BAGISWORI
JOURNAL

(A Peer Reviewed Research Journal)

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Editorial Note

In the present world, the role of research in an academic institution is significant for its sustainability and development, and it is imperative to have knowledge-driven growth based on innovation. The quest for knowledge is the basic principle behind research. Bagiswori College is so sincere and conscious about the essence of research and has been striving to materialize it since its establishment. Bagiswori College has been incessantly carrying out numerous research activities through its Research Management Cell and Research Committee. 'Bagiswori Journal' is the outcome of the same endeavour. Research Methodology Training, Research Based Writing and Publication Training and Workshop on Qualitative and Quantitative Research organized by Bagiswori College with the support of University Grants Commission (UGC) have also played a pivotal role to conduct research activities and publish this journal.

We are immensely grateful to share our achievement in the publication of 'Bagiswori Journal' as our second attempt. It is a multidisciplinary peer reviewed journal that consists of seven research based articles with valuable information on different issues of socio-cultural and managerial significance. The authors of the articles incorporated in this volume have made great efforts to present their ideas and to nourish the aspiration of the college. We believe the readers and the researchers can obtain utmost benefits from these articles and can use them to upgrade their competencies as well.

Finally we express our cordial gratitude to the College Management Committee, the board of the patrons and the advisors for their perpetual support and encouragement. We are very thankful to the University Grants Commission Nepal and peer review team. We also anticipate and appreciate constructive feedbacks and suggestions from our readers, scholars, faculty members, students and well wishers.

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Factors Influencing Employee Engagement and its Impact on Organizational Performance
Nabin Prajapati[1]

Abstract

Purpose: *The purpose of this study is to identify the factors affecting the employee engagement as well as to examine the effect of employee engagement on organizational performance.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *Descriptive and Analytical research design was used for data analysis. A convenient sample of 200 employees of Nepal Telecom responded to a structured questionnaire. Correlation and Regression analysis were performed to examine the hypothesis.*

Findings: *The result shows that identified factors like career development, compensation, work environment, team and co-worker relationship, organizational policies and workplace wellbeing have positive and significant impact on employee engagement whereas Leadership has negative and insignificant impact on employee engagement. Further, the result also shows employee engagement had significant impact on organizational performance.*

Practical Implication: *Organization must focus and effort on the factors like organizational policies and team and co-worker relationship as they have shown significantly higher impact on employee engagement and organizational performance. Organization should develop favourable organizational policies and focus on developing a good environment and promote such programmes that enhances team and peer relationship.*

Originality/Value: *Managers must apply various strategies to make their employee engaged which is less prioritized till today.*

Key Words: *Employee engagement, Organizational performance, Team and co-worker relationship, working environment*

I. Introduction

Engagement is a workplace approach which ensures to make employees committed toward organization's goals and also motivated to give extra effort toward organizational success, and similarly enhances the sense of wellbeing on them (MacLeod and Clarke, 2009). Now-a-days it has been an emerging debatable issue for Human Resource managers (Baldev and Anupama, 2010). It refers to the extent to which employees feel passionate and committed toward their job. It puts discretionary effort into their work. It has become a top priority for the business leaders in the organization.

Vazirani (2007) has considered employee engagement as a tool to measure the association of a person with the organization and that strategy which helps to attract, develop and retain skillful manpower of the organization. Employee engagement helps to increase the morale of the employees. So, Human Resource manager must satisfy the employees to make them engaged and motivate to contribute their knowledge skill and abilities to achieve organizational success. (Saradha and Patrick, 2011). Engaged workforce are committed, dedicated toward their job which supports high production and ultimately helps to improve organizational performance.

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In today's competitive business world, it is not enough to solely concentrate on employee satisfaction and motivation. Organization must focus on the concept of employee engagement to link between individual performance and positive business result (Sanchez and Maccauley, 2006). It results to higher achievement of individuals and enterprises. In order to achieve employee engagement firms, engage many HRM programs, which usually focus on activities of organizing work and managing people to achieve organizational goals. But still HR professionals and managers are continuously are confronted with the challenge of engaging the workforce.

Kumar and Swetha (2011) stated that employee engagement plays important role in customer satisfaction, developing organizational image and also influences employee retention, loyalty and productivity. In contrast, disengaged employees adversely affect the organizational performance (especially in absenteeism, turnover and low productivity) and drag the organization in negative direction (Basbous, 2011; Sundaray, 2011). Engaged employees analyze the business environment, maintain good relationship with peers to improve organizational performance (Mani, 2011; Sundaray, 2011).

II. Literature Review
Employee Engagement
Anitha (2014) has found strong relationship between employee engagement and performance. She has recognized factors that have direct relation between engagement and performance. She explored that physical and emotional environment requires effective leadership, team and good co-worker relationship, which consequence in healthy engagement of employees in their work. She agreed that employee engagement will improve employee performance which ultimately contribute to increase organizational performance.

Cook (2008) has emphasized on attraction and retention of talented employees for the success of the organization. An engaged employee is satisfied with the job, involve on high productivity and become loyal towards the organization which may be the reason to the success of the business. Whereas Kular, Gatenby, Rees, Soane, and Truss (2008) states that engaged employee is highly sincere toward his/her work against those employees who are actively disengaged. It reflects in an individual's intention to leave the organization.

Kumar and Swetha (2011) explained employee engagement as an important factor for success of the organization. Employee engagement promotes talent management, retention, and improved overall organizational performance. For better employee engagement, effective working policies should be applied which play roles to attract and retain talented employees for growth and development of the organization. Mani (2011) shows positive relation between employee engagement and employee retention, productivity and loyalty. Engaged employees coordinates with other employees and considers business environment to improve the organizational performance. Employee engagement develops positive attitudes towards their organization, which supports on increase in productivity and maintain goodwill of the organization (Sundaray, 2011)

Further, Harter et al. (2002) in a study on relationship between engagement and organizational outcomes found that there is strong correlation between employee engagement and productivity, profitability, turnover, absenteeism, and defects. In addition, the study found that the differences in organizational outcomes (productivity, customer loyalty, profitability, employee turnover, safety incidences, shrinkages, and absenteeism and product defects) between top performing and bottom performing organizations due to employee engagement on business success is significant.

Determinants of Employee Engagement
In the present business scenario, employee engagement has become emerging concept to build up employees' potential. Human resource managers have a huge challenge these days to develop for better engagement. Through study of various literatures on employee engagement, different drivers of engagement are identified. Each of these drivers quantifies the presence or absence of a workplace quality that impacts engagement. Some of the drivers of employee engagement are:

Career development is an important factor that determines the engagement level of the employee. Adlerfer (1972) presents career growth opportunities as the reward for their performance presented by the organization. Kahn (1990) and Murphy and Denisi (2008) consider training as an essential factor to innate skills and knowledge to enable them for employee engagement.

Compensation was the second fundamental factor to inform employee engagement. Saks (2006) explains that rewarding employees' effort is an important factor towards engaging them. when they are rewarded in the organization, they will be engaged and loyal. Kahn (1990) found that employee's level of engagement increases with perceptions of the benefits they receive. So, it shows that the engagement level of an individual is the result of quantity or quality of reward they receive.

Work environment of the organization is an important aspect of engagement levels of employees (Miles, 2001; Harter et al., 2002). Similarly, Organizations who care about the employees create a supportive work environment policy. Employers establish two-way communication and feedback system for achievement of organizational goals and objectives. It will increase confidence and develops the feeling of ownership of the organization among employees which increases employee engagement and thereafter the performance.

Team and co-worker relationship in the workplace is considered as the influencing factor employee engagement. Helpful team helps to contributes to supporting and strengthening of employee engagement notion in an organization. Supportive workplace lets the employees feel relaxed and dedicated toward their roles, duties, and responsibilities. (Kahn, 1990). So, there is significant impact of co-worker relationships on engagement level. Locke and Taylor (1990) states that interpersonal interactions with co-workers holds meaningful values in their work.

Schneider et al. (2009) studied importance of authentic, transformational and supportive leadership in fostering the engagement. Transformational leadership train, develop and raise

subordinate interests. It will build positive image toward the organization and work efficiently for the development of the organization. Engagement occurs naturally with the inspiring leaders (Wallace and Trinka, 2009). Good leaders feel the importance of employees' effort in overall business success.

Organizational policies also agree the extent to which employees are engaged in an organization. Schneider et al. (2009) and Armstrong (2012) states that organizational policies regarding selection and recruitment influence the engagement of employees. Fair and equitable practices in the organization stand-in a strong working environment It contributes in better organizational performance. Principle of fairness and equity is violated by the recruitment of family relations and contacts. It brings negative consequences like deficiency in knowledge, skills and ability, which results to lower productivity and disengagement of employees.

Workplace wellbeing promotes team work and helpful work environments. Wellbeing is defined as "all the things that are important to how we think about and experience our lives" (Harter et al., 2002). Robertson (2012) states that the better productivity can be achieved by the combination of employee engagement and workplace wellbeing. Work related attitudes, psychological wellbeing has strong and positive correlation with employee engagement which contributes in organizational performance.

Organizational Performance
Gavera, Ilies and Stegerean (2011) described organizational performance refers to the ability of the organization to meet their goals (effectiveness) using minimum resources (efficiency). Griffin (2003) explains organizational performance is the ability of the organization to meet their stakeholders' need. Carton (2004) states that organizational performance can be measured on the principle of optimum utilization of human, physical and capital resources to achieve the common objective. Dyer and Reeves (1995) gave a basis of performance measures. It has divided performance measures into human resource, organizational, financial and market measures. Human resource measures consist of variables like turnover, turnover intentions, absenteeism, job satisfaction; organizational measures include productivity, quality, customer satisfaction and manufacturing flexibility.

 In the traditional concept, the organizational performance is measured only on the basis of financial measures but in the present context, it is measured by adopting other methods of measuring the performance of the organization. Mitchell (2002) has concluded relevance of the company to stakeholders needs, the efficiency of the company, the effectiveness of the company, and the financial viability of the company as the dimensions of measuring organizational performance.

III. Research Objectives
The primary objective of this research is to analyze the factors which influence employee engagement in an organization. This research also aimed to examine the impact of employee engagement on organizational performance. The predictor variables selected based on prior research were work environment, leadership, team and coworker, training and career

development, compensation, organizational policies, work place wellbeing. This study also studies the strength of employee engagement on the organizational performance.
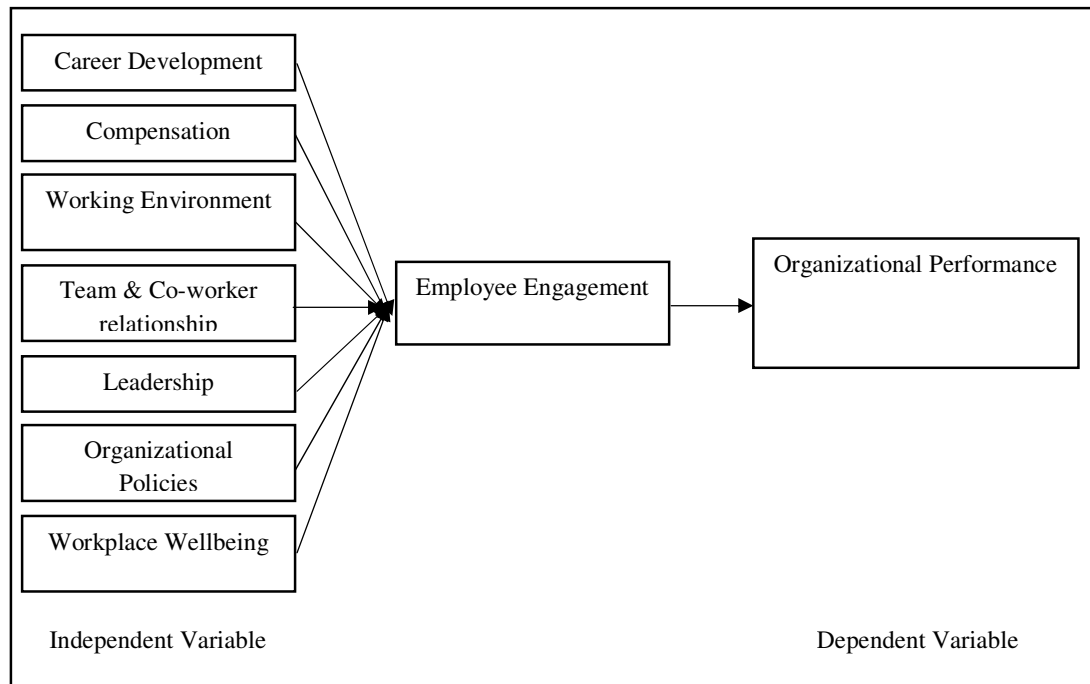

Figure 1 Conceptual Research Model

H1: There is a statistically significant impact of work environment, leadership, team and coworker, training and career development, compensation, organizational policies, work place wellbeing on employee engagement.

H2: There is statistically significant impact of employee engagement on organizational performance.

Seven factors are framed in a single hypothesis for simplicity and the impacts of the different factors on organizational performance are analyzed.

IV. Methodology

Descriptive and analytical research design was used to examine the relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance. A survey questionnaire was designed to check the impact of work environment, leadership, team and coworker, training and career development, compensation, organizational policies, work place wellbeing as the factors employee engagement on organizational performance.

The study is based on primary data collected through the questionnaire distributed through google forms and also by distributing the form in Nepal Telecom office. In questionnaire, 5 pointed Likert scaled questionnaire and general question is used to collect the views of the respondents. Since the unit of analysis of the study was the employee, the target population comprised of employees of Nepal Telecom. Total 200 responses were collected from the google online form and questionnaire submitted and presented for analysis.

V. Results and Findings
The results and findings of this study are as stated below:

Reliability and Normality
Cronbach alpha test were used to assess the reliability of the instruments and the computed Cronbach alpha coefficient results were all above 0.7.

Table 1
Reliability Statistics

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha	Skewness	Kurtosis
Career Development	5	0.837	.088	-.932
Compensation	3	0.761	.328	-.785
Work Environment	4	0.949	.652	-.154
Team and Coworkers relationship	3	0.773	.953	.296
Leadership	4	0.875	-.083	-.023
Organizational Policies	7	0.797	-.052	-.851
Well Being	3	0.753	.364	.708
Employee engagement	6	0.901	.219	.372
Customer Satisfaction	5	0.871	.153	-.835
Intention to quit	4	0.761	-.137	-.478

Data were screened to assess whether the assumptions of regression were met. All the study variables had a skewness and kurtosis within the range of -1 and +1 which met the threshold of data being normally distributed as advocated by Myoung (2008). Therefore, the data was found to be suitable for regression analysis.

Prediction of Determinant Factors of Employee Engagement
Regression analysis was used to find the relationships among various factors of engagement, and performance. The analysis focuses on finding various factors of engagement. It also finds out relationship between a dependent variable (factors of employee engagement) and the independent variables (employee engagement).

Table 2
Regression model summary - employee engagement

r	R Square	Adjusted R Square	SE of the Estimate
0.946	0.894	0.886	1.97366

Notes: Predictors: (Constant), career development, compensation, work environment, team and co-workers' relationship, leadership, organizational policies, wellbeing**.**

Regression analysis shows that all factors were identified as predictors of employee engagement with the value of R square 0.894 which is highly statistically significant. The R square value indicates that the identified factors (i.e., career development, compensation, work environment, Team and co-workers' relationship, leadership, organizational policies, wellbeing) explain up to 89.4 percent of the variance in employee engagement.

Table 3

Results of ANOVA for Employee Engagement Model

	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2999.848	7	428.550	110.016	0.000
Residual	354.475	91	3.895		
Total	3354.323	98			

Notes: Dependent Variable: Employee engagement
Predictors: (Constant), career development, compensation, work environment, team and co-workers relationship, leadership, organizational policies, wellbeing**.**

The F value of the model is 110.016 with p value 0.000 (<0.05) indicates that the model is fitted at 5 percentages level of significance. This demonstrates that career development, compensation, work environment, team and co-workers relationship, leadership, organizational policies, workplace-wellbeing have a significant positive influence on organization performance.

Table 4

Regression Coefficients for Employee Engagement

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	SE	Beta		
(Constant)	-8.465	1.727		-4.902	.000
Career Development	.113	.053	.092	2.142	.035
Compensation	.338	.153	.142	2.208	.030
Work Environment	.121	.050	.086	2.418	.018
Team and co-worker relationship	.647	.157	.325	4.132	.000
Leadership	-.355	.183	-.240	-1.937	.056
Organizational Policies	.775	.161	.703	4.805	.000
Well being	.321	.216	.109	1.488	.014

Notes: Dependent Variable: Employee engagement

The overall result shows that 89.4 percent variance in employee engagement is influenced by factors -career development, compensation, work environment, team and co-workers relationship, leadership, organizational policies, workplace-wellbeing. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis H1 is accepted. The Following multiple regression model is derived from the study.

EE=-8.465+.113 CD + .338 C + .121 WE + 0.647 TC –.355 L + 0.775 OP +0.321WB

Influence of Employee engagement on Organizational Performance
Correlation Analysis

Table 5
Correlation between Employee Engagement and Organizational Performance

		EE	OP
EE (Employee Engagement)	Pearson Correlation	1	.868**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	
OP (Organizational Performance)	Pearson Correlation	.868**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N		

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

The p-values for the correlation between employee engagement and Organizational performance are both less than the significance level of 0.05, which indicates there is strong evidence to prove that there is significant association between these variables. The Pearson coefficient value .868 means there is strong positive relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance, which indicates that, as employee engagement is increased, organizational performance also decreases.

Table 6
Regression model summary - Organizational Performance

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	SE of the Estimate
0.868	0.753	0.751	3.71301

Notes: Predictors: Employee Engagement

The value of R square 0.753 indicates that the dependent variable i.e., organizational performance is explained by variation in independent variable i.e., employee engagement explains by 75.3 percent. It means that the dependent variable i.e., organizational performance is explained by variation in other variables by 24.7 percent.

Table 7
Results of ANOVA for Organizational Performance model

	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4128.489	1	4128.489	299.460	.000
Residual	1351.071	98	13.786		
Total	5479.560	99			

Notes: Dependent Variable: organizational performance
Predictors: (Constant), employee engagement

The sum of square of regression and residual is 652.503 and 316.247 respectively and the mean square of regression and residual is 652.503 and 3.227 respectively. The F value of the model is 202.2 with p value 0.000 (<0.05) that confirms that the relationship is significant. It indicates that the model is fitted at 5 percentages level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Table 8

Regression Coefficients for Organizational Performance

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	SE	Beta		
(Constant)	9.540	.935		10.208	.000
Employee engagement	1.107	.064	.868	17.305	.000
Notes: Dependent Variable: organizational performance					

The multiple regression model of the study as per regression result is

$$OP = 9.54 + 1.107 \ EE$$

Table 8 shows high beta coefficient of 1.107 t-statistics of 17.305.and a p-value of 0.000, the equation signifies that employee engagement explains positive effect on organizational performance. This implies that a unit change in employee engagement would result to 1.107 unit change in organizational performance.

VI. Discussion

The result of multiple regression analysis shows the independent variables influence employee engagement. Table 4 implies that organizational policies (t=4.805) and team and co-worker relationship (t=4.132) are the most significant factors that affect on employee engagement. The beta value suggests that the organizational policies influence upto 70.3% as a determinant of employee engagement and team and co-worker relationship have 32.5 % influence. This implies the importance of good organizational policies and good interpersonal relationship with co-workers in the organization to make people engaged.

Career development has impact of career development on employee engagement. The finding of the current study is consistent with the previous research findings of Brown (2005) shows that engagement is a combination of satisfaction, motivation, commitment and career development.

Compensation was found as the factor which highly contributed to employee engagement. This result is consistent with the findings of Saks (2006) emphasize on reward system to increase level of performance. The result shows that employees mainly take interest in the remuneration and compensation policies. It highly influences on level of engagement.

Desirable work environment includes both physical and emotional environment that motivates the employee to get engaged at work. This result is consistent to the result of Miles (2001) and

Harter et al. (2002) has also implied that work environment is significant in contributing to higher level of engagement. Work environment motivates employees to increase their engagement levels and perform their role effectively for better performance (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

The result demonstrates that team and co-worker relationships have relationship with employee engagement. Colleagues support helps in adjustment and success of fresh employees (Dunlosky and Hertzog, 2000). The result clarifies that higher order needs like achievement and collaborative decision-making leads employees to take on greater responsibility to achieve shared goals and visions.

The study shows that the relationship between leadership and employee engagement is insignificant that means there is no relationship between leadership and employee engagement. This result is consistent with the result of Anitha (2014) which also shows there is insignificant relation between leadership and engagement. But the result is contrary with Schneider et al. (2009) which shows that leadership inspires employees and have positive impact on their level of involvement with organization.

Result shows the organizational policies, procedures and system decides the extent of employee engagement in an organization. The finding is quite similar with the work done by Schneider et al (2009) which shows that organizational policies including fair recruitment, selection, flexible timing, and work life balance. Organization should stress on organizational policies and procedures that supports flexible working hours and work life balance. Those organizations are likely to have engaged employees.

The result of the study shows that workplace wellbeing is an important factor that enhances employee engagement. Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) explains that workplace wellbeing is positively related with a variety of positive life and career outcomes and behavioral difference When the relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance was tested, it shows the significant path validity (t=17.305) and coefficient of determination (r^2= 75.3 %) of the dependent variable. Findings of the current study add to our understanding about the value of employee engagement. It also suggests that engaged employees lead to improved organizational performance. The strength of employee engagement also produces satisfactory organizational performance (Harter et al., 2002, Saks, 2006).

VII. Conclusion
The study focuses on the various factors of employee engagement and its significant effect on it. The result shows that there is a strong significant relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance. Regression analysis shows that among various important factors that have an overall effect on employee engagement. Two factors, Organizational policies and team and co-worker relationship, has very important role with significant path validity or t value in relating with employee engagement. The implications affect the organization in terms of improvement in productivity and directly on economy of the organizations.

Apart from this, the result depicts that manager should focus on career development, compensation, work environment, team and co-workers relationship, leadership, organizational policies, workplace-wellbeing to improve employee engagement. The model can be used by organizations for mutual benefits of both employer and employees.

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Enhancement of English Speaking Skills Through Role Play Technique

Shiva Bahadur Khulimuli[1]

Abstract

This study aims to investigate about how students' English speaking skills can be enhanced through the employment of role play technique. The sample population of the study was taken from the grade XI students of Bagiswori Secondary School. The experimental group was taught through role play technique while the control class was taught through the traditional grammar based techniques. The total population of this study was 30 students who were enrolled in the academic year 2020/2021. It was experimental study. The tools applied in this research were observation sheet and speaking test. After 15 lessons of the teaching, the post-test of speaking was conducted in which the students in both groups were asked to answer. The results revealed that the experimental group's motivation has been enhanced and has improved English speaking skill significantly.

Keywords: Role play, Speaking skills, Technique, Conversation, Communicate

I. Introduction

A person, at first, learns to speak in native language to convey a message and then gradually uses other methods like reading and writing to communicate with others. Similarly, when a person targets to acquire a second language, the speaking method is very effective for acquisition. In Nepal, the other methods are given more priority for second language acquisition and for that reason students find it difficult to speak and communicate in the target language.

In private as well as public/ community schools of our country Nepal, the medium of language in class room interaction is English. However, most of the students are from various mother tongues. As a result, when students are given a task in classroom, they find it difficult to express their feelings in the target language as their native language stands as a barrier. The students usually do not get exposure to the right environment to practice speaking in English as it is not practiced nationwide. As a result, in the classroom, when they are asked to give a speech they do not feel at ease. To overcome this problem, role play can be used as an effective tool to help the students regain confidence. In an English speaking class, it is important for the students to comprehend the situation to communicate effectively outside of the classroom. Role play is the medium which enables the students to get an idea about different situations through various activities taken from the scenario of real life. It is found that the students who are able to write an essay on a given topic fail to communicate a simple idea fluently. Therefore, it is very significant to teach students some skills that they can use in the everyday interaction and role play can be an effective technique for this.

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Richard (1985) defines role play as a drama-like classroom activities in which students take the roles of different participants in a situation, and, act out what might typically happen in that situation. For example, to practice how to express complains and apologies in a foreign language, students might have to role-play a situation in which a customer in a shop returns a faulty article to a salesperson. Doff (1992) states that in a role play, students imagine a role (e.g. a police officer, a shop assistant), a situation (e.g. buying food, planning a party) or both. Role play should be improvised; students decide exactly what to say as they go along. Situation, roles and useful expressions are the three parts in a role play.

When students were assigned a situation to role play in, they had put in the effort to think of the appropriate language that could be used to express their views and thoughts for communication. It also helped them to acquire speaking skill and oral fluency, which also helped to boost their confidence level. As speaking skill requires more 'practice and exposure', role play can play an effective role. A clear observation of the similarly assigned situation helped the students to adapt to the moods and vocal expression of the given situation, which they could then perform. For example, when they were assigned to play the roles of a salesman and a customer, they were introduced to a 'different social context' which was new, interesting, and challenging for them. It gave them an opportunity to show their creativity because the life style, language, emotion, environment, expression and body language would be different. As they took preparation for the play, it not only helped them to gain back their confidence but also helped in acquiring fluency in the target language.

In a classroom, besides other oral activities like picture description, storytelling and quizzing, we have also given them role play. Communication was not confined in one situation and role play gave them the scope to play a series of different situational interactions. Another reason was that it helped them to practice English in a controlled situation so that they could gain confidence to perform in a 'real life situation'. However, role play took up a lot of time it became difficult for the teacher to accommodate the activity for all students within the allocated class time. Moreover, for lack of proper logistic support, the teacher could not record their performance all the time to evaluate afterwards. Although the time limitation for each play was allocated, most of the time, they exceeded the time by two, three minutes as it was left to the team members to divide the allocated time among them-selves.

II. Literature Review

Liu and Ding (2009) used role-play technique to see how the students performed in groups when they were given a familiar situation to role play in. They also observed their language potency and how the errors can be corrected as well as how to give feedback to the learners for further improvement. Their observation was that if the teacher gave a familiar situation than the result would be positive and rather giving instant feedback they should be shown the video tapes with oral feedback for 'self or peer correction.' The researcher followed the similar pattern for feedback and noticed that students performed well as they acted in a familiar situation and they improved accordingly.

Cornett (1999) presented that students improved fluency in language and oral interaction skills, beside the use of language of the body during face-to-face communication, when they were participated in role play techniques. Those techniques were especially fundamental for students learning a foreign language, who did not often speak English at home because those students were eager to use English language, and then improved their fluency and speaking with the chance to participate in role play. Role-play is simply required to play the other roles in the same way they think about how other roles may behave. As a result, role play can be clearly understood of many aspects like reactions, values, feelings, and attitudes of the person in the same.

Ments (1999) mentioned, "The most obvious uses of role-play are in those areas which deal primarily with aspects of communication" (p. 19). In our speaking class the objective was to see how well the students communicate through language. Since role play is communication based technique, we applied it to see its effectiveness through various situations in controlled environment. Role-playing gives 'students the opportunity to practice interacting with others in certain roles' and regarding purpose of role playing he said, "their aim is to feel, react and behave as closely as possible to the way someone placed that particular situation would do" (p. 9). Since role-play deals 'primarily with aspects of communication' Ments expressed, "it is therefore ideally suited to those subjects that deal with linguistic ability, namely languages, literacy and social skills training" (p. 19). Ments mentioned a lot of areas where role play could be used. For testing linguistic ability, he said it could be done "by devising scenes of everyday life, in particular those situations which make use of the vocabulary to be learnt, the students can be encouraged to use language in a free and interesting way" (p. 19). He also noticed that 'one is using language and other ways of communicating' and for that reason learning became 'an 222 integral part of the task.' About role-play Ments said that "it expresses hidden feelings, student can discuss private issues and problems, enables students to empathize with others and understand their motivation" (p. 13). Ments mentioned that role play is "motivational and effective because it involves activity" (p. 13).

Qing (2011) experimented role-play in the intermediate level and noticed that role play could ace students' intercultural awareness and develop overall communicative competence (p. 36). The author stated, "Adopting another's cultural role creates freedom for experimentation while it also creates a significant learning situation for the participants and for the audience" (p. 38). The author also stated, "Content based role plays give 224 students the unique opportunity to explore another culture in detail from a variety of perspectives. Speakers of English should be able to express themselves properly and understand the grammatical discourse, strategic, and sociolinguistic factors for any given situation based on a higher level of communicative competence" (p. 38). In addition, Davies (1990) mentioned that dramatic activities, if the teachers know how to use them effectively, they will help reinforce the individuals to develop their communicative skill though the dramatic activities are only the role plays. Likewise, Singh (2000) who studied English teaching by using dramatic activities found that the dramatic activities were partially used with the students who studied Malay as their mother tongues. The students were more interested in joining activities than the conventional teaching and they had fun in doing the activities. In the study, the researcher observed similar communicative

development but as the learners were frequent user of mother tongues they had little difficulty in expressing themselves properly using English language.

Role play is considered as a place that makes it easy for students to learn the basics of English conversation (Stocker, 2006 cited in Rayhan, 2014). By applying role play in teaching speaking, students get the opportunity to practice in terms of communication and roles in different social, as well as create and place themselves (Fadilah, 2016, p.210). Furthermore, Rahayu (2015) argued that role play helps students who are shy, who have difficulty in conversation by providing a mask, so they can improve their ability to speak and interact in any situation. Based on the exposure above, it is clear that role play technique is a method applied in teaching speaking, to improve students' confidence and fluency in speaking, active learning, as well as dialogue and interaction with others.

III. Methodology
Objective of the Study
The principal aims of the current investigation can be listed as the followings:
a. To analyze the effectiveness of using role play techniques in enhancing speaking skills of the students in English as a second language class.
b. To evaluate the advantage of role-play techniques in students' real life situation.

Research Questions
The research questions of this study are as follows.
a. Is there any positive impact of using role play techniques in enhancing speaking skills of the students in English as a second language class?
b. What are the advantages of using role-play as a medium to enhance speaking skills to interact accurately in a class?

Participants of Role-play
Thirty students of Bagiswori Secondary School of section G took part in the investigation process. Out of them, 15 students were in the experiment group whereas the same number of students was in the control. The participants were grouped according to their class role number, i.e., odd in one group and even in other.

Duration
The duration of the research was from March 2021 to May 2021.

Role-play Technique Procedure in Learning
Role play is a technique used in language teaching**.** There have been many studies that discuss the implementation of role play in learning, which is more predominantly carried out in language learning to improve students' speaking skills. Huda (2015) states that there are three reasons this method created, which refers to the assumption on authentic comparison to the problems in real life; and involves several psychological aspects that include attitudes, values, and beliefs. In terms of the type, the implementation of role play divided into two forms, include 1) scripted, which is a script that comes from a dialogue book or text in the form of a speech,

with this text script functioning as a means of conveying language meaning in a way that is easy to remember; 2) unscripted, in this case, the implementation of role play does not depend on a script or textbook. In this, students improvise. Therefore, it requires preparation from both teachers and students.

There are several studies that explain the procedures for implementing role-playing, including those described by Susan House (cited in Fadilah, 2016), she mentions there are 4 procedures for implementing role play. The procedures include 1) students are accustomed to reading examples of dialogue; 2) dividing pairs A and B, giving dialogue and roles A and B; 3) give students play their role; 4) the teacher makes corrections and checks the students by changing roles, and repeats them. Added, according to Huang (cited in Rahayu, 2015) there are 6 main procedures in implementing role play, including: 1) the teacher must determine the teaching material in role play activities. Teachers can take teaching materials from various sources and select materials, as well as create their own authentic teaching materials. Interests of students, teaching objectives, and in determining the suitability of teaching materials; 2) choose the situation and make the dialogue, every situation created by the students themselves based on materials from the teacher; 3) before doing role play, the teacher teaches dialogue in role playing, the teacher needs to teach and ensure students use vocabulary, sentences, and dialogue, and provide opportunities for students to ask questions; 4) ask students to practice role play in pairs or small groups, then after they mastered their respective roles, ask them to exchange roles, and finally ask students to do a role play in front of the class; 5) ask students to modify the situation and dialogue from the original; 6) evaluate students' understanding related to vocabulary, sentences, and dialogues.

From the description above, it can be concluded that in implementing the role play technique, it is necessary to consider procedures. Based on that, the writer tries to make a large outline of the procedures for implementing role play techniques are 1) the teacher must know the goals and objectives of implementing role play; 2) the teacher designs the implementation of role play learning; 3) the teacher prepares his authentic teaching materials to be adapted to the learning objectives, talents, interests and abilities of students; 4) the teacher designs a conversation concept in the form of dialogue by determining the situation; 5) The teacher conveys the conversation dialogue that has been made beforehand, then asks students to say it in the context of habituation and practicing the students' pronunciation skills, as well as correcting and informing the accuracy of the pronunciation of vocabulary, sentences, and dialogue as a whole, in this case, the teacher must be able to ensure that students have mastered the aspects that must be mastered; 6) teachers divide students in groups or pairs, adapted to the learning design and the situation has been made before; 7) the teacher starts the role play activity by asking students to play their role correctly; 8) the teacher asks the students to switch roles if it is felt the students have mastered the previous roles, 9) students practice their role-play in front of the class, and 10) the teacher conducting the evaluation.

Data Analysis
First of all, the researcher distributed survey questionnaire among the students. Fifty percent students found it to be an easy method to communicate as they had complete freedom to select

the vocabulary. The researcher selected them as the experimental group and rest as the control group. Before implementing role play technique to the experimental group, the pre-test was conducted on 1st March 2021. The pre-test was administered on the sample of the study for two groups. The researcher himself tested the sample of the study and he recorded the answers for scoring. The time needed for answering the question was between 10-15 minutes. The aim behind carrying out the pre-test is to compare the students' achievement scores in the pre-test with that of the same students in the post-test.

Then the researcher divided the work into groups, the experimental group felt less burdened and, it created a scope to show the talent of each individual. Eight students said that as they were confronted with a different situation, they experienced something new and interesting even though the characters in role play were familiar to them. Seven students believed that, at times, it was difficult for them to fully manage the task within the allocated time.

The speaking class met thrice a week. To make the situation conducive, the teacher played YOU TUBE version of a one act play 'Refund' twice and then read the dialogue aloud and then pointed a couple of students to read it in front of the whole class. Then, the teacher pointed out to the students if they faced any difficult words or expressions in order to analyze and explain them. Students were asked to be the characters of the play and performed as them. Then, they were called up randomly to practice. This step conducted to encourage students; meanwhile the teacher should grade their performance on a rating scale of 1 to 20. In addition, a peer observation was conducted by asking students to grade their colleagues in similar scale. Member of each group were scrambled with each time of practicing the dialogues to avoid of feeling bored.

The students of the experimental group and controlled group were tested every last day of the months i.e. March, April and May respectively. The same testing procedures were used for pre-test and post-test of both groups. The students' oral performance in the post-test was scored under the same conditions as that of the pre-test. The time require for answering the questions was 10-15 minutes for each students. The researcher conducted the pre-test and the post-test under the same conditions.
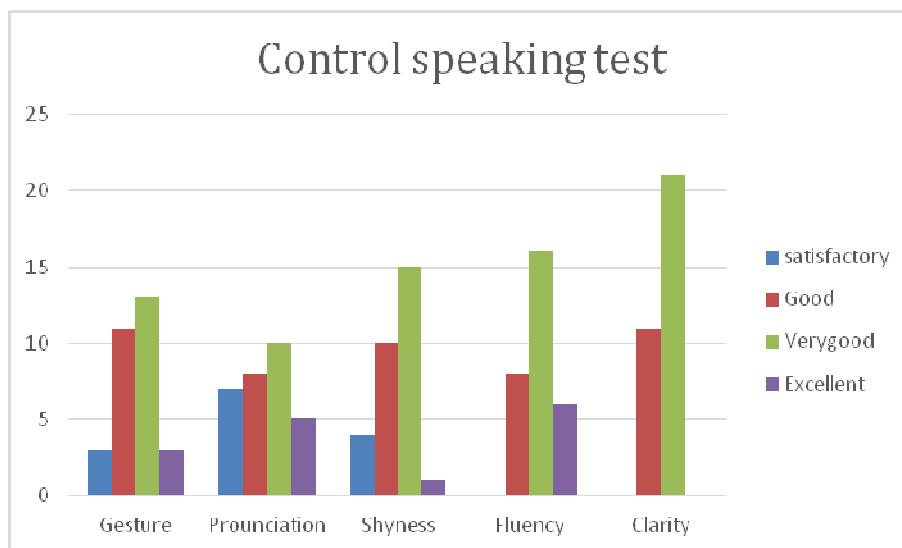
The following table and multifaceted bar diagram show the scoring of the controlled group and the experimental group; and is found almost same in the pre-test.

	Gesture	Pronunciation	Shyness	Fluency	Clarity
Satisfactory	20	15	24	21	18
Good	5	8	6	7	9
Very good	5	7	0	2	3
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0

General Speaking Test Before
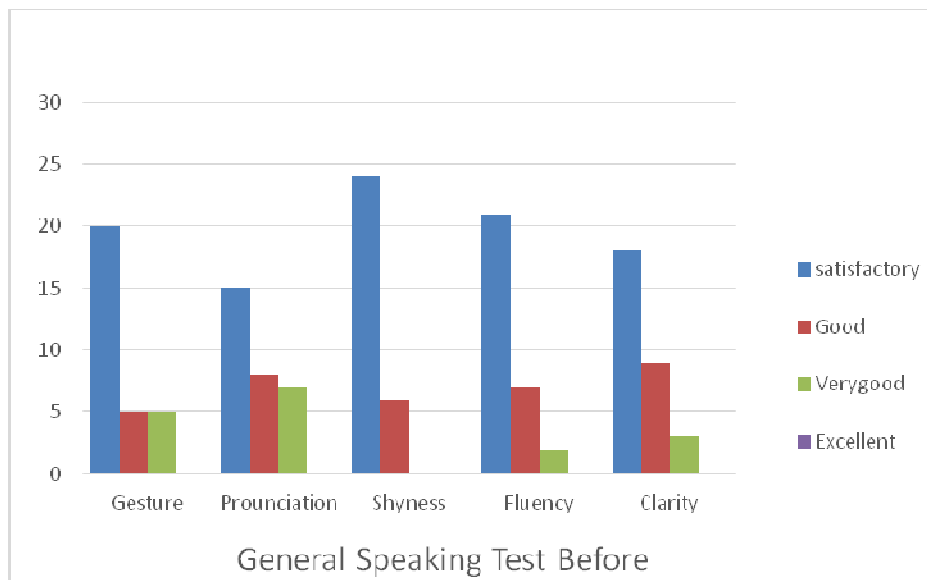
The following table and multifaceted bar diagram present the difference in scoring that is found a bit bigger in the post-test of the control and experimental group.

	Gesture	Pronunciation	Shyness	Fluency	Clarity
Satisfactory	3	7	4	0	0
Good	11	8	10	8	11
Very good	13	10	15	16	21
Excellent	3	5	1	6	0

Control speaking test

The following Table and Multifaceted Bar Diagram 3 show that students' accents improved with experimental group more than controlled group. It may be common fact to obtain this result because role play technique asks students to practice speaking and listening more than reading and writing. Students also should practice the repetition of the same words or expressions many times to comprehend their conversation. They were asked to focus consciously on their accent

and pronunciation in particular. As a result, students might have paid more attention to accent or pronunciation while speaking. This indicates that there is a significant difference in the total scores of post-test between the experimental and control groups in a favor of the experimental group. This confirms that the experimental group is better than the controlled group.

	Gesture	Pronunciation	Shyness	Fluency	Clarity
Satisfactory	0	0	0	0	0
Good	5	6	9	8	9
Very good	6	7	6	7	5
Excellent	4	2	0	0	1
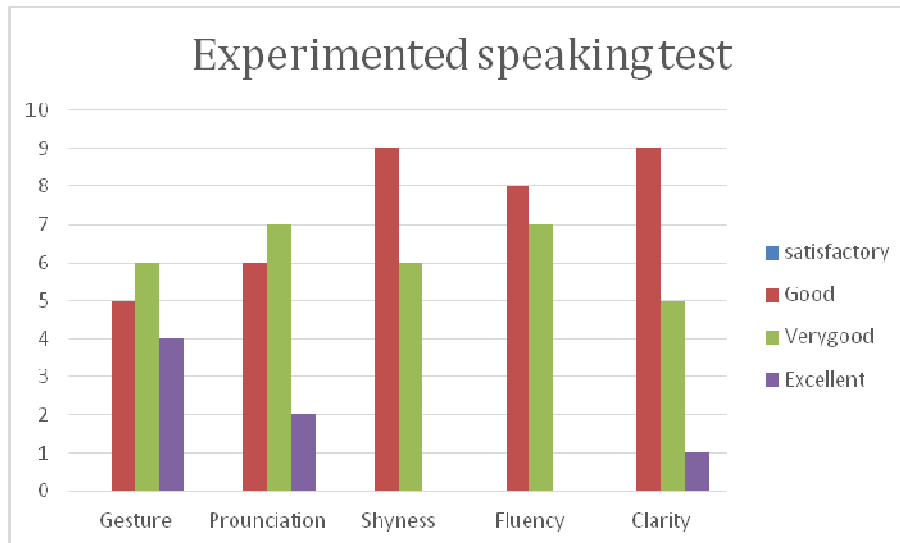
The performance of the experimental group was observed by the researcher with the observation checklist. The researcher as the teacher decided the teaching materials, selected the situations and created the dialogues, created the activity that required the students to work together to achieve a purpose. The teacher also taught dialogue for role play, asked the students to practice the dialogue, gave the students a desire to communicate, gave the students opportunity to express personal feeling, ideas and opinion, provided supportive and dynamic classroom that made the students feel confident in using the language. The observation checklists for the students, found that the students had worked together to achieve purpose. The students felt more confidence in using the language and the students remained active in teaching and learning process.

IV. Outcomes and Discussion

The reasons why the sample group was able to speak English for communication by using role play technique which emphasize the students' practice in speaking, students are confident and brave to act out and also they can use English in communication. They can apply the conversations into their daily use. In addition, they work in group and they can prepare the role play before hand enabling them to act out according to their assigned roles which was consistent with Maley and Duff (2001) stating that drama can stimulate the students to learn in other subjects, they want to communicate in different situations with natural communication and

meaningful context. They know themselves better and can evaluate their own abilities. This can result in the students' self confidence in using a second language. They can feel more relaxed and minimize their tension. Each time they present their role plays, they are interested in the roles given to them; they experience their emotion and their friends' as well because they try their best to play the roles as given and they can transfer their emotions and meet with the role plays.

The result of the present study showed that the students who were taught through role play got better result than the students who were taught through traditional grammar based method. It is caused by the strategy that is used. Role play gives the opportunity to the students to explore their ability to be more active in teaching and learning process. The students have the opportunities for stimulating their speaking skills and they can easily perform in the front of the class. So, based on the obtained results, certain justifications concerning the effectiveness of using role play techniques on Nepali English as a Foreign Language students' speaking skill can be made.

When students were assigned a situation to role play in, they had put in the effort to think of the appropriate language that could be used to express their views and thoughts for communication. It also helped them to acquire speaking skill and oral fluency, which also helped to boost their confidence level. As speaking skill requires more 'practice and exposure', role play can play an effective role. A clear observation of the similarly assigned situation helped the students to adapt to the moods and vocal expression of the given situation, which they could then perform. For example, when they were assigned to play the roles of a leader and a traveler, they were introduced to a 'different context' which was new, interesting, and challenging for them. It gave them an opportunity to show their creativity because the life style, language, emotion, environment, expression and body language would be different. As they took preparation for the play, it not only helped them to gain back their confidence but also helped in acquiring fluency in the target language.

Accordingly, the students under experimental group seemed to succeed because of getting involved and practice in role play technique such as group work and peer work. It can be inferred that if the class is framed as a community to work together supporting each other, it will have the opportunity to work for the same aims. This builds their ability to interact with and understand each other, the best basis for all learning. Moreover, the results of the present study confirm that role play techniques provide a kind of interesting environment for the students which lead to better attention in learning and stimulate them to participate in role-play techniques. In role-play techniques, students take a new identity and learn to use for every day interaction.

The eleventh grade learners from the sample group were very satisfied with the English Communication by using role play activities as well as the dramatic activities and at the same time they also practiced listening skill. These could result in the students' confidence in using English for their speaking skills since it allowed students to join in every activity prior to their performance; they had to write the scripts, set the situation, the characters. They could work in

pair or in group which resulted in group work atmosphere with such cooperation and they could rehearse their roles and learned how to solve the problems in different situations. Furthermore, students' vocabulary improved in experimental group more than control group. In role play, although as teachers gave them selected topics, they selected the words and phrases of their own, which helped them to choose suitable words that suited the situation and also helped them to increase their vocabulary. They had fun in doing the role plays under the teacher's facilitation.

V. Conclusion

1). The ability of English speaking skill of a sample group by using role play technique after attending the course was higher than the prior to attending the course significantly.

2). Role play technique supported learners to gain self confidence in using English language as well as enhanced the emotional and imaginative domain including the intellectual and rational sphere.

Moreover, based on the finding of the research it can be concluded that role play is an effective technique to develop speaking skill of the students. It can be generalized that role play technique enhanced the learners speaking skill. By giving them a special role, learners, especially shyest ones, feel encouraged and tend to abandon their embarrassment and shyness. It is because the positive aspect of the role play technique is it develops confidence and creativity on students as they are motivated to take part in speaking skills. The regular practice of role play makes the students fluent in English. Similarly, it develops vocabularies which help to choose suitable words that suit in the situation. Finally, the study proves that role play has an important pedagogical implication in EFL classroom to bridge the gap between the carefully controlled classroom work and the complexity of language in the outside world.

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Biska Jatra: Myth, Sign, Significance and Bhaktapur

Rajan Phelu[1]

Abstract

The still living ancient festivals which are mysterious, colourful and fun evolved in course of time due to the highest popularity of the paramount deities belonging to the two great religions: Hinduism and the Buddhism. Their rites and rituals possess the background of interesting myths, delightful legends, and captivating folktales. Every year, the Newars celebrate wonderful fairs and festivals on different auspicious days in Bhaktapur. Every festive event of Bhaktapur has its own specialties. This study examines myths and current practice of Biska Jatra in the cultural backdrop of Bhaktapur from the perspective of semiology. The common belief is that celebrating the festival will ward off evil spirits and dangers, boost growth in agriculture production and the economy; maintain peace and prosperity and ensure the protection of the country from the outside invaders. This study argues that the celebration of Biska Jatra depicts its rationality and significance in the socio-cultural lives of the residents of Bhaktapur.

Key Words: Biska Jatra, Festival, Myth, Semiology, Significance

Festivals and ceremonies are known as the mirrors of the folktales, history and traditions, way of life, religious beliefs, social harmony, craftsmanship, joys and fears, dreams and sorrows, unity in diversity of the people and entire the country. Especially, they have religious and cultural significance which are celebrated with huge gathering of people on the special auspicious days and time for the fulfillment of certain desires of an individual and community as well. They are related with the memories of special events, to bring happiness to the gods and goddesses. Mary Anderson states, "Festivals were inaugurated to celebrate annually in some event in the scriptures to pacify the gods, to thank them for the harvest, to honour their birth dates or to celebrate some miraculous performance attribute to them" (27). Newars of Bhaktapur have at least one festivity in a month and they enjoy and strengthen their bond celebrating feast and festivals. Being a culturally and historically rich city, Bhaktapur is famous for temples, cultures, and food. Newari people are fond of their festivals, cultures, traditions, and values. Eating different food items and celebrating different festivals is the way of life of the Newari people. Dor Bahadur Bista argues, "Newars observe the greatest number of festivals and feasts. They spend a great amount of money and food on such occasions, the food consisting of buffalo meat, beaten rice, vegetables, pickles, curd and large quantities of beer and spirit" (26). Events are closely associated with human beings. Each and every event directly touches to the society. They do not take place in a vacuum. Therefore, they influence almost every aspect of our lives, whether the religious, socio- cultural, economic, political and ecological as well.

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Roland Barthes helped the modern science of semiology applying semiotic methods to the myths that he saw all around him: media, fashion, art, photography, architecture, literature. According to Barthes, anything in culture can be a sign and send a specific message. He describes some methods of deciphering these messages:

Of course, it is not *any* type: language needs special conditions in order to become myth: we shall see them in a minute. But what must be firmly established at the start is that myth is a system of communication, that it is a message. This allows one to perceive that myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept, or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form. Later, we shall have to assign to these form historical limits, conditions of use, and reintroduce society into it: we must nevertheless first describe it as a form. (107)

This means that everything can be myth, provided that it conveys some meaning or message. There are different myths on how *Biska Jatra* was celebrated. The two myths are widely accepted by the locals on the commencement of this festival. The first myth tells the story of a cursed princess which goes like this:

Once in Bhaktragram, the king had a beautiful daughter. The princess would remain widow since her husband always died the next morning of the marriage. Each day a new man was chosen to marry the princess and the next day, the man would be dead. One day, a young man from another place came to visit Bhaktagram and was fascinated by the tale of the princess. The young man volunteered to go and to find out the truth behind all the deaths. After the wedding, the princess lay in bed and slept quickly. The young man stayed awake and sat beside the princess staring at her face. After some time, two poisonous serpents crawled from the nose of the princess. The young man quickly killed the snakes with his sword. The then King was happy that the princess was free from the curse. He hung the snakes in the tall pole and erected them in *Yosinkhel* to show to the public. The public then started to celebrate the occasion as the special day the princess was freed from the snake curse. (Munankarmi 2-5)

Another popular myth about *Biska Jatra* tells the story of Lichchhavi King Shivadev which narrates:
During the reign of King Shivadev, the Kirants attacked Bhaktapur and tortured the people. The King consulted with a tantric Shekhar Acharya who transformed himself into a tiger and chased the Kirants. One day, the tantric Shekhar Acharya's wife wanted to see the Azinger (python) and requested her husband to change shape. The tantric agreed and gave rice grains to sprinkle over him so that he could return back to his original form. But after he turned into the python, his wife was frightened and ran away. She ate the rice grains herself and turned her into a python. Both the couple turned to python and by realizing that they could not turn back to their original form, they committed suicide on the river bank. The kings then started to erect the lingum pole along with a pair of flag in memory of the couple. (Joshi 76-77)

While analyzing both of the myths, the main reason behind the celebration of *Biska Jatra* is crystal clear. Indeed, this festival is celebrated to disseminate the message of victory. In the first myth, the young man got victory over the cursed snakes which freed the princess being widow

whereas in the second myth, Shekhar Acharya protected the country from the kirants' invasion. As Gopal Singh Nepali's study mentions, "Besides symbolizing the celebration of the New Year's day of the Vikram era, this festival signifies a kind of propitiation principally designed for the protection of Bhaktapur town" (344). In both of myths though they are different, the kings became happy and started to observe *Biska Jatra* in the celebration of victory over the curse and enemy. Thus, *Biska Jatra* is observed every year disseminating the message among the locals that the observers of this festival won't be cursed by ill fate and will be able to defeat the enemies throughout the year.

Moreover, the Newars of Bhaktapur have maintained considerable social and cultural order. They observe the fairs and festivals in harmony preserving all the functions that are symbolically well off. Robert Levy reports, "Bhaktapur, the argument goes, can be considered to have interesting typological analogies with archaic cities insofar as it represents a community elaborately organized on a spatial base through a system of marked symbolism" (27). In addition to the myth, the events that take place during *Biska Jatra* are rich in symbolic meanings. They can be studied with the help of semiotic activities. Generally, semiotic is the study of signs or an epistemology about the existence or the actuality of sign in societal life. Semiotic accounts for everything that can be seen or be interpreted as a sign. Saussure states, "A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology; I shall call it semiology" (16). Since *Biska Jatra* is loaded with numerous symbolic meanings, they have their own significance in the socio-cultural lives of the inhabitants of Bhaktapur.

In the cultural city Bhaktapur, Lord Bhairabnath and his terrifying wife Bhadrakali are the main deities of the festival, *Biska Jatra*. The festival marks the beginning of the New Year, which always falls in the middle of April. As Anderson's study mentions, "It is believed that the Bhadgaon festival is called Bisket in reference to the Newari words bi for 'snake', and *syako* for 'slaughter', forming the term which eventually became Bisket, a celebration to commemorate the death of two serpent demons" (41). The festival lasts for nine conjunctive days and is celebrated with great joy and fanfare by the city crowds. Four days before the New Year, Bhairab and Bhadrakali are enshrined in their respective temple shaped chariots *Ratha*, which inaugurate the *Biska Jatra* celebration. The Ratha Jatra starts from Taumadhi tole of the city of Bhaktapur. The chariot of a wrathful god, Bhairab is pulled by both the parties of *Thane* (Upper) and *Kwone* (Lower). The tug of war starts between the two parties to bring the chariot to their respective area. Thousands of people gather at Taumadhi Square to take part in the festival and local television channels broadcast the festival live so that other people could watch the festival from their home. The winning party takes the chariot to their respective area. Munankarmi states, "The swarming mobs of celebrators try their level best to pull and move the chariot in their own direction shouting *Hose Haise*" (39). The two factors-space and movement should be taken in consideration while studying about the Newar performance art. The most unique feature of the Newar performance arts is the continuous blend of space and movement. Slausser mentions, "Architecturally insignificant but of considerable institutional importance are the masonry platforms known in Nepali as *dabali* . . . it was the traditional place for the performance of sacred dance dramas; and some *dabalis* have special names and designated uses" (159). The

dramatic shows, dancing and other forms of performances have direct symbiosis with the spatial dimension of the city.

On the day before New Year the *lingam* pole (a twenty five meter long wooden pole flanked by a pair of flags symbolizing the dead serpents) is erected at the festive place called: *Yosinkhel*. As soon as the *lingam* pole is erected, people start to climb up it to pluck the flower on the top believing that the one that becomes successful to do so will have the son. There is sublime feeling in attempting so. The day ends with erecting the *Yosin Dyo*, thus marking the end of the year. It is believed that the side on which *Yosin Dyo* faces will gain lots of rainfall and the agriculture will flourish there. Hariram Joshi argues, "On the day of New Year, the people from Bhaktapur visit *Yosin Khel* to worship the gods and get blessings for their upcoming year" (19). In the evening, the *Yosin Dyo* is pulled down. After *Yosin Dyo* is pulled down, the Bhaila Kha (the chariot of Bhairabhnat) and Nakinchu Kha (the chariot of Bhadrakali) are pulled towards Gahiti. At Gahiti, both the chariots clash at midnight symbolizing copulation. As the chariot procession is a very important event, the people of Bhaktapur engage in celebrations throughout *Biska Jatra*. The city is divided into eight zones; each one presided over by one of the eight forms of the goddess Astamatrika (the eight mothers). Arun Gupto opines, "The worship of the Matrikas and Nava Durgas are performed during Biskit Jatra (carnival) and Dashami" (52). On the last day of *Biska Jatra*, the chariot of Bhairabnath is again pulled by the two parties to bring the god to their respective area. The chariot is pulled from Gahiti by the Upper and Lower parties. The chariot after pulled to the respective area will be pulled back to Taumadhi where it stays for a while and then is dismantled until the next year.

There is another popular belief to *Biska Jatra*. It is believed that the sky and the earth are the forms of divine male and female in the form of Lord Bhairab and Goddess Bhadrakali. Ancient Newari mythology believes that the divine mating of the sky and earth has made creation possible. The rain showering from the sky denotes the life giving elements with the earth considered as the creative base. Tejeshworbabu Gwonga insists, "The pole has a hole in it that signifies the female reproductive organ" (152). So *Biska Jatra* is essentially the celebration of mating Bhairab and Bhadrakali. It is the celebration of creation and continuity of life. The mating of Bhairab and Bhadrakali is also symbolic to the creation that comes after the beginning of spring. The spring in fact brings life back, makes the surrounding green and yielding. This is of course the moment of happiness and time to cheer.

In Bhaktapur, the festivals are celebrated with gusto but if the cultural practices are not studied in association with the social living of the people and environmental phenomena, they will remain merely in myth and superstition. *Biska Jatra* has carried myths and meanings which are directly and indirectly associated with the life of local residents of Bhaktapur. Thus, the Newars observe this festival so lively and energetically every year with the anticipation of socio-economic prosperity throughout the year. As each and every events of *Biska Jatra* signifies particular meaning, it has great cultural and religious importance in the livelihood of the Newars of Bhaktapur.

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Market and Socio-cultural Embeddedness
(A Case of 'Subhan's Beauty Home', Bhaktapur and 'Ason' Market, Kathmandu)

Sunita Raut[1]

Abstract

Famous political economist Adam Smith argued that the market economy is made up of a series of individual exchanges or transactions which automatically create a functioning and ordered system. Similarly, according to rational choice theory, capitalist economy is driven by individual self-interest and works best when individual buyers and sellers make rational decisions that serve their own interests. In contrast to this atomized economic approach of David Ricardo, Adam Smith and others, this research paper entitled 'market and social embeddedness' applies Granovetter's ideas of 'social embeddedness of market' and highlights an alternative way of analyzing economic institutions and market which operate and functioned with non-economic institution, which is broadly functions within larger social and cultural framework with reflective empirical evidences. This article discusses the issues based on the data gathered from the two case studies through interview tool. The nature of study is qualitative and cases were selected purposively. The major purpose of this article is to prove that, market co-exist with, shaped by and depend on socio-cultural factor and moral values not only under socialized economic behaviors one. The theory which I applied in this study is reflected and supported with cases as market is constructed and functions with the relation of social and non-social economic factors. The major findings of this study are persons with long-term socio-cultural ties, established social networks, confidence, and quality sensitivity engage in economic transactions in the market rather than strangers one. People make their decisions on goods and services on their previous dealings and moral values with service provider or businessman then continue to deal with those they trust not only by the individualistic market-oriented transaction.

Key Words: *Atomized Economy, Rational Choice, Malfeasance, Social, Social Networks, Social Embeddedness*

I. Introduction

Simply, a market is a place where people go to buy or sell things and services. When people have products/skill to sell, they set up a market place. When things/service are sold, people buy the product/satisfaction and this helps people to spend and earn money. The market needs to balance supply and demand which is determined by the state policy, demographic status of people, socio-economic status of people etc. In this modern time, we live and enjoy in the age of market, which shapes our desire, aspiration, livelihood and everyday life. Similarly, market dynamics are the engines of historical social, cultural and economic change vise-versa. Modern economics developed from the classical ideas of early thinkers such as Adam Smith and his followers is

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based on the idea that the economy can be studied as a separate part of a society that operates according to its own laws leaving out the larger social or political context in which markets operate. In nineteenth century and before, some economists like Ricardo popularized the abstract and deductive approach about economic behaviors and market. They focused on market behaviors and principles that are economically determined and atomized. Likewise, Hirschma, (1982) has examined such types of fascinated markets, as "Large numbers of price-taking anonymous buyers and sellers supplied with perfect information…function without any prolonged human or social contact between the parties. Under perfect competition, there is no room for bargaining, negotiation, remonstration or mutual adjustment and the various operators that contract together need not enter into recurrent or continuing relationships as a result of which they would get to know each other well" (p. 1473). Likewise, during the late 19th to early 20th, pure economic and economistic dominancy remain in peak position in the world. It was assumed and convinced that classical economics is progressive, ideal discipline, which shadowed the notion of social embeddedness and formalize the assumption of economic rationality with the help mathematical calculative formula (Swedgerg and Granovetter, 2001). According to Karl Mittermaier (2020), the Wealth of Nations, by Adam Smith, is widely credited with laying forth the ideas of a free-market economy. As the authoritative and market order is the dominant type of order in society, its effect was likely strongest as a policy guide, notably throughout the nineteenth century. Governments make their edicts mandatory in this system so that law-abiding citizens have no choice but to obey and resistant citizens may be forced to comply. There is no way out for the person. The situation is different with free associations and its regulations, because the individual retains his or her freedom of choice. He does everything voluntarily, and that is all that is required for the invisible hand to work.

In contrast to this approach, this paper tries to reflect that social scientists, specifically sociologists, have attempted to develop an alternative way of studying economic institutions and processes within the larger social structure. The economy is also a part of the social world; it is not apart from the rest of society. The core tradition in economic sociology is to seek out and use a variety of sources. It includes the idea of Weber, Marx, and Durkheim, to name a few. They argue that economic action is a type of social action, that economic action is socially placed, and that economic institutions are socially constituted (Swedberg and Granovetter, 2001). Similarly, Mittermaier (2020) discussed that markets do not operate in a vacuum. They are important aspects of society's institutions. These institutions include not only a legal system that establishes property, contract, and other rights and obligations, but also a plethora of conventions, or established ways of doing things. Furthermore, social structures in markets operate to reduce information costs, give firms access to knowledge about what the competition is doing, allow market actors to trust one another, and reduce resource dependencies (Fligstein and Dauter, 2007).

Market actors are involved in day-to-day social relationship with one another, relationship based on trust, friendship, power, cultural understanding and dependence. Buyer and seller also are generally familiar to one another and in many cases are involved in repeated exchange and transactions. Social networks play in creating trust between buyers and sellers that makes exchange possible (Granovetter, 1985).

The main argument of Granovetter is market activities and related behavior of the people is socially embedded rather than atomized economic rationality. His idea concerns the extent to which economic action is embedded in structures of social relations, in modern industrial society or how economic behaviors and institutions affected by social relations. And the idea of "embeddedness" is identified and conceptualized by Mark Granovetter in 1985. This is idea which accomplishes those economic relations between agency or institution are embedded in genuine social networks and do not exist in an abstract idealized market. Particularly, the concept of "embeddedness" refers to the extent to which non-economic institutions impede with the economic activity.

The term "embeddedness" is firstly originated with Karl Polanyi in his book "the great transformation". He substantiates this approach, where Polanyi posited all economies are embedded in social relations and institutions. According to Polanyi, in non-capitalistic, pre-industrial livelihoods are not based on market exchange but on redistribution and reciprocity and moral economy (Polanyi, 1944). But in this modern and capitalistic age, at the recent time of this research also, moral and social embeddedness is found in every economic institution or in everywhere.

In this study, researcher employed two different cases to show the market and non-market relationship empirically. One of the cases is related to '*Ason'* market which is located in Kathmandu. It is a historical market place of Nepal. From generation to generation, people of every caste, class, religion and region have been continuously visiting there in order to do their shopping or to buy their things and goods. It is an interesting fact to know how this market has been maintaining the same market values and attraction since then to present time. What are the key features of this market that drive people to primarily choose this place in order to buy their goods and stuffs?

Similarly, another case is related to '*Subhan's Beauty Home'* which is located in Bhaktapur. It is absolutely a modern epitome of its establishment in nature, concept and services. There are many different types of beauty parlors and beauty care centers established in the city, almost one in every alternate building. But surprisingly, '*Subhan's Beauty Home'* has earned clients' choice and preference far higher than others. What's the latent formula behind this successful business? This is big question over here. So, on the ground of this theoretical and conceptual background, this study tries to show that market is shaped, constructed and functioned by social behaviors, not only by purely rational economic behaviors.

II. Research Methodology
As P.V Young (1998, p.23) says that case study is a method of exploring and analyzing the life of a social unit, be that unit a person, a family, institution, cultural group or even entire community, this study also employs the case study method to acquire detail information about two market institutions. One is '*Subhan's Beauty Home'* and another is '*Ason'* Market. '*Subhan's Beauty Home*' is simply known as ladies' beauty parlor established for business motive. Similarly, '*Ason*' market is the historic and ancient market of Nepal where people get

salt to gold and birth to death related goods in one place, far more than the modern departmental store. In this study, two cases were purposively selected because both cases were different in nature, characteristics, history, forms, shop and goods arrangements, promotion, advertisements, competitiveness, and so on. One ('*Ason'* market) is the goods-money transactional market while another (*Subhan's Beauty Home*) is the service-money transactional market institution. Both cases apparently seem purely economic market characters, but both have resembled socio-cultural embeddedness within them. After selecting the cases, five different participants were interviewed in details. The interview was recorded, transcribed, translated, coded and thematically categorized. Then key narratives were interpreted in thick description based on the objectives of the study. Each case enables the researcher to relate the social relation with the non-social institution and activities employed with descriptive research design. Because this study describes the prevalent situations or social issues of the market that are rooted in non-market social relations and morals.

Results
Network, Trust, Sensitiveness and Social Situatedness beyond the Competitiveness and Rational Behavior

Case I: Subhan's Beauty Home
To look at the implication of Granovetter's concept of social "embeddedness" of economic behaviors, the researcher has taken the case of a beauty parlor named *'Subhan's Beauty Home'*, located at Suryabinayak, Bhaktapur, Nepal. One of the shareholders of this beauty home Mrs. Shrestha says: "*we all are experienced, trained, and professionally motivated girls. Our bonding of share is more interesting because we are all from different castes and communities. I belong to Newar community; the remaining four belong to Dalit, Tamang, and Brahmin communities. And the last one is from the Newar community. Similarly, we are from different parts of Nepal. Newars and Brahmin are from the urban area of Bhaktapur. Likewise, Dalit and Tamang are from the rural areas of Kavre district. All of us have sufficient experience of doing collective entrepreneurship in so many different sectors. We have taken advanced training regarding the cosmetic and makeover. Our beauty home is mostly crowded by locals as well as general clients such as foreign development workers, volunteers, professional women, diplomats, housewives and so on. Some other clients are from many parts of the Nepal and beyond. Excluding us, we have 10 permanent workers (beauticians) and five are on-call workers. Because this institution also provides training to those women who want be self-dependent entrepreneurs in future, we shareholders basically engage and focus in promotional activities, upgrading, training and client's satisfaction-based work. We do promote and advertise of our services in the local and national magazines like 'Wow', 'Wave' and so on. Similarly, we are providing attractive salary of our workers and we also earn handsome money; therefore, we never have to depend on our husband and family to expenses as we want*". From this narrative, it can be theorized that women who are engaged in this business are economically empowered and self-driven.

According to G.R. Agrawal (2003), entrepreneurs have long been credited with initiating and sustaining socioeconomic growth. The process of starting new businesses is known as entrepreneurship. It entails coming up with new ideas. It necessitates taking chances and

receiving rewards. Individuals have the option of working for themselves. Others will be able to get work as a result of it. Entrepreneurship is a creative and risk-taking mindset. It is the process of discovering and bringing together variables of production in order to capitalize on those opportunities. Apparently, it looks purely economic market characteristics like hanging public hoarding with the list of price and different services, employers for 10-15 labor, and advertisement. Not only that, they choose various means to promote their beauty home like advertisement on local and international fashion magazine and events, which belong to the capitalization and networking of the business. To maintain distinct identity, the institute modifies and upgrades its service quality, provides advance training for workers and others from time to time, and changes and updates promotional boards or advertisements.

One of the regular clients named Miss Bhima Karki (name changed) aged 25 has been regularly visiting this beauty home for the last 10 years. She also adds: "*As I grew up young, my face became dirty with acnes and pimples. Thereupon, I thought about visiting the best beauty home where we could get quality service with satisfaction. Then my mother suggested me visiting this beauty home and receiving its service. For the first time, my mother herself brought me here and introduced me with the beauty workers and shareholders because she was familiar and had long service relationship with this beauty home. Of course, my school friends suggested me going to many other parlors and skin care centers, but I finally chose this beauty home because of my family network and trust. I have been visiting this beauty home since my age of fifteen. I am still regular. Now I mostly do hair straight, manicure, pedicure, facial, hair removing, etc. The most loved part of this beauty home is providing varieties of qualitative services and proper counselling at reasonable prices in comparison to other parlors of the city*". So, it can easily be analyzed that *'Subhan's Beauty Home'* provides varieties of services and choices such as massage, manicure, pedicure, permanent hair straight, stylist hair cutting, hair coloring, advance facial and many more, that are commonly offered at Western and competitive beauty salons. These services are supposedly attracted women to this beauty home. The daily transaction of the beauty parlor proves that it is a successful, functional and attractive business. Therefore, it can be said that this institute has purely been business-oriented, market-exchange oriented, economically featured and competitive from the lens of classic economists, under-socialized rationalists, formalists or even atomic poles.

In contrast of this economic perspective, interestingly, this beauty home is like a home (*ghar*) or social institution. This institution was started on the partnership of five trained girls from different castes classes and ethnic communities as well as different strategic pocket areas. Among the shareholders, two are Newars, one Brahmin, one Tamang and one Dalit. Spatially they are from different pocket areas of *Suryabinaya*k (urban city) and *Kavre* (rural area). They disseminate information and influence their own communities to visit the institute. Moreover, the workers are also from different caste/ethnic communities and different locations. This strategy is employed to influence their own kinship and neighborhood network to compete in the market. The narrative of Mrs. Shrestha makes this argument lively: "…*because of our diverse caste and region-based sharing of this beauty home, we have so many benefits. For example, most of the clients of our beauty home are familiar and come from families, friends' circle and network. When a new client visits our beauty home, she is sure to visit it again and again. You can also*

observe that so many familiar clients are waiting for their turn. They know each other because most of our clients are from family members, friends, co-operative members and kin network of their own. We provide special discount for the clients who visit this beauty home more than five times continuously. It's been about 25 years that this beauty home has not yet experienced the client and economic crisis till the present day since its establishment. This is the good fortune and good luck of our institution". This story indicates that the investors and workers can influence their spatial, caste/ethnic and kin clients. Whenever I have visited this beauty home, I have found it to be extremely busy with its clients waiting for their turn. I have observed clients from different caste/ethnic communities as well as different age groups.

This beauty home has established legacy, expertise and popularity for a long time at '*Suryabinayak'*. I (the researcher) have also heard about the name and fame of '*Subhan's Beauty Home'* from my friends and neighbors. There are surely other parlors that have claimed have better beauty expertise and brand consciousness than '*Subhan's Beauty Hom*e'. But I have started visiting this beauty home frequently. Once I have been a familiar and regular customer, they provide me their service at cut price. Even if the customers who visit this beauty home under the influence of the investors or workers, they receive discount on beauty services as the network customers. The display board price is only for strangers and general customers. Because of its popularity, customers prefer to visit this beauty home in spite of its higher price in comparison to other parlors in the area. The investors are also the members of saving and credit cooperatives around *Suryabinayak.* They also utilize this channel to influence customers. Because of wide network and strategies of influence, other parlors around it are not able to compete with '*Subhan's Beauty Home*'. The clear hierarchy of parlors is observed at this area.

Another client aged 30, Mrs Sangita Manandhar, adds that *"…I was really upset and frustrated because of my hair damage in the process of hair straight in next parlor. That parlor is also famous in social media. So many advertisements related to the parlour are also found in many social sites. One day I heard about that beauty parlor and went to do hair straight, but they damaged my hair. I did not know what and which brand cream was applied in my hair. One lucky day when I met my aunt, she suggested me repairing my hair from 'Subhan's Beauty Home' from where she had been regularly taking its service. After that, I visited the beauty home. It's almost been three cycle of my hair treatment and my hair is normal now. They showed and let me choose the brand of the cream with balanced counselling. I may forget my treatment schedule but they remind me on call or through message on time. So I have trust and attachment with the beautician sisters of this beauty home more than my family".* This story of Sangita Manandhar suggests that her continuity of visiting this beauty home is based on the trust, transparent and balanced counselling, satisfaction and long emotional attachment with its quality services, and long friendly relationship. They also call and message her and ask about her days and latest news. Therefore, customers believe that '*Subhan's Beauty Home'* uses quality and branded beauty products which have no side effects. Besides, it has permanent legacy, expert manpower, satisfactory services, and familial environment in spite of the commercial principles behind everything.

Similarly, Mrs Manandhar's story also reveals that the workers who work for their daily subsistence in this beauty home are highly practical. They concern about client's family affairs, and exchange emotions with their clients as if they are their family members. She further adds: *"we may not have money all the time, but the treatment of our hair or receiving other services is scheduled. Even at that time, we do not need to worry because this beauty home provides seven days credit bill based on trusty collateral for regular clients. One day I was in a big problem. My hair treatment time was getting nearer and I was already reminded about that. At the same time, my mother-in-law was admitted in a hospital and my family was in economic crisis. Even at this critical moment, 'Subhan's Beauty Home' managed the time as per my convenience and provided seven days credit. It was such great immensity and kindness exhibited by this home. Not only that, during the first cycle of my hair treatment time, I was in very stressful situation and I was planning to separate myself from my husband because he was always skeptical of my every behavior and activity. At the periphery of this situation when I visited this beauty home for the treatment of my hair, the beautician who treated my hair saw my gloomy face and encouraged me to share my problem with her. She also shared many similar stories in different contexts and situations. Her each story reflected my situation and extensively soothed me. Since then, I have developed deep attachment with her".* On the ground of this story, it can be analyzed that, in the process of providing facial, threading, manicure, pedicure and other services, the workers/beauticians of this beauty home interact with each other, joke, laugh, talk about fortunes and misfortunes, talk about their boyfriends/husbands or other family members and so on. Besides, it is also observed that this beauty home provides tea and snacks when clients have to wait for long hours. Sometimes the beauty workers and clients also talk about very personal affairs, marriage negotiation, trending films and movies, etc. They are also sensitive about the beauty products, skin type, and suitable fashion/makeup of each of their clients. The workers here also focus on quality rather than quantity and trending fashion. At this point, Granovetter, (1985) asserts that morality, trust, and network are responsible for the production and promotion of economic life.

This type of social masking proves and reflects that market is embedded in non-market social relations. Social embeddedness of market brings together a variety of women and girls from different classes, castes, religions, professions, ethnicity, education, and sexuality, and equally contribute to enhance togetherness. When social relation is absent, market disorder and malfeasance occurs. (Granovetter, 1985).

Nexus of Historic Business and Socio-Cultural Continuity
Case II: *'Ason' Market*

Six streets converge into Asan, creating a constant buzz in the area. The bazaar in Asan draws visitors from all around Kathmandu because of the wide range of goods available here. The goods includes everything from food, spices, and textiles to electronics and bullion. Asan is considered to be one of two historic India-Tibet trade routes that pass via Kathmandu. Asan has a long and illustrious history of business and socio-cultural patron-client relationship. Evidence proves that the ancient market of Ason has been in existence since the 6th century. An archeologically important stone tap found here, with the name of King Man Dev inscribed in it, proves its existence since his time. Although the market does not seem that large, one can find

here anything one needs. It sells things ranging from groceries to construction materials. Still today, people, even from the remote places, visit the market place for shopping as they believe, whatever be the things, they can buy there. People still visit the market from distance with confidence that they can buy anything they need (Oriental treks, 2020). *'Ason',* one of the oldest and popular markets in the Kathmandu city, can be taken as a good example of the market that is totally driven by our social structure and networks. For me as a researcher personally as well, it resembles the traditional department store that is well known as 'salt to gold market', where we can find everything. On the occasion of *'Maghesakranti'* (one of famous festivals of Nepal, celebrated on the first day of the month Magh) that fall in the middle of January (14th or 15th), so many people flock to a grocery shop located at a corner of *'Ason'* market. Most of the visitors to this grocery are familiar with the shopkeeper. The long buyer-seller relationship and network is reflected from the story narrated by 35-year-old Sarala Adhikari. *"I am from Budhanilkantha. I have chosen this shop because I have heard a lot about this place or market from many people and my family, too. My family members suggested me visiting this place believing that the goods available here are really good and qualitative and value the price that we pay. Thus, my trust has increased and my continuity to this place has developed through the networking"*

She further adds that "*almost all of my family members come here because of their trust to this place. As I know, from the time of my grandparents, my family has been continuously visiting 'Ason market'. We individually don't have any personal relation with the sellers, but we have the trust that the market is really good, and everybody (family, relatives, neighbours) claims it to be so. The distance of my residence and 'Ason' market is about 13 kilometers far. There are many marts and malls on the way. In spite of that, I frequently visit 'Ason' markte in order to buy the traditional, cultural and festive goods and stuff from here. Today also I am here especially to buy* **'Chaku', 'Tilauri'**, **'Sakhar', and 'Toriko Tel'** *for* **'Maghesakranti'**. *I trust on 'Ason market' not only because of my personal relationship but also because of the trust that I have built up for due to my continual visit and marketing practices in this place. It has always been the place of my first priority for shopping the cultural items, foods, beverages and ritual-related stuff. I rarely do shopping in other places for these stuff. My trust has also been strengthened by the suggestion of my family, friends, and relatives and my social relation that has always pushed me to go to this local and cultural market".* On the basis of this narrative, it can be said that social network and long-term relationship are embedded in masking with economic activities. *'Ason'* is not a super market that has been developed in a day. It has its own history. At the center of Newars community, it is famous and has gradually emerged as the business market. It is also said that Newars are famous for doing different traditional business activities.

60-year Krishna Man Taladhar, who is also known as Krishman *'Sahu'* (a merchant), says that *'traditionally, 'Ason' market is famous for special items like jaggery (chaku), pure mustard oil and other cultural stuff. From my 5th generation, we have been following this business continuously. People believe that many things which cannot be found in departmental stores can be found in 'Ason' market easily. Different goods that are required in particular festivals can easily found here because Newar community is more conscious about these things because of their cultural belief and practices. So, here is the easy availability of goods that are mostly required in festivals like 'Dashain', 'Tihar', 'Naag Panchami', 'Rakshyabandhan', etc".* This

narrative suggests that Newars are the main traders in this area. They are also popularly known to be loyal businessmen in the area. This trust on the specific community has also become a determinant factor of the market in *'Ason'*. Being a part of our social structure and culture, this market has earned the high trust of people from every community who live in and around Kathmandu valley, and from different parts of country to some extent and has been the centre of their shopping or trading.

III. Discussion

The majority of literature illuminates that pre-market societies ore embedded in social relation and moral values but become more independent with modernization. In this regard, according to Karl Polanyi (1944), pre-modern societies are generated and guided by this type of economies in which all economic activities are run through morality, social values, norms, trust, belief, obligation and socialization. There is no sense of individuality, no market-oriented transaction, zero sense of profit and loss, no competitiveness, no rationality, but purely social interaction, social relation, substantial economic behaviors and reciprocity based economic embeddedness. But when this type of society shifts to a modern form, the moral economy is collapsed; people's obligation is vanished; and negotiation, bargaining and mutual adjustment are almost cleared. Rather economic rationality and totally competitive and profit-oriented market and institution flourish. A great transformation appears there. A social man turns into an economic man. But surprisingly this study has uncovered the opposite findings.

Based on the case of *'Ason Market'*, this economic institution is very ancient in nature. There is no absence of social morality and obligation. There is strong masking of the non-economic and economic behaviors. Economic behaviors and decision making in *'Ason Market'* is not so much based on individual choices, but rather, it is embedded on social relationship of long time. As mentioned by Metcalfe & Ward (2002) "Cultural economies tend to be organized around dense networks of small–medium enterprises, producing high degrees of interdependence, with larger firms networked in at certain points" (p.122). Cultural values, moral concern, religion, kinship and social networks are most important to business continuity. This argument is based on purely substantive and normative view, it is related to Dennis Wrong's concept of over-socialized concept of man (Wrong, 1961).

Granovetter argued that even in pre-modern or pre-industrial societies, there were elements of economic market exchange. The peoples' behaviors were not totally based on reciprocity and redistribution. He argued that pre-modern people had minimum sense of profit and loss. The modern economic behavior, as mentioned by Karl Polanyi, matches with the concept of under-socialization. Traditional or classical economic theory acknowledges the under-socialization concept, and assumes that many individual actors have perfect knowledge and rational decision systems, ignoring possibilities of long-term relationship between a buyer and a seller.

According to pure economics, trust is reduced in social model of business. In the instance of mistrust or delinquency, buyers will move on to another seller. Competition renders political control unnecessarily. All behavior is controlled by market. This argument is not suited with the case of *'Ason market'* and *'Subhan's Beauty Home'*. Because many people and I still visit *'Ason*

Market' because of long term network, relationship, transparent price and quality goods, trust of quality and availability of a variety of goods in one place. Five generation of my family members have been visiting this market continuously. My family believes that no other shopping mall and shopping complex can take the place of *'Ason'* market in the case of quality goods and moral shopkeeper. And so is the case with *'Subhan's Beauty Home'*.

Just as "…factory worker is more sensitive to the attitude of their fellow workers than to purely economic incentive…" (Wrong 1961, Pp. 188-189), the workers in *'Subhan's Beauty Home'* who work for their subsistence in this institute are highly practical and sensitive to each other and to their clients. They are concerned about their clients' family affairs, and they exchange emotions with them (clients) as if they are family members. They share their personal problems, discuss about family issues, exchange their personal emotions, laugh, joke, and maintain customer's privacy as well. This beauty home is also sensitive in the context of using quality and branded beauty products without no side effects to their clients. This type of non-economic behaviors are embedded in economic activities of this institution. It has, at first, contributed significantly to reduce conflict and malfeasance and then to promote and develop business in the long run.

The term 'social embeddedness' is conceptualized by economic sociologist Mark Granovetter. Granovetter (1985) examines that, in market society, economic activities also present and operate there. Neoclassical views of economics disintegrate the economic activities of humans from culture, society, social network, long-term relationship, moral values, etc, and always focus on individualistic behaviors, atomized operation and free/atomized market. He adapted the notion of embeddedness to market cultures, proving that even there, pre-existing social links impact "rational" economic exchange. Individual economic agency was shown to be imbedded in networks of strong personal relationships in his research of Chinese business networks in Indonesia. The creation of personal relationships between dealers and customers is a part of the clientalization process in the business activities of both cases of this study. Certain fraud, crime, and conflict are simply impossible because social bond and long-term social masking cannot permit the opportunity to manipulate the account and activities.

According to Granovetter (1985), the occurrence of above stated social network inhibits malfeasance. Furthermore, his main argument towards the problem of social embeddedness is about the connectedness of economic action within sociological theory and his attempt at explaining the economic embeddedness has either been under-socialized or over-socialized. Ironically, he argues that both under and over socialization views suffer from the statement of individual actors, one based on economic choices and the other on social norms. He sees both extremists in the debate as "automizing" the individual as blindly obedient either to "perfect knowledge" decision making or social norms. His view is similar to Gidden's views on structuration in that one may gain better understanding by acknowledging that both extreme views are important and coincided one another and must be considered simultaneously. Granovetter also applies his logic to the issue of transactional trust and misconduct. Traditional economic notions of gentleman actors' over-socialized views of universal morality are off the

mark. Instead, he demonstrates that embeddedness theory recognizes that the ongoing network of social interactions between people deters wrongdoing.

According to Macaulay (1963), salesmen on the other hand are often familiar with purchasing agents. It is possible that the same two people have dealt with each other for five to twenty-five years. Each individual has something to offer the other. Since people have evidenced the five generational historical relation with '*Ason Market'*, they know and are familiar with each merchant with their respective available good and stuff. They have win-win relationship for a long history over there. People guide their choice based on past action and long-term relations through time space with people and continue to deal with those they trust. Therefore, he attempts to find a more appropriate middle ground between economic theory that under-socialize behavior and much of the existing sociological theory that over-socialize behaviors. Granovetter believes that these both extremists have embeddedness problem and it is more accurate to view the economic rationality as "embedded" within social relationship.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the facts, I may conclude that in processes of clients and patron relationship, the formation of personal ties between traders and clients is as important as, if not more important than, the economic transactions involved. Individuals involved in long-term continuing relationships, established social networks, confidence, and quality sensitiveness carry out the economic trades rather than strangers one. People's choices upon goods and services are based on the past legacy with people and they continue to deal with those they trust.

Granovetter's ideas of social embeddedness concerns that economic behavior of modern societies not only operate through the atomistic economic rationality or perfect competitiveness rather than social relationship, long-term interaction, ethics, morality and social values, and also important thing is social network, trust and latent or discouraged malfeasance through long term social relationship (Granovetter,1985). According to Granovetter, under and over socialized concept of economic behaviors could not be understood separately or distinctly as Polyanyi did great transformation in his writing (1944). But these both views have come coincidently and simultaneously. Friendship, long-lasting personal connection and dense network really influence business and market connection everywhere. Therefore, the cases of two market institutions '*Subhan's Beauty Home' and 'Ason'* market are perfectly associated with these arguments of market. Thus socially-constructed market is not out there but in here. Both cases simulate that market behaviors are not only independently functioned and maintained by economic and utilitarian transaction on time but also moral economic behaviors are embedded. In such situations, it does not matter whether the market is modern or traditional in origin and nature.

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Menstruation: A Silent Harassment among Women and Girls

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Abstract
This paper tries to address one of the cultural taboos related with menstruation existing and in practice in Nepalese society, creating an incident of social harassment for women and girls, in a silent mode, in the name of social norms. A methodology of unstructured one to one interview and a group discussion were employed to dig inside the issue which ends up with the remark of being in intimidation, annoyance, hassle, stigmatize, discriminate, and other ill-practices. This write-up might contribute to re-think on harmful menstruation practices in order to bring positive change in cultural practice and making menstruation talk more open in society.

Key Words: *Cultural Taboos, Social Harassment, Menstruation, Incident, Societal Norms*

I. Introduction

Menstruation is a natural phenomenon that happens in the female body when entering in the puberty stage. Medically, menstruation (also termed 'period' or 'bleeding') is the process in a woman of discharging (through the vagina) blood and other materials from the lining of the uterus at about monthly interval from puberty until menopause (Medicine Net newsletter, 2019). According to Collin dictionary, Harassment is a behavior which is intended to trouble or annoy someone. Similarly, Citizen Advice defines it as '*Harassment is unwanted behavior which you find offensive or which makes you feel intimidated or humiliated. It can happen on its own or alongside other forms of discrimination*'.

An Equality Act 2010 regards harassment as unlawful discrimination if it is because of or connected to one of these things: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Equality Act considered these things as protected characteristics and harassment from among one of these characteristics is called harassment related to a protected characteristic (Citizen advice, 2021).

Further it says it is harassment where the behavior is meant to or has the effect of either:
    a. violating your dignity.
    b. creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

It means it is harassment even if the person harassing you doesn't mean to offend or intimidate you, as far as the harassment has one of the above effects (ibid).

All the ways of harassment are seen to be rightly applied in the case of menstruating girls and women. And it also continues silently in the name of socio-cultural practice, manufacturing it as a naturalized phenomenon.

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Problem

We often talk about harassment that frequently occurs in work places, schools, public venues, and private spaces. We also see other forms of harassment practiced in the name of cultural and ritual rites, but we remain silent about it. This type of harassment has been going on unnoticed since time immemorial, and no doubt, if we do not act upon it promptly, it may continue even for many more years in the days to come ahead.

This paper talks about menstrual-related harassment that is still in prevalence in our society. The menstrual-related harassment has deteriorated the life of many women and girls and will continue to victimize them in the name of socio-cultural norms and practices, i.e. to maintain purity, for an uncertain span of time. If we expect zero tolerance against any sort of harassment, the instant action must, at first, be taken to end menstrual related harassment through change in cultural practices.

In menstrual-related harassment, each individual who practices societal menstrual related rules in the name of belief and to sustain culture is an offender. Menstrual related taboos are so deeply embedded in the society that they seem very natural and undoubtedly contribute to promote a kind of culture of being humiliated in the form of culture practice. Thus, to reflect this glass ceiling of silent harassment, this paper sets the following objectives:

   a. to reflect the behaviors related to menstrual practice that creates humiliating or unpleasant feelings.
   b. to ascertain that menstruation taboos are forms of harassment, particularly 'silent in nature'.
   c. to suggest ways to bring a change in menstrual practice in order to lessen intimidation.

Literature Review

There has been many studies and researches related to menstruation worldwide from different dimensions (positive and negative aspects of menstrual blood), but what matter most is considering menstrual blood as "*bad blood*" (PSI/Nepal, MIRA, Maverick, 2017), and literally stating that female body is *impure* during menstruation cycle. This prejudice has led to different forms of social ill behaviors like discrimination, restriction in feeding and mobility, oppression and even exclusion from daily social activities. The study carried out by PSI/Nepal, MIRA, Maverick (2017) found that about 89% of girls in Nepal experienced some forms of restriction or exclusion. Hawkey, Usser, Perz, Metusela (2017) stated that menstruation is an internal bodily process but the way how women experience and construct menstruation is highly influenced by the socio-cultural sphere in which they reside. This very study also reveals that menstruation in many non-western countries is strongly associated with dirt, taboos and restriction. Menstruating women are excluded from religious ceremonies just because they are taken as an agent of spreading pollution, dirt and impurity. These ideologies regard a menstruating body as an unclean source of pollution, leading women and girls to feel humiliated, and create a moment of being ashamed of their own bodies.

Studies on menstruation have shown that taboos related to menstruation are shaped by major religions like Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism which believe in certain kind of restriction and prohibition to menstruating women.

According to Hindu mythology, menstruation is a *dosha*, rightly referred as '*Rajaswala Dosha*' (Bhartiya, 2013). This kind of cliché strengthens the general public belief to take menstruating women as '*unclean*' beings. It also leads to various kinds of discriminations, intimidation, ill behaviors and practices towards them.

In the book "Apavitra Ragat", Poudel (2018) shares her own experience during menstruation and further mentions how Nepali women and girls are discriminated and treated inhumanly. Research conducted by her on menstrual practices came up with the findings that rural Nepalese women are unaware of undergarments and pads. So they bleed on their clothes. Likewise, in many households, women use the same rags for a long period of time. A study by Grogg (2018) in Mustang of Nepal found that women and girls cannot afford menstrual pads. So they are bound to reuse cloth pads, which require to be washed and dried in sunlight. But due to fear of being humiliated, they hang the cloth in dark and private places.

There still exists a tradition called *Chhaupadi* (isolation of women and girls during their menstruation) in Nepal, a cruel socialization where women and girls are evicted once a month for four days to the unhygienic outhouse. A study conducted by Poudel (2017) in western Nepal revealed that women are regarded impure during their menstruation; everything will be defiled from their touch; and they will invite various misfortunes such god's wrath, death of their livestock and destruction of their crops. The study further found that women and girls are made to accept this tradition with no room of objection. Women and girls are socialized to keep menstruation secret.

Beside Hinduism, other religion like the Quran (2:222) reads "*…..it is an impurity so keep away from women during it and do not approach them until they are cleansed.*" (Bhartiya, 2013)

Similarly, the Bible (Leviticus 15) states *"…..in her menstrual impurity; she is unclean…whoever touches…shall be unclean and shall wash his clothes and bathe in water and be unclean until evening.*" (Druet, 2017)

In Buddhism, there is a belief that ghost eats blood so menstruating women attract ghosts, and put the life of herself and others in threat. The statement made by the Buddha Dharma Education Association further reveals that while fermenting rice, menstruating women should not be nearby or the rice will be spoilt (Bhartiya, 2013). Similar statement can also be found in the study conducted by Joshi (2017). In 1878, the British Medical Journal posted that discharging women made a bacon rot.

 A study conducted by Repta (2004) in the context of western society found that women are socialized to be embarrassed, and ashamed and also to feel proud of their menstruation, while men are socialized to be distant, uninformed and unaware of menstruation. The case is

somewhat similar in Nepalese context. Here too, women and girls are socialized to maintain restriction and prohibition when they menstruate. Their menstrual blood is regarded to be 'dirty' and 'pollutant'.

Regarding menstruation, Gandhi (the national figure of India) also made a statement saying '*menstruation was a manifestation of the distorted soul of women because of their sexuality and when woman's soul became pure, then she would automatically stop menstruating*' (Bhartia, 2013). Girl's menarche (the first menstruation cycle) is celebrated in most of the culture as a symbol of puberty, but after that, she has to live rest of her 7 days a month with strict restriction, prohibition and entitles it as '*ritually unclean.*' (ibid)

There are many mythologies associated with menstruation and all these are, in fact, creating a moment of being harassed, which is usually practiced in the form of discrimination, restriction, prohibition, stigmatization, situation of humiliation, ashamed, uneasiness and many more to fit under the criteria of purity/pollution. These rosters of restrictions in the name of maintaining '*purity*' should be abolished to free women and girls from being harassed.

II. Methodology
The study in this paper is based on the informal talk with women and girls from Shilgadhi, Doti, a district in far-western region of Nepal, and from Kathmandu capital of Nepal. The conversation took place in informal session because the researcher had to win their trust so that they could openly express their feelings and opinions about ill-practices during menstruation. The interaction was typically based on sharing experiences regarding menstruation and its taboos. Tools used for interaction was unstructured one-by-one interview, mostly probing in nature in both sites and a group discussion in Shilgadhi.

The nature of data was qualitative and the source was primary. A secondary source was also used for literature review and to bridge the study issue with primary data. Experiences shared by respondents were noted down later in order to avoid any distraction and disruption of conversation. In this paper, all together 20 respondents, 10 from each study area, and a group discussion comprised of 6 respondents between the ages of 14 to 55 are summarized.

III. Results
Based on conversation, the researcher found that women and girls who follow traditional practices seem to have fear embedded in their mind: fear of being harmed if menstruation rules are not followed, fear of causing misfortune to their family members, particularly to male members, fear of breaking or changing socio-cultural rules, fear of committing sin, fear from God and fear to defy the tradition. The study also found that young generations do not want to follow strict rules associated with menstruation, but they fear to revolt or be vocal.

Women and girls from Kathmandu were found to be more liberate (*particularly the site being urban, open and mixed-society)* from restriction and prohibition as of staying in one confined room, in-taking of food, entertainment, stepping into kitchen, cooking food for everyone, etc, but still they have not been able to avoid some rules, particularly the religious ones as of not

going to temple, putting god's tika, bathing in four days of menstruation to purify themselves, participating in the deceased one's function (*sharade*) and not worshipping god even at home for minimum 7 days and maximum 12 days.

The condition is even worse among girls and women in Shilgadhi. Menstrual girls and women have to confine themselves in separate rooms for 7 days and follow the rules assigned for menstruation such as separate stairs or path to reach their room, separate utensils, plate, water jar, comb, bed, bed sheet, mattress, blanket, etc, — everything separate, treating them as an outcast, and if they disobey the rules, then no doubt they will be blamed for bringing misfortunes and a moment of humiliation in the family. One of the respondents aged 14 shared her experience stating "*I cried very badly when I menstruated for the first time. At first, I was having bad pain in my lower stomach and then I felt as if my freedom had been snatched out of me. Suddenly I became impure and an agent of spreading impurity. I was in a dilemma and trauma*".

Similarly, another respondent aged 20 clearly said: "*I know it's not impure or dirty blood and my touch does not spread impurity, but what can I do? We girls have to tolerate every kind of discomfort, hassle, embarrassment, discrimination and stigmatization just because we bleed*".

There is also a restriction in in-taking nutritious food like ghee, milk, meat, etc, and separate utensils and plates have to be used just to maintain '*purity*'. A 20-year old girl commented: "*I don't have to cook by myself when I menstruate, but I have a separate room to stay and a separate plate to eat my food. They ask me to hold my plate and they pour food in my plate with caution so that their utensils would not touch my plate. Every time I feel so discriminated and hassled but I am helpless*".

All these statements reveal the truth of violation of dignity, a situation of humiliation among women and girls.

For 4 to 7 days of menstruation, every woman and girl has to take bath early in the morning. When it is still dark, they are not allowed to bathe in the regular bathroom and they have to use open space like backyard. They have to change and wash their clothes everyday for 4 to 7 days after taking bath. On the 7th day, they have to wash everything used by them like bed sheet, blankets, curtain, etc. They have to clean the room with mixture of cow dung and *rato mato (red soil)* and sprinkle pure water everywhere — over them and in the room. This practice is considered as a process of getting "*purity*" again. In some cases, it is even worse; women/girls have to drink cow's pee to purify their body. Regarding this ritual, one of the female participants expressed: "*I really do feel bad from inside whenever I have to drink cow's pee. I don't know why we girls are treated in such a way just because we menstruate. How can cow's pee purify us? Menstruation is a natural process and this kind of bad ritual is in practice. People nearby also pass the comments such as 'did you have cow's pee or you cheat?'. I don't like the time I menstruate but I don't have a choice. Menstruation is not my choice and I don't have any option besides following it.*"

Similarly, another respondent mentioned: "*I fear when I bath in the backyard early in the morning. When it is still dark, it is even worse during winter season. It is open space and I fear a snake will bite me or someone will rape me or you know…….. I don't know why but I really fear and I am annoyed.*"

These above quotes are related to the harassment under protected characteristics: religion, belief and sex under equality act.

Toileting is also very challenging for them. They are not allowed to use a regular toilet. They have to use a separate toilet without water supply. And such a toilet is generally constructed far from the place they stay. It is too risky and life threatening, especially at night time. This place is frequently haunted by wild animals at night. Regarding the same issue and the use of toilet during day time, one of the respondents said: "*I feel annoyed and uncomfortable while going to that toilet in day light because everyone will know that I am menstruating and I don't want everyone to know about it. I think people will take me in a different way. I feel they are judging us. So, I usually avoid drinking water, and I use toilet only if I fail to hold myself any more. Otherwise, I will wait until the evening and the night.*"

Annoyance and discomfort are the outcomes of the unfriendly environment created by the menstrual taboo. Obviously toileting is a physical act of a human being, but the trend of maintaining a separate toilet during menstruation creates a hostile situation. And this sort of social practice naturally undermines the biological process of menstruation, creating the moment of harassment of females.

On one of the queries regarding the belief that something bad might happen either to them or to their family members if menstrual rules are not followed, a 35-year-old respondent from Shilgadhi said: "*Yes, I myself have undergone this bitter experience. Once I mistakenly happened to touch my husband's belonging and his health started deteriorating. This is because he is the one who offered food to our deceased ancestor (another traditional practice) and my touch made thing impure. So, I believe in menstrual rules and I persuade my daughters to follow the same as I did.*"

Similarly, another respondent of age 49 from Kathmandu replied: "*I strictly follow all the rules and I believe it because I have seen my husband had a health problem when I was careless with the rules. He starts shaking if purity is not maintained.*"

These above statements show that for some women menstrual beliefs do not seem offensive themselves and highlights that maintaining menstrual belief is concerned to the purity and health of male members of the family. This belief has been silently leading to a form of unlawful gender discrimination.

Respondent of age 30 commented: "*I am a teacher by profession and I don't believe in these all practices but my in-laws believe. So, I have to follow menstrual rules but I really feel annoyed. I just wanted to check, so one time what I did was, I didn't tell my in-laws that I was*

menstruating. I cooked food, served them and did everything as usual. They didn't comment of having a headache or any health related issues that time which otherwise they would have blamed as I did not follow the menstruation rules. They blamed me earlier of having headache, nausea and bad health when I disobeyed the rules. That time, when I didn't tell them, made me realize that previously they might have been pretending to have bad health or with some reason they got it but of course not because of my touch. Sometimes I wonder when all these superstitions will come to an end."

Likewise, the respondent of age 17 from Kathmandu said: "*I had been to temple knowingly when I was menstruating but alone without letting my family members know about it. Nothing bad happened neither to me nor to my family. I just wanted to check how my menstruation could turn out bad to someone when I did not follow the traditional practice.*"

Another respondent of age 35 from Kathmandu said: "*I myself don't believe in all the rules but my in-laws believe them, so I have to follow. I don't regard menstruation makes us impure or any bad thing might happen from our touch, I have given much freedom to my daughters as I want to bring change in these ill-practices associated with menstruation but the big obstacle is that these cultural taboos are so deeply embedded within us that it's difficult to abandon easily. Our fear plays a huge factor in coming forward against these ill-practices.*"

These opinions with the belief something bad might happen from the touch of menstruating girls and women have led to stigmatize repeatedly female body as defiling agent. Despite the fact, belief results nothing such misfortune, just leaving a feeling of degradation.

Regarding the probe on bringing change in menstrual practices, the respondent of age 30 shared: "*It's not that we cannot protest, but it takes time and it's challenging because it's rooted in our religious ritual. Disregarding religious rituals is considered to be sinful, and there is a fear of being outcast by the society. Hence, knowingly or unknowingly we have to tolerate everything.*"

Similarly, a respondent aged 15 from Kathmandu said: "*Once when I asked my mother why I was not allowed to enter the temple during my menstrual cycle, she replied me not to ask this kind of question. She just said that it has been practiced for ages and we have to follow it.*"

Likewise, another 38-year-old respondent from Kathmandu said: "*These rules are all human made. When I was unmarried, my mother made me follow these rules of maintaining purity through restriction on certain activities. Luckily, I got married in an open-minded family, where, during menstruation, I am allowed to cook food and serve my family members. My husband also serves food to his decease ancestors during my menstruating time. Once I was in my third day of menstruation and someone from our relatives demised. There was no one else in the house. So, I had to go to their house. My relatives told me to take a bath. Then only I could attend the funeral function. Similarly, we have a tradition of serving food to deceased one on 7th day of demise. I was on my 6th day of menstruation. Some people said that a mother of a son can cook food to serve deceased one even on 6th day of her menstruation after taking a bath. Even a priest*

told me that menstruating daughter can cook food and serve to mourn family members if there is no one beside her, on condition if she takes bath daily."

All these responses reflect that these menstrual beliefs are being transferred subliminally from generation to generation, not only among women and girls but to other members of the society as well, provoking its silence, despite humans being made to favor with time and space, and manufacturing it as naturalized.

IV. Discussion

The menstruating women and girls are not impure; impurity lies in how one perceives and acts accordingly. The practice of taking bath during menstruation actually is to maintain self-hygiene and cleanliness. Besides, all these rituals, either religious, social or cultural, are all made depending upon time and place and their favorableness. Thus, these menstrual rituals and practices indeed are human-made. So, menstrual practices should be managed with dignity. And menstruation should be taken as a natural biological process in the body of girls and women instead of taking it as a medium to harass them with a tag of purity/pollution.

Most women and girls seem to be in dilemma regarding bringing a change in menstrual practice as it is embedded in religious belief. Almost all women and girls ignore the incidents that happen with them and use it as one of the strong coping strategies instead of speaking and acting against it. Belief on menstruation practices is deeply inculcated in the mind of women and girls from an early age. The intimidation that something bad might happen to them or their family members forbid them abandoning and acting against these practices. It is because menstrual belief is chained with cultural norms and values, and, hence, each woman and girl naturally internalizes it as a part of their life. It is also because menstrual rules are linked with a religion and one fears to go against it thinking such an act to be a sin.

There is a constitutional provision of punishment of three months' jail or fine of three thousand rupees or both for those who practice '*chhaupadi*'. But the government of Nepal does not seem accountable to the laws. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 ensures following rights to Nepalese citizens, which are directly linked with menstrual discrimination and menstrual health.

Article 16: Right to live with Dignity:
- Every person shall have the right to live with dignity.

Article 18: Right to Equality:
- No discrimination shall be made in the application of laws on the ground of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, physical, condition, condition of health, marital status, pregnancy, economic condition, language or region, ideology or on similar other grounds.

Article 24: Right against Untouchability and Discrimination:
- No person shall be subjected to any form of untouchability or discrimination in any private or public places on grounds of his or her origin, caste, tribe, community, profession, occupation or physical condition.

Article 35: Right Relating to Health:
- Every citizen shall have the right of access to clean drinking water and sanitation.

Article 38: Rights of Women:
No woman shall be subjected to physical, mental, sexual, psychological or other form of violence or exploitation on grounds of religion, social, cultural tradition, practice or any other grounds. Such act shall be punishable by law, and the victim shall have the right to obtain compensation in accordance with law. (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2020)

It has also violated international rights like the Convention on the Rights of the Children (CRC), the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that mentions reproductive and sexual rights. Additionally, it also violates several human rights like the right to non-discrimination, privacy and the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment, from abuse and violence (WSSCC, WaterAid, Domestos, 2013).

Despite all these ensured rights, findings depict that women and girls have experienced humiliation, discomfort, annoyance, stigmatization, discrimination, and hassle. This can be addressed as unlawful harassment because it happens not one time but repeatedly each month encompassed by silence and sheathed by myths, reproducing a moment of being harassed by passing ill-practices from ages, and manufacturing it as a natural phenomenon.

V. Conclusion

Menstruation is obviously not a choice for females, but it is a natural process. All menstrual-related practices are enmeshed in the foundation of belief of purity and pollution. This belief and socially constructed code of conducts associated with menstruation put the lives of women and girls in vain. They feel inferior; they establish unhealthy relationship with their bodies; and they internalize themselves of being impure, consequently resulting in limiting boundaries in their life and a state of humiliation.

There is an utmost need to break this silence despite the biggest hurdles and challenges, and to emancipate all women and girls from social and cultural bondage in order to live their life with dignity, confidence and pride, but not in intimidation or annoyance or harassment. It should be practiced freely and naturally, not with the objective of continuing harmful cultural practices.

The study encompasses only the female version of menstrual practices and their experiences. The inclusion of fewer numbers of participants is due to the sensitivity of the issue, the

participants' hesitation to speak up and severity of the existing cultural practices. However, further study can be conducted in the future incorporating male participants towards their perception regarding menstrual practices in order to find out the loophole behind the continuation of all the harmful practices. Also a compare and contrast study can be carried out to analyze the similarities and differences in such practices/beliefs by incorporating respondents from two or more places. The government should sensitively act to eradicate these culture related ill-practices and other discriminating acts against women such as '*sati pratha*', '*deukipratha*', '*kamaiya pratha*' and so on.

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साँढे धपाउने भक्तपुर किसान आन्दोलन एक अध्ययन

विकल प्रजापति[१]

वस्तुसार

नेपालको किसान आन्दोलनको इतिहासमा भक्तपुरको किसान आन्दोलन अविस्मरणीय छ । बाली काट्ने आन्दोलन, भर्पाई आन्दोलन, मोही लगतमा जोताहा किसानको नाम लेखाउने अभियान, साँढे धपाउने आन्दोलन, भ्रष्टाचारविरोधी आन्दोलन, छोरीलाई पनि मोहियानी हक दिलाउने आन्दोलन, धर्मपुत्रलाई मोहियानी हक दिलाउने आन्दोलन भक्तपुरमा चलेका प्रमुख किसान आन्दोलनहरू हुन् । त्यसमध्ये किसानको बाली खाने र नष्ट गर्ने छाडा साँढे धपाउने आन्दोलनका विभिन्न पक्षहरूको विश्लेषण यस रचनामा गरिएको छ ।

देशका अधिकांश क्षेत्रजस्तै भक्तपुरका किसानहरूको आर्थिक र सामाजिक अवस्था अत्यन्तै कमजोर थियो । त्यसमाथि आर्थिक र सामाजिक रूपमा आश्रित किसानलाई साहु सामन्तहरूले गर्ने शोषणका रूपहरू अनेक थिए । जीविकोपार्जनको लागि कृषिबाहेक अर्को विकल्प थिएन । अनेक दुःख गरेर लगाएको बाली गोडमेल गरेर फसल भित्र्याउन ठिक्क हुने बेला कहिले असिना पानीले त कहिले शिवजीको बहान भनी पुजिएको साँढेले सोतर पार्थ्यो । छाडा साँढेको मनोवैज्ञानिक असरले किसानलाई कमजोर पारेको हुन्थ्यो । प्रत्येक वर्ष व्यक्तिगत रूपमा अपनाउने सुरक्षा सजगता निरन्तर बेकार हुने गर्थ्यो । यस्तो अवस्थामा बामपन्थी विचारबाट प्रभावित तत्कालीन क्रान्तिकारी किसान कार्यकर्ताहरू निरन्तर विमर्शमा जुट्न थाले । पाइला पाइला गर्दै सामाजिक अभियानको रूप लियो । किसानविरोधी वा जनविरोधीहरू त्यस्तो सङ्गठित अभियानलाई रोक्ने वा दिग्भ्रमित पार्न अनेक कोसिस गर्थे । बिस्तारै किसानहरू सचेत र सङ्गठित हुन थाले । समयले आफूलाई प्रहार गर्ने शक्तिविरुद्ध पनि सशक्त प्रतिवाद गर्ने धैर्यता वा साहश दिलायो । सङ्गठनको भूमिका र महत्व बुझेपछि स्वाभाविक रूपमा आन्दोलनको रूप लियो । साँढे धपाउने आन्दोलनको प्रभावकारिताले किसान आन्दोलनका अनेक चरणहरूलाई सम्भव बनायो । यस अध्ययनले भक्तपुर र समग्र नेपालको तत्कालीन कृषि व्यवस्था, कृषकको समस्या, आर्थिक, सामाजिक अवस्था र जनचेतनाको सामान्य आकलन हुनेछ । सामान्य आर्थिक र सामाजिक असन्तोषले पनि राजनीतिक रूप लिएको दृष्टान्त यो अध्ययनको सार हो ।

विशिष्टीकृत शब्द : *किसान, आन्दोलन, साँढे, किसानविरोधी, किसानसमस्या, साँपामा, वर्गसङ्घर्ष*

अ. विषय प्रवेश

अहिलेजस्तो रासायनिक मल नभएको, उन्नत बीउ र पानीको सुविधा नभई थोरै उब्जनी हुने समयमा छाडा गाई र साँढेले बाली नष्ट पारिनु किसानहरूलाई ठूलो समस्या भएको थियो । विशेष गरेर ठूलाठालूहरूले दूध, दही, घ्यू आदि खान घरघरमा गाई पालेका हुन्थे । उनीहरू गाई ब्याएपछि बाच्छी भए पाल्थे भने बाच्छो भए छाड्ने गर्थे । अर्कोतिर पर्वतेहरूको 'बिर्खेश्वर' अर्थात् बाच्छाबाच्छी दान गर्ने र छाड्ने चलन थियो । धर्मको नाममा छोडेका त्यस्ता बहर ठूलो भएपछि किसानको बाली खाई दुःख दिन्थे । किसानले रोप्नको लागि ठिक पारेको बीउ बेर्ना साँढेले खाइदिन्थे । कहिले पाकेको वा पाक्नै लागेको बाली बिगार्नाले किसानले बाली भित्र्याउनै पाउँदैनथे । साँढेको बथान जनताका ठूलो दुश्मनजस्तै थियो । छाडा साँढेको कारण किसानलाई ठूलो समस्या थियो । साँढेबाट बाली जोगाउन किसानहरू खेतमा रात दिन कुर्थे ।

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[१] विकल प्रजापति बागीश्वरी कलेजका उपप्राध्यापक हुनुहुन्छ । उहाँलाई *advocatebikal@gmail.com* मा सम्पर्क गर्न सकिन्छ ।

२०१९ सालमा भक्तपुर नगरपञ्चायतमा निर्वाचित जनपक्षीय पदाधिकारीहरूको पहलमा किसानको बाली खाने छाडा गाई, साँढे आदि नियन्त्रण गर्न चौपाया नियन्त्रण समिति गठन गरियो । पञ्चायतले शुरूमा साँढे नियन्त्रण गर्ने साँपामा (बाली कुरुवा बस्ने व्यक्ति) खडा गरेका थिए । पछि किसानहरू आफै मिलेर रोपनीको एक दुई पाठी धान उठाएर साँपामाको व्यवस्था गर्न थाले । बलिया र अजङ्गका साँढेलाई नियन्त्रण गर्न एक दुई व्यक्तिले सम्भव थिएन । बेलाबेला त्यस्ता साँढेले मान्छेलाई लखेट्थ्यो । साँपामा बस्दाबस्दै पनि साँढे बालीमा पस्थ्यो । हरियो फाँटमा पसेपछि धपाउन त मुस्किलै पर्थ्यो । यताबाट धपायो उता, उताबाट यता, फेरि उही समस्या ।

किसानको मागबमोजिम साँढे बटुलेर कृषिक्षेत्रभन्दा धेरै टाढा धपाउने योजना बन्यो । किसानहरू सङ्गठित भएको र साँढे धपाउने काम किसानविरोधी सामन्तहरूलाई मन परेको थिएन । साँढे धपाउन जाने किसानहरूलाई सामन्ती स्वभावका मानिसहरूले बाधा दिन खोजे । किसान र ती मान्छे दुई पक्षबीचको सङ्घर्षले वर्ग सङ्घर्षको रूप लियो । त्यही ऐतिहासिक घटनालाई साँढे धपाउने आन्दोलन भनिएको हो ।

आ. अध्ययन विधि : यो लेख मूलतः वर्णनात्मक तथा विश्लेषणात्मक विधिमा आधारित छ । द्वितीय स्रोतको रूपमा सीमित लेख, रचना र पुस्तक प्रमुख आधार हुन् भने प्राथमिक स्रोतको रूपमा किसान आन्दोलनमा प्रत्यक्ष सहभागीहरूको अनुभव अनुभूतिलाई यथोचित स्थान दिने प्रयास गरिएको छ ।

इ. अध्ययन विश्लेषण
साँढे र मानवीय आन्दोलन

गाईलाई गौमाता मान्ने समाजमा दूधको लागि गाई पाल्ने भए पनि नेवार समाजमा गोरु नजोत्ने भएकाले उपत्यकामा साँढे पाल्ने चलन विरलै थियो । गाई पाल्नेहरू बाच्छो जन्मेपछि विभिन्न बहानामा छाडा छाड्ने गर्थे । त्यही बाच्छाहरू यताउति लाग्ने क्रममा किसानको बीउ, बेर्ना र पाकेको बाली भेटाउँथे । ठूलो सङ्ख्यामा भएपछि किसानको फाँटभरिको बाली खान वा नष्ट गर्न समय नै लाग्दैनथ्यो । आफूलाई दुःख दिने साँढे धपाउने किसानहरू सामन्ती स्वभावका धनीहरूको तारो बन्ने गर्थे । यसरी किसान र सामन्तीहरूबीच सङ्घर्ष हुँदा सानो विषय चर्किएर वर्गीय मुद्दा बन्न पुगेको थियो ।

भक्तपुर किसान आन्दोलनका एक अगुवा मोहनबीर कुस्माका अनुसार दूध नदिने 'थाकेको गाई वा साँढे' गोरु जोत्नलाई काम लाग्ने भए पनि यतातिर गोरु जोत्ने चलन नभएकाले गाईपालकहरु त्यस्ता गाई गोरु त्यतिकै पाल्न सम्भव नभएपछि छाड्ने गर्थे; प्रायः राति राति आँखामा पट्टी बाँधेर साँढे छोडिन्थ्यो, ताकि साँढे पुनः घरमा फर्किन नसकियोस् । त्यसबेला साँढे किनबेच गर्न पनि नमिल्ने भएकाले महादेवका नाममा छोडिन्थ्यो । त्यसरी छाड्ने क्रममा साँढेका नाममा चरण क्षेत्रका लागि भनी केही जग्गा पनि छोड्दिन्थ्यो । कतिले जग्गा पनि छोड्दैनथे (बखुन्छें, २०७२) । ताथलीका किसान कार्यकर्ता केशरबहादुर खड्काका अनुसार त्यसबेला विशेष गरेर पर्वतेहरूका मान्छे मरेपछि ११ औं दिनमा 'बिर्खेश्वर' अर्थात् बाच्छाबाच्छी दान गर्ने चलन थियो । त्यसरी दान गरिएका बाच्छाबाच्छी फेरि घरमा राख्न हुँदैन भन्ने मान्यता थियो । त्यसरी दान गर्दा बाच्छाबाच्छीलाई डामेर छाडिन्थ्यो र डाम्दा पीडाले बाच्छाबाच्छीहरू कराउँथे । त्यसरी कराएको आवाज स्वर्गसम्म सुनिन्छ भनेर बाहुनले ढाँट्थे र सोझासिधाहरू होला नि भन्दै विश्वास गर्थे ।

अर्का अगुवा शङ्खबहादुर यामामीका अनुसार साँढेबाट बाली जोगाउन किसानहरू खेतमा रात दिन कुर्न बस्थे । कति ठाउँमा भोलि रोपाइँ गर्न पानी जम्मा गरेको हुन्थ्यो । खेतालाहरूलाई खबर गरिसकेको हुन्थ्यो । बीउ राखेको ठाउँमा राती साँढेले सबै बीउ सिध्याइदिन्थ्यो । दिउँसोको लागि खाजा बोकेर बिहानै खेत पुग्दा बीउ हुँदैनथ्यो । सबै तयारी बेकार हुन्थ्यो । कहिले पाकेको वा पाक्नै लागेको धान बिगार्नाले किसानहरू बाली भित्र्याउनै पाउँदैनथे । साँढे जनताका ठूलो दुश्मनजस्तै थियो । छाडा साँढेको कारण किसानलाई ठूलो समस्या थियो । किसान आफै बाली जोगाउन कुर्न जानुको विकल्प थिएन । 'एक त थोरै उब्जनी, त्यसमा पनि तिरो तिरान बढी । अझ छाडा चौपायाले

बाली बिगार्नाले किसानहरू मर्कामा परेका थिए' (बखुन्छें, उही) । त्यसकारण किसानलाई दुःख दिने साँढे कहिल्यै नफर्किने ठाउँसम्म धपाउने योजना बन्यो । साँढे धपाउन हिँडेका किसानमाथि भौतिक आक्रमण हुन थालेपछि किसानहरू आन्दोलित भएका थिए ।

साधारण किसान र किसानविरोधी चरित्र

एकातिर धर्म र परम्पराको नाममा साँढे छाडा छाडेका हुन्थे भने अर्कोतिर किसानको दुःखमा रमाउने किसान विरोधीहरू आफै पनि खेतबालीमा साँढे छोड्थे । प्रायः किसानको आफ्नै जग्गा हुन्नथ्यो, भए पनि पर्याप्त हुन्नथ्यो । धनी र मध्यम वर्गीहरूको जग्गा किसानले जोतेको हुन्थ्यो । किसानले जग्गा जोत्नको लागि तिनीहरूको घरको जन्मदेखि मर्दापर्दासम्मका सबै काम सित्तैंमा गरिदिनुपर्थ्यो । बिहानदेखि तमाखु भरिदिने, बढारकुढार गर्ने, लिपपोत गर्ने, पानी ल्याइदिने, बेलाबेलामा पराल, छ्वाली दिनुपर्थ्यो । बाली उस्तै चर्को तिर्नुपर्थ्यो । जिविकोपार्जन गर्न र आवश्यक पर्दा ऋण, सरसापट गर्नुपर्ने भएकाले अर्को विकल्प पनि थिएन । तिनीहरूसँग डराएर किसानले बजारमा बेच्न राखेको तरकारीको भाउ गर्न पनि सक्दैनथे । समग्रमा प्रायः जग्गावाला र धनी साहु महाजनहरू किसानविरोधी चरित्रका थिए । साहु महाजनहरूले साँढे धपाउने अभियानको विरोध मात्र गरेनन् साँढे धपाउन हिँडेका किसानहरूलाई पुलिस अगाडि राखेर कुटपिट्समेत गरेको कुस्माको अनुभव छ । ती घट्नाक्रमले सामन्ती भावना नै गरिब किसानलाई सताउने कुत्सित नियत हो भन्ने प्रतीत हुन्छ ।

बजारमा साहु महाजनहरू टिन ठटाएर साँढे जुधाउने गर्थे । तिनीहरू साँढेको पिठ्यूँमा हिर्काउँदै 'हार हार' भन्दै जुधाउँथे र त्यसैमा साँझ बिहानको मनोरञ्जन गर्थे । चारैतिर भिडले घेरेको हुन्थ्यो । काम छाडेर सर्वसाधारण जनता रमिता हेर्न बस्थे । यसरी साँढे जुधाउँदा पूरै बाटो र बजार ठप्प हुन्थ्यो । बेला बेला दुई पक्षबीच झगडा हुन्थ्यो । किसानहरूलाई रगताम्य हुने गरी कुटपिट पनि गरेको तत्कालीन किसान कार्यकर्ता नारायण गोसाईको स्मरण छ । 'भक्तपुरको किसान आन्दोलन' पुस्तकमा कृष्णभक्त चगुठिका अनुसार बब्बर शमसेरले ०४ सालमा नै 'नाति' ज्यापुहरूको अनुरोधमा चौपाया नियन्त्रण कानुन ल्याएका थिए । त्यो कानुन लागू गराउन भने निकै पछिसम्म पनि गाह्रो परिरहेको थियो । एकदिन रत्नबहादुर ख्याजू र रत्नवीर आचाजूको गाई ब्यासी बस्ने 'छ्याकः' ले समाते । साँझ झिसमिसेमा समातेकोले उनले तत्काल मजिष्ट्रेटकहाँ गाई बुझाउन लैजान भ्याएनन् । उता रत्नबहादुरले भने मेरो गाई चोरी भयो भनेर चोरको हुलिया समेत दिएका रहेछन् । उतिखेर तेजबहादुर प्रसाई मजिष्ट्रेट थिए । रत्नबहादुर उनका बैठके । बिहान गाई बुझाउन भनेर जाने बित्तिकै 'साँ खु साँ खु' भनेर रत्नबहादुरले होहल्ला गर्न थाले । 'हामी पनि पुगेका थियौं । त्यहाँ झगडा शुरू भयो । मजिष्ट्रेटले मिलापत्र गराउन भ्याए । बाली नोक्सानी भए बापत भनेर किसानलाई बीस पाथी धान दिनुपर्ने भयो- कानुनबमोजिमै । त्यो दिन साम्सुम् भयो । भोलिपल्ट बाली लिन जाँदा मेरो बेइज्जत भएको छ । त्यो बेइज्जतीको मूल्य खै भनेर रत्नबहादुरले किसानलाई खेदे । बाली दिने कुरै गरेनन्' (चगुठी, २०६५) ।

छाडा साँढे हरियाली सिधेपछि बजारतिर पस्थ्यो । भक्तपुरका टोलटोलमा साँढेको राज चल्थ्यो । मान्छे बस्न बनाएको पाटीमा साँढे बस्न थाल्यो । तचपाल, टौमढी र टोलटोलको चोकमा ठूलठूला साँढेले दुःख दिन्थ्यो; किसानले बेच्न राखेको साग सब्जी खाइदिन्थ्यो; मान्छेलाई बेलाबेलामा घाइते हुने गरी हुत्याइदिन्थ्यो । बजारमा घर भएका साहु महाजनहरूलाई दिन कटाउने मेसो बन्ने गरेको गोसाईको थम्याइले साधारण किसानको बाध्यतामा मध्यम वर्गी साहु महाजनहरूको किसानविरोधी चरित्र आभास हुन्थ्यो ।

बाली जोगाउन साँपामा

किसानको समस्यालाई ध्यानमा राखेर २०१९ सालमा भक्तपुर नगरपञ्चायतमा निर्वाचित जनपक्षीय पदाधिकारीहरूले किसानको बाली खाने छाडा गाई, साँढे आदि नियन्त्रण गर्न चौपाया नियन्त्रण समिति गठन गरे । साँढे नियन्त्रणका लागि भक्तपुर नगरपञ्चायतले शुरूमा साँपामा खडा गरेको थियो । साँपामा भनेको नगर पञ्चायतका नगर प्रहरीझैं थिए । किसान कार्यकर्ता गोसाईका अनुसार साँपामाले कालो झुप्पा भएको कालो टोपी

लगाएको हुन्थ्यो । पछि किसानहरू आफै मिलेर रोपनीको १-२ पाठी धान उठाएर साँपामाको व्यवस्था गर्न थाले । टोल टोलमा ४-५ जनासम्म साँपामा खडा भएका थिए (गोसाई, उही) । बलिया र अजङ्गका साँढेलाई नियन्त्रण गर्न १-२ व्यक्तिले सम्भव थिएन । त्यस्ता साँढेहरूले बेलाबेला मान्छेलाई लखेट्थे । आफ्नो खेतमा नर्कट वा बाँसको बार (व:) लगाए पनि साध्य थिएन । एक फाँटमा २-३ साँढे पुगेपछि बिहान भरिमा पुरै फाँट सखाप हुन्थ्यो । साँपामा बस्ने मान्छे पनि बलियो र आँटिलो हुनुपर्थ्यो । कहिले काहीं साँपामा बस्दाबस्दै पनि साँढे पस्थ्यो । हरियो फाँटमा पसेपछि धपाउन त मुस्किलै पर्थ्यो । साँपामाहरू पुलमा बाँसको बार र टांगाचा लगाई सुरक्षा दिन बस्थे । बलिया साँढेहरू त्यो बारसमेत नाघेर जान्थे ।

गोल्मढीका मुक्तिलाल खायमलीका अनुसार फाँट फाँटमा छाडा साँढेले बाली नष्ट गर्ने भएकाले किसानसँग चन्दा उठाएर साँपामा राखिन्थ्यो । साँपामाले फाँटफाँटमा निगरानी गर्थे । फाँटमा चरिरहेका साँढेलाई खोजी खोजी धपाइन्थ्यो । साँढे पनि उस्तै चलाख, धपाउने मान्छे फर्किन नपाउँदै अर्कोतिरबाट उहीं पुग्थ्यो । किसानसँग पराल उठाएर साँढेलाई खुवाइन्थ्यो । कतिपय पाटीमा साँढे थुन्न मिल्ने गरी भित्रपट्टि ठाउँ बनाएकाले त्यहीं पनि थुन्थ्यो ।

साँढे नियन्त्रण गर्न ठाउँ ठाउँमा २-३ नाले पाटीको पछाडिको भित्री भागमा कोठाजस्तो बनाई साँढे थुन्ने गरिन्थ्यो । जगातीस्थित हालको पाटी त्यतिबेला २ नाले थियो । टोलवासीसँग पराल उठाई साँढेलाई खुवाउनुका साथै किसानहरूले पाटीको भित्री भागमा (कोठामा) साँढे थुनेका थिए (मचामसी, २०७४) । चौपाया नियन्त्रण ऐनले वास्तवमा किसानको दुःख कम गरेको थिएन । कतिपल्ट किसानले त्यस्ता गाईवस्तु पक्रेर तत्कालीन किसान सङ्घमा बुभाउन ल्याउँथे । त्यही गाईवस्तुलाई ज्वाइँसरह हेरविचार गरिराख्नुपर्थ्यो । चौगुठीको अनुभव छ- 'देगमनाको फलेचामा हामीले कैयन रात त्यस्ता गाईवस्तुलाई ख्वाएर दिनरात पालो पहरा दिएर राखेका थियौं । अलिकति बाली नोक्सानीको मुआब्जासम्म पाइएला कि भनेर न हो । तर कहिले त्यो वस्तु कुनै किसानैको पर्थ्यो र हामीलाई त्यो मुद्दा न निल्नु न ओकल्नु हुन्थ्यो । कहिले वस्तुका मालिक कोही देखा पर्दैनथे र फेरि धेरै दिनको लेखापढीपछि गाईवस्तु लिलाम गरिनुपर्थ्यो । कहिले भने उल्टो गाईचोर बाखामाराको आरोप खेप्नुपर्थ्यो (चगुठी, उही) ।' यसरी छाडा चौपाया एक जटिल किसान समस्याको रूपमा देखापर्यो भने सो समस्या समाधानको लागि पीडित किसान स्वयं, समुदाय र जनप्रतिनिधिको पहलकदमी निरन्तर चलिरह्यो ।

कहाँ कति ?

भौतिकरूपमा साँढे धपाउने कार्य ठूलो कुरा नहोला । तर अन्यायी साँढे धपाउने कार्य आफैमा एक आन्दोलन थियो । यद्यपि साँढे धपाउन के कतिजना उपस्थित भए, गन्तव्यसम्म के कति पुगे भन्ने यकिन छैन । टोलटोलबाट किसान कार्यकर्ता र सर्वसाधारण किसान लागेको भए पनि गन्तव्यसम्म पुग्नेको सङ्ख्या न्यून थियो । योजनाअनुसार साँढे धपाउने दिन सबैतिरबाट जम्मा ६४ साँढे बटुलिए (किसान सङ्घर्ष, २०७३) । अगुवा कार्यकर्ता मोहनवीर कुस्माका अनुसार जिल्लाभरि छरिएका ६०-७० वटा साँढे बटुली नगरकोटपारि पुच्याइएको थियो । चगुठीको मतमा भण्डै सयौं साँढे थिए ।

साँझ पर्दै थियो । सयौं किसान जम्मा भएका थिए । केही व्यक्तिहरू मुलढोकाबाटै फर्केका थिए । जानेहरूको लागि खाजा, लालटिन आदि व्यवस्था गरिएको थियो । साँढे धपाउने काममा सहभागी किसानहरूलाई खुवाउन ३ भारी च्यूरा, २ भारी हरियो लसुन, २ भारी भुटेको भट्मास खर्पनमा लगिएको थियो । (किसी, २०७४) । गोल्मढीका रामकृष्ण कवाँले मुल्ढोकाबाट हरियो लसुनको खर्पन बोकेका थिए । गोल्मढीकै मुक्तिलाल खायमलीका अनुसार गोल्मढी राम झोपडीतिर चन्दा उठाएर खाजाको व्यवस्था गरिएको थियो (खायमली, २०७४)।

साँढे धपाउँदै कमलविनायकबाट खरिपाटीसम्म पुग्दा अँध्यारो-अँध्यारो भइसकेको थियो । तेलकोटमा च्यूरा, लसुन, भट्मास राखेर खाजा खुवाइएको थियो (सुवाल, २०७४) । साँढे धपाउने क्रममा व्यासीदेखि सहभागी इन्द्र बासुकला तेलकोटसम्म पुगेका थिए । त्यहाँ खाजा खाई उनी उतैबाट साँखुतिरको बाटो हुँदै फर्केका थिए । कवाँका

अनुसार भक्तपुरबाट धपाउँदै लगेको साँढे नगरकोटमा पुगेपछि कतिपय स्थानीयले खेतमा जोत्नको लागि भनी बलिया साँढे छानी छानी लगेका थिए । कतिपय तामाङले खानका लागि लिएका थिए । हातैमा च्यूरा, लसुन, भट्मास थापेर खाइरहेको अवस्थामा एक साँढे बाटैबाटो पछ्छाडितिर भागेपछि साँढेलाई फर्काउने बहानामा गोलमढीकै भाइचा ग्वाच्छासँगै रामभक्त किसी पनि घरतिर लागेका थिए । 'सँगै जाने चाहना भए पनि त्यस दिन श्रीमती परदोषको व्रत बसेकाले समयमा प्रसाद लिन नपाए श्रीमती भोकै रहने भएकाले चाँडै फर्केको थिएँ । साथै बाजेलाई थाहा नदिई आएको हुँदा बाजेको अडप पनि थियो' (किसी, उही) । 'खेतमा हाल्न मल बोक्दै गर्दा १२-१ बजेतिर साँढे धपाउनेहरू देखभेट भएका थिए । भेटेकामध्ये धेरैजसो कोने (नगरको तल्लो भेग) का बैद्य र खर्बुजाहरू, चोछेंका सुवालहरू, तःननीका सुवालहरू पनि थिए । खाजा बोक्नेहरू कोनेका र चोछेंका व्यक्तिहरू थिए । साँढे धपाउँदा ५०-६० जनाभन्दा बढी मान्छेहरू फाटैफाँट लखेट्दै गरेका थिए' (कर्माचार्य, २०७४) । वास्तवमा सामाजिक अभियान थालनी गर्नुअधि सबै कुराको तयारी आवश्यक हुन्छ । त्यसको व्यवस्थापन महत्वपूर्ण हुन्छ । यथार्थमा त्यस्तो सफल व्यवस्थापनले नेतृत्वको विकास हुनेमा दुविधा छैन ।

आन्दोलनको रूपरेखा

कुनै पनि आन्दोलन रहर नभई बाध्यात्मक परिस्थितिमा सुविचारित पाइला हुने गर्छ । छाडा चौपाया नै किसानको उन्नति प्रगतिको बाधक भन्न लागेपछि त्यसबाट सदाको लागि मुक्ति पाउन यथोचित तयारी गर्नु समयको माग पनि हो । तर सुरुआत कसले गर्ने ? नेतृत्व कसले गर्ने ? त्यसबाट उत्पन्न हुन सक्ने जस अपजस कसले लिने भन्ने कुरा महत्वपूर्ण हुन्छ । त्यसक्रममा अनेक छलफल र तयारीहरू भएको हुनुपर्छ । तत्कालीन कार्यकर्ता किसीले भनेअनुसार किसानको त्यो समस्या समाधान गर्न गोल्मढीस्थित पाटीमा भएको बैठकमा नारायणमान बिजुक्छेंले किसानको बाली खाने साँढे धपाउन सबैले सहयोग गर्न भनेका थिए । साँढे धपाउने आन्दोलनको तयारी र त्यसबाट तरङ्गित परिस्थितिले किसानहरू किसान सङ्गठनप्रति आकर्षित हुन थालेको खायमलीको मत छ ।

आन्दोलनको तिथि, मिति र समय कहीं पनि प्रकाशित भएको देखिएन । एक कार्यकर्ता दीर्घनारायण सुवालका अनुसार त्यो समय २०१९ सालको जेठ महिनातिर थियो । खाना खाएर बिहान ८ बजेतिर (किसी, उही) भक्तपुरमा छरिएका साँढेहरू बटुल्न थालेको रहेछ । किसानको बाली नष्ट गर्ने साँढे धपाउने भनेपछि सर्वसाधारण किसान उत्साहित हुनै नै भयो । सल्लाहअनुसार टोलटोलमा किसान कार्यकर्ताहरू जम्मा हुन थाले । व्यासी आसपासका ठाउँबाट १०-१५ साँढे जम्मा गरिएको थियो । चारैतिर घेरा हालेर एकै ठाउँमा जम्मा गर्न खोज्दा व्यासीमा पानी भरेको कांग: (कालीमाटी भिक्न खनेको गहिरो सुरुङ जस्तो खाल्डो- हिकांग:) मा एक साँढे खसेको रहेछ । सबै मिलेर बल्लतल्ल साँढे बाहिर निकालेर मुल्ढोका पुग्दा करिब १२ बजेको थियो । बाबुकाजी बासुकला, बिली बासुकला, कृष्णकुमार घोंजू, गोठे बासुकला, पुण्यराज बासुकला, भाइचा लघुलगायत व्यासीबाट ३०-४० जना सहभागी थिए (सुवाल, उही) । साँढे धपाउँदा कसैलाई नोक्सान नभए पनि कसै कसैलाई मन परेको थिएन । रामभक्त किसीका अनुसार त्यसक्रममा सुकुलढोकामा दाउरा (कलेचा सिं) बेच्ने तुइचा आँचाजूलगायतसँग झगडा भयो । गणेशमान ग्वंगले 'मातां' थरका एक किसानलाई हातै हाले पनि त्यसको बेवास्ता गरी धपाउँदै लगेका थिए । आफ्नो एरिया हनुमानचा, पाँचाखेल क्षेत्रमा रहेका साँढे जम्मा गर्न थालेको थियो । आफ्नो क्षेत्रमा करिब २० वटा साँढे फेला पारेकोमा धपाउने क्रममा कुनै बीच बाटोबाटै भागेका र खरिपाटीसम्म पुग्दा १४ मध्ये ७ ओटा यताउति भिरपाखामा खसेको थियो (किसी, उही) ।

एक-दुई होइन बथानका बथान, त्यसमाथि मान्छेभन्दा ठूला साँढे धपाउने कार्य सजिलो थिएन । अगुवा कार्यकर्ता भैरवबहादुर बाटीका अनुसार लिवालीवीमा एक अजङ्गको साँढे थियो । २०/२० जनाको समूह बनाएर हनुमानचा खोलामा झारेपछि दुईतिरबाट धपाउँदै खोलैखोला ब्रह्मायणी पुर्‍याइएको थियो । ब्रह्मायणीबाट कमलविनायकतिर लान खोज्दा खुला ठाउँ भएकाले नियन्त्रणमा राख्न सकिएन । धेरै प्रयास गर्दा पनि नसकेपछि त्यसै छाडिएको थियो । उता कमलविनायक हुँदै धेरै साँढेहरू नगरकोटतिर धपाइँदै थियो । कमलविनायक पुग्दा धेरै मान्छेहरू अगाडि गई सकेका थिए । खरिपाटी पुगीसके भनेकाले आफू चाहीं जान पाएन (बाटी, २०७४) । भावना

मात्र हुँदैमा त्यसै काम हुने होइन । समय र पारिवारिक कुराले पनि आन्दोलनमा प्रभाव पारेका त्यस्ता कयौं सन्दर्भहरू थिए ।

जहाँ-जहाँ साँढे रहने-बस्ने हो, त्यहाँ-त्यहाँबाट धपाउनुपर्ने हुँदा सोही टोलका किसानलाई धपाउने जिम्मा दिइएको बुझियो । सल्लाहअनुसार हरि मचामसी, किसमान मचामसी र अन्य ५-६ जनाले जगाती क्षेत्रबाट साँढे धपाएका थिए । एक दुई गर्दै छरिएर बसेका साँढे एकै ठाउँमा जम्मा गर्न सजिलो थिएन । एकै ठाउँमा पुगेपछि सजिलै कमलविनायकतिर धपाएका थिए (मचामसी, उही) । भाइचा भनिने विष्णुभक्त ग्वाछा पनि साँढे धपाउने क्रममा नगरकोटसम्म पुगेका थिए । गोल्मढी याताबाट साँढे धपाउन क्रममा साँढेले एक बच्चालाई कुल्चंदा च्याम्हासिंहमा झगडासमेत भएको तिनको स्मरण छ । आफ्नो खेत 'यगा'तिर भएकाले गोल्मढीका मुक्तिलाल खायमली बिहान उतैतिर लागेका थिए । त्यहाँबाट साँढे जम्मा गरेर धपाउँदै मुल्ढोकासम्म पुगेका खायमली पनि गन्तव्यसम्म पुग्न सकेन । त्यसदिन श्रीमती व्रत बसेको भएकाले समयमा घर पुग्न नसकिएला झैँ लागेर खायमली पनि त्यहीँबाट फर्केका थिए । व्रत बस्ने, धर्म-कर्म गर्ने र श्रीमान्लाई पहिलो प्रसाद बाँडेपछि मात्र आफूले खाने गरेमा श्रीमान्को आयु बढ्ने गहिरो विश्वास यी प्रसङ्गहरूबाट देखिन्छ ।

गोल्मढीकै रामकृष्ण कवाँका अनुसार टोलटोलबाट लगभग ३-४ सय किसानहरू सहभागी थिए । त्यतिबेला नगरकोट जाने बाटो साँघुरो थियो । किसानहरूको पटुकीको काँसचा बेरिएको (कछ्याड) हुन्थ्यो । कोही रमाइलोका लागि गएका त कोही जिम्मेवारी पूरा गर्न र कोही उज्यालो रहेसम्म वा अलि माथिसम्म सँगै जाउँला भन्ने हिसाबले गएका थिए । कोही कोहीले आफ्नो नैतिक जिम्मेवारीको रूपमा पनि सोच्थे । गोल्मढीकै रामभक्त किसी भने आफ्नो पनि बाली बिगार्ने साँढे धपाउन पाउने भएकाले बुबाको अनुमतिले सहभागी भएका थिए ।

हिँडेरै धपाउनेबाहेक विकल्प थिएन । उद्देश्यमूलक काममा हिँड्दाको समय कसले ख्याल गर्नु ? 'नगरकोट डाँडाको 'गडगडे' खोलामा पुग्दा तीन साढेतीन जति बजेको हुनुपर्छ । हामीले त्यहाँ चिउरा लसुन भटमास खायौं । नगरकोट डाँडो काटेर इन्द्रावती खोलाको तीरमा पुग्दा रात परिसकेको थियो । साँढेलाई खोलापारि जाने गरी धपायौं । आठओटा साँढे चाहिं खोला नतरीकन बीचैमा हेलिरहे । तीनओटा चाहिं मध्यरातसम्म हुल्दा पनि मरी गए पानीमा पसेनन् । अब रात बिताउन हामी नजिकैको दनुवार गाउँ पस्यौं । त्यो गाउँ फर्सिला पञ्चायतमा पर्दथ्यो । हामी बास बसेको घरधनी दनुवार द्वारे रहेछन् । भोलिपल्ट ब्यूँझिँदा त राती खोला तर्न नमानेका साँढेहरूले गाउँलेका गहुँबाली तहसनहस गरिदिएछन् भन्ने थाहा लाग्यो । गाउँलेहरू रिसाएर उधुम् । तिनले हामीलाई प्रधानपञ्चकहाँ लानुपर्यो भनेर लगे । बाटैमा कलिलो उमेरका वडा सदस्य भेटे । हामीले यता नगरपञ्चायतबाट लगेको पत्र देखाएपछि तिनले हामीलाई सघाउनु भनेर गाउँलेलाई सम्झाइ दिए । फेरि माझीहरूको डुङ्गामा बसेर साँढे धपाउन थाल्यौं । साँढे भने खोला तिरैतिर कुद्न थाले । हामी भीमटार पुग्यौं । त्यहाँ गाउँ नै उठेर आई साँढे लैजान हामीसित अनुमति माग्न थाल्यो । हामीलाई के चाहियो र हामीले हुन्छ भन्यौं तै पनि तीनओटा साँढे रह्यो नै । एउटा लड्गडो थियो । अर्को निकै बूढो थियो । तेस्रो साह्रै लोसे थियो । त्यतिकैमा कताबाट हो कुन्नि । एक हुल बाहुनहरू देखापरे । तिनीहरूले बिन्ती गरेर यी साँढे हामीलाई दिनुहोस् हामीलाई यिनको गोबरै भए पनि पुग्छ भनेर भन्न थाले । हामीले लौ त भन्यौं'(चगुठी, उही) । हामी नगरकोट पारि फटकशिला भन्ने ठाउँसम्म साँढे धपाउन गएका थियौं (कुस्मा, उही) । भार्वाचो बस्ने विश्व बहादुर न्याइच्याईको स्मरणमा आफू पनि साँढे धपाउने आन्दोलनमा गणेश बहादुर बाटी, ज्ञान बहादुर न्याइच्याई, गाविन्द दुवालसँगै नगरकोटसम्म पुगेका थिए ।

संयोग हो वा नियोग, सोही दिन दुई ठाउँमा साँढे धपाउने काम भएका थिए । मध्यपुरका अगुवा किसान कार्यकर्ता भाइप्रसाद धौबञ्ज्यारका अनुसार सोही दिन मध्यपुरमा छाडा साँढे छाड्ने व्यक्तिसँग क्षतिपूर्ति भराई लिएका थिए । उहाँका अनुसार भक्तपुर कटुञ्जेका मान्छेले पालेका गाई दिनभरि छाडा छाड्थे । त्यसले मनपरी किसानको बाली खाइदिन्थ्यो । गाईले परालको कुन्युको पराल सखाप पार्थ्यो । सल्लाहअनुसार गाईहरू धमाधम बटुल्दै यताउतिबाट ठिमी लायकुमा ३५-३६ ओटा गाई थुनिएका थिए । बेलुकातिर गाई खोज्दै कटुञ्जेबाट मान्छेहरू आइपुगे

। विवाद भयो यता किसानहरू पनि धेरै जम्मा भएका थिए । बालीबापत क्षतिपूर्ति तिराउने माग भयो । हामीले प्रतिगाई रु.२५/- को दरले क्षतिपूर्ति माग गरेकोमा अबदेखि गाई छाडा नछाड्ने शर्तमा प्रतिगाईको रु.२०/- का दरले क्षतिपूर्ति तिराइयो । ४ सय रूपैया जति जम्मा भएकोमा के गर्ने भन्ने कुरा भयो । कसलाई कसरी बाँड्ने भन्ने अप्ठ्यारो भएपछि व्यक्तिगत रूपमा कसैले नलिने भन्ने सहमति भयो । निकोसेरा भजनको लागि ठ्यासफ्रु (भजन पुस्तक) बनाउन दिने सल्लाहअनुसार पैसा दिइयो (धौबञ्जार, किसान सङ्घर्ष, २०७३ असोज) । यसरी अप्रत्यासित रूपमा भजन समूहको लागि भजन पुस्तकको जोहो हुनु उपलब्धि नै मान्नुपर्छ ।

वर्ग सङ्घर्ष

पीडित किसानको बाध्यात्मक कदम कसैका लागि नैतिक हाँकजस्तै भएको रहेछ । त्यसबाट कतिमा बदलाको भावना जागेको थियो । जिम्मा पाएका सात आठ जना नगरकोटको डाँडातिर लागे पनि बाँकी किसानहरू चाहिं बीचबीचबाटै फर्केका थिए । नगरभित्रका किसान फर्कदै गर्दा धर्मचा र गणेशमानचाहरूको तीनचारओटा मोटरबाट मानिसहरूले ती किसानहरूलाई टाउको फुट्ने गरी कुटपिट गरेछन् । (अपशब्द प्रयोग गरी) '...ज्याप्रु ! पशुपतिनाथको देशमा बसेर साँढे फाल्न लैजाने तिमीहरू !' भन्दै कुटपिट गर्दा कैयौं किसानहरू घाइते भएको चगुठीको स्मरण छ । यो कुरा अरू किसानहरूले थाहा पाएपछि घरघरबाट कोदालीको बीँड र नोल लिई गएको बताइन्छन् ।

किसानहरू सङ्गठित भएर साँढे धपाउने काममा लागेको सामन्तहरूलाई मन परेको थिएन । ब्यासीका कार्यकर्ता गोपालदास बासुकलाका अनुसार नगर पञ्चायत सदस्य निर्वाचित नारायणमान बिजुक्छेँले किसानको नेतृत्व गरी किसानको हितमा लागेकोमा आफ्नै बुबा गणेशमान बिजुक्छेँ (ग्वंग) लाई मन परेको थिएन । नारायणमान बिजुक्छेँलाई पनि आफ्नो बुबाको विचार र क्रियाकलाप मन परेको थिएन । सुकुलढोकातिरका साहु महाजनहरू एक ढिक्का थिए । गणेशमान ग्वंग सुकुलढोकामा बिर्ता सङ्घका अध्यक्ष थिए । खिछेँका मीलचा, सुकुलढोकाका नारांचा पहलमान, ग:हिटीका ख्याजु, सुकुलढोकाकै भजु (देव ड्रग्स अगाडिको घर) जस्ता कहलिएका मोहसुर व्यक्तिहरू एक ढिक्का थिए । बजारमा बेच्न राखेको साग सब्जीमा समेत तिनीहरूले भनेको भाउ हुन्थ्यो । अन्यथा लुटपाट, हातपातसम्म हुन्थ्यो (गोपालदास, २०७३) । किसानलाई ज्याप्रु भनी दबाउन चाहनेहरू भित्रभित्रै मुर्मुरिएका थिए (नायभारी, २०७३) । किसान एकतामा आफ्नो हार सम्झनेको कमी नभएको यसबाट देखिन्छ ।

साँढे धपाउन जाने किसानलाई पाठ सिकाउने योजना रहेछ उनीहरूको । त्यतिबेलाको नाम चलेको गाडी बाईरोड गाडी भनिने ११५ नं. को मिनिबस लिई मुलढोका हुँदै गएको नायभारीको थम्याइ छ । साँझ अँध्यारो हुन थालेको थियो । साँढे धपाउन गएकामध्ये कोही फर्किरहेका थिए । मुलढोकामै केही किसानलाई उनीहरूले लखेटी लखेटी पिट्न खोजेका थिए । त्यतिबेला सबै टोलका किसानमा एकताको भावना थियो । खबर पुग्ने बित्तिकै ब्यासी र आसपासका किसानहरू जम्मा भएकाले तिनीहरूले सोचेजस्तै गर्न पाएनन् । त्यसपछि गाडी लिएर नगरकोट्तिरै लागे । उनीहरूले बीच बीचमा उताबाट फर्किरहेका जो सुकैलाई भेट्ने बित्तिकै सोधपुछ नै नगरी कुट्न थाले । कोही खर्पन बोकेर खेतबाट फर्किरहेका थिए (नायभारी, उही) । अरू कसैसँग भेट होला र लफडामा परिएला भनेर किसानको खर्पन आफूले बोकेर घर फर्केको रामभक्त किसीको भोगाइ रहेछ । त्यस्तै भोगाइ कयौँका थिए ।

'खाजा खाएपछि हामी ६-७ जना केटाकेटीको समूह फर्केका थियौं । हाम्रो पछ्राडि ५/६ जनाको अर्को समूहले पछ्याएको थियो । हामीसँग कसैले सोधे भने 'खेतमा पानी हेरेर आएको भन्नू' भनी सिकाइएको थियो । यातु महादेवस्थाननिर (हाल डेरी भएको स्थानमा) पुग्दा सुकुलढोकाका साहुहरू बसेको दुई लरी (गाडी) भेट भयो । एक्कासि लरीबाट झरेर 'साँढे धपाउने ज्याप्रुहरू' भन्दै लामो लठीले हामीलाई कुटपिट गर्न थाले । हामीलाई कुट्दै गाडीमा ठेल्दै गर्दा पछ्राडिको युवा समूह आइपुगेकाले हामीलाई छाडी उनीहरूलाई लखेट्दै कुट्न थाले । त्यही मौकामा हामी गाडी छाडेर भाग्यौं' (सुवाल, उही) । गोल्मढीकै भाइचा ग्वाच्छा पनि त्यसदिन 'श्रीमतीको ब्रत भएकाले खाजा खाएर त्यहीबाट फर्केका थिए । ग्वाच्छालाई किसान विरोधी लटंवीर भन्ने आचाजुले ब्यारेकनिर भेटेका भए पनि एकै टोलका चिनेका व्यक्ति भएकाले होला 'ए ग्वाच्छा ए ग्वाच्छा' भन्दै माटोको डल्लाले हिकाए झैं गरी भगाएका थिए ।

सोझो सीधा मान्छेबाट पछि काम लिन सकिने आशामा आचाजूले त्यसदिन भाग्ने मौका दिएको हुनुपर्छ' (ग्वाछा, उही) । बेलुकीतिर साँढे धपाएर फर्कका ग्वाछा र आफ्नै काका कान्छा खायमलीलाई कोलपताहिले भन्ने ठाउँमा सुकुलढोकाका साहुजीहरूले कुटपिट गरेका थिए । कुटपिटको विरोधमा टोलटोलका किसानहरू उठेका थिए (खायमली, उही) । गोल्मढी बस्ने हरि मचामसी भने साँढे धपाउँदै जाँदा बीच बाटोबाटै फर्कका थिए ।

साँढे धपाएर फर्कंकामध्ये कान्छा भन्ने बिकुनारां मातां र किसंभक्त न्याइच्याईलाई खरिपाटी पानी ट्यांकीनिर भेटाएर कुटपिट गरिएको थियो । तिनीहरूलाई मोटो लौरो र ठूल्ठूलो माटोको डल्लाले हिर्काउँदा कान्छा मातांको हातै भाँचेको थियो । 'किसान विरोधीहरू १५ नं. (नायभारीले ११४ नं. बताएको) को गाडीमा गएका थिए । तिनीहरूलाई फेला पारेपछि अन्यलाई चाँगु जाने बाटोतिर फाँटैफाँट पठाइएको हुँदा बचेका थिए' (बाटी, उही) ।

चासुखेलका किसान जगन्नाथ त्वानाबासु त्यसदिन ४-५ जना साथीहरू साथ 'बागेश्वरी स्थित 'तपा' भन्ने खेतमा धान रोप्ने तयारीको लागि मल पुर्‍याउन गएका थिए । त्यतिबेला रासायनिक मलको चलन थिएन । घर छेउछाउमा खाली ठाउँमा 'घरको चुल्होचौका बढारकुडारबाट कुहिने बस्तु, सोत्तर जम्मा गरी कुहाउने सागालको मल नै किसानको प्रिय वस्तु थियो । घरदेखि खेतसम्म ३ खर्पन (भारी) मल पुर्‍याएर फर्कंदै गर्दा गणेशमान ग्वंगलगायतसँग भेट भयो । 'साँढे धपाउने यी नै होइन' भनी तर्साएका थिए । हामी त मल बोकेर फर्कका भनी उम्केर आएको एकैक्षणमा बाँसबारीनिर उताबाट फर्कका केही व्यक्तिहरू भेटिँदा तिनीहरूले लखेटी लखेटी पिटेका थिए' (त्वानाबासु, २०७४) ।

'बाटोमा गणेशमान ग्वंग, रत्नवीर आचाजु, नायच्चा तमो (राम तमोको भाइ) गाडी लिइ आएका थिए । आफ्नै टोलका केटाहरू भेटेपछि तिनीहरूले तिमीहरू पनि साँढे धपाएर आएको होला होइन ?' भनी सोधे । हामीले जवाफ दिन नपाउँदै तिमीहरूलाई समाइलाने भन्दै गाडीमा राखे । चिनजानका भएकाले आफूहरूलाई केही गरेनन् । अलि माथि लाठी बोकेका ब्यासीका मान्छेहरू भेटेपछि गाडी रोक्यो । 'साँढे धपाउने होइन ?' भन्दै तिनीहरूले कुटपिट गर्न थाले । हामी बिस्तारै गाडीबाट झरेर ताप कस्यौं । बाटोमा कालीमाटी बोकेर फर्कका इनाचोका कुस्माहरूसँग पनि भेट भएको थियो' (किसी, उही) ।

चासुखेलकै कृष्ण कर्माचार्यको भनाइ पनि उस्तै छ । 'गणेशमान ग्वंग, तुईचा आँचाजु, लटंवीर आँचाजु, डायडायचा भन्ने कर्माचार्यलगायत किसान विरोधी कहलिएका व्यक्तिहरू मिनीबस लिएर आउँदा पानी ट्यांकीनिर भेट भएको थियो' । 'साँढे धपाइस होइन ?' भन्दा, 'होइन बाजे मल बोकेर आएका' भनेपछि 'ल सरासर घर जाउ' भनि छाडेका थिए । घर पुग्दा उत्ता ठूलै झगडा भएको सुनियो । पहिलो आक्रमण खाजा खुवाई फर्कंकाहरू परेका थिए (कर्माचार्य, २०७४) ।

गहुँबारीमा लेखेटालखेट-भागाभाग-कुटाकुटा-गुहार गुहार र चिच्याहट चलेको थियो । त्यस्तोमा केही घाइते व्यक्ति घर फर्कने आँट नभएर रातभरि गहुँबारीमै लुकेको पनि सुनियो (नायभारी, उही) । त्यहाँबाट फर्किरहेका किसानहरूलाई कुटपिट गरेको खबर पुगेपछि राती नै जम्मा भएका किसानहरू माफ व्यासीमा नारायणमान बिजुक्छेंले जोसिलो भाषण गर्नुभएको थियो । उहाँले कार्यकर्ताहरूलाई नडराउन हौस्याउनुभएको थियो । देख्ने सुन्नेहरूका अनुसार बिजुक्छेंले किसानविरोधीसँग प्रतिकार गर्न एक नपुगे दुई जानू, दुई नपुगे चार जानू भन्नुभएको थियो । किसान विरोधी जो सुकै भए पनि तानेर ल्याउन र जनतासामु उभ्याउन भन्नुभएको थियो- उहाँले (नायभारी, उही) । कवाँका अनुसार नारायणमान बिजुक्छेंले सबभन्दा पहिले आफ्नै बुबालाई बदला लिन भनेको कुरा त्यतिबेला टोल टोलमा चर्चा चलेको थियो (कवाँ, उही) । यसरी आफ्नै बुबाले साँढे धपाउने किसानहरूलाई कुटेको खबर पाएपछि नारायणमान बिजुक्छेंले रातारात टोलटोलमा बैठक राख्न लगाउनुभयो । इनाचोका मंगलाल गोजाको घरमा भएको बैठकमा उहाँले किसानलाई कुट्ने जो कोही भए पनि बदला लिने भन्नुभएको थियो । उहाँले साँढे धपाउन ४ दिन लाग्न सक्ने भन्दै फर्कनेबेला बैण्डबाजा बजाएर लिन जाने घोषणा गर्नुभएको थियो (किसी, उही) ।

ई. निष्कर्ष र सुभाव :

करिब ६ दशकअगाडि किसानहरूको सङ्गठित अभिव्यक्तिको परिणामले किसान एकताको क्रमिक बिजारोपण सम्भव भयो । त्यस घट्नालगत्तै २०२१ सालमा सरकारले लागू गरेको भूमिसुधार पञ्चायती व्यवस्थाको देखावती वा आडम्बर मात्र भए पनि भक्तपुरका क्रान्तिकारी किसान एकताले त्यसलाई अधिकतम उपयोग र अधिकतम लाभ लिन उत्प्रेरित भयो ।

शोषणको सीमा थिएन । गरिबीको गहिराई नाप्ने आधार थिएन । शिक्षामा अन्धकार छाएको थियो । त्यतिबेलाको किसानहरूको अवस्था सम्फिँदा आँखा रसाउँछ (न्याइच्याई, २०७४) । यद्यपि क्रान्तिकारी विचार बोकेका तत्कालीन कम्युनिष्ट विचारबाट प्रभावित क्रान्तिकारी किसान कार्यकर्ताहरूको पहलमा तत्कालीन समाजमा शक्तिशाली वर्ग शोषक सामन्तहरूको विरुद्ध अभिव्यक्ति दिनु कम साहसिक थिएन । परिणामतः किसान एकता सम्भव भयो ।

साँढे लिलाम नहुने हुनाले त्यसलाई नगरकोटपारी फट्कशिला पुर्‍याइयो । किसानहरू सङ्गठित भएबाट विचलित सामन्तहरूले सरकारको आड पाएर त्यस जनपक्षीय कार्यको विरोध गरेको मात्र नभई साँढेलाई पुनः नगरतिरै धपाई दिने तथा किसान कार्यकर्तालाई रगताम्य हुने गरी कुटपिट गरे । यसका विरुद्ध किसान जनता कुटो, कोदालो लिएर उठे; प्रतिक्रियावादीहरूलाई बदला लिए । केही दिन भक्तपुर तनावग्रस्त भयो र मेजिष्ट्रेटले नगरमा कर्फ्यूसमेत लगाए । केही समयपछि तनाव सेलाएर गयो । त्यस आन्दोलनले एकातिर किसानको बाली संरक्षण हुन गयो भने अर्कोतिर किसानहरूमा सङ्गठनको आवश्यकता बोध गरायो (चालिसे, २०५१) ।

साँढे धपाउने आन्दोलनका कारण किसानका बालीनाली जोगिएको थियो । यो देखेर सामन्तहरू प्रशासन र पुलिसको आडमा किसानहरूलाई तर्साउने गर्दथे । तर किसानहरूले पनि सामन्तहरूसँग लड्न घरायसी हतियार बोकी निस्केका थिए । कुस्माले भनेभैँ किसानहरूको एकता र सङ्गठित शक्तिका अगाडि सामन्तहरूको केही लागेन । यद्यपि बेलाबेलामा शोषक सामन्तहरूले लखेटिएका साँढे फर्काउने असफल प्रयास गरेको भए तापनि आखिरीमा किसानहरूले सफलता प्राप्त गर्‍यो । यसले किसानहरूमा सङ्गठित हुनुपर्छ भन्ने भावनाको पनि विकास भयो ।

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.... ।२०७३। किसान सङ्घर्ष, वर्ष ४, अङ्क १ । भक्तपुर । नेपाल क्रान्तिकारी किसान सङ्घ, केन्द्रीय समिति

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लेखकसँगका अन्तर्वार्ता ∕कुराकानी :

मोहनवीर कुस्मासँग २०७३।८।७ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

भैरब बाटीसँग २०७४।४।१८ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

विश्व बहादुर न्याइच्याईसँग २०७४।४।१५ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

कृष्ण कर्माचार्यसँग २०७४।४।१६ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

मुक्तिलाल खायमलीसँग २०७४।७४ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

शंख बहादुर याकामीसँग २०७३।८।६ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

ईन्द्र बासुकलासँग २०७४।७१७ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

रत्नकाजी नायभारीसँग २०७३।९।९ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित२०७४।४।४

जगनाथ त्वानाबासुसँग २०७४।३।२७ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

रामभक्त किसीसँग २०७४।६।२९ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

रामकृष्ण कवाँसँग २०७४।७९ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

हरि मचामसीसँग २०७४।७९ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

नारायण गोसाईसँग २०७३।९।५ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

गोपालदास बासुकलासँग २०७३।९।६ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

दीर्घनारायण सुवालसँग २०७४।६।१० मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

भाइचा ग्वाछासँग २०७४।७५ मा गरिएको कुराकानीमा आधारित

गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको 'परालको आगो' कथाको आख्यानसंरचना

चन्द्रप्रसाद ढकाल[1]

सार

परालको आगो कथाका लेखक गुरुप्रसाद मैनाली (१९५७ - २०२८) हुन् । उनले यस कथामा नेपाली लोक आहानमा प्रचलित 'लोग्नेस्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो' भन्ने उखानलाई मुख्य विषयवस्तु बनाएका छन् । यस विषयवस्तुलाई पूर्णता दिनका लागि उनले चामे र गौथली पात्र भएको घटनालाई लिएर कथानकको निर्माण गरेका छन् । आख्यानसंरचनाका विविध पद्धतिहरूमध्ये यस अध्ययनमा विलियम ल्याबोभद्वारा प्रस्तुत आख्यानसंरचनाका घटकहरू सारकथन, अभिमुखीकरण, जटिल कार्य, परिणाम र निष्कर्ष, मूल्याङ्कन र समापन गरी छओटा घटकहरूका आधारमा **परालको आगो** कथाको विश्लेषण गरिएको छ । यो कथा विश्लेषणका लागि निगमनात्मक विधिको प्रयोग गरिएको छ । **परालको आगो** कथामा आख्यान संरचनाका घटकहरू एकअर्कालाई सहयोग र एकअर्काको सहारा बनेर अगाडि बढेका छन् । जटिलकार्य निर्माणका लागि अभिमुखीकरण, जटिल कार्यबाट परिणाम, कथाको सम्पूर्ण जिज्ञासाको समाधानका लागि समापन र सम्पूर्ण अवयवहरूको केन्द्रीयतामा सारकथनजस्ता संरचक घटकहरू आएका छन् । यी घटकहरूको अन्वितिपूर्ण प्रयोग भएकै कारण **परालको आगो** आख्यान संरचनाका दृष्टिले उत्कृष्ट कथा हो भन्ने निष्कर्ष प्रस्तुत अध्ययनबाट निकालिएको छ । **परालको आगो** कथाको आख्यानसंरचनाको विश्लेषण गरिएको प्रस्तुत अध्ययन आख्यानसंरचनाका आधारमा कथाहरूलाई बुझ्न चाहने पाठक तथा आख्यानसंरचनाका आधारमा विश्लेषण गर्न चाहने समालोचकहरूका लागि उपयोगी सामग्री रहेको छ ।

विशिष्टीकृत शब्द : सारकथन, अभिमुखीकरण, जटिल कार्य, परिणाम, मूल्याङ्कन, समापन, द्वन्द्व ।

अ. विषयपरिचय

गुरुप्रसाद मैनाली (१९५७-२०२८) आधुनिक नेपाली कथाका आरम्भकर्ता हुन् । उनको वि.सं. १९९२ को शारदा पत्रिकामा 'नासो' कथा प्रकाशित भएपछि नेपाली साहित्यमा औपचारिक रूपमा आधुनिक काल भित्रिएको हो । सङ्ख्यात्मक हिसाबले उनका कथाहरू थोरै छन् तर गुणात्मक हिसाबले महत्त्वपूर्ण रहेका छन् । उनका कथाले नेपाली समाजको यथार्थतालाई मात्र प्रस्तुत गरेका छैनन् कि नेपाली साहित्यलाई निश्चित उचाइ दिने कार्य पनि गरेका छन् । मैनालीका जम्मा ११ ओटा कथाहरू रहेका छन् । उनका यी ११ ओटा कथाहरूलाई सङ्कलन गरी वि.सं. २०२० मा प्रकाशित गरिएको पाइन्छ । मैनालीको *नासो* कथासङ्ग्रहभित्र रहेका कथाहरूमध्ये **परालको आगो** एक हो । यस अध्ययनमा **परालको आगो** कथालाई समाख्यानशास्त्रीय आख्यानसंरचनाका आधारमा विश्लेषण गरिएको छ ।

समाख्यानात्मक संरचनाको खोजी गर्ने विद्वान् विलियम ल्याबोभ हुन् । उनले समाख्यानात्मक सङ्कथनको संरचना र त्यसलाई विभाजन गर्ने आधारहरूका बारेमा विशेष रूपले व्याख्या गरेका छन् । प्रस्तुत अध्ययनमा ल्याबोभले प्रस्तुत गरेका सैद्धान्तिक आधारहरूमा रहेर नै गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको **परालको आगो** कथाको आख्यानसंरचनाको खोजी गरिएको छ ।

परालको आगो कथालाई साहित्यशास्त्रका विविध पद्धतिबाट व्याख्या विश्लेषण गरिएको पाइन्छ । उनका कथाहरू पाठक वर्गले पनि औधी रूचाएका छन् । यस्तो रूचिपूर्ण कथा निर्माण हुनुको कारण पनि खोजिनुपर्छ । त्यही कारणको खोजी गर्ने एउटा पद्धति आख्यान संरचना हो । त्यसैले पनि प्रस्तुत अध्ययनमा मैनालीको **परालको आगो** कथामा के कस्तो

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[1] चन्द्रप्रसाद ढकाल, त्रिवि, मानविकी तथा समाजशास्त्र सङ्काय उपप्राध्यापक हुनुहुन्छ । उहाँलाई *dhakalchandra33@gmail.com* मा सम्पर्क गर्न सकिन्छ ।

आख्यान संरचना रहेको छ ? भन्ने समस्याको निर्धारण गरिएको छ । यस समस्याको समाधानका लागि गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको **परालको आगो** कथामा प्रयुक्त आख्यान संरचना पहिचान गर्ने उद्देश्य राखिएको छ ।

आ. सैद्धान्तिक पर्याधार

संरचावादका प्रणेताका रूपमा सस्युरलाई लिइन्छ । उनले साहित्यिक कृतिलाई वस्तुपरक अध्ययन गरिनुपर्छ भन्ने मान्यता राख्दै संरचनावादी सिद्धान्तको प्रतिपादन गरेका हुन् । उनको यो सिद्धान्तलाई उनीपछिका विभिन्न विद्वान्हरूले अलग-अलग तरिकाले व्याख्या गरेका छन् । संरचनावादका अनेक रूपलाई आफूअनुकूल व्याख्या गरिएको भए पनि नेपाली सन्दर्भमा संरचनावादका समग्र प्रसङ्गहरूलाई एकीकृत गरी प्रस्तुत गर्ने प्रयास गरिएको पाइन्छ । यसै सन्दर्भमा वासुदेव त्रिपाठीले *पाश्चात्य समालोचनाको सैद्धान्तिक परम्परा भाग-२* (२०४९, तस्रो सं.) नामक पुस्तकमा संरचनावादको परिचय दिँदै संरचनावादी विधागत नवस्थापनाअनुरूप आख्यानात्मक संरचनाका परस्पर-निर्भर तीन मुख्य घटकका रूपमा क्रिया (घटना), कर्ता (पात्र-चरित्र) र परिणाम (थिम : समग्रार्थ)-लाई डा. सुरेशकुमारले र अरूले पनि प्रस्तुत गरेको पाइने बताएका छन् । यिनले आख्यानको संरचनाका सम्बन्धमा आफ्नो राय प्रस्तुत गरेका हुन् । त्यसै गरी संरचनावादी समालोचनाका क्षेत्रमा महत्त्वपूर्ण अनुसन्धान गर्ने खगेन्द्रप्रसाद लुइटेलले *कविताको संरचनात्मक विश्लेषण* (२०६२) शीर्षकको संरचना, संरचनावाद, संरचनावादी समालोचना पद्धति जस्ता नवीनतम सिद्धान्त र मान्यता प्रस्तुत गरेका छन् । उनले यस पुस्तकमा प्रगीतात्मक, आख्यानात्मक र नाटकीय गरी तीनै खाले संरचना भएका कविताको संरचनात्मक प्रारूप तयार पारी त्यसै तथा विभिन्न कोणबाट परिभाषित र वर्गीकृत गरी तिनको स्वरूप, संरचना, संरचनात्मक प्रकार, संरचनात्मक घटकसम्बन्धी सैद्धान्तिक अवधारणाको एकीकृत र प्रामाणिक प्रस्तुत गरेका छन् । उनले कथाको संरचना विश्लेषणका लागि विभाजन, सङ्गठन, वस्तु, सहभागी र सहभागिता, परिवेश, उद्देश्य, दृष्टिविन्दु, भाषाशैलीय विन्यासलाई आधार बनाएका छन् । यसरी नेपाली साहित्यिक कृतिको विश्लेषणका क्रममा पनि संरचनावादी पद्धतिमा समानता रहेको पाइँदैन ।

संरचनावादी समालोचनाका विविध रूपमध्ये समाख्यानशास्त्रीय संरचना एक हो । समाख्यानात्मक आख्यानसंरचनाको बारेमा पनि विभिन्न विद्वान्हरूले आआफ्नो राय प्रकट गरेका छन् । तीमध्ये विलियम ल्याबोभद्वारा प्रस्तुत आख्यानसंरचनाको सैद्धान्तिक मान्यताअनुरूप यस अध्ययनमा गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको 'परालको आगो' कथालाई विश्लेषण गरिएको छ । ल्याबोभले आफ्नो पुस्तक *ल्याङ्ग्वेज इन इनर सिटी* (ई. १९७२) मा आख्यानको संरचनामा सारकथन, अभिमुखीकरण, जटिल कार्य, परिणाम र निष्कर्ष, मूल्याङ्कन र समापन रहने कुरा व्यक्त गरेका छन् । ल्याबोभद्वारा प्रस्तुत आख्यानसंरचनाका यिनै आधारहरू प्रस्तुत अध्ययनको सैद्धान्तिक आधार रहेको छ । उनले प्रस्तुत गरेका संरचक घटकहरूमा निम्नानुसारका कुराहरू रहने उल्लेख गरेका छन् :

सारकथन : ल्याबोभका अनुसार सारकथन यस्तो पदावली हो जसले आख्यानले बताउन खोजेको मूल विषयलाई सारका रूपमा कथाभित्र प्रस्तुत गर्दछ । यसमा समाख्याताले एउटा-दुइटा वाक्यमा कथालाई सारांशीकृत गरेको हुन्छ, त्यही सारांशीकृत रूप नै सारकथन हो । यस्तो सारकथन प्रत्यक्ष, अप्रत्यक्ष वा प्रतीकात्मक किसिमको हुन सक्छ ।

अभिमुखीकरण : आख्यानको दोस्रो खण्डमा अभिमुखीकरण खण्ड रहेको हुन्छ । यस खण्डले आख्यानमा बीजारोपणको काम गरेको हुन्छ । आख्यानको मूल घटना वा विषयवस्तु आरम्भ हुनुपूर्व त्यसको पृष्ठभूमि निर्माणको काम गर्न समाख्याताले यस्तो अभिमुखीकरणमा समय, स्थान, व्यक्ति, क्रियाकलाप र अन्य पक्षहरू ल्याएको हुन्छ । यस खण्डमा समाख्याताले मूल विषय प्रस्तुत गर्नुपूर्व विविध परिवेशहरू क्रमैसँग व्याख्या गर्दै अगाडि बढ्दछ ।

जटिलतर कार्य वा घटना : अभिमुखीकरणभन्दा पछाडिको खण्ड तथा मूल कथाको खण्ड नै जटिलतर कार्य वा घटना हो । यस खण्डका घटनाहरू आउनका लागि यसभन्दा अगाडि आएका सारकथन तथा अभिमुखीकरणले पृष्ठभूमि निर्माणको काम गरिसकेका हुन्छन् । यस खण्डमा आख्यानको मूल समस्या प्रस्तुत भएको हुन्छ । यस खण्डमा विशेष गरी द्वन्द्व, विशेष परिवेश, मानसिक क्रिया, दुर्घटनाजस्ता अनेक किसिमका अवस्थाहरू आउँछन् ।

परिणाम र निष्कर्ष : जटिलतर कार्य वा घटनाले कथालाई एउटा निष्कर्षमा पुऱ्याउँछ । यसबाट कथाको मुख्य विषयवस्तु समाप्त हुन्छ । मुख्य विषयको समापन भए पनि कथामा यस्तो केही कुरा भन्न बाँकी रहेको हुन्छ त्यो नै परिणाम हो । अर्को शब्दमा भन्नु पर्दा कथाले चरमोत्कर्ष प्राप्त गरिसके पछि त्यसबाट केही निष्कर्ष वा परिणाम निस्कन्छ । यस्तो परिणाम र निष्कर्षले पनि कथाको पूर्वपर प्रसङ्गलाई जोड्दै आफ्नो निश्चित संरचनाको निर्माण गर्दछ । परिणामको प्रसङ्ग आएपछि कथामा समापन(कोडा) को अवस्था आउँछ । कथालाई निश्चित लक्ष्यमा पुऱ्याई समापनतर्फ धकेल्ने कार्य परिणामले गर्दछ ।

मूल्याङ्कन : आख्यानको संरचनाको विश्लेषण गर्ने क्रममा विभिन्न संरचक घटकहरूको चर्चा हुने गरेको पाइन्छ । यस्ता घटकहरूको चर्चा भए पनि संरचनाको विश्लेषण गर्दा समाख्याताले यी कुराहरू किन भनेको हो भन्ने बारेका चर्चा भएको पाइँदैन । यसै अभावको परिपूर्तिको लागि ल्याबोभले कृतिको संरचनाको अध्ययन गर्दा मूल्याङ्कन गर्नुपर्ने धारणा व्यक्त गरेका छन् । मूल्याङ्कनमा आख्यान प्रस्तुत गरेर वा आख्यानमा एउटा निश्चित विषय उठाएर लेखकले के पाउँछ त ? किन यही कथानक तथा चरित्र छानेको हो ? यसका लागि पाठक कतिको दक्ष छ ? भन्ने कुराको अध्ययन गरिन्छ । यस खण्डमा घटना, समाधान, अभिमुखीकरण र कोडाको मूल्याङ्कन गरिन्छ ।

समापन (कोडा) : आधुनिक आख्यानमा प्राय: कोडाको प्रयोग गरिन्छ । यस्तो समापन अधिकांश ठाउँमा अपूर्ण पक्षका तथा असमापक वाक्यहरूद्वारा गराइन्छ, जसले पाठकलाई स्थान दिन्छ । यसले जटिल कार्यहरूको क्रमबद्धतालाई भङ्ग गर्दै समाख्याता र पाठक दुवैलाई सुरुको स्थानमा पुऱ्याउँदै घटनाहरूको सम्बन्ध समाख्यातासँग नरहेको जानकारी गराउँछ र घटनालाई भित्र छोपेर राख्ने काम गर्छ ।

इ. सामग्री सङ्कलन तथा विश्लेषण विधि

प्रस्तुत अध्ययनका लागि पुस्तकालयीय पद्धतिद्वारा सामग्रीहरूको सङ्कलन गरिएको छ । यस अध्ययनमा प्राथमिक र द्वितीय गरी दुई स्रोतबाट सामग्रीहरूको सङ्कलन गरिएको छ । प्राथमिक सामग्रीका रूपमा गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको नासो कथासङ्ग्रहभित्रको **परालको आगो** कथा रहेको छ भने द्वितीय सामग्रीका रूपमा यस अध्ययनलाई सहयोग पुऱ्याउने आख्यानसंरचनाका सैद्धान्तिक आधार भएका पुस्तक, **परालको आगो** कथासम्बन्धि गरिएका अध्ययन, लेख रचना आदि रहेका छन् ।

प्रस्तुत अध्ययनमा विलियम ल्याबोभद्वारा प्रस्तुत आख्यानसंरचनाका सैद्धान्तिक मान्यताका आधारमा गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको **परालको आगो** कथाको विश्लेषण गरिएको छ । यसरी विश्लेषण गर्दा निगमनात्मक विधिको प्रयोग गरिएको छ । निगमनात्मक विधिको प्रयोग गरी यस अध्ययनमा 'कर्तव्य' कथामा रहेका तथ्यहरूको व्याख्या, वर्णन तथा विश्लेषण गरिएको छ ।

ई. आख्यानसंरचनाका दृष्टिमा 'परालको आगो' कथा

प्रस्तुत अध्ययनमा गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको **परालको आगो** कथालाई आख्यानसंरचनाका संरचक घटकहरूका आधारमा विश्लेषण गरिएको छ । यसरी विश्लेषण गर्दा आख्यानसंरचनाका छ ओटा संरचक घटकहरूलाई आधार बनाइएको छ ।

सारकथन

परालको आगो कथामा प्रत्यक्ष किसिमको सारकथन प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । यस कथामा कथाको अन्त्यतिर यस्तो सारकथनलाई प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । यस कथाको सारकथन लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो सरह हुन्छ भन्ने रहेको छ । 'लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो' भन्ने नेपाली लोक आहान पनि हो । यही लोक आहानलाई आधार बनाएर यो कथा तयार पारिएको छ । सारकथनले कथाको सम्पूर्ण विचारलाई समेटेर सारका रूपमा प्रस्तुत

गर्दछ । यस्तो विचार कतै प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा आउँछन् भने कतै प्रतीकात्मक रूपमा आउँछन् । जसरी आए पनि कथाको मूल कथ्य यसै सारकथनका केन्द्रीयतामा घुमेको हुन्छ ।

चामेलाई देखेर जुठेकी स्वास्नीले यति लामो जिभ्रो भिकेर हाँसेर भनी –"ओहो ! चखेवा चखेवीको जोडा जस्तै अधिअधि दुलही पछिपछि दुलाहा, कति राम्रो स्वाएको !"

गौथलीले मुसुक्क हाँसेर भनी –"भो नहाँस दिदी, फेरि कुन दिन कटाक्षे पर्ने हो !"
"उस्, चाटाचाट् गर्न पनि त बेर लाग्दो रहेनछ नि, लोग्ने स्वास्नीको भगडा परालको आगो !"

परालको आगो कथामा उल्लिखित कथन सारकथनका रूपमा आएको छ । यो सारकथन **परालको आगो** कथाकी पात्र जुठेकी स्वास्नीका माध्यमबाट प्रस्तुत भएको छ । जुठेकी स्वास्नीका माध्यमबाट भनिए पनि उल्लिखित कथन **परालको आगो** कथाको सार पनि हो । **परालको आगो** कथा ग्रामीण परिवेशमा निर्माण भएको छ । यसमा नेपाली समाजमा विद्यमान तत्कालीन मूल्य मान्यतालाई समावेश गरिएको छ र त्यही मूल्य मान्यताअनुसार लोग्ने स्वास्नीको भगडालाई परालको आगोका रूपमा व्याख्या विश्लेषण गरिएको छ ।

प्रस्तुत कथाले मूलतः नेपाली समाजमा प्रचलित उखान - 'लोग्ने स्वास्नीको भगडा परालको आगो' लाई सार्थक तुल्याउने कोसिस गरेको छ । यस कथाले प्रस्तुत गरेको लक्ष्यलाई यस कथाका सम्पूर्ण पक्षहरूले पुष्टि पनि गरेका छन् । त्यही पुष्टि नै यस कथाको सारका रूपमा आएको छ र त्यो सार- 'लोग्ने स्वास्नीको भगडा परालको आगो' भन्ने रहेको छ । यस कथामा एकातिर कथाको सारवस्तु विचार-वाक्य (Thesiss sentence) का रूपमा प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा व्यक्त भएको पाइन्छ भने अर्कातिर यो सारवस्तु प्रसङ्गविषयक (Topical) भएर आएको पाइन्छ (श्रेष्ठ, २०५७) । **परालको आगो** कथाले यस प्रकारको सारकथनलाई प्रत्यक्ष पात्रका माध्यमबाट प्रस्तुत गरेको छ भने त्यही सारकथनको अंशलाई शीर्षकका रूपमा पनि प्रस्तुत गरेको छ ।

अभिमुखीकरण

लोग्ने स्वास्नीको भगडालाई परालको आगोका रूपमा चित्रण गर्नु **परालको आगो** कथाको उद्देश्य हो । यस उद्देश्यलाई पुष्टि गर्न प्रस्तुत कथामा चामे र गौथली लोग्ने स्वास्नीलाई उपस्थित गराइएको छ र यी नै दुई पात्रको केन्द्रीयतामा कथानको निर्माण गरिएको छ । यस कथाको क्रमयोजनामा आदि, मध्य र अन्त्यको क्रम रहेको छ । यस कथाको आन्तरिक संरचनाअन्तर्गत अभिमुखीकरणका विभिन्न प्रसङ्गहरू आएका छन् ।

प्रस्तुत कथाको आरम्भमा यस कथाकी पात्र गौथलीको परिचय आएको छ । पात्रको परिचयबाट आरम्भ गरिएको यो कथाले यस पात्रका चारित्रिक प्रभावका कारण कथाले विभिन्न मोडहरू लिने कुराको सङ्केत पनि प्रस्तुत गर्दछ । यस कथाको प्रारम्भमा आएको गौथलीको परिचय लोग्ने स्वास्नीको भगडा गराउने कारकका रूपमा आएको छ ।

चामेकी स्वास्नी गौथली सारै मुखाले थी । राम्रा मुखले बोल्यो भने पनि बाझ्रा - बाझ्रा कुरा भिकेर निउँ खोज्थी । दुई - चार दिन बिराएर सधैँ लोग्ने स्वास्नीको भगडा हुन्थ्यो (पृ. ४५) ।

यस कथनले गौथलीको स्वभावलाई मात्र प्रस्तुत गरेको छैन ; यसले त चामे र गौथलीको भगडा हुनुमा गौथलीको स्वभावले पनि भूमिका खेलेको छ भनेर देखाउन खोजेको छ । चामे र गौथलीको भगडा हुनुमा चामेको दोष त छँदै छ तर गौथली पनि कमकी थिइन भनेर देखाउनलाई प्रारम्भमा नै यो कथन ल्याइएको हो । **परालको आगो** कथामा अभिमुखीकरणको खण्ड प्रारम्भदेखि चामेको मनमा एक्लोपनको महसुस भई गौथलीलाई लिन जाने विचार गरेको अवस्थासम्म फैलिएको छ । यो कथामा करिब महिना दिन जतिको समयलाई प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । यस

कथामा कुन स्थानमा घटना घटेको थियो भन्ने स्थानगत परिचय दिइएको छैन । यस कथामा प्रस्तुत विभिन्न सूचकहरूले यो कथा नेपालको कुनै एउटा पहाडी गाउँमा घटित भएको हो भन्ने देखाउँछन् (ढकाल, २०७५) । यस कथामा पात्रको परिचयदेखि समय, स्थान तथा घटनाहरू एक अर्कामा घुलमिल भएर आएका छन् । पात्रको परिचय, घटनाको परिचय सँगसँगै समय र स्थान तथा परिवेशको परिचय पनि एकै साथ आएका छन् ।

परालको आगो कथाको आरम्भदेखि तेस्रो विश्रामसम्मको भागलाई अभिमुखीकरण खण्ड मान्न सकिन्छ । यस कथाको चौथो विश्राममा चामेको मनस्थितिमा परिवर्तन आउन थाल्छ । यस अवस्थादेखि प्रस्तुत कथाको कथानक जटिल घटना वा कार्यमा प्रवेश गर्दछ । प्रारम्भिक खण्डमा चामेको घर, खेत, गोरु, भैँसी, गोठ, कोकलेको बारी आदि स्थानहरू अभिमुखीकरण निर्माणका निम्ति स्थानका रूपमा आएका छन् । त्यसै गरी खेती किसानी, बिहे, मारुनी पहिरन, चामे तथा गौथलीको पहिरन, जुठे र उसकी स्वास्नीको मिलाप आदि सांस्कृतिक पक्षहरू पनि परालको आगो कथाको अभिमुखीकरण निर्माणका निम्ति आएका हुन् । हलो जोतीआएको समय, साँझ, बिहानजस्ता समयबोधक प्रसङ्गहरूले पनि यस कथाको अभिमुखीकरणलाई सहयोग पुऱ्याएका छन् ।

प्रस्तुत कथाको अभिमुखीकरण निर्माणका लागि थुप्रै स-साना घटनाहरूमा चामेकी स्वास्नी मुखाले हुनु, घरको काम छोडेर बिहे हेर्न जानु, चामे थाकेर आउनु, गौथलीलाई पिट्नु, गौथली माइत जानु, चामेलाई घरधन्दा गर्न धौधौ पर्नु, भैँसीले दुध थोरै दिनु, चामेले भैँसी पिट्नु, भैँसी भागेर कोकलेको मकैबारीका पस्नु, कोकलेले चामेलाई पिट्नु, जुठे र उसकी स्वास्नीले चामेलाई सम्झाउनु, चामेको मन क्रमशः फेरिदै जानुजस्ता घटनाहरू आएका छन् ।

माथि उल्लिखित घटनाहरूले प्रस्तुत कथामा जटिल कार्य निर्माणका लागि पृष्ठभूमिको कार्य गरेका छन् । लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई परालको आगोका रूपमा देखाउन प्रारम्भमा झगडाको अवस्था देखाइएको हो । त्यही झगडा, त्यसको पृष्ठभूमि आदिलाई क्रमैसँग प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । गौथलीको मुखाले स्वभावलाई प्रारम्भमा देखाइएको छ । गौथलीलाई मुखाले नदेखाइएको भए चामे र गौथलीको झगडा देखाउन मिल्दैनथ्यो । चामे र गौथलीको झगडा नभएर गौथली माइत नगएकी भए यो कथालाई पनि लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगोजस्तो हुन्छ भनेर देखाउन मिल्दैनथ्यो । त्यसै गरी गौथलीले घर छोडेर माइत गएपछि चामेका दुखदायी दिन देखाइएको छ । चामेलाई गौथली चाहिएको छ भन्ने देखाउन यी दुखदायी दिनहरू देखाइएको हो । चामेलाई स्वास्नीको अभाव देखाउनका लागि भैँसीले दुध नदिएको, लात्तले हानेर गोबरमा लडाइदिएको, भैँसी भागेर कोकलेको मकै बारीमा पसेको, कोकलेले चामेका गाला चड्काएको जस्ता घटनाहरू प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । गौथली नभई चामे बस्न सक्दैन भन्ने देखाउन यी सम्पूर्ण घटनाहरू अभिमुखीकरणका रूपमा आएका हुन् ।

जटिल कार्य

परालको आगो कथाको जटिलतर कार्य चौथो विश्रामबाट आरम्भ हुन्छ । यस कथाको अभिमुखीकरणमा चामेलाई एक्लोपनको महसुस भएपछि उसले गौथलीलाई लिन जाने विचार गरेको छ । उसको यो विचार तथा गौथलीबिनाको एक्लोपनले कथालाई मूल घटनामा प्रवेश गराउँछ । चामेको यस अवस्थादेखि "खेती कमाइको बेला छ, ससुरा ! छोरी पठाइदिनुपऱ्यो ।" भनेको अवस्थासम्मका घटनाहरू यस कथाको जटिल घटनामा पर्छन् । यस कथाको मूल घटना पनि यही नै हो । यस खण्डमा प्रस्तुत घटना, द्वन्द्व, आरोह-अवरोह आदिले लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो सरह हुन्छ भनेर देखाउने कार्यमा महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका निर्वाह गरेका छन् ।

जुठेका लोग्ने स्वास्नीको त्यस्तो माया पिर्ती छ । दुःख सुखका कुरा गरेर सँगै हिँड्छन् । आफ्नी स्वास्नी चाहिं झगडा गरेर माइत हिँड्छे । बिहा भएको यतिका दिन भैसक्यो, कहिल्यै राम्रा मुखले बोलेको थाहा छैन । फेरि, एउटा भएको भैँसी पनि नजिक पर्न दिदैन । आफू त माइत गै गै, भैँसीलाई पनि एकहाते पारेर गै । यस भैँसीले गर्दा गालामा कोकलेको लबटो पऱ्यो । .... विचार गऱ्यो - मुखाले भए पनि सारै जाँगरिली थी । मन लाएर एक भारी घाँस ल्याई भने भैँसी टम्म अघाउँथ्यो । बिहान बेलुका एक गाँस पकाएर खान दिन्थी । ऊ गएदेखि तीन-चार दिन भात

खाएँ हुँला, नत्र भने खाली भुटेका मकैका भरमा छु । ऊ हुन्जेल भैँसीले ट्याम-ट्याममा दूध दिन्थ्यो । आफै दुहुन्थी । ऊ गएदेखि बिच्केको बिच्च्यै भो । सबैजना डाकेर ले भन्छन् । जुठे दाइकी स्वास्नी पनि त त्यसै भन्थिन् । आए आउली, नआए नआउली, एक पटक लिन जाने पर्‍यो ।

प्रस्तुत कथाको चौथो र पाँचौँ विश्राममा उल्लिखित कथनले चामेको मनस्थितिमा परिवर्तन आएको देखिन्छ । अघिसम्म गौँथलीको नाम सुन्न नचाहने चामेलाई यस्तो परिस्थितिले बाँधेर ल्यायो जसले ऊ गौँथलीलाई लिन जाने अवस्थामा पुग्यो । यसभन्दा अगाडि आएका सम्पूर्ण घटनाहरूले चामेलाई परिवर्तित गराएका छन् । अभिमुखीकरणका घटनाहरू समाख्यातालेई चामेका मनस्थितिमा परिवर्तन आएको देखाउनलाई प्रस्तुत गरेको हो । चामेको मनस्थितिमा परिवर्तन ल्याउनु मात्र समस्याको समाधान होइन तर यो अवस्थाले लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई परालको आगोमा रूपान्तरण गर्न महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका निर्वाह गरेको छ ।

यस कथामा चामेका मनका अन्तरद्वन्द्व प्रशस्त मात्रामा पाइन्छ । चामेले गौँथली माइत गएर गरेको गल्ती तथा गौँथलीको अनुपस्थितिमा उसले भोग्नु परेका सम्पूर्ण पीडाहरूलाई महसुस गर्छ । गौँथलीका अवगुणहरू थोरै र गुणहरू धेरै भएको महसुस गर्न थाल्छ । यी सबै अन्तरक्रिया चामेका नितान्त अन्तरमनका अनुभवहरू मात्र हुन् । यी नै आन्तरिक द्वन्द्वको परिणाम स्वरूप चामे एउटा निष्कर्षमा पुग्छ र गौँथलीलाई लिन जाने अठोट गर्छ । चामेको सोचाइमा पनि आरोह-अवरोह आउँछ । ऊ गौँथलीलाई लिन जाने विचार गरी कपडा लगाउँदा पनि गौँथलीले ढङ्ग नपुर्‍याएको प्रति गन्थन गर्छ । तथापि उसले गौँथलीलाई लिन जाने निर्णय गरिसकेको हुनाले निर्णयबाट विमुख भने हुँदैन । यस कथाको समाख्यातालेई पनि चामेलाई निर्णयबाट विमुख गराउन चाहेको छैन । यदि चामेलाई यो निर्णयबाट पछाडि फर्काइयो भने यस कथाको उद्देश्यमा पुग्न सकिँदैन । त्यसैले गौँथलीका सामान्य कमजोरीहरू मात्र स्मरण गरेर चामे ससुरालीतिर लाग्छ । 'परालको आगो' कथाका जोई पोइ सम्झौतावादी छन् । पहिले सानो कुरामा बाझ्छन् र केही दिनपछि फेरि मिल्छन् (जोशी, २०२५) ।

एकछिन चौतारामा थकाइ मारेर चामे बिस्तारै उकालो लाग्यो । चिलाउनेका बोटनेर पुगेर चामेका गोडा अलि गह्रौँ भए । सासू ससुराले केही भन्छन् कि भनेर कुस्तुर थियो । बिस्तार-बिस्तार तगारोनेर पुग्यो । सासू जुठ्यानमा बसेर ताप्के मस्काउन लागेकी रहिछ । ससुरो पिढीमा बसेर तमाखु खान लागेको थियो । सासूलाई देखेर चामेले हात जोरेर ढोगिदियो ।

प्रस्तुत कथनमा चामेका मनमा भएका शङ्का, आशङ्का तथा अब के हुने हो भन्ने स्थिति देखाइएको छ । यस ठाउँमा कथामा अन्योलता आएको छ । चामे अत्यन्त चिन्तामा छ, सासू ससुराले केही भन्ने हुन् कि भन्ने उसलाई लाग्छ । शङ्का, डर, अन्योलता आदि भए पनि गौँथलीलाई लिएर जाने प्रबल इच्छा भएकाले ऊ पछाडि हट्न सक्दैन । यहाँको अन्योलता देखेर समाख्यातालेई चामेलाई भगाउँदैन । किनभने चामेलाई भाग्ने होइन, अझ आकर्षण गर्ने स्थितिको सिर्जना गर्नुपर्छ तब मात्र यस कथाले देखाउन खोजेको उद्देश्य भेट्न सकिन्छ । चामेसँग रिसाएका सासू, ससुराले चामेको सामान्य स्वागत सत्कार गर्छन् र उसलाई पिढीमा ओछ्यान लगाइदिन्छन् ।

घर गृहस्थीको अप्ठेरो देखाई गौँथलीलाई लिन गएको चामे ससुरालीमा पुगेर गौँथलीलाई देखेपछि घर गृहस्थीको आवश्यकताभन्दा जैविक आवश्यकताका दृष्टिले गौँथलीलाई देख्छ । चामेमा यौनजन्य आवश्यकता देखाई समाख्यातालेई चामे र गौँथलीको मिलन गराउने मजबुत आधार प्रस्तुत गरेको छ । त्यसै गरी उसलाई हर दृष्टिले स्वास्नी(गौँथली) को आवश्यकता छ भन्ने पनि देखाउन खोजेको छ । चामेमा यसरी आएको परिवर्तन यस कथालाई लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगोसरह हुन्छ भन्ने देखाउने आधार पनि हो ।

साँझ परेपछि गौँथलीले आएर चामेका गोडामा ढोगिदी । चामे गद्गद् भो । आज उसको हृदयमा गौँथलीलाई समातेर हजारचोटि चुम्बन गरूँ भनेजस्तो लाग्यो । समाउनलाई हात लम्काएको थियो ; गौँथली हात पन्छाएर घरभित्र

पसी । .... चामेका मनमा कुरा खेल्न लागे । हरे ! त्यो दिन बिचरी गौंथलीलाई किन कुटेँ हुँला ? स्वास्नी मानिसहरू बिहा हेर्न भनेपछि हुरुक्क हुन्छन् । उसमा पनि चढ्दो उमेर, एकछिन बिहा हेर्न गै त ! एकछिन यसो गाउँघरमा रमिता हेर्न गएको पनि खप्न नसक्ने छुसीले के स्वास्नी सुमर्नु ? भात पकाउन अलिकता ढिलो गरी भनेर स्वास्नी कुट्नुभन्दा अधम काम अर्को के होला ? अनि मुखाले भएकी पनि कुटेरै हो ! अब घर गै भने कहिल्यै कुट्ने छैन ! जुठे दाइका भन्दा बढ्ता कदर गरेर राखिनँ भने भन्नू (पृ. ५०) !

उल्लिखित कथन **परालको आगो** कथाको जटिल कार्यले उच्चता प्राप्त गरेको अवस्थाको हो । यहाँ आइपुगेपछि चामे गौंथलीलाई औधी माया गर्न थाल्छ । गौंथलीलाई लिन जाने अवस्थासम्म चामेले उसलाई गृहिणीका रूपमा मात्र हेरेको थियो । घरको कामधन्दा बिग्रिएको तथा आफूले पनि समयमा खान नपाएको समस्या देखाएर चामे गौंथलीलाई लिन गएको थियो । तर ससुराल आइपुगेर गौंथलीलाई भेटेपछि गौंथलीलाई लानैपर्ने अर्को कारण पनि उसले देखेको छ र त्यो कारण यौनका रूपमा रहेको छ । प्रारम्भमा घरधन्दा बिग्रिएको मात्र ठानेको चामेले अहिले आएर यौन सुखको पनि अभाव देखेको छ । त्यसैले उसका गौंथलीप्रतिका पुराना विचारहरू परिवर्तन भएका छन् । चामे गौंथलीलाई पिटेकोमा पछुतो गर्न थाल्छ, गौंथलीसँग झगडा हुनुमा आफ्नै गल्ती देख्छ र अब उप्रान्त यस्तो गल्ती नदोहोर्‍याउने बाचा पनि गर्छ । चामे आफ्नो निर्णयमा पूर्ण प्रतिबद्ध भइसकेपछि खेती किसानीको निहुँ पारी गौंथलीलाई पठाइदिनुपर्‍यो भनी ससुरासँग भन्छ । ससुराले सहज ढङ्गले आफ्नी स्वास्नी राजी गराऊ, लैजाऊ भनेपछि चामे निश्चिन्त हुन्छ साथै प्रस्तुत कथा पनि समाधानको बाटोतिर लाग्छ । यही अवस्थामा पुगेर प्रस्तुत कथाको जटिल कार्य सम्पन्न हुन्छ । यस अवस्थामा अब कथाले समापनको बाटो अपनायो भन्ने स्पष्ट हुने अवस्था पाठकमा आइपुग्छ ।

परिणाम र निष्कर्ष
परालको आगो कथाको छैटौँ विश्रामको तेस्रो अनुच्छेद देखिको अंश परिणाम र निष्कर्षको खण्ड हो । यस खण्डमा प्रस्तुत कथाको सारकथनले उठान गरेको विषयसम्म पुग्नका लागि अभिमुखीकरण तथा जटिल कार्यले महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका खेलेका छन् । लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई परालको आगोका रूपमा देखाउन चामे र गौंथली दुईजना पात्रलाई लिइएको छ । चामेले गौंथलीलाई लिएर आउने निश्चित भएपछि यस कथाको जटिल कार्य पूरा हुन्छ । जटिल कार्यको समापनपछि त्यसको परिणाम के आयो भन्ने कुराको व्याख्या यस खण्डमा गरिएको छ ।

अगाडिदेखिका घटनाहरूले चामेलाई आत्मविश्वासी बनाएका छन् । उसले गौंथलीलाई घर जानका निम्ति अनुरोध गर्छ । गौंथली पनि सामान्य आनाकानी गरेजस्तो गरी घर जान तयार हुन्छे । यस अवस्थामा चामे अब कहिले पनि गौंथलीलाई नपिट्ने बाचा गर्छ । चामेले गौंथलीलाई लिएर फर्किन्छ । घर फर्किँदा उनीहरू बीच रमाइला गफ सुरु हुन्छन् ।

पोको काखी च्यापेर गौंथली अधि-अधि लागी ; चामे हातमा ठेकी झुण्ड्याएर पछिपछि लाग्यो । बाटामा चामे र गौंथली कुरा गर्न लागे -"आजकल भैंसीले दूध कति दिन्छ नि ?"

"बिहान-बेलुका गरेर एक पाथी ।"
गौंथलीले चामेपट्टि फर्केर ओठ लेप्याई ।

उल्लिखित चामे र गौंथलीको संवाद यस कथाको परिणाम खण्डमा आएको छ । चामे र गौंथलीबीच रमाइलो संवाद गराएर कथाकारले यो कथा पूर्णरूपमा समापनतिर लागेको जानकारी दिन्छन् । यस कथनसँगै कथाको आरम्भदेखि देखापरेको समस्याले पनि समाधान पाउँछ । यहाँ उप्रान्त चामे र गौंथलीमा यस विषयमा लिएर अब कुनै किसिमको मनमुटाव रहँदैन भन्ने कुराको पनि सङ्केत प्रस्तुत कथनबाट प्राप्त हुन्छ । यसरी प्रस्तुत कथामा

सारकथनअनुरूपको परिणाम निकालेर लोग्ने-स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगोजस्तै हुन्छ भन्ने निष्कर्ष प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ ।

समापन

प्रस्तुत कथाको समापन यस कथामा प्रयुक्त दुई नारी पात्र गौंथली र जुठेकी स्वास्नी बीचको संवादका माध्यमबाट गरिएको छ । यो क्रममा जुठेकी स्वास्नीले भनेकी छ -*"उस, चाटाचाट गर्न पनि त बेर लाग्दो रहेनछ नि, लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो !"* (पृ.५१) । यस कथाको सारकथन पनि यही वाक्यले बोकेको छ । नेपाली समाजमा प्रचलित लोक आहान लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगोलाई आधार बनाएर तयार पारिएको यो कथा त्यही आहानमा पुगेर समाप्त भएको छ । अहिलेको समाजमा लोग्ने स्वास्नीका सबै झगडा परालको आगोमा परिणत हुँदैनन् । तर त्यतिखेरको समाज र यस कथाको प्रयोजनअनुरूप लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई परालको आगो देखाउनु थियो त्यसैले यो कथालाई यही बिन्दुमा पुर्‍याएर समाप्त गरिएको हो ।

प्रस्तुत कथाको समापनमा समापक क्रियाको प्रयोग गरिएको छैन । यसो गरिए पनि पूर्व प्रसङ्गमा पाठकहरू परिचित भएकाले तथा नेपाली लोक आहानसँग परिचित भएकाले पनि उनीहरू लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो सरह हुन्छ भन्ने अर्थमा नै बुझ्छन् । समाख्याताले पाठकका लागि यति ठाउँ राखिदिएको हो । यस समापनले प्रस्तुत कथालाई सुरुको अवस्थामा पुर्‍याएको छ । यस कथाको सुरुको अवस्थामा चामे र गौंथली लोग्ने स्वास्नीका रूपमा रहेर जीविकोपार्जन गरिरहेका थिए । बीचमा उनीहरूबीच विभिन्न तित्ततापूर्ण अवस्था आए पनि फेरि उनीहरू मिलेर बसे । त्यसैले यो कथा फेरि पहिलेकै अवस्थामा पुग्यो । यसरी **परालको आगो** कथाको समापन पाठकहरूलाई सामान्य ठाउँ दिँदै कथाको प्रारम्भ भएको अवस्थामा पुर्‍याएर टुङ्ग्याइएको छ । यसमा अन्य आधुनिक कथाहरूमा जस्तो प्रतीकात्मक समापन भने गरिएको छैन ।

मूल्याङ्कन

परालको आगो कथाले नेपाली लोक समाजमा विद्यमान लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगोजस्तै हुन्छ भन्ने लोक आहानलाई पुष्टि गर्दछ । गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीले यो कथा नेपाली समाज शिक्षा दीक्षा प्राप्त गरी आधुनिकतामा प्रवेश गर्न थालेका बेलामा लेखेका हुन् । यस बेलामा नेपाली समाज शहरी जीवनप्रति पनि आकर्षित हुँदै थियो भने विदेशी संस्कृतिको प्रभाव नेपाली समाजमा क्रमशः प्रवेश गर्दै थियो । यसले नेपाली समाजमा रहेको पतिपत्नी बीचको सम्बन्धलाई गम्भीर प्रभाव पार्न सक्थ्यो । त्यस समयका पढेलेखेका विद्वान्मा गुरुप्रसाद मैनाली पर्दछन् । विद्वान्हरूको कर्तव्य आफ्नो समाजलाई सही बाटो देखाउनु पनि हो । त्यसमा पनि गुरुप्रसाद मैनाली आफ्नो समाजमा विद्यमान आदर्शहरूलाई स्थापित गराउनुपर्छ भन्ने मान्यता राखी साहित्य सिर्जना गर्ने व्यक्ति हुन् । त्यही सांस्कृतिक आदर्शलाई स्थापित गराउन उनले **परालको आगो** कथा लेखेका हुन् ।

लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई परालको आगो देखाउनका लागि अन्य किसिमको कथानकको प्रयोग पनि गर्न सकिन्थ्यो । यस विषयको कथालाई शहरी क्षेत्रका र पठित पात्रहरूको उपस्थित गराइएको भए लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई परालको आगोजस्तो बनाउन सकिन्नथ्यो । पठित र शिक्षित भनिएकाहरूमा सम्बन्ध विच्छेद, पुनः विवाहजस्ता आयातित संस्कारहरूले आकर्षण गर्दै थियो । त्यसैले कथाकारले यहाँ अपठित ग्रामीण दम्पतीलाई उपस्थित गराएका हुन् । त्यस बेलाको समाजमा स्वास्नी कुट्नुलाई सामान्य मानिन्थ्यो, अपठितहरू स्वास्नी कुटेर पुरुषार्थ देखाउँथे । लोग्ने स्वास्नीका बीच झगडाको स्थिति ल्याई पुनः मिलन गराएको खण्डमा मात्र लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो साबित हुन्थ्यो । त्यसैले पनि कथाकारले यस किसिमका पात्र र घटना ल्याई कथानकको प्रारूप तयार पारेका हुन् ।

परालको आगो कथाको समाख्याता तेस्रो पुरुषको छ । तेस्रो पुरुषको समाख्याता भएकाले नै ऊ सर्वदर्शी पनि छ । सर्वदर्शी समाख्याताले घटनाहरूको व्याख्या स्पष्टसँग गर्न सक्छ । यस कथामा समाख्याता प्रथम पुरुष वा अन्य

भएको भए घटनाको वर्णन यति सहज र स्पष्टसँग गर्न सक्दैनथ्यो । यस कथाको संवादको चयनमा पनि समाख्याताले विशेष ध्यान पुऱ्याएको छ । यसमा संवादमा वक्ताको नाम नलिईकन आलोपालोको क्रममा संवाद राखिएको हुनाले पाठकहरू प्रसङ्ग अनुरूप कसले बोलेको हो भनी छुट्ट्याउँछन् । यस्तो किसिमको संवाद प्रयोग गर्नु गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको कथागत विशेषता पनि हो । ग्रामीण परिवेशमा सिर्जना गरिएको हुनाले प्रस्तुत कथामा ग्राम क्षेत्रमा प्रचलित शब्दहरूको प्रयोग भएको छ । कथाको सारकथन तथा घटनाहरूको प्रकृतिले गर्दा यस्तो किसिमको प्रयोग गरिएको हो ।

प्रस्तुत कथामा वाक्यहरू विषयवस्तुलाई निरन्तरता दिने किसिमका मात्र रहेका छन् । यसमा प्रयोग गरिएको पर्यावरणको चित्रण पनि कथानकको परिपुष्टि गर्ने तथा कथानकमा आउने परप्रसङ्गको सङ्केत गर्ने किसिमका छन् । अनावश्यक किसिमका वा कथानक इतरका कुनै पनि वाक्यहरूको प्रयोग नभएकाले प्रस्तुत कथाका वाक्यहरू आत्मनिर्भर रहेका छन् । यी आत्मनिर्भर वाक्यहरूले विषयवस्तु अनुरूपको कथानक निर्माणका लागि सहयोग गरेका छन् ।

प्रस्तुत कथा ग्रामीण परिवेशमा लेखिएको हुनाले यसमा प्रयुक्त भाषिक संरचना पनि ग्राम परिवेश अनुकूलको रहेको छ । यसमा छोटाछोटा ग्राम परिवेशानुकूलका वाक्य र ग्राम बोलिचालीका शब्दहरूको प्रयोग गरिएको छ । यस्ता सरल र परिवेश अनुकूलका शब्द र वाक्यहरूको प्रयोगले प्रस्तुत कथालाई बोधगम्य बनाएका छन् । यही कारणले प्रस्तुत कथा सबै किसिमका पाठकहरूका लागि बोध्य बनेको छ ।

निष्कर्ष

गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको 'परालको आगो' लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई विषय बनाई लेखिएको कथा हो । यो कथाको आदिदेखि अन्त्यसम्मका घटनाहरू एकअर्कामा अनुक्रम मिलेर रहेका छन् । यस किसिमको अनुक्रम मिलेकै हुनाले प्रस्तुत कथा सबै किसिमका पाठकहरूका लागि बोध्य बनेको छ । यस कथामा आख्यानसंरचनाका संरचक घटकहरू एक अर्कामा मिलेर बसेका छन् । यी घटकहरू एकअर्कासँग छुट्टिएर नबसी एउटै मालामा उनिएर बसेजस्ता छन् । यस कथाको सारकथन लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगोजस्तो हुन्छ भन्ने देखाउनु रहेको छ । यही सारकथनलाई पूरा गर्न प्रस्तुत कथामा चामे र गौँथली अनि नेपाली समाजको आर्थिक, राजनैतिक परिवेशहरूको सिर्जना गरिएको छ । यस कथाको अभिमुखीकरणमा आएका घटना, समय, स्थान तथा पात्रको परिचयहरूले यस कथाका परप्रसङ्गलाई प्रभावित बनाएका छन् । **परालको आगो** कथाको मुख्य पात्र चामेलाई जब गौँथलीबिनाको संसार एक्लो र उसका सत्गुणहरूको स्मरण हुन थाल्छ तब यस कथामा जटिल कार्यको आरम्भ हुन थाल्छ । यस कथाको मूल विषय पनि लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडालाई परालको आगोजस्तो देखाउनु भएको र सो कार्य पूरा गर्न चामेको यही क्रियाकलाप आरम्भ बिन्दु भएकाले यसै बिन्दुलाई जटिल कार्यको आरम्भ बिन्दु मानिन्छ । जटिल कार्यमा कुशलतापूर्वक प्रस्तुत गरी त्यसको परिणाम र निष्कर्षका रूपमा लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो सरह हुन्छ भन्ने निकालिएको छ । यस कथाको समापनमा सारकथनलाई प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीले चामे र गौँथली सहभागी भएको जुन कथानक तयार पारेका छन्, त्यो कथानक र कथानकअनुरूप चयन गरिएको समय र स्थानले लोग्ने स्वास्नीको झगडा परालको आगो सरह हुन्छ भन्ने कुरा पुष्टि गर्न सक्छन् । आख्यानसंरचनाका यी सम्पूर्ण पक्षहरूको अनुक्रम मिलेकै कारणले प्रस्तुत कथा सबै किसिमका पाठकहरूका लागि बोध्य बनेको छ । यसरी गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीको 'परालको आगो' कथा आख्यानसंरचनाका संरचक घटकहरूको उचित संयोजन भएका कारणले उत्कृष्ट कथा बन्न गएको छ । गुरुप्रसाद मैनालीद्वारा लिखित प्रस्तुत **परालको आगो** कथा आख्यान विश्लेषणका विभिन्न पद्धतिहरूद्वारा व्याख्या विश्लेषण गर्न सकिन्छ । यस कथालाई अन्य पद्धतिबाट विश्लेषण गर्न सकिने भए पनि प्रस्तुत अध्ययनमा विलियम ल्याबोभद्वारा प्रस्तुत आख्यानसंरचनाका आधारमा विश्लेषण गरिएको छ । यीबाहेक अन्य अन्य किसिमका कुनै पनि विधि/पद्धतिबाट उनको **परालको आगो** कथालाई यस अध्ययनमा विश्लेषण गरिएको छैन । **परालको आगो** कथाको आख्यानसंरचनाको विश्लेषण गरिएको प्रस्तुत अध्ययन आख्यानसंरचनाका आधारमा कथाहरूलाई बुझ्न चाहने पाठक तथा आख्यानसंरचनाका आधारमा विश्लेषण गर्न चाहने समालोचकहरूका

लागि उपयोगी सामग्री रहेको छ । यस आधारबाट विश्लेषण गरी कुनै पनि आख्यान किन स्तरीय र निम्न स्तरको छ ? भन्ने कुराको पहिचान गर्न पनि सहज हुन्छ ।

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