


Influence of Youth Engagement on Nepal's Political Evolution: An Analysis of Emerging Youth-Led Movements

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Abstract

This research investigates the increasing influence of youth participation on Nepal's political evolution, focusing on the rise of youth-led movements and initiatives. The purpose of the study is to analyze how increased political participation among youth has shaped recent political developments and policy changes in Nepal. Utilizing secondary data sources, including academic journals, government reports, and credible databases, the study employs a qualitative approach to evaluate historical and contemporary youth movements. Key variables measured include the extent of youth involvement in political activities, the impact of social media in mobilizing youth, and the resultant changes in political policies and governance. The findings reflect that youth-led movements have significantly contributed to political discourse and policy reforms in Nepal, highlighting the critical role of digital platforms in facilitating this engagement. For instance, the #OccupyBaluwatar movement of 2012-2013 successfully pressured the government to address issues of gender-based violence, leading to policy amendments and the establishment of more stringent laws for women's safety. Similarly, the advocacy by the Youth Parliament Nepal has been pivotal in incorporating youth-centric agendas into the national budget, promoting policies on education, employment, and entrepreneurship. Challenges such as institutional barriers and societal resistance are identified, enshrining the need for strategic interventions to support sustained youth participation. These findings reflect the necessity of creating supportive frameworks that enable continuous youth involvement in political processes, ensuring that their voices lead to tangible policy outcomes. The study signifies that harnessing the potential of youth is vital for the progressive political transformation of Nepal and for fostering a more inclusive political environment. By addressing the obstacles and leveraging the strengths of youth engagement, Nepal can achieve a more dynamic and representative governance structure.

Keywords: political movement, youth participation, inclusion, political transformation, youth leadership

Introduction

In recent decades, youth participation in politics has gained significant momentum globally. From the Arab Spring to the climate strikes led by Greta Thunberg, young people have increasingly taken to the streets, social media, and political platforms to demand change. These movements reflect a global trend where the younger generation is no longer content with being passive observers but are instead emerging as active agents of political transformation. This global phenomenon highlights the power and potential of youth to influence political landscapes and effectuate substantial changes in governance and policy. Nepal mirrors these global trends with its own unique context. Historically, Nepalese youth have played pivotal roles in key political movements, such as the 1990 People's Movement and the 2006 Democracy Movement, which led to significant political transitions. In recent years, there has been a noticeable rise in youth-led political initiatives and movements aimed at addressing contemporary issues such as corruption, unemployment, and social justice. The utilization of social media and digital platforms has further amplified the voices of young activists, enabling them to mobilize support and advocate for change on a larger scale.

Despite the evident enthusiasm and activism among Nepalese youth, there remains a gap in understanding the full extent and impact of their engagement on the country's political evolution. While there are anecdotal accounts and isolated studies on specific youth movements, comprehensive research that encapsulates the broader implications of youth participation on Nepal's political landscape is limited. This gap underscores the need for a systematic analysis of the role of youth in shaping Nepal's political changes. The objective of the study is to analyze the rise and impact of youth-led political movements in Nepal. Specifically, it aims to examine the extent of youth involvement in political activities, the role of social media in mobilizing youth, and the resultant changes in political policies and governance. By examining secondary data sources, this research aims to analyze how increased political participation among Nepalese youth has influenced recent political developments and policy reforms. The thesis statement of this study posits that youth-led movements are a driving force behind significant political and policy changes in Nepal, facilitated largely by digital engagement and grassroots mobilization. The significance of this study lies in its potential to shed light on the critical role of youth in the future of Nepalese politics. As Nepal continues to navigate its path towards democratic consolidation and socio-economic development, the active involvement of its youth is crucial in ensuring a vibrant and inclusive political system.

A youth movement is a collective effort by young people, typically ranging from their teens to their early thirties, to advocate for social, political, or economic change. These movements often arise in response to perceived injustices or deficiencies in the current system and are characterized by their grassroots nature, innovative use of technology, and ability to mobilize large groups of young people (Maher & Earl, 2021; Paschou & Mogollón, 2022). Youth movements can address a wide range of issues, including environmental sustainability, political reform, human rights, and social equality. Examples include the global climate strike movement and the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong (Neas et al., 2022). Youth leadership is the practice of young individuals assuming roles of influence and responsibility within organizations, communities, or movements. It involves young people taking initiative, making decisions, and driving actions that lead to change (Taft & Gordon, 2013). Effective youth leadership combines passion, vision, and the ability to inspire others, often leveraging contemporary tools such as social media to amplify their impact (Velasquez & LaRose, 2015). Youth

leaders are seen not just as future leaders but as current agents of change who challenge traditional hierarchies and bring fresh perspectives to the table (Hachhethu, 2014). Political evolution through youth leadership is the process by which young leaders and youth-led movements contribute to significant changes in the political landscape. This evolution can manifest in various ways, including the introduction of new policies, shifts in political power dynamics, and changes in societal attitudes toward governance and civic engagement (Roberts, 2015; Zharkevich, 2019). Youth leadership often brings innovation and urgency to political discourse, challenging outdated practices and advocating for more inclusive and responsive governance (Snellinger, 2018). As youth leaders gain influence, they can drive reforms that address contemporary issues and reflect the values and priorities of the younger generation, thereby shaping the future trajectory of political systems (Flanagan et al., 2007).

Literature Review

Youth participation in politics has long been a catalyst for change across the globe. Throughout history, young people have been at the forefront of major political movements, advocating for civil rights, democratic reforms, and social justice. The energy, idealism, and willingness of youth to challenge the status quo have made them a powerful force in shaping political landscapes. This phenomenon is not only evident in Western democracies but also in countries like Nepal, where youth movements have significantly influenced political transformations.

Youth Political Involvement in Nepalese Historical Transformations

Nepal's political history has been profoundly shaped by the involvement of its youth. From the early 20th century, young Nepalese activists have played critical roles in advocating for political and social changes. The anti-Rana movement in the 1940s, which sought to end the autocratic Rana regime and establish democracy, saw significant participation from students and young intellectuals. This early engagement set the stage for subsequent youth-led political activities. One of the most notable periods of youth political involvement in Nepal occurred during the 1990 People's Movement (Jana Andolan). This movement, which ultimately led to the restoration of multi-party democracy, was significantly driven by young activists and students who organized protests, mobilized communities, and demanded an end to the Panchayat system (O'Neill et al., 2019). The success of this movement highlighted the critical role of youth in Nepal's political transformations and established a tradition of youth activism in the country. In the early 2000s, the Nepalese Civil War (1996-2006) saw youth involvement on multiple fronts. While many young people were drawn into the Maoist insurgency, others engaged in peace-building and democratic advocacy. The period following the civil war, particularly the 2006 Democracy Movement (LoktantrikAndolan), again saw massive participation from youth, who were instrumental in pushing for the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a federal democratic republic (Shrestha & Jenkins, 2019).

The post-conflict era presented new challenges and opportunities for youth political engagement. Student unions, which have historically been vibrant centers of political activism in Nepal, continued to play significant roles. However, these unions also faced criticism for engaging in what O'Neill (2016) describes as "political anti-politics," where political engagement is sometimes driven more by factionalism and patronage than by genuine democratic ideals. In more recent years, youth political involvement in Nepal has taken on new forms, particularly through social media and digital activism. The 2015 Nepal earthquake and subsequent political responses saw youth mobilize through online

platforms to coordinate relief efforts and advocate for political accountability. Beyond political activism, Nepali youth have also channeled their energy into social development. The increasing number of youth-led volunteer organizations addresses critical issues like poverty, education, and environmental protection. These organizations not only provide crucial services but also cultivate a sense of social responsibility and civic engagement among young people. Issues such as corruption, unemployment, and social justice have driven new waves of youth activism, leading to the formation of various youth-led organizations and movements (Faye & Kölbel, 2022). Despite these efforts, young people in Nepal face numerous challenges in their political engagement. Structural barriers, including a lack of representation in formal political institutions and socio-economic constraints, often hinder their participation. However, initiatives such as national youth policies aim to address these barriers by providing frameworks to support youth involvement in governance and policy-making processes (Lelwic-Ojeda & Akintola, 2023). From spearheading movements that have toppled autocratic regimes to engaging in post-conflict democratic processes, Nepalese youth have been and remain essential drivers of political change.

Theoretical Framework on Youth Political Engagement

Exploration of various theories and models explains about the reasons of young people participating in political activities, the forms their activism takes, and the resultant impacts. These frameworks have been essential for comprehending the motivations and mechanisms behind youth activism, particularly in the context of Nepal, where youth have played pivotal roles in political transformations. Tuck and Yang (2013) interpret the concept of youth resistance as a form of activism aimed at challenging existing power structures. This theory posits that young people engage in resistance through both overt actions, such as protests and demonstrations, and covert actions, such as cultural expressions and lifestyle choices. This dual approach to resistance is not merely reactionary but also proactive, as youth seek to create alternative futures. In Nepal, this form of youth resistance is evident in historical movements such as the 2006 Democracy Movement, where young people were at the forefront of advocating for the end of the monarchy and the establishment of a federal democratic republic.

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework, discussed by Flanagan et al. (2007), emphasizes the potential of young people to contribute positively to society. This approach proposes that youth engagement in political activism is driven by a desire to bring about social change and to contribute to the common good. The PYD framework highlights the importance of supportive environments and opportunities for meaningful participation. In Nepal, this is reflected in the activities of youth organizations that focus on education, health, and environmental sustainability, providing platforms for young people to engage meaningfully in their communities. Velasquez and LaRose (2015) explore the concept of collective efficacy, which refers to the shared belief in a group's ability to achieve collective goals. This theory is particularly relevant in the context of social media, where youth can mobilize and organize collectively. The sense of collective efficacy can drive young people to engage in activism, believing that their efforts, combined with those of others, can lead to significant change. In Nepal, the role of collective efficacy is evident in the way young people utilized social media during the 2015 earthquake to coordinate relief efforts and advocate for government accountability. Taft and Gordon (2013) introduce the idea of constrained democracy, examining the limitations and opportunities for youth activism within democratic societies. They argue that while young people are often encouraged to participate in politics, their participation is frequently limited by structural and institutional barriers. In Nepal, this is seen in the context of student unions and youth wings of political parties, where

political engagement is sometimes driven more by factionalism and patronage than by genuine democratic ideals. Maher and Earl (2021) discuss how age inequality affects youth activism, arguing that societal expectations often undermine the political capabilities of young people. This theory suggests that youth activism is not only about overcoming external barriers but also about challenging societal perceptions of young people's roles. In Nepal, young activists often struggle to be taken seriously by older political leaders, creating additional hurdles for youth engagement. This dynamic necessitates a cultural shift towards recognizing and valuing the political contributions of young people.

Ubachs (2022) emphasizes the role of youth in peace-building, which is highly relevant to Nepal's post-conflict context. Youth-led movements have been instrumental in advocating for peace and reconciliation, demonstrating the capacity of young people to contribute to long-term political stability. Similarly, Neas et al. (2022) highlight the significance of youth climate activism. In Nepal, young people are increasingly involved in environmental movements, addressing issues like climate change and sustainable development. This activism is driven by a global awareness and a local commitment to preserving Nepal's natural heritage. Chrysochoou and Barrett (2017) discuss civic and political engagement among youth, which is evident in Nepal's vibrant civil society. Young people participate in various civic activities, from volunteering to participating in local governance, reflecting a broader trend of active youth citizenship. These theoretical frameworks highlight the various factors that drive young people to participate in political activities. Applying these theories to the Nepalese context reveals the multifaceted nature of youth activism in Nepal, characterized by both challenges and opportunities for significant political impact.

Despite extensive global studies on youth political engagement, there are gaps in understanding youth political movements in Nepal. Existing research often focuses on individual movements like the 1990 People's Movement or the 2006 Democracy Movement, lacking a comprehensive historical analysis. Limited research addresses how Nepalese youth use social media for political mobilization and advocacy. Additionally, there is insufficient analysis on the specific outcomes of youth movements on political policies and governance in Nepal. Research highlights barriers to youth participation, but in-depth studies on economic constraints, societal norms, and intersectional identities are needed. Few studies explore the development of youth leadership in political contexts or the long-term effects of youth engagement. Comparative studies placing Nepalese youth activism in a global context are rare, and more research is needed on the implementation and effectiveness of national youth policies. This research addresses major gaps in understanding youth political engagement in Nepal by providing a comprehensive analysis of youth-led political movements, tracking their evolution and impacts over different political eras. It also explores digital activism, analyzing how Nepalese youth use social media to mobilize and influence political discourse. The study examines socio-economic and cultural barriers to youth participation and incorporates an intersectional approach to understand how gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status influence political engagement.

Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative methodology, relying on secondary data sources to analyze the impact of youth participation in Nepal's political landscape and the rise of youth-led political movements. The study utilizes academic journals, books, government and NGO reports, media articles,

and historical documents to analyze youth political engagement. Thematic analysis has identified recurring patterns and narratives, such as types of youth movements, modes of engagement, and their impacts on political policies. Sources have been selected based on relevance, credibility, and recency, ensuring a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of the topic. Contextual analysis has situated these findings within Nepal's broader socio-political and cultural context, exploring how historical events, socio-economic conditions, and cultural norms influence youth activism. Additionally, comparative analysis has placed Nepalese youth political engagement in a global context, highlighting similarities and differences with other countries. By synthesizing insights from these diverse sources, the research aims to fill existing gaps in the literature. However, the reliance on secondary data sources presents potential limitations, such as the availability and accuracy of information. To mitigate these limitations, the study has cross-referenced multiple sources to ensure reliability and validity. Efforts have been made to include a diverse range of perspectives and to critically evaluate the content to minimize bias.

Findings and Discussion

Youth political engagement in Nepal is driven by a multifaceted array of factors, encompassing socioeconomic, cultural, and educational influences. These elements create an environment that not only encourages political involvement but also shapes the nature and direction of youth activism.

Catalysts for Youth Political Engagement in Nepal

Economic conditions play a pivotal role in motivating youth political engagement in Nepal. The country faces significant economic challenges, including high unemployment rates and limited economic opportunities, particularly for young people. According to a report by the International Labour Organization (ILO), youth unemployment in Nepal was estimated at around 19% in recent years, significantly higher than the national average. This economic disenfranchisement often leads to frustration and disillusionment among young people, pushing them towards political activism as a means to voice their grievances and demand change. Shrestha and Jenkins (2019) highlight that economic hardships, compounded by inadequate access to resources and opportunities, drive many young people to participate in political movements. The lack of economic stability forces youth to seek alternatives, including migration for employment, which in turn influences their political engagement. In rural areas, where economic opportunities are even scarcer, young people are particularly motivated to engage in political activities that promise economic reforms and better livelihoods. The economic disparity between urban and rural areas exacerbates the situation. Urban youth often have better access to education and employment opportunities, while rural youth face systemic barriers that hinder their socioeconomic mobility. This disparity fosters a sense of inequality and injustice, propelling rural youth to become more politically active. Korzenevica (2016) emphasizes that young people in rural Nepal navigate political engagement through the lens of post-war instability and mobility, where economic conditions directly impact their political aspirations and activism.

Cultural factors are equally significant in shaping youth political engagement in Nepal. The concept of "Yuba," or youth, in Nepalese society is imbued with cultural significance and expectations. Snellinger (2009) explains that youth are not just seen as an age group but as a dynamic social force capable of driving societal change. Historically, youth have played crucial roles in major political movements in Nepal, including the 1951 revolution that ended the Rana regime, the 1990 People's Movement that

restored multiparty democracy, and the 2006 Democracy Movement that led to the abolition of the monarchy. This historical legacy of youth activism creates a cultural expectation for young people to be at the forefront of political change. Cultural norms and societal expectations encourage youth to engage in activism, viewing it as a rite of passage and a moral responsibility. Lamichhane (2021) describes how this cultural expectation has evolved into a "cultural turn" in youth activism, where traditional forms of protest are complemented by new, innovative expressions of dissent and advocacy. This includes the use of art, music, and digital media to convey political messages and mobilize support. The cultural dimension of youth activism is also evident in the way youth movements shape collective identity and social solidarity. Snellinger (2013) discusses how youth movements create a sense of belonging and shared purpose, reinforcing the cultural narrative of youth as agents of change. This collective identity is crucial for sustaining political engagement and fostering long-term commitment to activism.

Education is a critical factor in fostering youth political engagement in Nepal. Access to education, particularly higher education, exposes young people to diverse ideas, ideologies, and critical thinking skills that are essential for political engagement. Universities and colleges in Nepal have historically been hotbeds of political activity, where students organize protests, debates, and campaigns on various political issues. Snellinger (2018) highlights that student movements have been instrumental in shaping political discourse and leadership in Nepal. Educational institutions provide a platform for young people to engage with political processes, develop leadership skills, and build networks that support their activism. The role of student unions and campus organizations in political mobilization cannot be overstated, as they serve as training grounds for future political leaders. However, the quality and accessibility of education remain significant challenges. While urban youth have better access to quality education, rural youth often face barriers such as inadequate infrastructure, lack of resources, and socio-economic constraints. This educational disparity contributes to the broader socio-economic divide and influences the nature of political engagement among rural and urban youth. Prasai (2018) emphasizes that improving educational access and quality is crucial for empowering youth to participate more effectively in democratic processes and governance.

The historical and political context of Nepal significantly influences youth political engagement. Nepal's recent history is marked by political instability, conflict, and transition. The decade-long Maoist insurgency (1996-2006) and subsequent peace process have left a lasting impact on the political landscape. Young people who grew up during this period have been shaped by the experiences of conflict and the subsequent efforts at peace-building and democratization. Zharkevich (2019) describes how the promise of development and the reality of political instability motivate young people to become politically active. The ongoing process of political transition, including the establishment of a federal democratic republic and the drafting of a new constitution, provides a dynamic backdrop for youth activism. Young people are driven by the desire to influence these processes and ensure that their voices are heard in the shaping of the country's future. Political inclusion of youth has been a contentious issue in Nepal. Despite their numerical strength, young people often feel marginalized by older political elites who dominate the political landscape. Hachhethu (2014) discusses the challenges of political inclusion, noting that young people struggle to gain significant influence in formal political institutions. This marginalization drives many youth to seek alternative avenues for political engagement, including grassroots movements, civil society organizations, and digital activism.

Youth movements themselves act as powerful catalysts for further engagement by creating a sense of solidarity, identity, and collective purpose. Rijal (2024) explains how political demonstrations and the politics of mourning among Nepali youths serve as powerful symbols of resistance and collective identity. These movements address immediate political grievances but also inspire ongoing political participation by fostering a sense of agency and empowerment among young people. O'Neill (2023) highlights the role of meritocracy and cultural hierarchy in the "New Nepal," where youth movements strive to challenge existing power structures and advocate for a more inclusive and equitable society. These movements provide a platform for young people to articulate their demands, mobilize support, and effect change. Hence, youth political engagement in Nepal is driven by a combination of socioeconomic, cultural, and educational influences, set against a backdrop of historical and political context. Economic disenfranchisement, cultural expectations, educational opportunities, and historical legacies all contribute to the motivations and methods of youth political activism.

Impact of Youth Movements on Policies and Governance in Nepal

Youth movements in Nepal have played a significant role in shaping political policies and governance, particularly in recent decades. These movements, driven by the vibrant and politically active youth population of the country, have led to substantial political changes and reforms. The 1990 People's Movement, or Jana Andolan I, marked a significant turning point in Nepal's political history. Spearheaded by student unions and youth activists, this non-violent revolution succeeded in toppling the authoritarian Panchayat regime, which had ruled the country for three decades (O'Neill et al., 2019). The movement's success led to the establishment of a multiparty democracy. The movement resulted in the introduction of a new constitution that guaranteed fundamental rights and freedoms to the Nepalese people. It established a multi-party political system with provisions for regular elections, enhancing political participation and democratic governance. The movement also created increased space for civil society organizations and political participation, empowering citizens to engage more actively in the country's political processes.

The 2006 People's Movement- Jana Andolan II, is a pivotal example of youth-led activism that significantly impacted Nepal's political landscape. This movement, which saw massive participation from youth across the country, led to the end of King Gyanendra's direct rule and the restoration of democracy. The movement culminated in the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in November 2006, which officially ended the decade-long Maoist insurgency and paved the way for the abolition of the monarchy (Faye & Kölbl, 2022). Youth played a crucial role in mobilizing mass protests, utilizing both traditional methods and modern technologies to coordinate efforts and spread their message. This movement's success reflected the power of youth activism in driving major political changes. As a result, the monarchy was abolished in 2008, and Nepal was declared a federal democratic republic. The youth's involvement in this movement also emphasized the importance of inclusive political processes and the need for a democratic system that accommodates diverse voices. The movement culminated in the adoption of a new constitution in 2015, which enshrined a federal system with seven provinces. It increased representation of marginalized groups in government structures, promoting a more inclusive political system. The establishment of a republican form of government with a president as the head of state marked a significant shift in Nepal's governance.

Another significant instance of youth impact on political policies is the involvement of young activists in the drafting of Nepal's new constitution, promulgated in 2015. The constitution-drafting process was

marked by intense political negotiations and widespread public consultations. Youth activists were actively involved in advocating for progressive provisions, such as gender equality, social justice, and the recognition of marginalized communities. Youth-led organizations and movements, such as the Association of Youth Organizations Nepal (AYON), played a vital role in ensuring that the voices of young people were heard in the constitutional assembly. They organized rallies, submitted petitions, and engaged in public debates to influence the drafting process. Their efforts resulted in several youth-friendly provisions in the new constitution, including the establishment of a National Youth Council and the inclusion of youth rights as fundamental rights (Korzenevica, 2016).

The "Enough is Enough" campaign, which emerged in 2020, is an instance of how youth activism can drive political change. Sparked by dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, this youth-led movement used social media to organize protests and raise awareness about government accountability and transparency. The campaign demanded better healthcare facilities, more transparent communication from the government, and effective measures to combat the pandemic. The movement's impact was significant in highlighting the government's shortcomings and pushing for reforms. It forced the government to take more decisive actions in managing the pandemic and addressing public health concerns. The "Enough is Enough" campaign demonstrated the effectiveness of digital activism in mobilizing support and holding the government accountable (Lamichhane, 2021). Political campaigning through social media is observed to be increased in the recent time. In Nepal's general election 2022, young candidates won a few election constituencies, primarily from fledgling political parties. Youth movements have consistently advocated for social justice and the inclusion of marginalized communities in political processes. This has resulted in policy changes aimed at addressing inequalities and promoting social cohesion.

Large-scale demonstrations led by young people in 2022 highlighted concerns about corruption, particularly in the education sector. These protests demanded transparency and accountability from the government. The protests led to increased scrutiny of government spending and procurement processes in the education sector. Independent commissions were established to investigate corruption allegations, demonstrating a commitment to accountability and reform. The 2022 local-level elections saw a significant increase in youth candidacy, with 41% of candidates being under 40 years old. This trend indicated a growing desire for political participation among young people (O'Neill, 2023). The increased youth representation in local government bodies expects to bring a fresh perspective to governance and policy-making. There is a potential for increased focus on youth-specific policies and programs in local governance, addressing issues directly affecting young people (Hachhethu, 2014).

Comparative Analysis

Youth political movements across the globe have historically played a crucial role in driving political and social changes. In examining youth movements globally, Braungart (1984) identifies historical generations and generation units as pivotal to know the global pattern of youth movements. This concept asserts that each generation faces unique social and political challenges that shape their activism. An instance is the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1960s which was heavily influenced by the young generation's desire for social justice and equality. Similarly, the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa saw significant youth involvement, as young people were at the forefront of the struggle against racial segregation and oppression.

European youth movements provide an analytical comparative perspective. According to Walther et al. (2021), different European cities exhibit various regimes of youth participation influenced by local policies and cultural contexts. In cities like Berlin and Barcelona, youth engagement is fostered through supportive policies that encourage political participation and provide platforms for youth voices. These policies include structured youth councils, participatory budgeting processes, and educational programs that emphasize civic engagement. These practices highlight the importance of creating institutional support mechanisms to enhance youth political involvement. In Latin America, Atta et al. (2021) explore the dynamics of youth and adult education within social movements in Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina. They reveal that educational initiatives within these movements play a critical role in empowering young activists by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for their causes effectively. It suggests that integrating educational components into youth movements can significantly enhance their impact and sustainability. Paschou and Mogollón (2022) conducted an analysis of the motivations behind youth political participation across different types of activism, revealing that motivations can vary significantly based on cultural, economic, and political contexts. In some regions, youth are driven by a desire to address immediate socio-economic issues, while in others, ideological commitments or identity politics may be the primary motivators. Reflecting these diverse motivations can help tailor strategies to mobilize youth effectively in Nepal, addressing both their immediate concerns and long-term aspirations.

The role of informal youth movements in shaping postmodern societies is discussed by Kahane and Rapoport (1997). They highlight how informal, grassroots movements can exert substantial influence by challenging traditional power structures and advocating for more inclusive and democratic societies. It is relevant in Nepal where informal youth groups have often been at the forefront of political activism, pushing for more transparent and accountable governance. Roberts (2015) examines the impact of youth mobilizations and political generations on political change movements throughout the twentieth century. It is argued that youth movements often act as catalysts for broader social transformations, leveraging their energy and idealism to challenge entrenched systems and promote progressive change. This historical perspective reinforces the idea that youth activism in Nepal can drive significant political reforms if properly harnessed and supported. In Africa, Maganga (2020) analyzes the impact of youth demonstrations on political change and development. It highlights the role of youth in toppling autocratic regimes and advocating for democratic governance. The success of youth movements in countries like Tunisia and Egypt during the Arab Spring illustrates the potential of youth activism to bring about rapid political change. These instances reveal the importance of strategic planning, effective use of technology, and international solidarity in amplifying the impact of youth movements.

Discussion

There is the pivotal role of youth movements in shaping Nepal's political landscape, with substantial impacts on policies and governance structures. Historical movements such as the 1990 People's Movement I and the 2006 People's Movement II exemplify the significant influence of youth activism in transforming the country's political regime. The 1990 movement, driven by student unions and youth activists, led to the overthrow of the Panchayat regime and the establishment of a multiparty democracy. This change was not merely political but also constitutional, guaranteeing fundamental rights and freedoms and providing a framework for regular elections and increased political

participation. Similarly, the 2006 movement catalyzed the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a federal republic, showcasing the power of youth-led mobilization in driving democratic reforms. The success of these movements demonstrates the critical role that young activists play in advocating for inclusive governance and democratic principles, emphasizing the need for continued youth engagement in political processes. Comparatively, Nepal's youth movements share similarities with global trends, yet also reflect unique contextual challenges and opportunities. European youth movements, supported by institutional frameworks like youth councils and participatory budgeting, illustrate how formal structures can enhance youth political engagement. The digital activism seen in the "Enough is Enough" campaign in Nepal mirrors global trends where social media is leveraged to organize protests and demand government accountability. This campaign highlighted the effectiveness of digital tools in mobilizing support and pushing for reforms, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, the rise of many new parties with young leaders in the parliament having strong social media support reflects the increasing tendency of youth in political mainframe. However, despite these successes, challenges remain in ensuring proportional youth representation in formal political structures and in effectively engaging young people in decision-making processes. Lessons from other countries, such as the integration of educational initiatives within youth movements in Latin America, are beneficial in addressing these challenges in Nepal. This comparison advocates that while Nepal has made significant strides, adopting successful strategies from other contexts could further strengthen youth activism, ensuring a more vibrant, inclusive, and representative democracy.

Conclusion

This research has been based on the analysis of the transformative impact of youth-led movements on Nepal's political evolution, demonstrating how they shifted the nation from an authoritarian regime to a federal democratic republic. Despite this success, the persistent issue of inadequate youth representation in formal political structures remains a significant challenge. The broader implications for policy and practice suggest the need for more robust institutional frameworks that actively include youth in political processes. Recommendation drawn from the findings suggests the establishment and enhancement of youth councils and the strategic use of digital platforms to engage young people effectively, drawing on successful global models. The "Enough is enough" campaign has set an example of how modern technologies can empower and mobilize youth, offering a template for future activism. To foster greater youth engagement, priorities should be focused on initiatives that increase youth representation and create inclusive governance mechanisms. Addressing structural barriers and promoting continuous advocacy for social justice and the inclusion of marginalized communities are crucial for a responsive political system. These steps will not only strengthen Nepal's democratic foundations but also ensure that youth remain pivotal in shaping the country's political future. Subsequent research should focus on longitudinal studies to track the long-term impacts of youth movements and explore innovative strategies for enhancing youth participation in political systems.

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