

CHINTAN-DHARA: A Multidisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal

VOL-18, pp 1-13, May, 2025

ISSN: 2091-2714

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/cd.v18i01.89619>

Tribhuvan University Teachers' Association

Campus Unit Committee, Dhankuta Multiple Campus, Dhankuta, Nepal.

Digitalization of Agriculture Sector in Nepal: Possibilities and Challenges in the Context of Globalization

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Abstract

The transformative potential of digitalization in promoting agricultural entrepreneurship in Nepal, a geographically diversified developing nation with an abundance of natural resources, is examined in this qualitative study. The study, which is based on the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), looks at how digital tools like digital financial systems, e-commerce platforms, and mobile advisory services can boost youth involvement in agribusiness, increase productivity, and improve market access. Secondary data were gathered from government reports, policy documents, peer-reviewed journal articles, and institutional publications using a descriptive and analytical research design. To compile information about the prospects, difficulties, and policy ramifications for digital agriculture and entrepreneurial growth, thematic analysis was used. The results show that while Nepal's agricultural sector has a lot of potential, development is hampered by issues like outdated legislation, inadequate training, and a lack of digital infrastructure. In order to address these issues, the report recommends improving internet connectivity in rural areas, implementing capacity-building programs, amending legislation that benefits agriculture, promoting public-private partnerships, and integrating agribusiness into formal education. With the help of these strategic initiatives, Nepal's agricultural landscape can be transformed into a modern, competitive, and sustainable industry. Through the use of digital technology and youth empowerment, Nepal can move closer to inclusive economic growth and food security.

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Keywords: agricultural entrepreneurship, digitalization, Nepal, innovation, policy reform, youth entrepreneurship and agribusiness.

Introduction

Nepal, a developing country in East Asia, is recognized for its geographical and natural diversity, which offers a multitude of chances for economic growth. Business is crucial to Nepal's transformation from a developing to a developed nation in the era of globalization. Given the abundance of natural resources in the country and the shifting socioeconomic landscape, there are several opportunities to leverage local infrastructure and resources to support sustainable development. Establishing a favorable business environment can stimulate new business ventures, particularly in sectors of importance like agriculture, tourism, and rural industries.

If government regulations are changed to become more business-friendly and inclusive of digital technology, technological advancements have the potential to completely transform Nepal's acceptance of modernity (Melles et al., 2025). In this sense, digitalization has emerged as a key facilitator, offering innovative approaches to increase output, broaden market reach, and streamline supply chains in the agricultural sector.

Agricultural entrepreneurship is essential for increasing industrialization, encouraging resource use, and reducing reliance on traditional farming. It significantly lowers unemployment and poverty while also improving rural areas' overall socioeconomic status. Digital financial services, e-commerce platforms, and mobile-based agricultural advisory services are examples of digital tools that farmers and agro-entrepreneurs can use to enhance production management, reduce post-harvest losses, and access larger domestic and international markets (Khanal et al., 2018). According to Guidi (2011), innovation and creativity are critical to the modernization and commercialization of agriculture, and digital technologies serve as facilitators for these goals.

Additionally, real-time price data, weather predictions, and pest control guidance are made possible by digital platforms, giving farmers the ability to make better decisions and increase their profitability.

To ensure sustainability and long-term success, policy frameworks in Nepal must prioritize agricultural digitization and support companies with targeted infrastructure development, capital, and training. Encouraging young people to work in agriculture, especially those who are returning from abroad or currently unemployed can hasten rural transformation and reduce migration to urban areas. By adopting digital tools and fostering a supportive policy environment, Nepal can greatly contribute to food security

and national development by transforming its agricultural sector into a modern, competitive, and globally interconnected enterprise.

Major Problems Seen in Agricultural Entrepreneurship

The lack of well-defined regulatory guidelines presents some problems to Nepal's agricultural entrepreneurship sector. Lack of modern agricultural expertise, slow adoption of technology, and lack of access to needed resources like fertilizers and improved seeds are all significant challenges that impact productivity (Neupane et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the production in the sector is further constrained by its over-reliance on rainwater. Besides, Nepali agriculture does not have skilled manpower. Rather than expanding their agricultural enterprises into sustainable businesses, they only continue to prioritize meeting family requirements.

The majority of the agricultural sector exists in rural communities, which have higher poverty levels than urban communities. The majority of farmers cannot mobilize adequate funds for their businesses because of lack of finance, including high interest rates for loans, inaccessibility of banks and other financial institutions, and lack of collateral. Nepal's agricultural sector is still dominated by tradition, which raises the cost of production. This raises the risk of displacement by making it much harder for domestic farmers to compete with farm imports. There is also limited technical infrastructure and when available, farming entrepreneurs cannot utilize it. Entrepreneurs are at a disadvantage since farming business groups are dominated by complex and complicated government regulations.

Furthermore, there is an urgent critical shortage of physical infrastructure needed to support the sector's growth, such as transportation, warehouses, electricity, water supply, and security. Agricultural entrepreneurs are confused by the government's weak implementation of the policies it has developed for the sector. Unavailability of technical advice, agricultural research, marketing to market, and agricultural business education is another severe issue (Paudel, 2016). The farmers therefore fail to achieve products of higher quality, and thus the sector less implements. The growth of farm entrepreneurship in Nepal depends on solving these problems through comprehensive policy reforms, infrastructure development, and increased financial access.

Possibilities and Opportunities

Nepal is big enough to support agriculture, and it's possible to plant foodstuffs there. The potential to enhance production is tremendous given the national average rate of wages and that all people have been working in agriculture since time immemorial (Rajbhandari, 2015).

In addition, Nepal's membership with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and globalization provide chances to export Nepalese agricultural products overseas (Anderson & Tiwari, 1999). Nepal has the advantage that its agricultural products are unique compared to other nations. Yet, Nepal still has very little agricultural industry development despite this chance. Because of this, the majority of agricultural raw materials are currently exported raw rather than being processed and sold as added-value goods.

There are some farm enterprises such as mining, forest utilization, production of medicinal herbs, cattle farming, and poultry farming that are sustainable under the diversified natural and physical conditions of Nepal. All these products are in high demand from international consumers, providing them with a chance to increase the economy. As a step towards promoting farm-based business entrepreneurship, the Nepalese government has also launched a number of useful projects including exemptions, subsidies, technical guidance, agriculture training, and production discounts.

Nepal's economy also relies heavily on tourism, with individuals from across the world visiting to carry out research, try various food varieties, and witness new attractions. Promoting agro tourism, farm-to-table tourism, and organic foods among tourists is a great way to integrate agriculture and tourism, especially considering Nepal's popularity worldwide as a tourist destination (Agarwal & Upadhyay, 2006).

Apart from this, the demand for agricultural produce is growing rapidly with the world's ever-increasing population. Nepal can avail itself of a great chance to develop its agriculture sector by increasing its production level and solidifying its place in the international market.

Despite the above various problems, due to the opportunities of agribusiness in Nepal, the enough potential of agribusiness in Nepal cannot be denied at the present time. In this way, the role of agricultural business is necessary for the economic and social development of Nepal. The role of the technologies developed in the present time to take it to the world market cannot be denied. Among which digitalization of agriculture sector is the main technology. Digitization will effectively and sustainably advance Nepal's agricultural sector and the global market. If the agriculturists of Nepal can use the digitalization that has developed in the present time, there is a possibility that they can take their business to the world level. While the contribution of the sector is decreasing, social and economic development will also increase.

When Persons, companies, Institutions sell, distribute, and exchange their products, services, and experiences electronic device or online method, called digitization. In this, goods or services produced by the company are exchanged through

internet or digital technology. At the present time in Nepal also, various companies are doing it through digital means like personal website, business website and mobile apps to distribute their goods or services (Vitalis et al., 2023). Digital media has made it easy for any company to sell its products or services anywhere in the world. Under which search engine marketing, content marketing, social media marketing, and e-commerce marketing have been used, but in the context of Nepal, this is a new trend. However, some large commercial establishments in Nepal have realized its role and have used internet or digital technology to run their business and increase long-term profits. In this way, if all kinds of companies from developed and less developed countries in the world use digital means, along with agricultural entrepreneurs and businessmen in Nepal, if they can use it, there are many opportunities to bring Nepali agricultural products to the world market.

In order to bring the agricultural products of Nepal to the world market and to provide information about it to the people there, it is necessary to communicate and interact with them. For this, the Internet developed at present, through which SMS, MMS and other online means can be used. Thus, the online medium to interact with them is the most easiest and reliable nowadays. Today's age is the age of digital. Various companies and businesses in the world are doing online and offline video and mobile advertising to expand their relationship with customers. In this way, if even the agricultural professionals can use it in present time in Nepal, their possibility cannot be denied.

(Scholte, 2017) Globalization is the interdependence and growth of economic, social, cultural and political relations among the countries of the world.

Under globalization, we can understand the increase in international exchange and cooperation of goods, services, information, technology, manpower and other resources and tools produced in the world. Economically, different countries in globalization, trade investment and internationalization of financial markets, as well as the establishment and development of multinational and multilateral companies, the growth of international trade by products or services, and international investment. Culturally, the exchange of culture, customs, lifestyle, food, fashion, etc. The exchange and growth of political relations between, the increasing role of various international organizations and the establishment and development of various regional organizations until the present time, when explaining globalization socially, the growth of the role of health education and international non-governmental organizations in different countries in the world, migration and other topics, technically The rapid development in the Internet and communication technologies around the world has created the possibility of exchanging information and information quickly and easily, connecting people around the world. Globalization is the biggest aspect in present times. Especially, more than 200

countries in the world are connected to each other in one way or another at the present time. Globalization makes a country interdependent with other countries economically, socially, culturally, technologically, legally, naturally, etc. In this way, through economic, social, cultural and technical aspects, one country is interrelated with another country, coordinating and advancing by helping for development is globalization. In this era of globalization, an important basis for the development of any country in the world is the entrepreneurship of that country.

In recent years, Nepal has seen a significant growth in Internet users with the increase in Mobile phones. Every individual now holds a smart phone with the latest technology(Singh & Aryal, 2023). In Nepal, there were 40.58 million mobile connections in Nepal out of which 11.51 million are active users of Internet. The internet penetration rate stood 38.4 percent in 2022. The internet users in Nepal increased by 7.7 percent between 2021 and 2022(Bank, 2022).

Global agro-food security is a concern, and poverty reduction requires the use of sustainable production technology(Bhat, 2022). In order to minimize waste, maximize input efficiency, and improve crop yields, digital agriculture (DA) is a cutting-edge technology that combines artificial intelligence (AI), automation, robotics, sensors, and data analytics into agricultural processes. Producers may make smarter decisions with the help of DA, which offers real-time insights on productivity aspects like plant health, soil quality, weather, and insect pressure. The goals of this review paper are to elucidate the advantages of DA, address real-world issues, and suggest potential directions.

In the view of (Abiri et al., 2023), coordination between Ministry of Agriculture and Nepalese agriculture sector and use of digitalization can drives new modern condition in agriculture from traditional situation. Farmers who works traditionally, they gain knowledge of digitalization and improve own work rapid technique.

Method and Material

This qualitative study employed a descriptive and analytical research approach to examine the potential benefits of digitization for Nepal's agricultural industry. The study's primary secondary data sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, government and institutional reports (including those from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development and the Central Bureau of Statistics), books, e-books, websites, online news portals, and policy documents related to agriculture and the digital economy. Through the methodical collection, synthesis, and analysis of data using qualitative techniques, a

comprehensive understanding of the subject was developed. Real-world experiences and empirical data from the corpus of existing literature supported this understanding.

Population and Sample

The study's target population consists of stakeholders involved in agriculture-related business operations in Nepal, such as small-scale farmers, cooperative societies, agro-enterprises, and governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in rural development (Acharya et al., 2018). However, since this study relies entirely on secondary data, no specific sampling strategy was employed. Instead, the sample consists of relevant case studies, records, and online materials that provide insight into the current state of digital transformation and agricultural entrepreneurship in Nepal.

Data Collection Theory

This study adopted a desk-based methodology and secondary data obtained through in-depth documentary analysis (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The theoretical underpinning of data collection is qualitative content analysis, which comprises systematically identifying and analyzing patterns within pre-existing textual materials, such as journal articles, policy documents, and official publications. Data were selected using timeliness, credibility, and relevance criteria to guarantee compliance with the study's goals. We identified and looked at themes related to challenges, opportunities, and strategies for enhancing agricultural entrepreneurship with digital tools.

Tools and Techniques

The following tools and techniques were used during the research process: Literature Review: A comprehensive examination of books, conference proceedings, and peer-reviewed journal articles that focus on agricultural entrepreneurship and digital transformation.

Examining documents: Examining government publications, strategic plans, and non-governmental organization studies on rural development and agriculture in Nepal. Online research: Using academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Research Gate to access recent developments and empirical data. Finding recurring themes and concepts in a range of sources in order to draw perceptive conclusions is known as thematic analysis. SWOT Analysis: In some regions, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) framework was employed to evaluate the internal and external elements influencing agricultural entrepreneurship in Nepal (Kotzé& van Rooyen, 2019).

Limitations

Despite its positive effects, this study has several limitations: Reliance on Secondary Data: The conclusions are based solely on previously published material, which may be

incomplete or lacking firsthand recollections, as no primary data was collected. Accessibility Issues: Some crucial information regarding the use of digital technology in Nepalese agriculture was either outdated or difficult to find because of the dearth of internet infrastructure in rural areas. Geographic Scope: The study provides a broad overview of Nepal without examining regional differences that may have an impact on digital integration and entrepreneurial activities. Time Restrictions: The study's brief duration might have affected the amount of data verification and investigation that was conducted.

Result and Discussion

The analysis highlights Nepal's significant potential for growth through entrepreneurship, particularly in agriculture, which has traditionally been the backbone of the economy. The country's natural and geographical diversity provides opportunities for various sectors such as agriculture, tourism, mining, and forestry. These sectors can be further expanded to meet the demands of global markets. Nepal faces numerous challenges in fully realizing this potential, including a lack of clear government policies, insufficient technological infrastructure, and limited access to capital for rural and agricultural entrepreneurs. Traditional agricultural practices, low productivity, and dependence on manual labor hinder the country's ability to compete with imported products. Furthermore, inadequate infrastructure, such as poor transportation, electricity, and storage facilities, hampers agricultural entrepreneurship. Despite these challenges, there are promising opportunities. Nepal has untapped resources that can be used, such as land, a variety of crops, and naturally occurring goods. The world's need for distinctive agricultural products and Nepal's access to markets through participation in organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) give opportunities for the country's agribusiness to expand internationally.

The groundwork for future growth is laid by the government's existing measures, which include tax breaks, training opportunities, and subsidies for agricultural businesses. But embracing contemporary technologies and digitizing agriculture will be essential to realizing this potential. Digital platforms have the potential to expand market accessibility, offer improved tools for supply chain management, and link Nepali farmers with global markets. Additional opportunities are provided by globalization, since it allows Nepal to become more integrated into the world economy. In this age of interdependence, entrepreneurship particularly in agribusiness will be essential to propelling the country's development.

In conclusion, Nepal can realize its entrepreneurial potential despite structural and policy-related obstacles, particularly in agriculture. However, globalization, technical

improvements, and the availability of natural resources present a promising avenue for social and economic progress. Modernizing agricultural methods, encouraging rural businesses, and fortifying ties to international markets are critical to this endeavor's success.

Nepal is a developing country; it possesses a high level of natural and geographical diversity, making it one of the most coveted countries in East Asia. Most of this diversity in opportunities can be exploited towards its development, particularly entrepreneurship promotion. Nepal must harness its natural resources, create a business-friendly climate, and apply current technologies to transform from a developing country to a developed country in the context of globalization.

Role of Entrepreneurship in Accelerating Economic Growth

In Nepal, entrepreneurship has the power to propel social and economic advancement. The nation has a number of underdeveloped industries, including mining, tourism, services, agriculture, and rural industries. Among these, agriculture is one that has the most promise. Although it is still in its infancy, Nepal's economy has historically been based primarily on agriculture (Shrestha, 1997). In addition to boosting production, promoting agricultural entrepreneurship can lower poverty, provide jobs, and promote industrialization in rural areas.

Establishing an atmosphere that is conducive to business is essential to achieving this potential. Nepal can reach its full resource potential by tackling problems including obsolete policies, poor infrastructure, and restricted capital access. The government of Nepal might create an atmosphere that is conducive to business growth if it were to change its laws in favor of entrepreneurship. This would be especially beneficial for industries like tourism and agriculture, which are closely related to the nation's geographic advantages.

Impact of Globalization on Nepal's Development

Globalization has brought nations together on an economic, social, cultural, and technological level, opening chances for nations to develop (Panic, 2003). Nepal can join international supply chains, gain access to overseas markets, and draw in foreign investment thanks to globalization. Through the creation of new channels for commerce and development, this exchange of commodities, services, and cultural experiences boosts Nepal's economy (Abiri et al., 2023). But for Nepal to gain from globalization, its entrepreneurial foundation must be strengthened. Entrepreneurs are the engine of economic growth, because they foster creativity, boost output, and create jobs. To thrive in the midst of globalization, Nepali entrepreneurship needs to be forward-thinking, utilizing cutting-edge technology and connecting with international networks.

Obstacles Agricultural Entrepreneurship Faces

Nepal is very large scope for development in the agriculture sector, there are a couple of small problem. One of them is that agricultural rules and laws are not very standardized and give no security to investors and businessmen working in the sector. Moreover, the lack of availability of critical farming inputs like quality seeds, fertilizer, and agricultural technologies is also responsible for low productivity that still defines the sector. The situation is further compounded by excessive reliance on unpredictable weather, thus unstable and unpredictable farm yields.

Second, the industry remains to grasp tightly of conventional and non-professional farming methodologies where agriculture is thought of almost exclusively as ways to meet the family subsistence need and not as a profit-making commercial operation. Lack of commercialization goes against the efficient use of effective, market-driven strategies. Another major barrier is access to funds, particularly in rural settings where farmers often have trouble getting loans since they do not have the necessary collateral. Their ability to invest in agricultural modernization is also restricted by their limited exposure to banking and financial institutions.

Growth of the agricultural sector of Nepal is further decelerated by inadequate infrastructure. Lack of critical infrastructure including transportation, infrastructure, storage, supply of power, and communication, logistic barriers are lead productivity from high to less as well as increase post-harvest losses. Also, there is a high manufacturing cost involved, making domestically produced goods non-competitive within the market and hence more challenging for Nepali agro business to compete against imported agricultural commodities.

Public-private sector collaboration must address these issues. Agricultural productivity Enhancing sustainable development requires investments in the upgrade of farm practices, expanding access to finance for rural enterprises, and upgrading infrastructure. A successful approach based on financial assistance, technological change, and policy reforms must be implemented to improve the long-term growth and competitiveness of Nepal's agricultural sector.

Possibilities for Agricultural Entrepreneurship

The farm sector in Nepal also has a vast scope for growth. This is grounded on many factors, such as the availability of land and the favorable climate of the country, which make it possible to grow a multitude of agricultural products. Besides, agriculture has long history in Nepal, and the reasonably low cost of labor of the country provides a good starting point for enhancing agricultural output and productivity.

As a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Nepal is able to sell its distinct agricultural goods, which have clear competitive edges, and break into world markets. But much of the agricultural raw materials nowadays are shipped in its raw form, which suggests that the potential for value addition is not being exploited. Establishing agro-processing industries would make these products more profitable and help in economic growth. In the same way, the development of agro-based industries due to the increasing demand for organic and natural products across the world is made possible by Nepal's abundance of natural resources in the form of minerals, forest, and medicinal plants.

The government of Nepal has implemented a number of policies in favor of the agricultural industry, such as grants, training programs, financial incentives to activate agribusiness units, and technical assistance. Facilitating farmers' and entrepreneurs' modernization and capacity building, these actions maximize the industry's potential. Agro-tourism activities have plenty of scope too, owing to agriculture's close relation with tourism. These schemes can draw foreign investors and tourists, thus promoting rural development and new economic opportunities. Nepal can achieve its sustainable economic development and enhance its agriculture sector through these advantages and adopting strategic policies.

The role and functions of digitalization and technology

Nepal has to adopt contemporary technologies and digitization in order to realize its full agricultural potential. Digital tools can revolutionize the agriculture industry by facilitating better marketing, communication, and access to international markets. For instance, Nepalese agricultural products might be directly marketed to consumers throughout the world through e-commerce platforms, social media marketing, and content marketing. Additionally, digital platforms may give farmers access to vital information like crop prices, weather forecasts, and agricultural methods, which will increase their output and profitability.

Nepal has not yet completely embraced the worldwide trend of digitization, which allows companies to sell and distribute their goods online, particularly in rural areas. On the other hand, as big businesses start utilizing digital tools; more people are realizing the potential of mobile and internet technologies for agricultural product marketing. When used effectively, digital platforms may link Nepali business owners to international markets, generating more revenue and strengthening the country's economy.

Impact of Globalization on Nepal's Development

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investment thanks to globalization. Through the creation of new channels for commerce and development, this exchange of commodities, services, and cultural experiences boosts Nepal's economy.

But for Nepal to gain from globalization, its entrepreneurial foundation must be strengthened. Due to their ability to create jobs, boost productivity, and foster innovation, entrepreneurs are the main drivers of economic growth. To thrive in the midst of globalization, Nepali entrepreneurship needs to be forward-thinking, utilizing cutting-edge technology and connecting with international networks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Nepal has sufficient opportunities to grow economically and expand as a result of globalization. Nepal can benefit from integrating with global markets to its optimum by embracing innovation, harnessing technology, and building a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem. Entrepreneurship, especially in agriculture, is one of the key drivers of Nepal's journey towards a developed country. Nepal's immense potential can be harnessed by eliminating issues with its antiquated laws, poor infrastructure, and limited access to technology. Digitalization and industries like tourism and agriculture offer a solid base for long-term sustained growth. With the help of modern infrastructure and favorable rules and regulations, Nepal will be able to sell its distinct products, improve the lives of its citizens, and integrate well into the global economy.

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