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Attitudes of Nepalese Stakeholders towards Sustainable Development of Nepal: A Thematic Analysis

NIRAJ BARAL¹ AND ANKUR JOSHI²

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to observe and analyze the attitudes of various Nepalese stakeholders with the streamlined research questions to deeply dig out long standing development dilemmas in social, economic and environmental sectors, which have been reeling from government instability, unemployment, import dependency, and deforestation. This comes in spite of Nepal having abundant natural resources and natural wonder like Mt. Everest, the birthplace of Gautam Buddha, UNESCO heritage sites, and in spite of Nepal adopting the policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization, which were purported to develop the nation.

Nepal has been struggling with chronic development barriers that have been traced out as remedial themes through Thematic Analysis (TA) for assisting policy makers for sound policy framing and result-oriented implementation. A thorough study reveals that the deep development aspirations of Nepalese people are hindering by the vested interests of its few stakeholders, political instability, poor governance, rampant corruption, ineffective service delivery mechanisms, socio-cultural orthodox practices, untapped and trapped economic opportunities, and environmental problems. The reasons behind the inability to meet contemporary sustainable development (SD) needs even in a country with strong historical foundations and growth oriented neighbor countries have to be contemplated to pave the way for progress and prosperity in Nepal.

Keywords: Sustainable Development; Development Barriers; Nepalese Stakeholders; Attitudes; Thematic Analysis.

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I. INTRODUCTION

(A) Social Aspects of Nepal in relation to SD

Nepal is one of the newest federal democratic republics of the world (Government of Nepal, March 10, 2017). Although it is landlocked, Nepal has ample natural resources in forest, water and bio-diversity.

Nepal is still known as a rural-agricultural society, with a literacy rate of 65.9 per cent – male (75.1 per cent) and female (57.4 per cent) respectively (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

The major social problems include brain-drain, the dangers and frustrations of foreign employment in Arab countries, unemployment among the educated, and poverty etc. (Nepal Buzz, n.d.); (Adhikari, 2019).

(B) Economic Aspects of Nepal in relation to SD

Nepal was ranked in the fifth in foreign employment remittance recipient country in 2017/18 concerning equivalence to GDP (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, 2020). During 1993/94 to 14/15 FY, more than 3.8 million employment seekers had taken government permits to work abroad (excluding India) which was almost 14 per cent of their total population. The remittances' contribution to GDP grew from 10.9 per cent in 2003/04 to 27.7 per cent in 2014/15 (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2014/2015).

The average economic growth rate for the country is 4.5 per cent over a decade (2007/08 – 2016/17) (Nepal Rastya Bank, 2017).

Fifteen per cent of Nepalese lived on less than \$1.90/day in 2010 (World Bank, Oct. 2017). The poverty rate is 28.6 per cent - urban (7 per cent) and rural areas (33 per cent) respectively.

It is assumed that two-third of the population is engaged in agriculture, while this sector represents only 28.9 per cent of Nepal's economy.

Corruption is rampant. Nepal is ranked 117th in corruption perceptions index among 180 countries (Transparency International, 2020). Each year this index shows that corruption is diminishing our society, economy, and democracy.

Nepal has faced various economic problems, like remittances spent in unproductive sectors, inconsistent supply of electricity, the failure to commercialize of agriculture, a chemical fertilizer crisis in planting season, poor road connectivity, encroachment upon agricultural land for residential buildings, government instability, losses of state owned enterprises, capital flight, ineffective tax structure, international indebtedness, and a lack of public-private

partnerships. (Panthi, 2017); (2021 Index of Economic Freedom, n.d.); (World Bank, 2021).

(C) Environmental Aspects of Nepal in relation to SD

The forest cover of Nepal is about 39.6 per cent land of total area (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2016). However, this land is threatened by deforestation, habitat destruction and traditional harvesting, encroachment in grazing protected areas, and poaching animals for high value products (Bhusal, Paudel, Adhikary, Karki, & Bhandari, 2018).

Nepal is the 25th richest nation in terms of biodiversity and is home to 2.27 per cent of world's fresh water resources (Bhattarai, 2020). The majority of people living in rural and remote urban areas still use firewood, and growing number of industries are emitting pollutions. These are contributing to decrease air quality. Only 42 per cent of waste is collected systematically and managed.

The SD Agenda for Nepal (SDAN) report has prioritized – “income, health, population and settlement, forest ecosystem and biodiversity, education, institutions and infrastructure, and peace and security as the six main concern areas” (Asian Development Bank, 2013).

This research paper focuses to identify SD hindrances through the study of attitudes of Nepalese stakeholders for result-oriented policy framing in respect to wellbeing of people of Nepal.

(D) Literature Review

SD is an integrative framework based on three pillars: social development, economic development, and environment protection. It is a well-known global agenda from more than 25 years, with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set as a foundation for SD Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2015).

Models of SD help for gathering, sharing, and analyzing information along educating and training the professionals, policymakers, and publics at large. They can be described as follows:

1. Three Pillar Basic Model, which comprises social, economic and environment tenets, where, social stands for equity; economic stands for growth and environment stands for conservation.
2. Egg of Sustainability Model, which shows the relationship of people and the eco-system (i.e. an egg is good when inside yolk and white both are good. Similarly, a society is in a well condition only when people and eco-system both are well.)
3. Atkisson's Pyramid Model consists of 5 levels – indicators, systems, innovations, strategies, and agreements.

4. Prism of Sustainability Model shows the inter-connections of care, access, democracy, and eco-efficiency. It portrays the relation between these dimensions and policy.
5. The Amoeba Model is an excellent approach for accelerating innovative processes and for achieving SD. It is used to assess system's condition focusing on four dimensions - i.e., material production (metals, minerals, plastics, etc.), product manufacturing (metal components, plastic components, textiles, electronics components, etc.) use (consumption, maintenance, lifetime, etc.) and end of life (recycling, reuse, sorting, etc.)_(Hamedani, April, 2014)

The above models are not panacea for all SD needs. However, it requires an integrated approach to address the different aspects of SD considering the time and scale of a country.

World Development Indicators 2016 Highlights: Featuring the SD Goals where 214 economies and 14 country groups are organized into six themes: people, environment, world view, global links, economy, states and markets (World Bank, 2016).

“The attitudes of people and communities towards sustainable development remain an important factor in the advancement of sustainable development, in that it is difficult to move forward when people and communities are not supportive of sustainable development and the ideas embodied within it” (Rosen, 2017).

It is obvious that the body of literature pertaining to SD is vast and discordant. The multiple opinions are on the floor would be the involvement of large number of stakeholders (Gallopín, March 2003). The successful implementation of SD is mainly dependent on rightful roles played by its stakeholders with right attitudes. Thus, it is imperative to forge out longstanding development hurdles by studying the attitudes of stakeholders for the sake of the Nepalese people's prosperity.

(E) Methodology

Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to explore the SD obstacles.

The research questionnaires were based on the following two major questions:

- i. What are the major social, economic, and environmental barriers to be addressed for achieving SD in Nepal?
- ii. What are the major roles that will have to be played by stakeholders – individual Nepali citizens, organizations, the government, and think tanks to achieve SD?

The above two basic questions were further elaborated into nine short subjective questionnaires focusing on the aspects of social, economic, environment and development of Nepal along with

the attitudes of Nepalese stakeholders.

The six-stage data collection and analysis procedures of TA were followed, as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006): editing, classifying, coding, and tabulating to draw conclusions and recommend measures to pursue SD in Nepal.

The sample size was selected on the basis of stratified random sampling method (not fixing any quota) from different selected personalities of Nepal like economists, sociologists, developmentalists, environmentalists, consumerists, bureaucrats, doctors, lawyers, chartered accountants, ambassadors, businessmen, entrepreneurs, politicians, provincial citizens (rural & urban) and other professionals. Thus, primary data were collected through structured questionnaires, open discussions, and personal interviews. Secondary data were used from published books, journals, reviews, bulletins, and surveys pertinent to this research.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

SD would be achieved through collective, active participation and well-spirited public efforts. Materializing human wisdom into reality is necessary to spur development. Materialism is coming to dominate society, while more spiritual and communal values are diminishing at a fast pace among stakeholders. Meanwhile, observing in some cases biocentric practices (planting trees personally for greenery at home yards; placing water bowls in open area and/or giving un/cooked food grains to birds and dogs showing love to nature and creatures) are diminishing (inhumanly transporting buffaloes, goats, and chickens in trucks or vehicles for meats; animal sacrifices openly in religious sites or meat shop), whereas anthropocentric ideas are increasing (rearing the birds mostly colored sparrows and parrots in cages at home for fulfilling personal hobby; hairs of elephant tail used in bracelets' making). The vested interests of core stakeholders would have to be identified and assessed to put SD on track.

Using TA, six themes were extracted:

(A) Stakeholders

SD is encouragingly accepted by GoN. But some stakeholders are not showing much interest due to a low level of awareness and understanding. A crisis of belief and a conflict of interest (hidden motives or intentions to awarding contracts to kith and kin by government personnel or agencies or state power holders especially in public constructions and projects) among stakeholders are hindering SD in Nepal.

Stakeholders are divided in many small interest groups. Most of them are inclined to ensure their own short term benefits rather than welcoming and adopting SDGs for long term and

holistic benefits. This nature of stakeholders is causing friction for development endeavors. They have vested interests even in trifling matters (pressurize tender awardee contractors for construction materials' supplies favoring to the kith and kin of government personnel or state power holders for their commissions or other personal gains). These interests in policy makers for their personal development have shaded the main objectives of SD.

Nepalese businessmen are suffering from unstable politics that beget frequent changes in government policies. This directly affects their business profits, which lead to demotivation to continue businesses and further investment planning. The Nepali business community has the highest potential to energize economic sectors but is moving sluggishly due to policy instability.

Conflicting interests of civil society members is inhibiting momentum on urgent social issues. The country lacks an independent civil society, since people mostly are affiliated with one of the political parties of the country. Broad participation is necessary for collective bargaining to govern in common public interests, but most of stakeholders lack technical knowledge of SD. Stakeholders' interest would have to be considered while formulating plans, policies and strategies by following the four engagement process of stakeholders: clearness on goals, scope and context; distinctness on roles and responsibilities; sharpness on timelines; and clearness on rules. Then this process would give momentum to lethargy moving SD activities (Brandli, 2016).

(B) Attitudes

Most Nepalese are pessimistic because of long standing poverty and political instability. Politicians, political parties, interest groups, and government officials are keen to work for their personal monetary benefits while pretending to support development of the country.

Furthermore, fatalism is deep rooted in Nepalese society. A common attitude among people (especially youths) is to be most interested in working in a foreign country rather than at home. This situation has arisen due to huge lack of employment opportunities and low salary and incentives within Nepal, but also people are attracted to western society for its culture, clothes, foods, and religions. Other Nepalese go abroad because they disagree with political leaders' self-serving activities and government policies.

The pessimism of Nepalese stakeholders is reflected in their use of words like landlocked, poverty, deprivation, impoverishment, dependency, backwardness, and small. These words belie an inferiority complex born of Nepal's undeveloped status. Such humiliating thoughts need to be removed in order to move up the development ladder.

Negative and pessimistic thoughts also are prevailing due to long standing problems like unemployment, political and economic instability etc. They are result of illiteracy and bad governance. Substantial change would necessitate the idea that the community or country's interest is always above personal or individual interest. This, in turn, necessitates honesty, mutual trust, and harmony among stakeholders.

However, as mentioned before, a mentality of corruption more often is found among bureaucrats and politicians. Risk aversion and fear of failure arise from this untrustworthiness or hopelessness in government. In order to break this, the Government of Nepal (GoN) would have to be more serious about providing basic services to people who are already in a dire condition.

Cultural taboos and malpractices are so ingrained they impede adapting change. This is due to the fear of losing beneficiaries of power and position of top level people who are enjoying their facilities. Many people have adopted the idea that change would bring more burdens and additional workloads to their lives – and that needs to be changed for the sake of development. Apathy towards development leads nowhere but to poverty and backwardness. Nepal's assets and advantages (natural, cultural and social) will be worthless as long as rigidity to change persists.

Social guidance is a preamble for going to new development horizons. “Both Fullan (2001) and Greenberg and Baron (2000) support the view that, habit, past experience, a sense of security from doing things in familiar ways, disrupting well-established professional and instructional patterns can also result in a fear of the unknown” (Foley, 2020).

There is strong belief in work culture that educated people should only work in the office. Seeking nationality in skin color and language would be a harmful path for social solidarity and unity. Some sorts of people are prohibiting those persons who are holding different ideology than they own. Others are indifferent towards gender inequality and environmental protection.

Educations for SD are pivotal in shaping perceptions, gaining knowledge, honing skills, and inculcating values that would lead to developing rightful attitudes of the stakeholders and eventually helping for the attainment of SDG 2030 vision (Balamuralithara Balakrishnan, 2019).

(C) Social Factors

Nepal has predominantly been a patriarchal society. Widespread nepotism among state power holders of the country is hindering the development aspirations of people.

Basic necessities are lacking most in rural areas. Nepalese are constantly voicing their need for health care and education, especially at rallies and movements. The voices of people from the grassroots level are then undermined in development frameworks, where people's basic needs are highly valued in debates, but not addressed in reality

Meanwhile, Nepalese are paying higher taxes without even a word of appreciation or any assurance of social security from the government. It is distressing that only minimal social security allowances are provided, when this should be a state obligation to the citizens.

Health mechanism need to be set intact to fight against diseases, especially in pandemic and epidemic situations, and to reduce the child mortality rate as well. To do so, the government would have to provide free health services, and treat health care as a fundamental constitutional right of all citizens.

Education is another area in need of improvement. There is a need for free and quality education format the primary levels. Also, most schools' and colleges' curricula are based on theoretical teaching learning approach. Educational learning would have to be evaluated the competency on holistic basis.

The government also could conduct skill based technical training for promoting start-ups in various sectors. Public education focused on clean water and sanitation is imperative, as well. Daughters' early marriages are undermining their education, which is still prevalent in remote and rural areas and uneducated families.

Meanwhile, rapid population growth is depleting Nepal's natural resources. Education for family planning would help to reduce over population.

Urbanization is increasing due to a lack of employment opportunities in local levels or a smaller number of industries in surrounding areas. Unplanned urbanization creates unmanageable conditions in the time of natural calamities like earthquakes and floods. The government could develop a stronger policy for urbanization keeping in mind the need for environmental balance.

Educated and professionals are migrating to other countries. An investment supportive environment would definitely help to stop brain drain or migration trends. To cope with pandemic like situation, the returning migrant workers could be large in numbers, so government must have stringent plans to engage in some kind of payable works.

Existing discrimination in sex, religion, caste and skin color could create conflict among people, which would have to be addressed by mainstreaming marginalized and underprivileged groups with inclusive policies.

In Nepal, usually social recognition is evaluated on the basis of the economic status of a person so that everyone wants to go abroad to make money and/or better life standard. As a result, other social life qualities like trust, relationship, love and affection between family members are undermined and being ignored.

There is an income gap between poor and higher class of citizens due to unequal distribution of production. Discrimination in caste, gender, skin and kin are prevalent in rural and remote areas.

Nepal is still a paternal society. Women's empowerment is inevitable for gender equity. It is necessary to improve maternal healthcare. Female friendly industries would have to be established for equal opportunities. Sexual harassment, rape and violence are increasing in numbers that shows social values and norms are degrading day by day. Human rights' violations, especially among women, are overlooked in many circumstances.

Orthodox sociocultural practices are also stumbling blocks for country's development. Some bad cultures or ill practices like superstitions, Chaupadi, child marriage, untouchability (Chhuwachhut), dowry, witchery, gender biasness and alcohol addiction related violence are deeply rooted in society. So, cultural reformation is utmost for development.

SD is primarily concerned with social dimensions like social investment, poverty reduction, and building safe and caring communities. Social investment has two major areas: health and education. It refers to utilization and enhancement of human capital.

"Poverty is both caused and exacerbated by the unequal distribution of land as well as other resources and assets" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

It can be reduced through social development efforts focusing on local people's job-oriented education, protecting human rights of citizens and equitable distribution of resources (Torjman, 2000).

(D) Economic Factors

Remittances, foreign aid, and taxes are Nepal's main sources of revenue. Import dependency is high even on essential goods and services. Economic transformation would require technological innovations in sectors like agriculture and hydroelectricity.

This could gradually shift the agricultural labor force to other sectors with the help of industrialization and entrepreneurship development.

Remittances are a remarkable source of national income of country. More employment could be created through professional farming and animal husbandry, something which many

returned young migrant workers already are engaged in since they got the skills for these activities from their foreign jobs. Large firms might be encouraged to absorb unemployed nationals.

Meanwhile, service sector areas like tourism could generate quick employment opportunities. Foreign employment is generating more income than the agricultural sector. More than 70 per cent of the population is involved in agriculture, which is contributing only 27 per cent of GDP. The government would have to allow FDI in the agricultural sector without disturbing the businesses of domestic farmers and safeguarding the national interest.

Agro-based sectors or industries could be enhanced with modern technologies and equipment that increases productivity even in small plots of land. The practice of selling fertile land for residential housing is harming agricultural production and outputs. Areas within the agriculture sector would have to be identified and developed just like 'Illam' for tea farming.

GoN would have to come with grand action plan to create a national agricultural surplus through commercial farming that would definitely help to replace the tag of traditional occupation. Proper distribution channels could give higher value added to the farmer/producer rather than middlemen.

The government also could facilitate entrepreneurship by providing soft loan facilities to youths for start-up businesses – with or without collateral - along with exporting facilities to access the international market. The government also could take initiative to promote local entrepreneurs by utilizing locally available resources and raw materials for making finished products, especially in the Terai region, where fertile and abundant plain land are available. Numerous innovative and digitalization businesses could be developed like Tootle, Pathao, Foodmandu, and Food Mario to help transform society into digital mode of life. The government also could promote home staycations to boost local tourism.

The current practice of small and scattered types of projects is delaying development. Projects are occurring on ad hoc basis. Hilly, rural, and remote areas are struggling with poor roads and insufficient transportation. Tunnels and Ropeways would be better alternatives, rather than construction of roads in every hilly region to access just a few village households.

Nepal currently cannot produce enough electricity for industries and daily household activities. Foreign companies' dividend repatriation needs to be made easier by amending laws. Nominal returns on investment (ROI) would have to be ensured by policy guidelines. From foreign perspectives, Nepal is still insecure place for investment due to government instability in spite

of low costs of labor, and SMEs are not encouraged enough.

The foreign loans and grants are linked with development on the surface, but strategically hidden interests are defense, diplomacy, and making country something of an economic colony. So, the practice of decolonizing development is necessary for building mutual trust, harmony and confidence.

Cash transactions could be discouraged to promote digitalization. A good example is the Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE), where trading is done online. Different digital payment systems like QR codes, mobile wallets (eSewa, Khalti, IME pay) are gradually becoming friendlier for cashless transactions in Nepal.

Import taxes are significantly contributing to government revenues. The country could open up trade by reducing trade barriers and focusing on competitive advantage products or sectors. Prevailing development problems could be addressed through a public private partnership (PPP) model.

(E) Political Factors

Nepal is struggling to develop due to a lack of visionary political leadership. Political parties are preoccupied with power struggles. Politicians would have to change the attitude of only running after higher political positions and fulfilling their personal interests and instead focus on overall development of the country. National solidarity among top leaders would help to end the current political anarchy in Nepal. On the other hand, most of the politicians have low academic qualifications and their track record is poor.

Generally, congress and communist parties are mainstays of Nepal's politics. People have been habitual to consecutively choose one of them in spite of their constant poor performances. Top level politicians are confronting each other on personal ego or trifling matters without maintaining inter-party consensus. This is creating political anarchy that is thwarting the development aspirations of people. Young generations are frustrated by this prevailing political tug of war and mostly want to go abroad for career opportunities. Polemic journalism and a corrupt judiciary system are other drawbacks for Nepal's development.

The politics of Nepal is mostly influenced by two neighbors – China and India. People with opposing ideologies do not trust development activities run by the government. Political agendas would have to be broadly discussed in all sections of Nepalese society for the country's progress.

Political parties have a short-sighted vision rather than pragmatic thought about country's

overall development. “There are structural barriers, solitudes, silos and stovepipes, that mitigate against its implementation, that is, its structural organization, particularly when civil society groups are organized around issues. Clearly, there is a fundamental mismatch that, once again, militates against developing cohesive policy and political constituencies” (Dale).

(F) Environmental Factors

Poor implementation of Initial Examination of Environment (IEE) and Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) is aggravating the risk of disasters. The prevailing Environment Protection Act of 2019 needs to be effectively implemented for achieving SDGs. Updated policy and modern technology would be adopted for measuring carbon emissions.

Some big development projects like Nijgadh Airport are not considering environmental factors seriously. Unscientific road construction across country is disturbing ecological balance. Before carrying out any projects for roads or hydro-power, an assessment should be conducted to determine the environmental impact on the natural state of the hills. The state should always take into consideration environment and geography while doing development works.

Community forestry recharges environment and helps to balance the nature. Afforestation in the Chure region is necessary. Wastage or drainage water could be reused for electricity generation and irrigation. Fossil fuel powered vehicles are prime cause of carbon emissions and sound pollution as well.

Air pollution has increased due to the use of old or unmaintained vehicles. Brick kilns (factories) are another big source of carbon emission. Dust particles are increasingly found in the air due to muddy or damaged roads. Industrialization needs to be done in a planned and scientific manner for controlling to spread harmful chemical wastes.

The government should be strict by charging penalties or fines for high carbon emitting vehicles/equipment.

Smuggling of forest logs is a prime cause of deforestation and landslides. Nepal can earn from carbon trade through afforestation. Timber cuttings are still done for cooking purposes. Fossil fuels burning could be reduced by using of renewable energies like biogas or green energy.

Extraction of sand and boulders from rivers, especially from Chure area, are creating environmental havoc. Nepal is one of the earthquake prone countries in world and already experienced three highest magnitude quakes. Hence, disaster preparedness programs are imperative to reduce losses of life and property in the future occurrences.

Fertile land plotting for making buildings should be gradually stopped so as to utilize that land

for agriculture produces. Local compost manure could be used instead of imported harmful chemical fertilizers. Abundant mining resources could be explored for economic benefit.

The conflicting interests of two neighbors – India and China - lead to contradictions in various development works like hydroelectric projects, linking road construction in border areas, and so on.

“In economic development, the environmental load should be balanced and buffered, and the natural resources and environments needed by human beings should be well protected, instead of abusing environmental resources” (Tu, Chiu, & Hsu, 2013).

In short, SDG6, SDG7, SDG13 and SDG15 goals should be considered for measurement of environmental factors.

III. CONCLUSIONS

SD is a global concept that can serve as an impetus for the prosperity of Nepal. All seventeen SDGs need to be broadly discussed through consultative processes among the most concerned and influential stakeholders. Policies should be formulated and implemented with consideration of the special features of Nepal and the interests of the Nepalese people. The alignment of SDGs with national interest would be imperative for achieving development objectives of country.

In general, the attitudes of stakeholders towards SD are positive. Other stakeholders are somewhat neutral towards SD because of lack of awareness. But also, stakeholders are affected by corrupt politics, inefficient bureaucracy, poor law and order, and state mismanagement.

The people of Nepal have to change their mindset and start to believe that there is not more money abroad than in their own country. The arrogant and egoist nature of some top-level state power holders and politicians are undermining national interests. Nepalese business organizations are usually concentrated on short-term monetary gains rather on customer services or their larger benefits.

Social factors like poverty, unemployment, gender bias, child marriage, and illiteracy continue to inhibit the country. Social inclusion and compulsory education should be framed in policies with strong implementation mechanisms.

Most of the economic figures are showing gloomy pictures of the country, like low industrialization, high dependency on agriculture, low human development, the slow service delivering mechanism of state, and so on. An Infrastructure and Reconstruction Bank would help for building mega national projects. Nepal will be always behind in development unless

and until it utilizes its highest potential natural and human resources optimally and rationally.

The environment must be protected through decreasing poverty, improving governance, easier access to health facilities, a better quality education system, natural disaster preparedness programs, and seeking global partnerships.

Government, private sectors, and community - all three are prominent role players in the development of any country. An environment needs to be created such that almost all stakeholders are able to play their role actively and significantly for the achievement of SDGs.

Moreover, the GoN must control civil bureaucracy red-tapism and state mismanagement. The vested interest of stakeholders needs to be curbed through insightful policy framing. Transparency and accountability must be strictly followed in all government works.

Nepal does not lack in financial resources or goodwill from its neighbors and development partners. Actually, it has lack in proper planning and execution of development activities. The two: environment and development have some trade-off which would have to be compensated.

People would have to understand that the government is not a doer but a strong facilitator. GoN would have to form an expert committee on SD, comprised of independent professionals to provide solid remedial measures for development. Agriculture, hydro, and tourism are prime sectors to be developed for the sake of fulfilling the development aspirations of the Nepalese people.

Themes, Subthemes, and their Frequencies

| Subtheme | Subtheme Frequency | Theme NO. | Theme Title | Theme Frequency |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------|
| Self-centered and profit-oriented mentality | 9 | 1 | Stakeholders | 28 |
| Vested Interests | 6 | | | |
| Demotivation | 5 | | | |
| Business Community | 3 | | | |
| Civil Society Organization (CSO) | 5 | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|----|----------|-------------------------|-----|
| Common Attitude | 13 | 2 | Attitudes | 38 |
| Traditional and Negative mindset | 12 | | | |
| Corrupted Attitude | 2 | | | |
| Risk averting attitude & Fear of failure | 3 | | | |
| Resistance to Change | 4 | | | |
| Belief | 4 | | | |
| Basic Necessities | 9 | 3 | Social Factors | 67 |
| Social Security of Citizens | 2 | | | |
| Health | 2 | | | |
| Education | 12 | | | |
| Population growth | 3 | | | |
| Urbanization | 5 | | | |
| Brain Drain | 4 | | | |
| Social Backwardness and Discrimination | 11 | | | |
| Equality, Justice and Empowerment | 11 | | | |
| Religion and Culture | 8 | | | |
| Economic transformation to production base | 25 | 4 | Economic Factors | 138 |
| Institutions Strengthening | 6 | | | |
| Manpower Planning | 16 | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|----|----------|----------------------------------|----|
| Employment | 16 | | | |
| Agriculture | 18 | | | |
| Entrepreneurship Development | 15 | | | |
| Infrastructure Development | 15 | | | |
| Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) | 15 | | | |
| Cash Transaction | 2 | | | |
| Imports and Exports | 7 | | | |
| Public private partnership (PPP) | 3 | | | |
| Lack of farsightedness of politicians | 7 | 5 | Political Factors | 33 |
| Political commitment | 6 | | | |
| Lack of qualified politicians | 7 | | | |
| Political instability | 13 | | | |
| Environmental Law and Policy | 15 | 6 | Environmental Factors | 78 |
| Natural Resources | 9 | | | |
| Geographical Structure | 6 | | | |
| Climate Change | 3 | | | |
| Environmental Considerations | 16 | | | |
| Production and consumption | 3 | | | |
| Community forestry | 1 | | | |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Recycling and Reusing | 4 | | | |
| Pollution | 8 | | | |
| Deforestation | 3 | | | |
| Renewable/Clean Energy | 7 | | | |
| Natural Disasters/Calamities | 3 | | | |

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