

Production Cost of Feature Film in Nepal

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Abstract

This study examines the financial structure of Nepali film production, focusing on key cost elements such as pre-production planning, cast and crew salaries, set design, shooting and post-production processes. Article serves as a resource for filmmakers, investors, and scholars interested in understanding the economics of Nepali cinema and offers insights into how cost management affects film quality and commercial success. The goal here is to understand the production cost as well as film making process in Nepal and estimated production cost of Nepali feature films. The four basic and essential stages of production process are classified as development, pre-production, production and post-production. This article uses different methods for analysis: descriptive & comparative methods look at many sides of production; deductive-inductive methods dig deeper; then there's logical analysis based on existing literature in film production and accounting. It includes informal interviews with film producers as well. The expenses across various filmmaking stages are pretty similar around the globe. The timeframe and structure really play a role in determining production cost. A realistic and accurate budget can help secure financing, avoid overspending, and manage expectations.

Keywords: cost of feature film, film budget, production, box office, film crew

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Film production is a set of economic, creative, organizational, legal and technical activities leading to producing a film and it also includes analysis of the production process of a feature film through the prism of incurred production costs. The research is important about the subject of financial matters and related with the applied field of film industry and the practice of book keeping system. So that, fresh producers, film makers and film development board can take benefit of it. The main objective of this study is to analyze the production cost of making feature film in Nepali. The specific objectives of this study is to understand the film making process of Nepal and estimated production cost of Nepali feature film.

The study uses the descriptive and comparative analysis method of various aspects of film production the deductive-inductive reasoning method, the costing method, the logical analysis method based on the literature on film production organization. Overall study plan is based on the qualitative and quantitative approach of research. The study involves a number of discrete stages including an initial story, idea or commission, scriptwriting, casting, shooting, editing, and screening the finished product before an audience that may result in a film release and exhibition. The film industry consists of the technological and commercial institutions of filmmaking: i.e. film production companies, film studios, cinematography, film screenwriting, preproduction, production (shooting), post-production, distribution, marketing, exhibition, film Festivals, film directors, actors,

technicians and other film crew personnel. Films are a common source of entertainment, education, and information across the country.

As Nepal's film industry grows, researchers are researching how movies can be big business for country. It also leads to compare Nepali film industry with famous Indian and American films. Lots of literature review to understand this better. It looked into how international trade in entertainment works the trends that have popped up over the years and how globalization affects businesses in the industry. It analyzes successes in business as well as income details along with financial changes linked to Nepali cinema.

Basically, review is based on film production houses, economic journals, articles, websites, various publications of Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Nepal Film Development Board, Central Bureau of Statistics, Company Register Office, various film associations of film industry and other relevant materials. Methodology include research design, data collection and processing procedures, sampling procedures, data analysis procedures, models, interpretation of changes, as well as reporting on process constraints. It includes different data, especially based on descriptive data, statistical inferences and their analysis. This research must be beneficial to the economy and play an important role in the development of the economy. Therefore, the subject of this study is financial issues related to practices in Nepali film industry.

Review of Literature

Analyzing and critically identifying the commonalities and differences between earlier, relevant studies is the process of conducting a literature review. This section contains a concise summary of previous research that is relevant to the current investigation. This section is divided into two different parts. First part deals with the major studies or international article whereas; second part deals with related studies in Nepalese context. The review of literature has been conducted based on the chronological order and categorize into two different studies as under:

a) Review of International Studies

b) Review of Nepalese Studies

International Context

The problem of spatial clustering of specialized economic activities, not based on economic geography, has attracted considerable academic interest. Feser and Bergman (2000) and Gordon and McCann (2000) have attempted to create a classification, but an increasing number of scholars are trying to theoretically explain the emergence and growth of clusters in cities and Marshalina counties. There is a consensus that while each cluster results from a particular set of historical factors (businesses, universities, capital, politics, etc.), the continued development of a cluster depends on that cluster's ability to

generate cumulative causes (Myrdal, 1957). Geographically co-located firms generate multiple economic benefits.

External economies of scale are the advantages of co-locating firms engaged in similar economic activities. These include the attraction of skilled labor based on the know-how of these firms, and the attraction of small, flexible, specialized firms that can provide high-capacity and high-quality services through cooperation (Maskell, 2001; Morgan, 2004; Gordon & McCann, 2005). Moreover, external economies of scale also include the advantages of the coexistence of different companies, i.e. companies from different levels of the corporate chain or even completely different industries. These advantages include specialization along the industry chain, facilitated by high trust and low transaction costs, and the ability to create a single company based on internal economies of scale and their activities (Martin & Sunley, 2003). The survival of a cluster depends on continued competitiveness and growth. Thus, the inability to adjust external economies to overcome exogenous (e.g. market) shocks and endogenous (organizational and political) challenges weakens the results of outdated growth paths and ultimately leads to the decline of the cluster.

The "cultural turn" has led economic geographers to pay increasing attention to a particular kind of cluster, namely the agglomeration of companies in cultural industries such as film, television, music, and advertising (Pratt and Hesmondhalgh, 2005). While most studies are content to describe productive cultural clusters in major world centers

(Lorenzen, 2009), some scholars try to explain the causes of their growth. The explanation of the growth of cultural clusters relies on the external economic arguments mentioned above. Moreover, Bathelt (2005) explains how continuous reproduction at the local level can contribute to the diffusion of external economies of scale in the form of learning between media production companies located in the cluster. However, some scholars point out that since virtually all clusters are located in cities (Scott, 1997; Scott, 2007; Lazzeretti et al. 2008), the study should also include external economies of scale related to the city location. These include external economies of scale resulting from the coexistence of cultural clusters with urban venture capital or clusters of other industries (Lorenzen, 2009). They also benefit from the fact that large cities attract talent (Glaeser et al., 2001; Florida et al., 2008).

Like other cultural industries, the film industry also tends to concentrate in certain cities. The long list of film clusters includes a wide range of cities, such as Copenhagen, Seoul, Rome, Hong Kong, Paris, London, Kyoto, New York, Los Angeles, and Mumbai. Theoretical work on the film industry over the years has focused mainly on the case of Hollywood. Scott (2005) argues that Hollywood emerged in the first decades of the 20th century as a result of the symptomatic contribution of exemptions and external economies of scale associated with the urbanization of Los Angeles. Later, the film cluster developed external economies of scale in the form of a large specialized labor market by attracting a large number of different films to Los Angeles.

However, Hollywood initially began to develop strong internal economies by leveraging its large domestic market (Krugman, 1980; Davis & Weinstein, 2003). First, the horizontal integration of production in large "studios" gave it a significant advantage in production (Prag & Casavant, 1994; Eliashberg et al., 2006). Later, the large and unnecessary funding of film marketing, distribution, and exhibition contributed to the formation of a few powerful companies that offered certain criteria for success (de Vany, 2004). After World War II, film clusters further strengthened their external framework economies and built flexible and specialized standard production models consisting of small independent production companies made up of specialized suppliers, freelancers, and technical workers (Robins, 1993; Blair, 2001).

Nepalese Context

This study focuses on Nepali film industry and analyses the case of Nepal based on an extensive survey and study of national literature. It examines how this relates to the Nepali economy and whether it has a positive or negative impact on economic development. Nepali films have received widespread acclaim from critics and the film community in recent years. Films such as *Loot*, *Kabaddi Kabaddi*, *Pashupati Prasad*, *Dreams* and *Prem Geet 2* have set benchmarks with excellent box office receipts and introduced new standards in the domestic film industry. With the emergence of a new generation of filmmakers, Nepali films are becoming more diverse and better with each

passing day. In contrast to traditional filmmaking styles, the new generation of directors and producers are not afraid to experiment and take bold risks.

Budget constraints are also slowing down the development of the domestic film industry. Unlike Hollywood and Bollywood cinemas with their huge budgets, films are not considered an investment opportunity in Nepal, making it difficult for Nepali producers to find sources of funding. This prevents Nepali films from using the latest technology. One example is the animation unit that Hollywood films outsource to Nepal. "The biggest problem is budgetary constraints. We are not in a position to invest huge amounts of money like foreign films. Also, our market is very limited," says Dipendra K Khanal, (2016).

Film making technology has advanced, and the quality of movie theatres also needs to be upgraded, Nepali movies command 70 percent of the market and the rest of the film shown in Nepali cinemas are from Bollywood and Hollywood. Nepali movies are getting good response from audiences, and they have been able to attract urban audiences too in recent years.

Research Gap

After analyzing the above literatures, it is found that the existing literature has laid the status of cost elements in project production. As to the cost of film project production, the status of the film production houses, film development board, Associations of film makers and the strategy of cost management are explained and discussed in detail.

However, the existing studies mainly based on the cost of film production strategy, while ignore the characteristics of the film crew and the specific reasons for the high cost and have difficulties in explaining the deeply hidden unregistered logic of the cost problem. Therefore, based on the logic and generality of the film production management in formulating cost control method and strategy, the author has deeply explained and discussed the details of the production cost caused in the film production process and classified the attributes of the production cost. At present, there is no perfect and effective cost control system for film production in Nepal.

Therefore, the problems in the control on cost emerge in an endless stream. System should be implemented from the production director to all the staff; the objects of cost control should be standardized to meet the requirements of the cost control and filming characteristics of the film crew, as well as the organization characteristics of the film crew; appropriate cost control method should be selected according to the characteristics of the film crew. The film production cost in Nepal is still in its infancy, and there are certain problems in all aspects. In particular, production cost personnel should shift from the role of single financial accountant to the role of management accountant. Producers and film crew financiers need to understand the characteristics of film projects and be aware of the impact of cost management on film production. Appropriate cost control can help to improve the overall level of the film in addition to reducing project costs.

Research Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology that is employed in this study which includes various sections describing research plan and design, description of the sample, instrumentation, data collection procedure and time structure, validity, and dependability of the research and analytic strategy. Methodology includes the methods and techniques of collecting and analyzing data. Methodology is also defined as the process of conducting research. It explains the steps of conducting research. It clarifies the subject and presents a scientific method. Accordingly, the overall study plan is based on the qualitative approach of research.

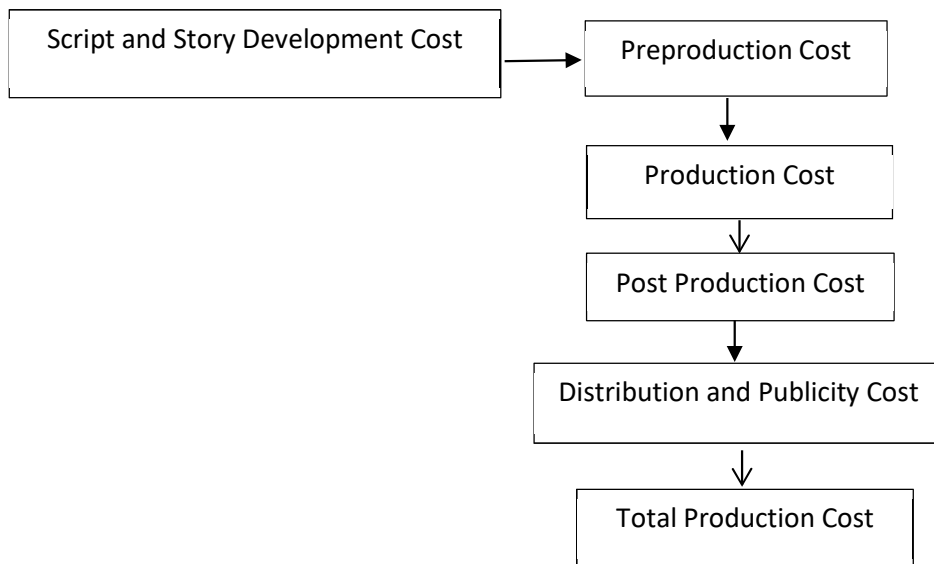
Research Design

This study was conducted using a descriptive research design. This study focuses on the cost of film production in Nepal. Relevant data was collected and analyzed to examine the true cost of film production. However, the current situation and problems should be tried to be revealed and the necessary recommendations in the report should be a guide for future developments. Beside this, it will also try to discover the present status, problems, prospectus and necessary suggestions will also provide for way forward.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1

Conceptual framework



Sample Size

This study was conducted in different film production companies in Kathmandu. Purposive method was applied for the sampling. The total number of movies are 10 out of 100. Random sampling method for studying will be applied to select respondents. Random sampling simply describes a state wherein every element in a movie has an equal chance of being chosen for the sample.

Sources of Data and Information

The research is descriptive and analytical in nature. Data and information regarding this study were collected for the study. However, information obtained from

secondary sources can also be helpful in research studies. Primary data can be interviews, surveys, observations, etc. In order to achieve the research objectives, most of the data will be collected from secondary sources. The information needed for the research should be collected from published trade journals, magazines, websites, and various publications. On the other hand, some supporting documents are collected from the official websites of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Ministry of Finance, Nepal Film Development Board, Central Bureau of Statistics, Registrar of Companies and various organizations operating in the film industry. The original sources provided small amounts of information.

Tools of Data Collection

In this study, both primary as well as secondary data were used. Different data producing instruments were used in this study. For the purpose of primary data collection, a set of questionnaire was developed. Survey in the form of questionnaires was chosen for this study. The questions were identified from the previous studies and modify as per the requirement in the context of Nepal. The questions were designed in such a way that helps to get the opinion, perceptual views and feelings of the respondents. Data were collected using well formulated questionnaires. During the survey; discussions with the respondents and information collected through discussions and interviews along with questionnaires were used as instrument which copy is included in the appendix. Questionnaires are divided into two parts. The questions in this study are both close-ended and open-ended.

In the first part, the respondents' profile was asked such as gender, position, etc. The second part comprise of close-ended questions and open-ended to measure independent and dependent variables. The close-ended question includes yes/ no types, multiple choices, rankings.

Data Collection Procedures

This study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources of data have been employed to assess the opinion of various respondents with respect to contribution of film industry in the economy of Nepal. The primary data have been obtained by conducting questionnaire survey with selected senior Film Makers, Directors, Artists, Distributors, Exhibitors, Government Administrators of Film Industry. The secondary sources of data have been employed in order to investigate the contribution of film industry in the economic growth of the nation. The secondary data are collected from the various government publications, film publications and Film Development Board publications.

Costing Method

In cost accounting, the method involves categorizing costs related to a specific cost object, such as a film production. Here's how the costs are typically classified:

1. **Direct Cost of Cost Object:** These are costs directly attributable to the production of the film. Examples include:
 - Salaries of actors, directors, and production crew directly involved in the film.

- Cost of props and costumes used exclusively for the film.
 - Costs of film equipment rental specific to the production.
2. Indirect Cost Expense (Overhead): These are costs that are not directly traceable to the film but contribute to the overall production process. Examples include:
- Overhead costs such as utilities (electricity, water) for the production facility.
 - Administrative expenses related to managing the production company.
 - Depreciation of equipment used in multiple productions.
3. Production Cost - Film (Direct Cost + Indirect Cost): This is the total cost of producing the film, which includes both the direct costs and the allocated portion of the indirect costs. It represents the comprehensive financial outlay required for the film's production.

Each of these cost categories plays a crucial role in determining the total production cost of the film and helps in evaluating the financial feasibility and efficiency of the filmmaking process.

Questionnaire

Creating a questionnaire to gather information about film production costs involves asking detailed and specific questions that cover various aspects of the production process. This questionnaire can be tailored to fit the specific needs of different film productions, ensuring that all relevant cost aspects are covered.

Field Observation

As part of field observation, members of the Directors' Association were directly approached to gain insights into the activities of film production companies. This involved tracking their progress and development in their respective film careers within the industry.

Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews are essential in qualitative research methodologies, especially in studies focusing on the film industry. These interviews involve engaging with individuals who possess significant knowledge, experience, or expertise related to the research topic. In the context of studying film production companies and directors' careers, key informant interviews could include:

1. **Film Directors:** Interviewing established and emerging directors to understand their experiences, challenges, and strategies in filmmaking.
2. **Industry Experts:** Speaking with professionals such as producers, cinematographers, and film critics to gain broader insights into industry trends and dynamics.
3. **Association Representatives:** Interviewing members of directors' associations or film industry organizations to gather information on industry standards, policies, and professional development initiatives.

4. **Film Crew Members:** Interviewing crew members (e.g., cinematographers, editors, production designers) to explore their roles, collaboration experiences, and contributions to film projects.
5. **Academics and Researchers:** Interviewing scholars and researchers who study film production and career trajectories to gather theoretical perspectives and empirical findings.

Key informant interviews provide nuanced perspectives and rich qualitative data that complement other research methods like surveys or observational studies. They help uncover personal experiences, motivations, and critical insights that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the film industry and directors' careers.

Methods of Data Analysis

The main purpose of data analysis in this study is to explore the relationship between film industry and economic growth in the context of Nepal. Besides, the study also attempts to identify and analyze the trend of Nepali film industry and economic growth. Therefore, this section deals with descriptive data analysis method for the purpose of analysis of secondary data. Secondary data have been collected to analyze the impact of film industry in economic growth. All the observed relationship and findings have been interpreted to derive the meaningful conclusions. This section also deals with the analysis of the primary data. The ordered structure of the questionnaire design has guided the analysis of the primary data. There are different methods of data analysis that has been

used in the study depending upon the nature and sources of data. The main data analysis employed descriptive statistics, while the subsequent data analysis employed inferential statistics.

The data or information collected has been successfully researched. Data were analyzed manually and using computer software such as Excel. Different tables and data are prepared for different sectors. Mathematical and mathematical calculations, calculations and tests are made from large amounts of data. Qualitative data was used to explain. We prepare different charts, graphs and charts to present and visualize the collected data.

All the processes are captured while estimating the cost of film production. The primary study is conducted with reference to different Nepalese movie production and distribution within Nepal only. It may not represent the movie production and distribution out of country. The Limitations of the study are as follows:

- The primary study is conducted with reference to different Nepalese movie production and distribution within Nepal only and it may not represent out of country.
- This study is based on the officially published data. So, the study is not free from weakness because of time and resource constraints.
- Report is based on data from film production houses, economic journals, articles, websites, various publications, Ministry of Communication and Information

Technology, Ministry of Finance, Nepal Film Development Board, Central Bureau of Statistics, various film associations of film industry.

Results and Discussion

Film Production Cost

Film production is closely correlated with incurring costs. Cost refers to the consumption of fixed and current assets, third-party services, labor and some expenses not related to use, and shows the results of the operation of the enterprise in a period. Film production costs consist of the direct costs of film production plus overhead costs (that is, the fixed cost portion that the producer allocates to the film in proportion to his authority and is properly recorded) and valuation. Participation of individuals and investors in physical co-productions will not be deducted from VAT. In terms of the accounting system, the cost of goods includes the direct cost of the goods and the appropriate portion of production costs that are not directly related to the goods. . Film production costs consist of the direct costs of film production plus overhead costs (that is, the fixed cost portion that the producer allocates to the film in proportion to his authority and is properly recorded) and valuation. Participation of individuals and investors in physical co-productions will not be deducted from VAT. In terms of the accounting system, the cost of goods includes the direct cost of the goods and the appropriate portion of production costs that are not directly related to the goods. The technology used to make movies has progressed, and movie theaters need to be of a higher caliber.

Nepali films hold a 70% share of the market. The remaining movies screened in Nepali theaters are Hollywood and Bollywood productions. Nepali movies are getting good response from audiences, and they have been able to attract urban audiences too in recent years.

Process of Cost Estimation

Direct product cost is the product cost that can be directly attributed to the final cost of the product (calculated product). From the perspective of film technology, cost products are activities (work) at each stage of film production. The simplified film production cost calculation system based on the model is as follows:

1. Direct cost of material cost
2. Direct cost (1)
3. Film material cost (1+2)

The film material cost list model expresses the direct costs and related costs during production separately for the cost of goods. The basis for cost sharing is the movie script. On the other hand, production costs are also included in the cost estimate of the digital report. The cost estimate answers the question: How much will it cost to make this movie? The amount of planned costs should be sufficient to create the audiovisual work in order for it to work as intended. Experienced producers will know how much the film will cost after reading the script. The average cost of making a film in Nepal is Rs 2 Crore 59 Lakhs.

Nepali film industry practice in accounting for the elements of film costs, the amortization of film costs, and the classification of film costs in financial statements has varied. Consequently, the Committee recommends the adoption of uniform methods and appropriate disclosures as discussed in this industry accounting guide. A completed film, including stories and scenarios; salaries of cast, directors, producers, extra talent and miscellaneous staff cost of set construction and operations, wardrobe and all accessories cost of sound synchronization; production overhead, including depreciation and amortization of studio equipment and leasehold improvements; and rental of facilities on location. Production overhead to be capitalized as a production cost should be consistently allocated among films produced during the period on a systematic and rational basis in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Generally, a budget is broken down into four categories: other (insurance, completion bond, etc.), above the line (creative talent), below the line (direct production costs-shooting cost), and post-production (editing, visual effects, etc.). Since the distributor is responsible for these, marketing and advertising for the film are not included in the budget.

A film's budget plays a significant role throughout its lifespan, with an impact that extends far beyond the film's cost. Perhaps the most obvious aspect of movie budgets is that the amount the distributor pays for the movie almost always includes a percentage of the budget, regardless of the script, cast, or anything else. "There are many items that

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cannot be included in the budget, usually around 7-10% of the budget, but if they include all financial costs, including interest and fees, as well as the cost of filming and fulfilling all legal costs associated with it, the guarantee is usually considered a distribution fee."

and although it cannot be used, it does not generally. The estimated preparation cost is as follows:

Project Detail

Table 1

Project info of film production

Film :	Nepali feature movie
Production Company	Producer
Camera type set :	Red dragon 4k
Location:	Nepal
No of shooting	45 days
Total film crew:	45
Movie length (minutes):	2 hours 30 minutes
Total Production period:	12months

Table 2

Production time Schedule

Particular	Week	Month
Script Writing and Research Work	12 weeks	3 months
Preproduction Periods	8 weeks	2 months
Production/Shooting	6 weeks	3.5 months
Wrap	2 weeks	14 days
Post Production	12 weeks	3 months
Total	40 weeks	12 months

Cost Allocation

Table 3

Cost allocation at package

S.N.	Particular	Cost in Package (Rs)	Total
1	Script Cost	10,00000	
2	Workshop /Rehearsal	5,00000	
3	Location hunting	1,50,000	
4	Casting/Artist	40,00000	
5	Producer Team	14,00000	
6	Direction Team	21,00000	
7	Camera Light Sound Crew Team	22,25,000	
8	Action/Fight Team	4,50,000	
9	Dance Team	2,20,000	
10	Art Direction Team	5,00,000	
11	Costume Team	10,50,000	
12	Makeup Artist	4,95,000	
13	Spot boy	4,05,000	
14	Camera Light Sound Equipment Set	24,97,500	
15	Music Production	2,05,000	
16	Transportation	9,00000	
17	Fuel	8,00000	
18	Lodging / Fooding	15,75,000	
19	Hard disc	1,20,000	
20	Post Production	15,70,000	
	Total Cost (Rs.)		2,21,62,500
	Producer overhead cost 7% (contingency budget)		7,82,925
	Total (Rs.)		2,29,45,425
	Tax 13% VAT		29,82,905
	Total Film Production Costs (Rs.)		2,59,28,330

The total cost of feature film in Nepal is two crore fifty nine lakh twenty eight thousand three hundred and thirty.

Conclusion

Film cost is a crucial step in the various stages of production process. It entails deconstructing the scenes, evaluating the script, figuring out the budget, and creating a schedule. A realistic and accurate budget can help secure financing, avoid overspending, and manage expectations. This includes assessing the number of locations, special effects, stunts, CGI, set designs, and the overall scope of production. Detailed scene-by-scene analysis helps determine the complexity and resources required. Additionally, understanding the scale of the cast, the crew's needs props, and wardrobe, with any specific technical or logistical demands outlined in the script, aids in creating a more accurate budget estimate. Estimating a film's budget is to calculate the costs. Assigning a monetary value to each element that identified in the scene breakdown. A budget consists of different categories and subcategories that cover all the aspects of the production, such as pre-production, production, post-production, and contingency. Cost calculation helps to determine the total amount of money that needs to make the film, and allocate it wisely.

The overall objective of this study was to evaluate the film production cost model and determine its feasibility. Research objectives were identified to provide a specific focus for achieving this research goal and research objectives were achieved, with the majority of the elements of the model performing as predicted. Research on film production costs in Nepal reveals a unique set of challenges and opportunities within the context of the country's film industry.

The film production process refers to the stages or phases required to complete a movie product from the idea to the final master copy. The four basic and essential stages of production process are classified as Development , Pre-production, Production and Post-production.

There are various challenges throughout the stages of Development, pre-production, production, and post-production. One of the biggest challenges in film production is managing the budget and schedule of the project. There should be balanced the artistic vision, the technical requirements, and the client expectations within the available resources and time. To overcome these challenge, need to plan ahead, communicate clearly, should create a realistic budget and schedule that account for contingencies. Film production is complying with the legal and ethical matters that may affect the project. There are some problems which need to deal with issues such as copyright, contracts, permissions, privacy, or censorship. These issues can have legal, financial, or reputational consequences for the project. To overcome this challenge, need to research, consult, and respect the laws and regulations that apply to the project and follow them accordingly. Also consult with experts, such as lawyers, accountants, or insurance agents, to get professional advice and guidance.

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