Serial correlation LM test

The null hypothesis indicating no serial correlation is not rejected even up to 10 lags. The test indicates no autocorrelation of residuals. The result is presented in Annex 1.

6.5.2 Normality test

Jarqua-Bera normality test of residuals fails to reject the null hypothesis implying the residuals are multivariate normal with Jarqa-Bera statistics 2.9292 with probability 0.2311. The result is presented in Annex 2.

6.5.3 Heteroscedasticity

This test examines the variability of residuals with respect to time. Tests such as Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey, Harvey, and Arch are applied. The result from all of these tests shows homoscedasticity. The result is presented in Annex 3.

6.5.4 Stability

Recursive estimation with CUSUM and squares of CUSUM tests are applied. These tests assess the stability of coefficients over time and help detect any structural changes or shifts in the relationship between variables by examining the cumulative sum of the estimated coefficients. Both tests confirm the model is stable as coefficients fall within the 5% level of significance. The graphs are presented in Annex 4.

6.5.5 Ramsey RESET Test

This test examines whether the model specification has omitted important nonlinear terms in the model. The result shows that the model is free from specification errors. The result is presented in Annex 5.

The model confirms all the diagnostic checks.

7. Conclusion and policy recommendation

For developing economies like Nepal, government spending plays a vital role in driving growth by facilitating public infrastructure development and enhancing the productivity of private sector investments. On the demand side, increased government spending injects money into the hands of individuals and firms, boosting their purchasing power and stimulating aggregate demand. Consequently, this leads to a rise in GDP. Similarly, investments in sectors such as healthcare, education, skills development, and physical infrastructure enable firms to increase aggregate supply, thereby boosting overall production and GDP. However, it is important to acknowledge that some of the positive effects of government spending may be offset by the crowding-out effect when the funding for expenses comes from the private sector, which is typically more productive than the public sector. Empirical findings on the impact of government spending on GDP growth have yielded mixed results, highlighting the importance of conducting further research to obtain context-specific conclusions.

This study conducted an ARDL analysis using the time series data of nominal GDP, capital expenditure, recurrent expenditure and. population. The ADF and PP test indicated that all variables are integrated of order one, except population which was integrated of order zero with intercept only according to the ADF test and integrated of order zero with trend and intercept according to the PP test. KPSS test suggested that all variables are trend stationary. Given the mixed order of integration, the ARDL model was selected as appropriate. The bounds test of cointegration showed the significant long-term relationship between capital and recurrent expenditure with the GDP. However, in the short run, capital expenditure did not exhibit a noticeable impact on GDP. The short-run effects of recurrent expenditure yielded inconclusive results, warranting further research on the subject.

The effectiveness of using government expenditure as an instant tool to boost economic activity is constrained by the limited impact observed in the short run. Policymakers need to identify the possible leakages that hinder the multiplier effect of government expenditure and try to plug in them with sound policies. The measures to spend expenses evenly throughout the fiscal year would help reap the benefit of the expenditure within that fiscal year contributing to the efficacy of the expenditure in the short run. Fiscal discipline such as strictly adhering to the budgeting cycle and implementing trimester plans, along with timely budget releases and bill payments, has the prospective to greatly improve the efficiency of government expenditure in the short run. Policymakers should prioritize these areas for reform efforts.

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प्रशासन वर्ष ५५, अङ्क २, पूर्णाङ्क १३८, २०८० मंसिर

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