Rethinking National Security in the Context of Nepal

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Abstract

This paper explores discourses of rethinking national security and the modern security challenges of Nepal, especially targeting the factors of both comprehensive and human security. The existing literature on Nepal has discussed the issues of threats such as fraud, cyber-crime, corruption, transnational organized crime, such as, illegal migration, identity politics raised by ethnic and religious groups, transit hub of narcotics, political disputes, economic downturns etc., and suggests ways of addressing those threats in both policies and implications. Security practices in Nepal sustains a gap in addressing non-traditional security mechanisms where the basic issues of the security dilemma, socio-cultural cohesion, political strength, diplomatic support, and military readiness are widely overlooked. In such a context, this paper explores the undergoing modern security challenges in Nepal based on a holistic approach. The critical constructivism perspective has been applied to rethink different dimensions of national security. This paper raises pertinent questions for strategic intervention in the contemporary context considering Nepal's geostrategic importance, diplomatic presence, and national interest. The conclusion of the paper portrays the ways of ensuring national security which eventually helps security professional researchers and scholars.

Keywords: national security, security discourse, modern security challenges, non-traditional security, national interest.

Introduction

A condition of being free from certain threat can be understood by the term 'security'. It is a kind of protection from various forms of action against loss, damage, threats, or violations. Security is also 'a mere absence of intense threat that is less likely to be accepted at its minimum degree which people consider essential to its survival' (Krause & Nye, 1975). Likewise, protecting a nation, state, citizen, and national interest from any internal or external threats can be defined as national security. National security is an act of a state to use its military force to build a strong

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socio-economic conditions and safeguard citizens and institutions from any possible attack or invasion (Waever, 2000). Security is defined as a low probability of damage to acquired values (Baldwin, 1997). National security is an umbrella concept that protects the national identity and core values of a nation-state. After the Cold War (1945-89) and evolution after the 1970s, there have been drastic changes, remarkable development, and transformations regarding concepts in the field of national defense. Military security was considered a key element for the security of a nation. But lately, protecting territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence, and unity of nation-states is a major concept of national security that maintains the survival of the state.

Origin of concept of National Security

The seventeenth century is considered an originating point of national security, which evolved during 'Three Decades War (1618-1648)' and 'Civil war' (The Concept of Security, 2023). While war continued, 'Peace of Westphalia' came into existence with an idea of protecting and safeguarding territorial integrity and sovereignty from numerous hazards and danger (Holmes, 2015). During the Cold War, the traditional notion of national security was specifically occupied by military domains and were more concerned with preventing war through weapons, alliances, treaties, deterrence, defense mechanism and balance of power. It was more concerned with state, governmental decisions, and governing institutions. Gradually, the traditional notion was transformed and extended beyond the military sphere. After the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, the concept of non-traditional security emerged (Cook & Nair, 2021). The idea of non-traditional means of security emerged to create a pathway to readjust the functioning of governments to engage more people and their communities to develop a potential cooperative environment to act upon. The conventional idea of security is state-centered, whereas non-traditional security is people–centered. Non-traditional security is non-military and transnational in nature. It usually requires cooperation at regional and multilateral levels to maintain security and stability at national, regional, and international level (Anthony, 2021).

Building a new approach to security

There is always an existing security strategy of a nation. Depending upon the risk and need, they improve their plans and policies regarding security. Despite few instant actions to threat (emergency response), a state needs to develop a peculiar and holistic strategy to overcome pertinent challenges (prevention of threats). For that a nation-state should think of strategies concerning acceptance (mutually hurting stalemate depending upon the situation of the strategic intervention), protection (growing by learning and defense) and deterrence (cost of war is greater than cost of peace). While envisioning strategy for security of a nation, the policy maker should consider all the positioned and intersecting aspects of security like economic, political, military, geo-graphical, historical, and socio-cultural (Rothery, 2018).

The new notion of security not only deals with traditional means where basically the military strengths is regarded as inordinately essential element, with many other dimensions of human development, citizen's security, and overall welfare of the nation. In regards, many scholars have presented profound ideas regarding new spheres of security. Also, it is the safety of society, individual and system (Buzan, 1991). The core elements for security of a state are physical security and sense of security (Snow, 2016). Also, from military domains to more

expansive human spheres, the idea of security has started focusing more on welfare of people and states (Anthony, 2010). From all those above-mentioned definitions, given by various scholars, we can say that the notion of security changes as the time changes. The security apparatus is needed to be revised as the time and context demands.'

After that, the strategy should shift towards capacity building. Also, the issues relating to non-traditional means of security vis-à-vis human security must be incorporated in security strategy reform. Modern security deals with issues that directly impact the human existence, such as transnational crime, poverty, ethnic or religious conflict, cyber-crime, illegal migration, environmental degradation, extremism, corruption, human trafficking, failure in government, natural disasters, health crisis and many more (NCSG, Security Challenges in Nepal, 2022). It is not only concerned with states but also with communities and individuals. Modern security therefore is widely known as 'global security' as it comprises different dimensions of National security such as food security, environment security, health security, cyber security, political security, economic security and enhances security at all levels. It covers the military, political, social, economic along with cultural aspects. Despite interdependence among national and global security context, both requires distinct international and national security apparatus to deal with various security threats (Osisanya, 2022).

Statement of problem

Modern security menaces are overlooked in major policies and praxis, and the obsolete means of security are still practiced which results in incompatibility of Nepalese security mechanisms with current world affairs and contemporary issues relating to modern security. The aspects of human security are still not recognized as 'challenges to security' in Nepal. The National Security Policy of Nepal and the council are not that effective, which results in poor operation of security tasks and sometimes results in mishandling of security related affairs. Although, Nepal has four core security institutions: i.e., the Nepali Army (NA), Armed Police Force (APF), Nepal Police (NP) and National Investigation Department (NID); they don't have a designated plan to act upon the major concern of the public. The civilian often questions, why invest too much in security forces when they do not have to fight with anybody? The problem lies at all the paradigms related to security i.e., the policy, policy maker and the security forces mechanisms. Using traditional means not only makes the security forces inept but it affects the livelihood of the citizens living within the territory in various means like politico-social, environmental, data security etc. This study will further lead to contributing knowledge on thinking non-traditional means of security in contemporary context. This paper focuses on the following three research questions.

1.   What are the modern security challenges of Nepal in the contemporary context?

2.   What are the major gaps in security practices and policies of Nepal?

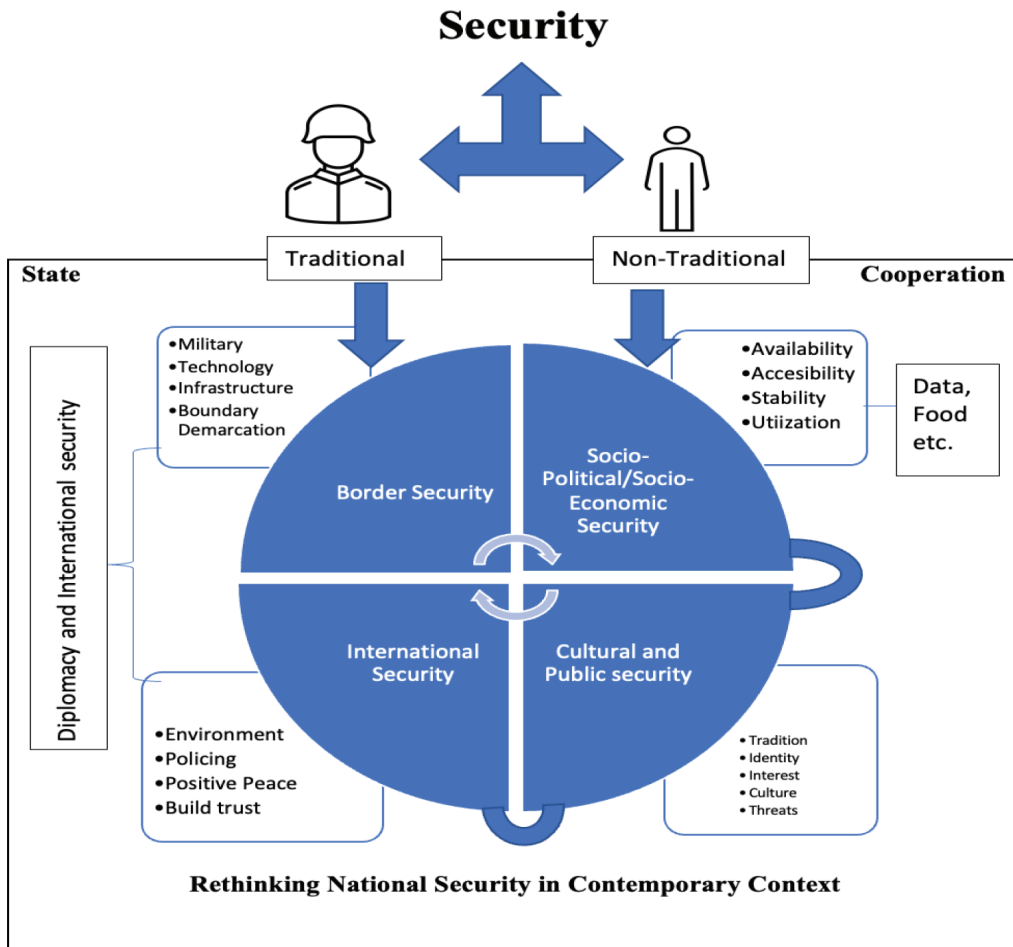3.   What can be the possible interventions in the national security sphere of Nepal?

Based on these three research questions, the authors focus to recognize the modern security challenges of Nepal in contemporary context and to recognize the major gaps in security practices and policies of Nepal. Furthermore, the paper aims to discover possible intervention measures in the sphere of security sector in Nepal.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research developed based on discourse analysis and exploratory research design. The research design helps in the exploration of current scenarios regarding national security of Nepal. It also elucidates the existing modern security threats/challenges in the contemporary situation of Nepal through an inductive and a systematic method of study. The data used in this paper is qualitative in nature. This paper used a combination of both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected through concerned personnel, academicians, authorized institutions or agencies, government, and semi-government sources. Interviews were also taken with different security experts and stakeholders as primary data whereas various newspaper articles, journals, books, web sites, web blogs, reports and documents were reviewed thoroughly to gather secondary information as a secondary source of data. For the interview, participants were selected purposively. Methodologically, this paper is based on exploratory research design. It is conducted using interpretive research methods. To obtain the objectives of identifying gaps in security policies and practices in Nepal, this paper majorly focuses on discourse analysis, inductive and systematic methods of study. Based on nature, this is qualitative research having the scientific and empirical data collected through primary and secondary sources. Theoretically, this paper follows an idea of critical constructivism and hence, incorporates its theoretical perspective into the field of research to enhance the ideas of national security.

Conceptual Framework

A state in cooperation with various agencies needs to focus on dimensions other than tools and techniques of warfare that is focusing majorly on non-traditional means of security. Securing its border is still a priority for Nepal. The demarcation of the border is not yet concrete. But there are certain obvious things that cannot be undermined. We see various areas of security interlinked with one another. They portray linkages between historical, social, cultural, economic, and political contexts and others, starting from self to the world, the theory of critical constructivism is applied in these discussions. Also, the methods of circular reasoning are the pith of this paper. The non-traditional security can only be ensured when an enriched level of interconnectedness between various constructive approaches that a society needs for transformation is seen. Besides, consciousness and collective knowledge at personal and societal level is needed equally. The security of the boundary requires an ample number of armed forces, new tools and technologies, better infrastructures, and bilateral cooperation between neighboring countries. Similarly, when we talk about safety within the border, we must think about the socio-political and socio-economic security of Nepal. Along with that other dimension of security of Nepalese people: i.e., their culture, traditions, identity, interest; the environment they live in, the administration that administers them and their dignity should be respected as well. Issues in security dilemma, socio-cultural cohesion, human security threats, border distinction, geo-political dilemma, weak diplomacy, socio-political instability, are few major areas to ensure national security.

Security

Rethinking National Security in Contemporary Context

Source: Based on contemporary security studies, this framework has been developed by authors,2022

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

The author consulted twelve literatures and they are categorized into three themes: 'modern security menaces', 'aperture in policy and praxis related to security' and 'national security in present-day context.'

In the theme of modern security menaces, the uncertainty of mishap (social, economic, political etc.) in quotidian is becoming a greater question to modern security. Late 20th century has seen an extreme rise in modern security threats (Khan, 2022). Threats or challenges can be created through physical, along with economic, social, and environmental forces. These days' threats are not associated with inter-state rivalries or conflicts rather it is generated through various dissatisfaction and grievances. Such threats or challenges have a greater impact on maintaining security, peace, and stability in a nation. Cyber-crime, food crisis, climate change,

health crisis, corruption are some major issues that challenges modern security. Beside threats, lack of knowledge, advanced technologies, equipment, infrastructural development, lack of proper training to security forces, high rates of migration and policy gap can be more challenging to modern security in countries like Nepal. Modes of threats can be regional, internal, or transnational and can involve various governmental and non-governmental actors in large numbers. The argument of Namara emphasizes that non-traditional security factors like poverty and environmental threats are becoming more responsible for civil wars and fighting in countries like Rwanda, Liberia, Somalia & Zaire than lack of military hardware (Naqvi, 2010).

Furthermore, threats regarding modern context goes beyond the geopolitical boundaries, it affects people, societies, state, and international institutions as well. Such threats must be controlled through modern security apparatus. Modern security apparatus is concerned more with an individual's needs and is people or citizen centric. There are several threats and challenges to modern security which the state alone cannot overcome. Hence, it requires support regionally, nationally, and globally from other sectors or institutions. For this purpose, a state suffering from 'human security and development' threats require cooperation from international agencies which plays a significant role to help nations grow mutually. Modern threats affect the population, resources, development, political system, national interest, national identity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the nation-state. To maintain global security, non-traditional security issues should be addressed with solutions that are "people-based, multilateral, and multi-sectoral/ holistic" (Khan, Non- Traditional Security threats in Southeast Asia, 2003). In these approaches, intrinsic issues are prioritized more than extrinsic threats. State's continuous efforts on building connections and maintaining good relations add more value to the security apparatus. Such a modern security apparatus has positive changes and sustainable impacts in maintaining global security.

After discussing modern security menaces, the second theme emerged during literature review was 'aperture in policy and praxis related to security'. Threats to modern security require national security policies with extended dimensions. National Security Policy is an official description which aims at providing better understanding of threats and challenges for maintaining safety and security of a state (DCAF Geneva, Security Sector Integrity, 2022). It consists of guidelines, values and principles and promotes rule of law, human rights, dignity, and democratic values. National security policies help government and core security institutions to act accordingly. The National Security Council came into existence during 1990's in Nepal. It was established to formulate policies related to national security. The national security policy prioritized the national interest, sovereignty, independence etc. of a state and core values of citizens. The policies formulated, somehow helped in overcoming threats in a comprehensive manner but there remains a certain gap in the National Security Policy of Nepal. The National Security Council of Nepal is ineffective and there is a lack of proper design and strategy in the Policy (Bhattarai & Cave, 2009).

Additionally, the security strategy of Nepal seems incapable of responding to threats and major problems regarding security. Strategic planning, better framework and a clear mandate is necessary to have an impactful and effective policy which is highly lacking in Nepal. Lack of knowledge and understanding regarding security issues and mechanisms among governmental

actors, security personnel and policy authorities is another failure of national security policy of Nepal (Wagle, 2009). The Government of Nepal has prioritized the security sector reform which is very challenging for local, regional, and national level to maintain peace, stability, and security in the state. Political instability, lack of proper decision-making, politicization in security, weak policy of Nepal and its ineffective implementation leads to failure in balancing unconventional threats. Maintaining privacy and secrecy in policy making are major challenges in formulating national security policy (Hunter & Peckham, 2019). Nepal failed in dealing with various delicate and sensitive issues of national security and hence impacted the overall human security system.

The third theme from the literature review was 'national security in present-day context'. Every nation is composed of population, territory, culture, history, language, and tradition. Despite these, every nation faces problems, may it be social, political, or economic. National security deals with all kinds of contemporary threats or problems, be it external or internal. The challenges regarding modern security are being faced by many nation-states throughout the globe. In earlier days, the concept of security was just to protect nations from military threats but along with the advancement in technology and competitions in various sectors globally, modish types of security threats are seen day-to-day which not only have an impact on nations but on whole human existence (Bellamy, 2020). Modern security not just only deals with regional and state level, but it also seeks to addressing an individual problem. It majorly focuses on non-military threats, including corruption, terrorism, natural calamities, spread of disease like COVID-19, health crisis, food shortage, transnational organized crimes, border/land disputes, political instability, geopolitics and geo-strategic location, inadequate civil military relations, ethnic, cultural, religious conflict, gender discrimination etc. (Bhattarai, 2013). Above mentioned threats are the biggest challenges and risks to national interests, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and national power. National security covers wide areas and various dimensions focusing on food security, health security, environment security, economic security and many more. National security not only focuses on protecting its citizens from physical threats but also aims to promote and safeguard the socio-economic condition and firmness of institutions within its territory including the identification of potential dangers, threats, or mishaps. Modern security primarily focuses on comprehensive and human security. It is mostly defined in political and socio-economic terms. Modern security threats are becoming a major concern of national security. Security personnel, governments, stakeholders, and other concerned authorities have been strategically planning and working for protection and promotion of security agendas of the nation. Since modern security issues cause societal and political instability, it requires regional and multilateral cooperation. The strategic planning, interventions, practices, mechanisms, and policies are inadequate to counter modern security threats in contemporary context (Anthony, 2021).

Likewise, scholars mostly claim that it basically arises from the relationship of man to nature. Also, threats to any nation come from relations with other nations but mostly modern security threats arise from and within the nation itself. Different groups, communities, biological systems, and governments become responsible for these threats. Only armed security forces cannot deal with the modern security threats. Various other institutions of state should together work to prevent the consequences of those threats. Third world countries

have been facing challenges regarding rapidly increasing threats and issues. National defense mechanism and policy becomes inert against these security challenges (Ordzhonikidze, 2009). Nepal's security policy is ineffective, and it needs to be redefined regarding the human security and federal democratic system. Along with redefining policies, restructuring nations and its security mechanisms or agencies is essential. While drafting policies regarding security, the concepts of human security should also be incorporated. Even the new constitution of Nepal has included human security as a guiding principle of national security. The state should take an immediate decision by making policies to make security agencies free from all kinds of political influences, and make them competent, benevolent, and versatile enough to counter any circumstances regarding internal or external security. In this regard, back from a couple of years; the security agencies are themselves suggestive towards restructuring by submitting proposals to governments.

Discussion

Modern security challenges and threats are spread all over the world these days. The modern security mechanism is responsible for protection of individuals, nations, and states against modern security threats. There are various challenges regarding the political, economic, social, and cultural sphere in the current context of Nepal. The Nepalese government and security experts or personnel are working on their respective fields to ensure the safety of its citizens. Yet a certain failure is seen in security sector reform. Six major issues from the writer's analysis in the Nepalese context are discussed below:

The first one is related to border issues. During the time of field visit and interview, the problems and various challenges of security personnel were disclosed. Open borders have a detrimental effect on the performances, roles, and responsibilities of security forces. The APF does not have enough resources; in terms of human and technology to mitigate the unbarred border threats. A security personnel in an interview claimed that the institution has no effective monitoring and control devices for border security regulation. Few handful security officials cannot surveil a large border area, especially when it is open. If there was availability of proper surveillance devices, those security personnel could act more efficiently. The rates of goods for daily use in Nepal are so high that people prefer purchasing goods from India. The custom duty allows domestic goods to be purchased without tax for a limited amount. It becomes a challenge for security personnel to track everyone. Also, the zigzag border creates difficulty in nagging out the smugglers and fugitives. Lack of a controlled and organized border regulation system (unidirectional) is what the security personnel argue about. Overlapping roles of APF and Nepal Police in border law hinders the smooth flow regulation of border patrol. Security forces must overcome certain threats, baseless allegations, encroachment issues, unnecessary debate and even physical attacks from smugglers and transnational criminals. Border security is regarded as a major issue of national security and a pertinent threat to modern security in the context of Nepal. Nepal lies in between two big ideologies and geography which is also considered as both boon and curse regarding cross border issues.

Furthermore, Sino-Nepal border issue seems quite problematic due to the ecological setbacks. The Indo-Nepal border is an open border having both positive and negative aspects. The negative aspect, such as increasing border crimes pose more problems to the border security

forces. Killing, abduction, extortion and proliferation of small arms and light weapons across the open border are some of the serious cross-border challenges (Security Challenges in Nepal, 2022). Security forces are specifically deployed for border management or border security. The major focus of border security is on territorial integrity. Proper border demarcation has been an issue since the past several decades, but the government is yet to address them effectively. Protecting borders is a primary role and responsibility of a nation. A country fails in protecting national security if it fails to secure its territory (Shrestha, 2020). Security forces have been safeguarding people at the border, collecting and synthesizing information related to national security along with border security. Despite tight regulation procedures at checkpoints in the borderline, illegal cross border & illicit trade has highly increased (Thapa, pseudonym, personal communication, October 13, 2022). Nepal is slowly and gradually becoming a transit hub for narcotics. The rate of human trafficking is rampantly increasing. As seen, the Nepal government has given less attention to secure its border strategically. Increased Human resources, technological advancement, effective tools, and gadgets are essential for border security. Such security apparatus can promote smooth and professional border security.

Afterwards, the second discussion based on security Forces raises a question stating: Why do Nepal need force in such a large number when it is not facing any territorial aggression? Can we use our forces in some productive way? Nepal is not facing any wartime threats, but we can productively use our forces for peacebuilding approaches, says peace researchers. Also, there is less civil-military and civil-police relation seen which results in creating a gap between tracking problematic acts, matters of social importance and many more. There is minimal interaction of the public with security forces which ultimately creates a gap in understanding each other. As per the interview with security personnel, there exists a misconception regarding the term 'security forces. People misinterpret their roles and responsibilities without knowing what is stated in legal documents. Although security forces have been making constant efforts to maintain peace in the nation, many people fear from security forces as they believe that security forces work on their own without any principles or guidelines (Silwal, pseudonym, personal communication, October 13, 2022).

The figure below highlights major challenges regarding security issues in the contemporary context of Nepal. It illustrates the political, cyber, social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues.

The third argument on cyber terrorism depicts that in everyday life, the rapid advancement of technology has a great impact on people and society. A growing dimension of cyberspace and social media cannot be over-emphasized. Over the years, social networking among people around the world have become more popular. Meanwhile, threats and attacks against computer systems, technologies or networking systems have increased rapidly affecting many lives, workspace and creating challenges to cyber security. Data piracy, information tracking, honor killing through social media, cyberbullying are some major challenges to cyber security. Cyberbullying, hacking of passwords and personal information are some issues that can lead to serious mental health issues and sometimes may lead to suicidal attempts and death as well. This directly hampers many dimensions of human security. In the present context, access to social media and new technologies is continuously increasing in Nepal. According to the

Management Information System (MIS) report released by the telecommunication authority, nearly 4 million new users will use the digital device in 2018 to 2019 where half of the Nepalese
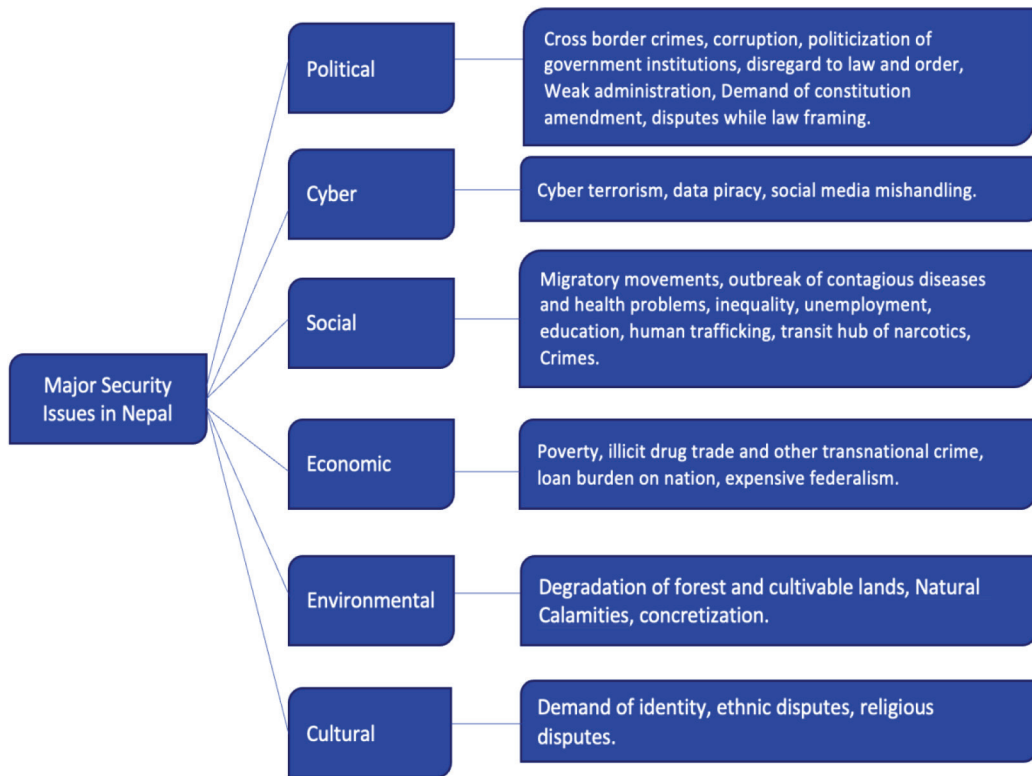

Fig 2: Major security issues in Nepal (Source: Writer)

(Source: Author's Illustration)

population use smartphones to access the internet (Rijal, 2019). In such cases, there are high chances and risks to cyber security. Various cyber-crimes have been witnessed in the current scenario. Nepalese law enforcement agencies are struggling to keep pace with advancement in information technology. Yet, it lacks strong cyber policies and mechanisms, weak Internet Service Provider (ISP) and governmental institutions. The greatest consequence is that the personal data and information, including the whole networking systems are at high risk.

The fourth analysis portrays the challenges faced by increased migration rate. In today's context, migration seems like a rising trend among Nepalese youths. Lack of secured jobs, employment opportunities, lack of better education and poor lifestyle in the country are the major reasons for high migration. Dependency on remittance is temporary. If a foreign country stops providing jobs, the situation will become worse. As the migration rate is increasing the country is significantly losing its human resources in working spaces. This is continuously slackening the momentum of development and consequently affecting the overall economy of the nation. Soon, the country's population will have a maximum percentage of old aged people

and the country would face a huge crash in different sectors (Wagle, 2022). Control over the issues of brain drain and creating better opportunities and spaces for youth can be the major solution to this problem. People from villages, small towns and moderate cities migrate to big cities in search of better life and secure jobs. This increases the city population which adversely affects the environment of that area. Subsequent rise in population has led to many problems including increase in crime rates whereas villages are left out with old peoples and less skilled peoples. When the given number of resources for few people are to be distributed to many, then a situation of conflict arises. Same condition applies for people with migratory movements. The remedial aspect for this problem can be the decentralization, devolution and delegation of power, socio-economy, and political affluence.

Similarly, the fifth discussion is based on social issues. While talking about social issues, the first thing that strikes is health. Crisis to health can be fatal to life. The COVID-19 pandemic and Dengue have shown, how late the Nepal government respond to health crisis and emergencies. It is seen that Nepal has always been less prepared for any outbreaks. Also, poor health infrastructures i.e., untrained and inefficient human resources, constraints relating to the competency and their behavior towards service recipients has led to several health crises. Although there were health insurance plans implemented; due to weak managing plans, the scheme seems to bear failure. Despite insurance, the Government of Nepal has not been implementing any long-term social security schemes regarding healthcare. Government fails to deliver sufficient, affordable, and consistent health care to the citizens. Similarly, poor education infrastructure (school, colleges, university, un-updated curricula, teachers, traditional teaching methodology), problems in foundational learning, less skillful and practical knowledge and rate of students migrating abroad are the major educational problems in Nepal. This problem is pushing Nepal far from a decade or more. Degrading education means degrading society. There must be a concrete plan to overcome these issues and it is the appropriate time to think and act upon them. A development worker in an interview added, if people feel that their children will be getting quality education at minimal cost and the state will provide health security where it covers all the treatment at minimum or zero sum, there will be less chances of corruption in all fields (Shrestha, pseudonym, personal communication, October 14, 2022). Corruption is also a grave issue to human security. Along with this, inequality exists in this age as well. Nepal has better laws, plans and policies but they are weak in practice. One can note, women are still not equal as men in Nepal, dalits are not as equal as brahmins, and other ethnic groups are not given equal opportunities as khas/arya which sometimes leads to identity crisis (Lamichhane, pseudonym, personal communication, October 14, 2022). Income and expenditure of a few handfuls of people is high and others are beyond average. Increased rates of domestic violence are seen. Road accidents and disrespect towards traffic rules are highly observed. Other issues like poverty, unemployment, ethnic and religious disputes are also seen most of the time (Upreti, Bhattarai, & Wagle, 2013). These all-social issues are the contemporary threats to security. If not acted to reduce those threats on time, serious national security challenges will be seen in near future as conflict emerges from individuals and society.

The sixth issue raised by one of the components of 'solidarity and fraternity' component i.e., environmental issues. This is a burning issue in the present context. Geographically, Nepal has steep hills and mountains, rivers, and weak soil over there, which creates high risks of

natural calamities such as landslide, soil erosion, earthquake, and floods. Since the migration rate is increasing, the rise in population leads to deforestation and pollution in urban areas and suburbs. This destruction has a greater impact on certain environmental factors. Environmental degradation often results in conflicts affecting peace and stability in the nation. The water crisis is being seen nowadays in many areas. Gary Lewis reflects on his motivation for joining the United Nations is its preamble where peace, human rights, justice, and development are four core elements. He suggests that thinking upon one more i.e., securing our home and environment on this planet (Lewis, 2022). Also, Nepal has promised to stand alongside mitigating climate change effects. An increasing level of flow of the information and knowledge regarding climate change, as well as mapping vulnerabilities, can help create adaptive measures for reducing the effects of climate change.

Other areas which are overlooked in security practices of Nepal include declining rate in GDP, dependency on loan and remittance, low per capita income, weak passport, transitional justice, refugee issues, miserable jails, unsystematic immigration, and expensive federalism. Also, Nepal should not become an arena of grappling between India and China. Precisely, Nepal should stand firmly on its geographical boundaries while maintaining peace and order.

Necessary interventions

To strengthen national security, Nepal should consider the following immediate interventions. First, changes are required in the national security council, hence restructuring security policy. The constitution of Nepal, National Security Council of Nepal consists of a 7 members committee chaired by the Prime Minister of the country and four member ministers (Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Finance), including Chief Secretary of Government of Nepal and Chief of Army Staff (Constitution of Nepal, 2015). Due to political instability, the structure remains unfulfilled most of the time, especially the defense ministry. In this context, how a public can be assured that the defense mechanism is strong enough, says a security expert. Experts with expertise in non-traditional security are needed urgently for ensuring the righteousness of national security policy and its implementation.

Another major task is engaging multi-sectoral approaches for implementation, communications, monitoring, oversight, and accountability. All the sectors of diplomacy and correspondence should act together to maximize the upshots of defense strategy. The government is responsible to make, amend and implement plans and policies. Citizens expect better plans and policies, which should be monitored by oversight agencies and non-government representatives. Those who do business should keep national security in mind while investing and making profit. Taxpayers have equal roles to promote national security, making the economy strong. Maximum knowledge production is needed to be done to identify the real security threats and challenges and ways to mitigate them (Stepputat, 2012). Anything that harms national security must be shared with concerned individuals and authorities, including private citizens, activists, religious leaders etc. and they should also keep their eyes wide open. The dimension of national security which needs rethinking is the aspect of economic, social, political, cultural, and civil. Based on the discussion above, change in the national security council, its policy, structure and strategies along with addressing the hidden normal day-to-day issues concerning modern security needs to be addressed.

Conclusion

The conception of security has expanded to a wider perspective of human security. Nepal has prioritized its focus on different dimensions of national security. From protecting human dignity and individual interest to promoting a security system at the local, regional, and national level, it is seen that Nepal is moving towards positive changes. Advocacy on various issues related to comprehensive and human security are raised in today's context but still there exists some major issues that need to be worked upon to enhance national security in the contemporary context of Nepal. The major problem seen in security assurance is relevant and concrete policies (be it border, custom, policing, or national security policy itself), political instability, political intervention in security agencies and other development institutions, natural catastrophe, and irregularities in finance in most of the institutions, lack of morale in public service providers etc. are major problems. The political system, national security policy and other authorities concerning security requires effective and strategic planning. For instance, to improve the combating attributes of security institutions, they should be equipped with advancement in training and technologies like cloud computing, nanotechnologies, and the advanced internet use to counter cyber security, physical security and many more.

Since various dimensions are focused, yet there are lots of modern security challenges, gaps in policies, practices, mechanisms which result Nepal in struggling and suffering in the field of national security. Hence, this paper concludes by stating that in contemporary context the issues of human security should not be overlooked as that can be problematic in near future. Human security that goes beyond the country and its territory and encompasses the safety of its citizens is an important component of a 21st-century's democratic, liberal, and civilized society. In the new context, political freedom, human rights, rule of law, economic development are considered integral to human security including all the security challenges.

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