



Development Practices under Different Political Regimes in Nepal: Theoretical Explanation

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Abstract

The government of Nepal has introduced and implemented many development plans, policies, and programs so far. Nepal has witnessed various development practices during different political systems. This paper is intended to review and analyse the development practices under different political regimes in Nepal. The paper employed an analytical review approach based on secondary sources to assess and analyse the development practices in Nepal. The study reveals that Nepal has implemented fifteen periodic development plans and policies; however, it still needs excellent efforts for economic progress. The People's Movement in 1990 restored Nepal's multiparty system, focusing on privatisation and financial liberalisation. The 2007 Interim Constitution introduced the concept of inclusion, and the 2015 Constituent Assembly Constitution instituted inclusion in periodic development plans. Each political regime contributed to the nation's overall development but faced difficulties contributing to its effectiveness. Nepal's development plans, programs, and policies have not fully achieved objectives, addressed rural poor issues, and lacked continuity due to unstable government and global practices.

Keywords

Development Plans, Government, Planning commission, Political regimes

Introduction

Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal is naturally prosperous between two immense countries -China in the north and India in the south. The Constitution of Nepal, 2015, has restructured the country administratively into seven provinces and 753 local units. The federal government has delegated the province and municipal governments' jurisdiction, authority, and resources mainly to practice balanced regional development in the country. Development practices in Nepal are not new; they have a history of almost seven decades. Following the overthrow of the hundred-year-long family-based Rana Regime in 1956 A.D., Nepal established a substantial national planning commission, regarded as the first turning point in the country's

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economic development history. The National Planning Commission, established under the Yojana Mandal Act of 1957 A. D., is the government of Nepal's apex body that serves as a consultative body for the nation's development strategies and plans. Creating a national vision, regular periodic plans, and development policies is the key responsibility of Nepal's highest advisory body to the government. The 1951 political reforms began Nepal's planned development endeavours. (Manandhar, 2011). In Nepal, a five-year development planning process started in September 1956 A.D.

In the meantime, following the implementation of periodic development planning in Nepal, fifteen development plans underwent testing, and the sixteenth-fifth-year periodic development plan is in operation with its initial operation. Implementing fifteen development plans has witnessed many ups and downs in the country's political system. With the downfall of a century-long authoritarian Rana regime, democracy was established in 1951. A. D. Nepali people took part in the election to cast votes to select their representatives in 1959. A. D. Nepal's first elected representative government could not experience its entire tenure as King Mahendra dissolved the cabinet, suspended the Constitution, and excluded the articles concerning the declared State of national emergency on December 15, 1960 (Skerry et al., 1992). King declared the Panchayat system through his proclamation in January 1961. The first democratic regime continued only for one decade, from 1951 to 1960.

The political regime shifted to a party-less Panchayat system, which lasted three decades from 1960 to 1990. Democracy was reestablished on April 08, 1990, with nationwide agitation, which added one more shift in the political regime. A new Constitution was promulgated on November 22, 1990, which authorised multiparty democracy in the country. Based on this Constitution, the first free and fair election was held on May 12, 1991. The era of multiparty democracy continued only for one and half decades, from 1991 to 2006. With the historic people's movement in 2006, the unitarian system of democracy shifted to the federal democratic republican system and experienced a drastic change in the political regime. The Constitution Assembly declared the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal in 2015. The government of Nepal has introduced and implemented many development plans, policies, and programs so far; however, no study has been carried out on the development practices in Nepal with different political regime backgrounds. So, this paper aims to review and analyse the development practices in Nepal under different political regimes.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Todaro and Smith define development as a multi-dimensional process that includes significant changes in social structures, public attitudes, national institutions, economic growth, inequality reduction, and elimination of absolute poverty (Todaro & Smith, 2020). According to Nederveen Pieterse, "development" is "the organised intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement." People's choices, capacities, and freedoms should be considered more broadly when evaluating development than just a society's average. Development should be measured in terms of how it affects people rather than how much they earn. (Pieterse, 2011).

Thorbecke (2019) pointed out that the socio-economic Development of the Third World was not a key policy objective before the Second World War. The end of the Second World War waved the commencement of a new regime for the less developed countries, which transformed their relationship with the former colonial powers from symbiosis to self-examination and from dependence to a degree of independence. Additionally, it showed the initiation of a thoughtful interest of academics and decision-makers in understanding and better comprehending the development progression as a foundation for formulating effective development plans, policies, and strategies. With the strong feeling that it was necessary to create a conceptual development theory that would serve as a manual for developing economic policies in newly decolonised countries, they framed different development discourses for various decades, which have been summarised as follows:

- 1950s- Development as economic growth led by the State.
- 1960s- Development as modernisation led by the State; first UN decade of development.
- 1970s- Development as World Structural Change (Dependency Theory); Critique of Development; second UN decade of development

- The 1980s- Development as growth led by the free market (neoliberalism), basic needs, structural adjustment, and the third UN decade of development.
- 1990s- Development as Poverty Reduction; Sustainable development; Human Development
- 2000s- Environmental/ Climate Change Concerns; MDGs

Skerry et al. (1992) argued that foreign aid has played a fundamental role in helping Nepal's economic advancement since it opened its doors to the outside world in 1951. In 1951, U.S. assistance in Nepal was expected to accelerate the nation's economic modernisation significantly. USAID increased capital investments in the 1960s to boost economic expansion and focus on institution-building to support fiscal and administrative infrastructure for relevant development programs. In the 1970s, this approach was improved by the New Directions directive, which stated that AID should directly relieve the rural poor by involving them in the development process. With an emphasis on expanding the private sector and restructuring macroeconomic policies, USAID carried out a comprehensive policy reform program in the 1980s to promote economic growth and development. The political revolution in Nepal in 1990 provided hope for donors, leading to the International Monetary Fund's willingness to discuss an Expanded Structural Adjustment Program at the Paris Nepal Aid Group conference. However, liberalisation was adopted based on aid groups' interests, leading to the privatisation of many industries and many disappearing.

Theoretical Review

Modernisation Theory

The concept of modernisation evolved as the counterpart of traditional society. It originated during the 1950s and 1960s. The major founder of modernisation theory is German sociologist Max Weber. Weber's approach provided the basis for the modernisation paradigm, and it was later popularised by American sociologist Talcott Parsons, who translated Weber's works into English, including his interpretations of it. In addition to explaining how civilisations evolve, modernisation theory also tries to pinpoint the social factors that influence social development and advancement. Modernisation theory suggests that traditional civilisations will advance as they embrace more contemporary practices. This theory advocates that traditional beliefs and norms usually lose significance as modernisation advances traction. The concept of individualism dominates the family or community as society's core unit as society grows more modern.

Modernisation Theory was revived in the 1990s and is still a contested theory of developing underdeveloped countries. Modernisation theory explains two leading sets of societies in the world, namely the traditional and modern societies. It denotes the creation of a new social order based on advanced technology and the spirit of science, a rational outlook on life and social interactions, the pursuit of justice in public affairs, and, above all, the political acceptance of the idea that the nation-state should be the primary unit of public policy (Ojukwu et al., 2016).

Most third-world leaders and development planners have regarded modernisation as one of the key policies or theories since the 1950s for transforming their underdevelopment to the development track. Moreover, development was primarily undertaken to transform traditional values into modern ones. Therefore, the countries in the Third World needed to follow the stages of development propounded by Rostow, i.e., Preparation to take-off, take-off, drive to maturity, and the period of mass consumption as they were believed to have already been experienced by the developed countries. Another school of thought of modernisation was the Lewisian model, which presumes that the surplus produced by the industrial sector would "trickle down" to the backward rural areas and decrease the accumulation of rural surplus labour in the industrial sector by stimulating a slightly higher wage rate. The underlying presumption of this approach is that noteworthy investments in rural development will spur economic growth there, with overall advantages eventually trickling down to the lowest strata of society.

Modernisation theory has been the central hypothesis in development literature explaining the change and growth process. Many different intellectuals operate under the modernisation theory and propose different development models (Clement et al., 2019). However, this theory is not free from some flaws based on which it has been criticised. Socialist ideologies, theorists of dependency, and world systems have strongly criticised modernisation theory.

Dependency Theory

Development thinkers and scholars were forced to seek new development paradigms as the modernisation theory failed to address the growing problem of inequalities, poverty, and many socioeconomic issues in newly independent countries in Asia and Africa. Matunhu (2011) stated that in the 1950s, dissatisfaction with modernisation sparked new lines of inquiry that gave rise to the dependency theory. This theory was developed as a critical response to the conventional approaches to economic development that emerged following World War II. In his analysis of the post-colonial State, Frank (1975) stated that classical development theories like modernity were deceptive since they could not describe the actual interaction between the developed and underdeveloped parts of the world. Frank believed that modernity had distorted the reality of what developed countries wanted from their former colonies. He claimed that the relationship between rich and underdeveloped poor countries was detrimental to the latter and actively harmful, hindering and destroying their growth. To him, the interactions between societies were the cause of both underdevelopment and Development (Singh, 2009). T. D. Santosh's widely accepted definition of dependency is mentioned as

By dependency, we mean a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected. The relation of inter-dependency between two or more economies, and between these and world trade, assumes the form of dependency when some countries (the dominant ones) can expand and be self-sustaining. At the same time, other countries (the dependent ones) can do this only as a reflection of that expansion, which can have either a positive or a negative effect on their immediate Development (Santosh, 1970 as cited in Namkoong, 1999, pp. 123-24).

In this definition, Santosh describes the spatial form of dependence, where some nations (the dominant) attained self-sustaining economic growth. In contrast, others (the dominant and dependent) only experienced growth because of shifts in the dominating nations. Dependency theory's conceptual core is Marxist theory. According to this theory, resources move from a peripheral of underdeveloped and poorer countries to a core of wealthier ones, enhancing the latter at the expense of the former. According to the dependency theory, poor states' integration into the global economy makes rich states richer and poor states poorer. In the Theories of Development, Shareia (2015) explains that the theory focuses on the totality of society and the periphery of the social system, highlighting the distinctions between first-world imperialist nations and developing nations. Dependency theory clarifies these distinctions by concentrating on numerous nation-states' geographical areas and structural circumstances. Muuka remarked that Dependency Theory is a school of thought that is not isolated from global events and was born out of Latin American dissatisfaction with the failure of the economic benefits predicted by neoclassical theory (Muuka, 1997, as cited in Shareia, 2015, p. 81). Todaro & Smith (2000, p. 91) believed that, according to international dependence patterns, Third World countries are essentially ruled by the politics, institutions, and economies of the developed countries themselves or other countries under the influence of dominating wealthy countries.

According to dependency theory, the world is divided into a capitalist core and an exploited periphery. The key appearances of core countries are industries, financial power, social elites, and education systems. In contrast, periphery countries have characteristics like agriculture, forestry, mining, less power, poor system of education, and low wages. These factors are the pivotal constituents composing the core and periphery relationship. The significant implication is an unequal flow of high-wage, high-profit items and low-wage, low-profit products in global trade between the centre and the periphery. Peripheral countries remain underdeveloped, dependent, and poor because they export primary commodities at low prices to the rich countries, which then produce products from those commodities and sell them back to poorer countries at high prices. Therefore, the basic contention is that developed countries continually industrialise while exploiting the economic excess of developing countries, whereas developing countries are primarily left behind and suffer from underdevelopment.

Policy Review

The Nepalese development policy is based on the Constitution's political obligations and directive principles (NPC, 2019). The development policies are designed to provide guidelines outlined in the

Constitution. State development policy may be accessed through the theoretical frameworks for the political system established in the Constitution. The political intent of the State is to underpin the federal republican system by ensuring the protection of freedom, equality, proportional participation, and social justice by internalising the inclusionary principles of the governance system, as stated in the directive principles of the Constitution (Article 50). The economic objective of the State is to "stop all types of economic exploitation and inequality and build the national economy self-reliant, autonomous, and evolving towards socialism orientated economy with fair distribution of resources and means." Nepal's Constitution (2015) is a perfect example of the source of policy for development plans (Limbu, 2019).

Empirical Review

Khatri (2019) argued that rural development is indispensable for the overall advancement of the nation based on its agrarian nature. Many programs related to rural development have been launched in Nepal during different periods. Most rural development programs launched in the country are related to developing rural infrastructure, such as land reform, water, electricity, agriculture, and social-cultural issues. Nepal, being rural, is essential to the programs implemented for both rural and national development. The study has also revealed a high potential for economic expansion through rural development in the country. However, the policies and programs that were applied have not been able to address the real needs of the rural poor. He further suggests committing continuity to the following government's considerably good programs and employing the pro-poor oriented and geographically appropriate rural development policies.

Gautam (2020) mentioned that rural development, for a rural nation like Nepal, is unavoidable for the country's sustained development. From a historical perspective, many rural development policies and programs have been implemented by the numerous governments in the country. Significant efforts were made to promote rural development during the Panchayat era. Panchayat focused on agriculture, allied activities, rural industries, and infrastructure. The government, especially after restoring democracy in 1990 A. D., focused on rural development. He argued that the efforts adopted by rural development in the country did not address the real needs of low-income people. He suggested improving the rural development efforts in Nepal. Katuwal (2020) examined Nepal's development efforts and agenda in his paper "Development Practices in Nepal: Historical Perspectives," referencing previous legal frameworks, acts, rules, regulations, policies, plans, and programs. He argued that the development paradigm in poor nations like Nepal lies in the relationship between local development and citizen participation. He concluded that there were rarely successful planning records after looking at nearly a dozen past plans, development policies, and strategies. Sapkota and Malakar (2021), in their study entitled "Local Development Planning Process: A policy-level analysis in Nepal," argued that local development plans serve as a crucial yardstick and pivot for national long-term vision. The paper finds that Nepal's local development planning process involves designing the overall process, steps, and procedures based on policy documents. Nepal is implementing a new local development planning exercise that involves beneficiaries in defining needs, prioritising issues, setting objectives, and monitoring implementation. The paper concludes that local government should adopt a result-based approach in formulating local development planning, prioritising input, process, outcome, and impact over the spirit of local development.

Methodology

This study is based on the review of literature on development practices in Nepal. The study has reviewed both published and unpublished literature for the analysis. First, relevant literature was extracted from multiple online search engines like Google Scholar, JSTOR, Research Gate, Scopus, Springer, Science Direct, and the website of the National Planning Commission, which were used as the search engines of electronic databases to access and retrieve the information to review the relevant and authentic documents like scholarly articles, organizational reports, and various periodic plans of Nepal. Furthermore, a systematic review was conducted using an analytical review approach. Then, the country's development practices were described under different political regimes. Among the various development programs, only a few were chosen to interpret the development practices of the relevant political regime concerning issues like inclusion and people's involvement in the programme.

Results and Discussion

Some development practices implemented by the Nepalese government during different political regimes have been discussed here.

Development practices in the first multiparty democratic regime (1951- 1960 A.D.)

The joint efforts of the people and the Shah King overthrew the Rana Regime, a century-long family-centered oligarchy, in 1951. With the establishment of multiparty democracy in the country, the path for development was constructed as the government announced the country's first annual budget in 1952. Moreover, Nepal witnessed the first development plan in the country's history in 1956, for which the Ministry of Planning and Development was established in 1955. It is the first significant turning point in Nepal's economic growth since the plan called for establishing a socioeconomic environment to enable its citizens to lead happy and prestigious lives (Shrivastava, 2008). The first five-year plan (1956–61) was expected to improve the living conditions of Nepalese people. Established in 1957, the Administrative Reform Planning Commission projected a hierarchical organisation for village development activities, with a sub-division, Panchayat, and district unit overseeing operations, with each block consisting of multiple villages. In 1959, a new democratic Constitution was declared, followed by the multiparty election for the first time in the history of Nepal. This led to a separate Ministry of Development accountable for the Tribhuvan Village Development Department. The Congress government applied socialist measures, destroying feudal principalities, establishing an independent judiciary, introducing free primary education and healthcare, and initiating limited land reform, allying with their socialist perspective (Katuwal, 2020). By enacting and implementing the decentralisation policy, the first elected government started institutionalising democracy at the local level. District development officers were appointed to each district to oversee district-level projects to strengthen this process. The government's decentralisation plan appears to create 14 provinces, 69 subdistricts, and 35 districts. In these decades, governments, in close collaboration with donor organisations and countries, tried to extend road and education infrastructure in the country (Skerry et al., 1992). All previously established academic institutions were merged under Tribhuvan University after its establishment in 1959. The government led by Bisheshwor Prasad Koirala had planned to initiate an act to assign power to districts from the centre to strengthen the local democracy. King Mahendra dissolved the government on December 15, 1960, detained leaders of the Congress Party, and suspended the Constitution, except for the sections about declaring a state of national emergency. He entertained the whole state power and declared a party-less Panchayat system in 1960.

The major development program practised in this political regime was the Tribhuvan Village Development Program. It was a multi-dimensional activity designed to cover numerous aspects of rural aspirations. This program's establishment in 1952 marked Nepal's first systematic and intentional attempt at rural development. It was a complex program that addressed practically all the community's requirements in the village, including education, drinking water, agricultural input supply, preventative health services, agricultural extension, cottage industry, and cooperative development. This program got significant attention in the first five-year plan (1956–1961) (Regmi et al., 2008). Three different types of programs were included. In addition to the minimum level of development and infrastructural facilities, the second category was to provide facilities like improved seeds, fertiliser, horticulture, livestock development, and social services, including drinking water, primary schools, and first aid kits. The third category sought to expand health and maternity services, cottage businesses, and scientific farming aid (Adhikari, 1982). However, despite local support and being a significant initiative, the political system failed to provide a favourable climate. Consequently, this program was terminated, and King Mahendra replaced it with the Panchayat Development Program, implemented through top-down planning (Khatri, 2019).

Development practices in the Panchayat System (1961- 1990 A.D.)

After introducing the panchayat system, King Mahendra declared the Panchayat Constitution, which established a tiered system of village, city, district, and zonal panchayats or councils. The Panchayat Act of 1962 sought to afford citizens access to financial decision-making and development gains by establishing a decentralised power structure. Communities would supervise local functioning, while the part of central

budgetary and policy planning was the core responsibility of the central government. However, the notion was idealistic due to the low literacy rates in the region (Skerry et al., 1992)

The Panchayat System implemented some notable social reforms (Katuwal, 2020), like the continuity of abolition of birta tenure into practice, the novelty of the legal code in 1962, and land reforms in 1964, as well as the provision of regional administration as a means of devolution of central authorities and also for equitable development, the concept of regional development, the implementation of projects emphasising physical and social infrastructure, and launching the "Back to the Village National Campaign" to seek support for the system and create the impression that the new system was in favour of the people. In the third Plan period (1965–70), decentralisation was implemented in the Panchayat system to involve people in decision-making for planning and development within local bodies' territorial boundaries (Katuwal, 2020).

A total of seven development plans were implemented during this political regime. Due concern was paid to alleviating local poverty by strengthening institutional capacity. This period had comparatively less industry and few urban centres. Until very close to the end of this system, a massive segment of the population (93 per cent of the total workforce) was engaged in the primary agriculture sector resulting in 55 per cent of total GDP (World Bank, 1988). This political regime had envisioned boosting the country's overall development, scaling up agricultural productivity, and reducing dependence on foreign aid by optimising its natural and human resources. However, the goals were not achieved as the programs were prioritised over political expediency rather than based on needs (Skerry et al., 1992). The major development program of this political regime is mentioned here as follows:

Panchayat Development Program

This program was designed and executed with the advent of Panchayat's partyless political system. As part of this program, panchayat development workers collaborated with village panchayats and assisted them in creating and implementing plans. In 1966, the Panchayat Development Land Tax was also established to help local organisations raise funds for rural development. As a result, the village panchayats were given the authority to increase the local land tax and set aside a portion for village development. This program was first implemented in 12 village panchayats in the Jhapa district and then expanded to two more village panchayats in the Morang district. However, it was stopped in 1978 (Baskota et al., 2008).

With the inception of the Panchayat System, village panchayats were established in rural areas with populations of around 2,000 each and town panchayats in a selected few urban areas. Seventy-five district panchayats made up of members of the town and village panchayats were established to represent them. Block Development Officers became Panchayat Development Officers, while Village Development Workers became Panchayat Development Workers. The District Panchayat executive secretary and program coordinator for rural development at the district level were to be filled by the Panchayat Development Officer (Baskota et al., 2008). However, Baral and Koirala (1998) argued that the panchayat development program was ineffective because top-down planning was widespread, and the district and village panchayats had little influence on the sectoral plans. The Panchayat Development Project also failed to enable equal participation in local decision-making by the impoverished and less educated ethnic minorities, as traditional landholding elites-controlled resources at all levels (Skerry et al., 1992).

The planning process in the Panchayat system was not well institutionalized and remained relatively weak. Government investments in projects lacked consideration for long-term sustainability, as projects were selected randomly without adequate attention to any social or economic factors. As a result, resources were never sufficient throughout the implementation stage. Autocratic and feudalistic decision-making characterize politics a lot. Because of this, the planning process was unaccountable and failed to elicit actual public participation. Most of the projects were centrally controlled. The Panchayat regime tried to enhance advancements in transportation, communication, health, drinking water, literacy, and student enrollment; however, the overall economic outcomes were ambiguous and disappointing, lacking significant improvements in lifestyle (Shrivastava, 2008). John Cool stressed that the Panchayat system established a foundation for actively incorporating Nepalese living in rural areas in development decision-making, though this process was never fully recognized (Cool, 1967).

Development practices in a multiparty democratic system (1991- 2006 A.D.)

The People's Movement 1990 overthrew the 30-year-long Panchayat autocracy and restored the multiparty system, establishing an interim government with representatives from political parties to draft a new Constitution and parliamentary elections. The new Constitution, granting people sovereignty and establishing a Constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature, was implemented in 1990, leading to the first free and fair elections in 32 years (Skerry et al., 1992). The development practices under this regime focused on increasing people's participation at the community level and on the involvement of the private sector. With an emphasis on alleviating poverty, formulating integrated and interregional programs was focused on creating productive asset bases and increasing employment opportunities. Additional poverty alleviation measures include extending social services like health education, professional training, drinking water, and resource management, primarily benefiting the population below the poverty line. The focus was on enhancing rural roads and providing primary healthcare, education, and drinking water to achieve regional balance. After Nepal's democratic restoration, the focus shifted to privatisation and economic liberalisation (Shrivastava, 2008). The governments of this political regime enacted the Local Self-Governance Act (LSGA) in 1999, along with the Local Self-Governance Regulation (LSGR) in 1999 and the Local Body (Financial Administration) Regulations in 2007, to boost the authority of local bodies in overseeing developmental projects. They also announced other relevant regulations and operating manuals (Sharma, 2004). The idea of inclusive development was introduced in the country after the 1990s (Katuwal, 2020). The major programs of this political regime have been discussed as follows:

Agricultural Perspective Plan (APP)

The first elected government in Nepal implemented a 20-year Agricultural Perspective Plan (APP) in 1993, funded by the Asian Development Bank. The APP aimed to accelerate agricultural growth, reduce poverty, convert subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture, and promote economic transition. It focused on a technological green revolution, high-value production, rapid employment, physical and human capital investments, and a package approach. These initiatives prioritised inputs like electricity, roads, technology, fertiliser, and irrigation. This was the first program to modernise the agriculture sector in the 1990s in Nepal (Khadka, 2010).

Micro Credit for Rural Women (MCRW)

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of Nepal (GoN) supported the implementation of this project in 1993. The ADB contributed SDR 3.54 million for this project's funding. The project's primary components can be credit provision for women, institutional strengthening of chosen non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and group formation and training of women beneficiaries. This project initially ran through July 2002; however, it was later extended by two additional years (Khadka, 2010). The project's main objective was to assist GoN in raising the socioeconomic level of women, encourage their involvement in national development, and so on, to help Nepal reduce its poverty. This project also sought to increase the wages and work opportunities for low-income women in a few selected rural and urban locations. This project aligned with the 1990s development effort to reduce poverty and promote human development with gender balance. This project could also be the impact of modernisation theory.

Rural Community Infrastructure Development Program (RIDP)

With the assistance of the World Food Program (WFP), the Rural Community Infrastructure Development Program (RIDP) was implemented in forty-five districts over several phases. The program's objectives were to increase food availability for disadvantaged rural families, improve and build community infrastructure in food-scare areas, strengthen self-help capacity in rural communities, and improve local bodies' management capabilities in implementing the program. River training to protect farmers and farms, connecting rural roads with primary roads and market areas, and implementing community-based irrigation projects significantly enhanced the rural population's access to essential services. Small-scale canal buildings, pond maintenance, mule and tractor roads, riverbank protection, and small-scale landslide management in mid-hill regions are just a few of the programs that would be implemented. Programs to address community

malnutrition would be implemented by bringing food into food-deficit areas under the "food for work" scheme. This program would expand employment in rural areas, enhancing income generation. With the target of implementing 2,300 community-based activities, this program would benefit 200,000 families with a food deficit through active participation in the Food for Work program (NPC, 1997). This program has adopted a modern approach to constructing infrastructure at the local level.

Built Our Village Ourselves Program

Built Our Village Ourselves Program was implemented nationally in 1994/95. The program's objectives were to increase the local governments' capacities in accessing authorities and resources, to lessen the local government's reliance on the centre even for minor development projects, and to restore a sense of community self-sufficiency. In the history of rural community development, it was a significant policy development. All Village Development Committees (VDCs) and municipalities receive an equal block payment from the government each year of Rs. 300,000. These local institutions were given the authority to carry out development programs with the assistance of the local people (Shrestha, 2009). In terms of policy, it was a significant turning point for rural community development (Regmi et al., 2008). This program seems to have followed the central government's decentralisation of resources to local levels. It was the foundation of local development with strong local participation. This program was initiated to foster a bottom-up approach, as the local governments were provided with the devolution of authority to identify development needs and, hence, implement the program accordingly.

Bisheshor Among the Poor Programmes

Based on the philosophy of socialism by Bisheshor Prasad Koirala, this program was designed and implemented in the fiscal year 1999/00 A.D. The groups targeted in this program were those who represented rural ultra-poor families, people with torn clothes, people lacking access to health facilities, and people whose children could not attend school education because of poverty, landlessness, and unemployment. This program was launched simultaneously in 75 districts, focusing on the ultra-poor, considering the country's economy's elitist class orientation. The objectives of this program were to make people capable, better, and self-reliant (Swabalamban). Between FY 1999/00 and FY 2004/05, the program was extended to 421 VDCs. The program organised 1 lakh people into 6 thousand groups within the working areas directly under the supervision of social mobilisers (Sharma, 2014, as cited in Khatri, 2019). This program has been designed to meet the needs of poor people. This program was affected by the development practices in the Third World in the 1990s, i.e., especially poverty reduction and human development. Modernisation theory has spread its effect on this program; however, state investment in hardware programs could increase people's dependency on the State.

Development Practices in the Federal System (2006 A.D.- Present)

With the historical movement of 2006, centuries-long monarchy systems were abolished. The 2007 Interim Constitution of Nepal owned the federal form of governance and inclusiveness as the foundation of Development (Katuwal, 2020). The country got its first Constitution from the Constituent Assembly in the history of Nepal in 2015 A.D. The federal system and the three levels of government—local, provincial, and federal—could carry out their responsibilities according to the requirements of the new Constitution (2015), which acknowledged inclusion (Government of Nepal, 2015). This political regime has already implemented four 3-year interim development plans and one 5-year development plan. The key development practices of this regime are inclusive development, decentralisation, local governance, and model villages. The development practices are concentrated mainly on creating a prosperous, modern, and just Nepal by eliminating discrimination and inequalities and improving socioeconomic, politico-cultural, and political conditions. This regime's development approach concentrates more on ending all forms of discrimination, fostering multiculturalism, and ensuring a peace process (Shrivastava, 2008). The development practices prioritised roads, tourism-focused transport, and small and medium-sized hydroelectric projects. The development practices, after the Constitution of Nepal, 2015 was promulgated, aimed to promote prosperity and sustainable development by fostering a socially oriented, self-dependent, free, and advanced national

economy in line with the Constitution's development direction to achieve the long-term vision of "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali" (NPC, 2020).

Conclusion

The political regimes have significantly influenced Nepal's development practices. In the history of Nepal, the first multiparty democratic regime (1951-1960 A.D.) established the basis for economic development and social reforms focusing on decentralisation and local democracy. The country witnessed its formal development activities in 1956 through the National Planning Commission, which established its first development plan in the same year. The government implemented various measures, such as removing feudal principalities and granting free primary education and health care. Tribhuvan Village Development Program was the first and most renowned development practice of the period during the decade of 1950s, which addressed community needs like education, water, and health services. This period laid the underpinnings for Nepal's economic growth and social development. However, the development practices of this political regime were controlled and state-centric.

Panchayat System in Nepal (1961-1990 A.D.) established a decentralised power structure and engaged citizens in economic decision-making but faced challenges due to low literacy rates. While it carried out some social reforms like land and legal code updates, the system mostly failed to achieve its goals due to political prioritisation, weak planning, and resource constraints. The dominant agriculture sector, minimal urbanisation, and top-down planning hindered its success, leading to inadequate economic results and limited progress in citizens' lifestyles. The primary development practice of the Panchayat political system was the "Go to the Village National Campaign," which focused on the village development program. Progress was made in transportation, communication, health, literacy, and student enrollment; however, overall economic achievements were unsatisfactory during this system.

A paradigm shift in development practices from controlled to self-help development was marked by restoring the multiparty democratic system (1991-2006). This political regime introduced privatisation, economic liberalisation, and inclusive development, concentrating on poverty alleviation and local governance. The major development initiatives of this political system were the Agricultural Perspective Plan, Micro Credit for Rural Women, Rural Community Infrastructure Development Program, Built Our Village Ourselves, and Bisheshor Among the Poor program, which focused on increasing community participation in development aiming to alleviate poverty through integrated programs and social services. The first Constitution of the Constituent Assembly introduced inclusiveness and allowed the federal system and three branches of government to function. The Federal System (2006- present) intends to create a prosperous and just Nepal by abolishing all forms of discrimination and promoting multiculturalism, focusing on sustainable development and infrastructure projects. The political regime implemented four interim and one fifth-year development plans to create a prosperous, modern, and just Nepal. The development practices prioritised roads, tourism, and hydroelectric projects to promote a socially oriented, self-dependent, free, and advanced national economy.

Many studies have highlighted the prospects for development in the country. However, the objectives set forth by different programs have not been fully achieved. Khatri (2019) supports this argument by mentioning that the rural poor's actual issues have not been solved by Nepal's established plans, programs, and policies for development. Some of the programs are highly considerable but lack continuity due to frequent changes in government. No government has witnessed an entire period of tenure, which might be why Nepal lacks development. The world's practices have influenced Nepal's development, as Nepal agreed on a liberalisation policy despite the urgent need. Many development programs in the country have been influenced by modernisation approaches, which ruined innovation and indigenous development practices and made the country dependent on others. Maintaining political stability, increasing public participation in development plan formulation, empowering local units, and integrating traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge in development plans and implementation can foster development outcomes, resulting in a more stable and prosperous Nepal.

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