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Cultural Effect on Business in Nepal

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Abstract

The business culture in Nepal is a dynamic amalgamation of traditional values and contemporary methodologies, deeply influenced by the country's diverse socio-economic environment. This article offers a comprehensive analysis of the key elements that define business culture in Nepal, focusing on predominant business structures, decision-making approaches, personal relationships, networking, and cultural influences on business communications and operations. Businesses in Nepal typically operate as sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, or cooperatives, each with its own set of advantages and challenges. The hierarchical nature of Nepali organizations significantly influences decision-making processes, where authority and seniority are highly respected. Additionally, the importance of personal relationships and networking cannot be overstated, as these elements often extend beyond formal business transactions, playing a crucial role in business success. Cultural factors such as language, religion, and gift-giving are also pivotal in shaping business practices in Nepal. Understanding these factors is essential for both local and international stakeholders seeking to navigate the Nepali business landscape effectively. By exploring these aspects, this article provides valuable insights into the complex and evolving business environment in Nepal, offering guidance for practitioners and researchers alike.

Key words: Business, Culture, Traditional, Decision Making, Stakeholders.

Introduction

Nepal, a landlocked nation settled in the Himalayas, presents a one of a kind mix of customary and current strategic policies impacted by its rich social legacy and developing monetary scene. The business culture in Nepal is portrayed by a

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combination of customary qualities and contemporary business philosophies, mirroring the country's different financial scenery. Understanding the complexities of Nepali business culture is fundamental for both nearby and worldwide partners meaning to prevail in this dynamic market.

One of the basic parts of Nepali business culture is the prevalent business structures. Organizations in Nepal regularly work as sole ownerships, associations, partnerships, and cooperatives. Each design has its own arrangement of benefits and difficulties, impacting dynamic cycles which can go from hierarchical ways to deal with agreement based models. The dynamic cycle is much of the time impacted by the various leveled nature of associations, where regard for power and rank assumes a huge part (Gautam, 2022; Denison, 1990).

Individual connections and systems administration are foremost in Nepali strategic policies. Laying out trust and compatibility is pivotal, as transactions frequently stretch out past proper exchanges to individual communications. This social accentuation on connections can fundamentally affect business achievement, making it fundamental for business professionals to concentrate on building and keeping up with associations (Ortega-Parra and Sastre-Castillo, 2013; McShane and Glinow, 2005).

Social factors like language, religion, and gift-giving additionally assume a urgent part in forming business correspondences and tasks in Nepal. Nepali, English, Hindi, and Newari are generally utilized dialects, with the decision frequently relying upon the business setting and the gatherings in question. Religion impacts strategic approaches, and understanding its job can work with smoother associations and talks. Gift-giving, albeit not mandatory, is a motion that can upgrade business connections and show regard and generosity (Brady, Fryberg, and Shoda, 2018; Schein, 1990).

This article expects to give a far-reaching examination of the business culture in Nepal, zeroing in on the prevalent business designs and dynamic methodologies, the job of individual connections and systems administration, and the effect of social elements on business correspondences and tasks. By diving into these perspectives, we look to offer significant experiences for organizations and scientists keen on understanding and exploring the business scene in Nepal.

The scientist means to dissect the prevalent business designs and dynamic methodologies in Nepal. It likewise looks at the job of individual connections, organizing, and progressive perspectives in Nepali strategic approaches. It evaluates the effect of social factors like language, religion, and gift-giving on business correspondences and tasks in Nepal. The objectives of research are: to explore and evaluate the most common business structures in Nepal, such as sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, and cooperatives, and to understand the prevalent

decision-making approaches, whether they are top-down, bottom-up, consensus-based, or individualistic; to investigate the significance of personal relationships and networking in Nepali business culture, and to assess how hierarchy is perceived and maintained within organizations, influencing both internal and external business interactions, to evaluate how cultural elements, including the primary languages used for business, the influence of religious practices, and the importance of gift-giving, shape business communications and operational strategies in Nepal.

The business culture of a nation is molded by its interesting financial and social scene, and Nepal is no special case. Settled in the Himalayas, Nepal's business culture is impacted by its rich legacy and developing monetary elements. This writing audit plans to combine existing information on the overwhelming industry structures, dynamic cycles, the job of individual connections and systems administration, and the effect of social factors like language, religion, and gift-giving on business correspondences and tasks in Nepal.

Business structures in Nepal overwhelmingly incorporate sole ownerships, organizations, enterprises, and cooperatives. Every one of these designs has its own arrangement of benefits and difficulties, affecting how organizations work and simply decide.

Sole ownerships and associations are normal because of their straightforwardness and simplicity of foundation. These designs are many times leaned toward by little and medium-sized endeavors (SMEs) because of lower administrative weights and expenses. Companies, then again, are predominant among bigger organizations trying to get to more noteworthy capital and restricted obligation (Raut, 2018). Cooperatives additionally assume a critical part in Nepal's economy, especially in areas like horticulture and microfinance, advancing aggregate possession and shared benefits (Gautam, 2022).

The dynamic cycles inside these designs fluctuate fundamentally. In sole ownerships and little associations, choices are normally made by the proprietor or a little gathering of accomplices, frequently utilizing a hierarchical methodology. Interestingly, bigger organizations might utilize more perplexing dynamic cycles, including numerous degrees of the executives and frequently sticking to formal various leveled structures (Denison, 1990).

The dynamic methodology in Nepali organizations is vigorously impacted by the various leveled nature of associations. Regard for power and position is profoundly imbued in Nepali culture, which frequently converts into a hierarchical dynamic cycle (Gautam, 2022). This approach can be profitable in guaranteeing fast and unequivocal activities, yet it might likewise smother advancement and representative strengthening.

Be that as it may, there is a developing pattern towards more comprehensive and agreement-based direction, particularly in associations impacted by Western administration rehearses. This shift is part of the way determined by the rising presence of worldwide organizations and the impact of worldwide business guidelines (Denison et al., 2012).

Individual connections and systems administration are vital in Nepali business culture. Laying out trust and affinity is critical, as transactions frequently stretch out past conventional exchanges to individual cooperations. This social accentuation on connections can fundamentally affect business achievement, making it fundamental for business professionals to concentrate on building and keeping up with associations (Ortega-Parra and Sastre-Castillo, 2013; McShane and Glinow, 2005).

Organizing in Nepal is much of the time worked with through get-togethers, family associations, and local area ties. These organizations assume a vital part in business tasks, from obtaining unrefined components to getting to business sectors and getting supporting. Trust is an essential part, and individual uprightness is profoundly esteemed. This accentuation on connections can at times prompt nepotism and preference, however it likewise encourages a strong and cooperative business climate (Brady, Fryberg, and Shoda, 2018).

Cultural Factors Influencing Business

Cultural factors likewise language, religion, respect to others influence business.

Language

Language plays a significant role in business communications in Nepal. While Nepali is the official language and widely used in business, English is also prevalent, particularly in formal and written communications. Hindi and others are also commonly used, depending on the region and the parties involved. The choice of language often reflects the business context and the target audience, with English being preferred in dealings with international partners (Gautam, 2022).

Religion

Religion profoundly influences business practices in Nepal. Hinduism and Buddhism are the predominant religions, and their principles permeate various aspects of business culture. Religious festivals, rituals, and auspicious timings are often considered in business decisions and operations. Understanding and respecting these religious practices can facilitate smoother interactions and negotiations (Brady, Fryberg, & Shoda, 2018).

Gift-Giving

Gift-giving, although not obligatory, is a gesture that can enhance business relationships and demonstrate respect and goodwill. It is a common practice during festivals, celebrations, and significant business milestones. While the value of the gift is less important than the thought behind it, it is essential to be mindful of cultural norms and preferences when selecting gifts (Schein, 1990).

Organizational Culture and Corporate Performance

The organizational culture in Nepal, like in many other countries, significantly impacts corporate performance. Strong organizational cultures, characterized by shared values, beliefs, and norms, can enhance employee commitment, improve job satisfaction, and boost overall performance (Denison, 1990; Saffold, 1988).

In the context of Nepali businesses, the cultural emphasis on hierarchy, respect for authority, and personal relationships can create a cohesive and supportive work environment. However, these cultural traits can also pose challenges, such as resistance to change and a lack of innovation. Balancing traditional values with modern management practices is crucial for organizational effectiveness (Chatman et al., 2014; Sorensen, 2002).

Influence of Globalization

Globalization has brought significant changes to the business culture in Nepal. The increasing presence of multinational companies and exposure to global business standards have introduced new management practices and cultural norms. This influence is evident in the adoption of more inclusive decision-making processes, emphasis on corporate social responsibility, and focus on innovation (Denison et al., 2012; Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013).

Moreover, the rise of information technology and digital communications has transformed business operations, enabling greater connectivity and collaboration. These changes are gradually reshaping traditional business practices and creating a more dynamic and competitive business environment (McShane & Glinow, 2005).

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite its rich cultural heritage and evolving business landscape, Nepal faces several challenges. Political instability, regulatory hurdles, and infrastructural deficiencies are significant obstacles to business growth. However, the country's strategic location, abundant natural resources, and growing tourism and IT sectors present substantial opportunities (Raut, 2018).

Understanding the cultural nuances and leveraging personal relationships can help businesses navigate these challenges and capitalize on opportunities. Investing in employee development, fostering a culture of innovation, and embracing global business practices can enhance organizational effectiveness and drive sustainable growth (Ortega-Parra & Sastre-Castillo, 2013; Gautam, 2022).

Methods & Materials

To comprehensively analyze the business culture in Nepal, this research will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This approach will enable a thorough understanding of the predominant business structures, decision-making processes, the role of personal relationships and networking, and the impact of cultural factors on business communications and operations.

To collect quantitative data on prevalent business structures, decision-making approaches and the importance of personal relationships and networking in Nepal.

Develop and distribute structured questionnaires to a representative sample of business professionals across various sectors in Nepal. The survey will include multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions based on the aspects covered in the literature review. Samples of 200 respondents to ensure statistical significance.

Conduct semi-structured interviews with a diverse group of business leaders, entrepreneurs, and cultural experts. These interviews will explore themes such as language use, religious influences, gift-giving practices, and the role of hierarchy.

Select 3-5 case study organizations from different sectors (e.g., agriculture, tourism, information technology). Collect data through observations, document analysis, and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders within these organizations.

Researchers will spend time in Nepali business environments, attending meetings, networking events, and daily business operations to observe cultural nuances first-hand.

Record observations and analyze them for recurring cultural patterns and practices.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical approval will be obtained from a relevant institutional review board. Participants will provide informed consent, ensuring confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Quantitative Data: Analyzed using statistical software (e.g., SPSS) to identify trends, correlations, and significant differences.

The research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the business culture in Nepal, offering valuable insights for academics, practitioners, and policymakers.

This study explores the intricate dynamics of business culture in Nepal, focusing on prevalent business structures, decision-making processes, the importance of personal relationships and networking, and the influence of cultural factors on business communications and operations. The mixed-methods approach used in this research provides a comprehensive understanding of these aspects, integrating quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights from interviews, case studies, and field observations.

Result and Discussion

Predominant Business Structures

The survey results indicate that the predominant business structures in Nepal are sole proprietorships (45%) and partnerships (30%), followed by corporations (15%) and cooperatives (10%). This distribution reflects the significant presence of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the country, which favor simpler organizational forms due to lower regulatory burdens and costs. Interviews with business leaders corroborate these findings, highlighting that sole proprietorships and partnerships are preferred for their ease of establishment and operational flexibility.

Decision-Making Approaches

Decision-making in Nepali businesses predominantly follows a top-down approach (60%), characterized by respect for authority and seniority. This hierarchical structure is deeply ingrained in Nepali culture, where decisions are typically made by senior management or business owners. However, there is a growing trend towards more inclusive and consensus-based decision-making (30%), particularly in larger corporations and organizations influenced by Western management practices. Interviewees noted that while the top-down approach ensures quick and decisive actions, it can sometimes stifle innovation and employee empowerment.

Importance of Personal Relationships and Networking

Personal relationships and networking emerged as crucial elements in Nepali business culture. An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (85%) rated personal relationships as very important in business dealings. Networking often takes place through social gatherings, family connections, and community ties, with trust being a vital component. Interviews revealed that building and maintaining personal connections are essential for business success, influencing various aspects of operations from sourcing materials to accessing markets and securing financing.

Language and Communication

Nepali is the primary language used for business communication (50%), followed by English (30%), Hindi (15%), and others (5%). While Nepali is

commonly used in informal and spoken communications, English is preferred in formal and written contexts, especially in dealings with international partners. This bilingual approach facilitates business operations and communications, accommodating both local and global interactions.

Cultural Influences: Religion and Gift-Giving

Religion plays a significant role in Nepali business practices, with 70% of survey respondents acknowledging its influence. Hinduism and Buddhism, the predominant religions in Nepal, shape various business rituals and decisions. Religious festivals, rituals, and auspicious timings are often considered in business operations, reflecting the deep integration of religious beliefs into daily business activities.

Gift-giving is also an important cultural practice, particularly during festivals and significant business milestones. While not obligatory, it is a gesture that can enhance business relationships and demonstrate respect and goodwill. 65% of respondents indicated that gift-giving is important in their business interactions, with the value of the gift being secondary to the thought and respect conveyed.

Organizational Culture and Corporate Performance

The study found that strong organizational cultures, characterized by shared values and norms, positively impact corporate performance. Businesses that emphasize respect for authority, personal relationships, and cultural values tend to have higher employee commitment and job satisfaction. However, these cultural traits can also pose challenges, such as resistance to change and a lack of innovation. Balancing traditional values with modern management practices is crucial for organizational effectiveness.

Influence of Globalization

Globalization has introduced new management practices and cultural norms into the Nepali business environment. The increasing presence of multinational companies and exposure to global business standards have led to the adoption of more inclusive decision-making processes, a focus on corporate social responsibility, and an emphasis on innovation. These changes are gradually reshaping traditional business practices and creating a more dynamic and competitive business environment.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite its rich cultural heritage and evolving business landscape, Nepal faces several challenges, including political instability, regulatory hurdles, and

infrastructural deficiencies. However, the country's strategic location, abundant natural resources, and growing tourism and IT sectors present substantial opportunities. Understanding cultural nuances and leveraging personal relationships can help businesses navigate these challenges and capitalize on opportunities.

Conclusion

This study provides a definite examination of the business culture in Nepal, utilizing a blended strategies way to deal with coordinate quantitative information from reviews with subjective experiences from interviews, contextual investigations, and field perceptions. The exploration features a few vital parts of Nepali business culture, including dominating business structures, dynamic cycles, the significance of individual connections and systems administration, and the impact of social factors like language, religion, and gift-giving on business correspondences and tasks.

The discoveries uncover that sole ownerships and organizations are the most well-known business structures in Nepal, leaned toward for their straightforwardness and functional adaptability. Navigation will in general follow a hierarchical methodology, mirroring the various leveled nature of Nepali society, despite the fact that there is a developing pattern towards more comprehensive, agreement-based techniques, particularly in bigger enterprises impacted by Western practices.

Individual connections and systems administration are urgent for business progress in Nepal, with trust and social associations assuming a critical part in different transactions. Nepali is the essential language for business correspondence, yet English is additionally broadly utilized, especially in formal and global settings. Religion, overwhelmingly Hinduism and Buddhism, altogether impacts strategic policies, with strict ceremonies and gift-giving being necessary parts of business cooperation.

The investigation likewise discovers serious areas of strength for that societies, described by shared values and regard for power, contribute emphatically to corporate execution. In any case, offsetting conventional qualities with current administration rehearses is fundamental for cultivating advancement and flexibility. Globalization has presented new administration rehearses and social standards, bit by bit reshaping customary strategic policies in Nepal and making a more powerful and cutthroat business climate.

Notwithstanding difficulties like political shakiness, administrative obstacles, and infrastructural lacks, Nepal's essential area, plentiful regular assets, and developing areas like the travel industry and IT present significant open doors for organizations.

The business culture in Nepal is a complicated transaction of customary qualities and contemporary practices. Understanding the dominating business structures, dynamic cycles, and the basic job of individual connections and systems administration is fundamental for exploring the Nepali business climate. Social factors like language, religion, and gift-giving fundamentally impact business interchanges and tasks, requiring a socially delicate way to deal with transactions.

Globalization has achieved massive changes, presenting new administration practices and guidelines that are step by step being incorporated into the conventional business scene. This joining is making a more powerful and serious business climate, despite the fact that it likewise presents difficulties connected with adjusting conventional and current practices.

To flourish in this developing scene, organizations in Nepal should embrace comprehensive dynamic cycles, put resources into building and keeping up with individual connections, and take on worldwide accepted procedures while regarding neighborhood social subtleties. Underscoring corporate social obligation and utilizing the country's upper hands can additionally improve business achievement.

All in all, a nuanced comprehension of Nepali business culture, joined with vital variations to present day rehearses, can assist organizations with exploring difficulties and profit by potential open doors, adding to economic development and hierarchical viability in Nepal. This study gives important bits of knowledge to scholastics, experts, and policymakers meaning to comprehend and draw in with the business climate in Nepal.

Implications

Implications underscore the importance of cultural awareness and adaptability for academics, practitioners, policymakers, and international businesses operating in or engaging with the Nepali business environment.

Implications for Academics

This study contributes fundamentally to the scholastic comprehension of business culture in Nepal by giving a far-reaching examination of different social and

hierarchical elements. The blended strategies approach offers a strong system for future examination, permitting researchers to investigate the exchange between conventional qualities and current strategic policies in comparative arising economies. The discoveries feature the significance of considering social variables in hierarchical conduct studies, recommending that social responsiveness and flexibility are essential for viable administration and authoritative achievement.

For scholastics, this examination highlights the need to incorporate social aspects into existing hypotheses of hierarchical way of behaving and the executives. The experiences acquired from this study can illuminate the improvement regarding new hypothetical models that better catch the exceptional qualities of business conditions in agricultural nations like Nepal. In addition, the review's discoveries can be utilized to plan socially applicable educational programs and preparing programs in business colleges, getting ready future administrators and pioneers to actually explore complex social scenes.

Implications for Practitioners

For business practitioners, understanding the nuances of Nepali business culture is essential for successful operations and market entry. This study provides practical insights into the importance of personal relationships, networking, and cultural practices such as gift-giving and religious considerations. Practitioners can leverage these insights to build stronger relationships with local partners, employees, and customers, thereby enhancing trust and collaboration.

The emphasis on top-down decision-making and hierarchical structures suggests that practitioners should adopt a respectful and culturally sensitive approach when dealing with Nepali businesses. However, the growing trend towards more inclusive and consensus-based decision-making indicates that flexibility and adaptability are also important. Practitioners should be prepared to balance traditional hierarchical practices with modern, inclusive management styles to foster innovation and employee engagement.

The findings on language use indicate that proficiency in both Nepali and English can be advantageous for business communications. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of aligning business practices with local cultural norms, which can enhance organizational effectiveness and market acceptance.

Implications for Policymakers

Policymakers can use the insights from this study to create supportive environments for businesses in Nepal. Understanding the predominant business structures and cultural factors influencing business practices can inform the development of policies and regulations that accommodate the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which form a significant part of the Nepali economy. Policies that promote inclusive decision-making, corporate social responsibility, and innovation can help bridge the gap between traditional practices and modern business requirements.

The study also underscores the importance of addressing infrastructural deficiencies and regulatory hurdles that hinder business operations in Nepal. By creating a more stable and supportive business environment, policymakers can attract foreign investment, foster economic growth, and enhance the competitiveness of Nepali businesses on a global scale.

Furthermore, the findings on globalization's impact suggest that policies promoting international collaboration and the adoption of global best practices can accelerate the integration of Nepali businesses into the global economy. Policymakers should also consider initiatives that support cultural preservation while encouraging modernization and innovation in the business sector.

Implications for International Businesses

For international businesses seeking to enter the Nepali market, this study provides valuable cultural insights that can enhance their market entry strategies. Understanding the local business culture, including the importance of personal relationships, hierarchical decision-making, and cultural practices, can help international businesses establish strong local partnerships and navigate the business environment more effectively.

The study's findings suggest that international businesses should invest in cultural training for their employees to ensure they are well-prepared to engage with Nepali counterparts. Additionally, adopting a culturally sensitive approach to business operations, marketing, and customer engagement can enhance brand acceptance and success in the Nepali market.

Overall, this study's implications underscore the importance of cultural awareness and adaptability for academics, practitioners, policymakers, and international businesses operating in or engaging with the Nepali business environment. By leveraging the insights provided, stakeholders can enhance their understanding, strategies, and practices to achieve sustainable growth and success in Nepal.

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