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Editorial

How do we know? This question seems simple, but it is not. Many philosophers, theorists and scientists have been trying to find the answer(s) to this question. Due to this, the concepts of knowledge have been constructed and/or developed. Both the East and the West have been engaged in philosophizing/theorizing the nature, means, methods and objects of knowledge since ancient times. The Sanskrit term *Jnana* and the English word *Knowledge* have been used as synonymous though they have their contexts owing to different civilizational and philosophical backgrounds. True *Jnana* is called *Prama* in Bharatavarshiya philosophies. The *Prama* resides in the mind and is also manifested through physical objects. In Sanskrit scriptures, there are concepts like *Jnanagni* (the fire of cognition) and *Jnanaloka* (the light of cognition) that refer to the nature of knowledge being inherently revelational. This is to note that knowledge as the basis of rational and intelligent activity is approached in the continuum of mind and matter.

Both knowledge and the methods of knowing are part and parcel of human life. Humans are knowingly or unknowingly engaged in the affairs of knowledge - be it for solving practical problems or satisfying the inquisitiveness. Meanwhile, it becomes a professional obligation for the persons working in academia. Publications like *Bodhi* provide a forum in this regard.

This issue of *Bodhi* consists of six articles. The first article deals with environmental social work with special reference to mitigating the impact of

environmental crises on older people living in disaster-prone areas in Nepal. The second article analyzes Yoga marketing on Instagram. The third article takes on narrative writing as reflective practice and observes its therapeutic relevance. The fourth article is on teacher engagement with young children taking a case study of an early childhood development centre in Nepal. The fifth article analyzes famous Nepali poet Lekha Natha Paudyal's outstanding poetry *Tarun Tapasi* and seeks to outline its underlying thoughts. Poet Paudyal is revered with the honorific title “Kavi Shiromani” and is regarded as the founding father of modern Nepali poetry. It is interesting to mention that the earlier issue of *Bodhi* also consisted of an article on the same text from the perspective of spiritual environmentalism. The sixth article in this issue is focused on technology integration for quality education.

The first issue of *Bodhi* was published in 2007. The second, third, fourth and fifth issues of the journal were published in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively, whereas the sixth issue was published in 2013. After a pause for some years, the seventh issue came in 2019. After another pause, of two years this time, finally the eighth issue of the journal is published in 2022. The editorial board regrets such discontinuities. Hereafter, the Department of Languages and Mass Communication at Kathmandu University School of Arts is committed to publishing the journal annually. The academic fraternity across the world is invited to contribute to the journal thereby promoting the quest for knowledge from the inter/multi-disciplinary perspectives.

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डा. रामचन्द्र पौडेल

Environmental Social Work: Mitigating the Impact of Environmental Crises on Older People Living in Disaster Prone Areas in Nepal

Diwakar Khanal, Erasmus Scholar
Megh Raj Dangal, PhD

Abstract

Older people themselves have a key role in adapting to the impact of environmental disasters rather than being a vulnerable group. They have useful knowledge, skills, and experience which can help them to be resilient in times of disaster preparedness and responses. In such context, this paper highlights the concern for the well-being of older people in Nepal against environmental threats. It further draws attention to how inequalities shape the impact of environmental crises showing stronger connections between the concept of eco-social work and empirical discussions from several kinds of literature. The article provides some recommendations for social work practice in the context of Nepal about environmental crises on older people.

Keywords: Eco-Social-Work, Vulnerable, Climate Change, Disasters, Older People, Mitigation, Advocating, Resilient

Introduction

Climate change and environmental calamities have a significant impact on many communities around the world (Alston, 2015). Climate change is due

to natural disasters and human activities; but mostly it is because of the human-induced activities which are causing major climate change impact which affects the global south and vulnerable communities more compared to North (Dominelli, 2014). In the case of Nepal, flood is one of the natural disasters with severe impact on the livelihoods of people who are living on the riverbank or the ones who have settlements in riverside areas (Deshar, 2013). Every year flood from the river swallows their settlements, endangering lives and people's sources of income. Just this year 13 houses and schools from the settlements were swept away by the flood (Bhatta, 2020).

The intensifying impact of disasters such as floods, landslides, and erosion worsen the socio-economic situation of the people and creates inequalities (Dominelli, 2014). For example, older people are not as mobile as youth and children, so it is difficult for them to escape these disasters to save themselves (Deshar, 2013; Adhikari, 2017). This paper argues for the protection of vulnerable people and inclusiveness in environmental justice in contemporary social work practice in Nepal to resolve the challenges caused by climate change and environmental disasters (Dominelli, 2014). It does so by giving the conceptual definition of Eco-social Work and presenting the lived implications of environmental degradation.

Environmental disasters are not a new thing in Nepal. Most especially, in the Terai region, where flood and erosion are a year-round problem; and many settlements are swept away and lives severely impacted (Sanderson & Bruce, 2020). In such times, older people are more vulnerable to diseases from contamination of drinking water, and not enough warmth for the body (clothes to wear and protect the body from cold), not enough food to eat to name a few (Adhikari, 2017). Environmental social work can play a significant role in protecting older people from these environmental calamities (Rambaree et al., 2019; Sanderson & Bruce, 2020).

Theoretical Assumption of Eco-social work

There has been a transformative change to challenge the modernist assumptions regarding the social work practice and its foundations in order to have some ethical responsibility towards resolving social problems which had been raised due to environmental factors. The profession itself which originated in Europe around the nineteenth century tilts more towards the concept of 'individualism', 'industrial capitalism' that can be seen still now in social work practice. But more research and development have brought the concepts of 'rationality', 'logic', and 'positivism'.

The approach in social work practice has been associated with two major aspects connecting it with eco-social work where one being 'ecological' and the other being 'environment'. These aspects of eco-social work present how it views the world, the relationship of humans with the environment. Eco-social work believes there is a subtle balance in the earth's ecosystem that enables the survivability of human beings and all living organisms. If the ecosystem is affected then it can pose a grave danger for all living beings (Boetto, 2019).

Eco-social Work

Eco-social work or environmental social work is a discipline that is currently advocating for the safety of vulnerable populations around the disaster-prone environment. It focuses on the problems, issues, and concerns with the lens of green social work or the Eco-social work paradigm (Rambaree et al., 2019; Dominelli, 2014; Ramsay & Boddy, 2017). Eco-social work is defined by different scholars using different terms such as 'green social work' or 'environmental social work' but the principle being the same, creating a better environment for people (Dominelli, 2014).

Moreover, eco-social work in practice gives focus on the policies, practices, and challenges that have come from environment-related issues; be it climate change, environmental disasters (Ramsay & Boddy, 2017). Rambaree (2020)

argues that social workers have been falling behind in terms of addressing the issues that are related to the environment. The main priority of the government in Nepal lies in social problems such as poverty, education, and health. The environment has never been the utmost concern but its impact has been severe for quite some time. It has been neglected but the relation of people with their society (environment) impacts a lot on their well-being.

Rambaree, Smith, and Powers (2019) argue that it is important to recognize the relation of all living things with the ecosystem and should make these relationships strong for the well-being of both. Thus, social work should be eco-social work while considering the practice. Whereas Dominelli (2014) mentions that social work has fallen behind in responding to the impact of environmental crises and advocating for environmental justice. She presents her analysis in regards to the practice approach of social work being insufficient to create better socio-economic and cultural equalities in difficult times of environmental disasters.

In the case of Nepal, environmental injustice can be seen to some people where society has failed to distribute post-disaster relief (foods, clothes, shelters, medical assistance) more equitably. The people who are living on riverbank and riverside settlements are mostly squatter residents who do not have any place to live. They could be sometimes seen as homeless people who do not have anywhere to live so they try to make their settlements near the place where there is access to water because that is where they could fish and have access to water (Deshar, 2013; Sharma, 2017). This is not only the issue of one country. Every country around the world is affected by environmental disasters (Alston, 2015; Sanderson & Bruce, 2020).

Climate change, drought, flood, global warming, and earthquakes have started weakening communities across the world where the impact is more on African belts, Asian countries, lower-income countries, and lower-middle-income countries (Alston, 2015). Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia, New

Zealand have been able to adapt to these environmental disasters and climate change issues in more appropriate methods of technological innovation, providing safety for people and better prevention and protection plans for vulnerable people (Alston, 2015).

Nepal is a strongly patriarchal society in the Terai region where women are expected to carry out most household activities. It is common to see that even older women work in the kitchen, carrying water from the river, working on the farm, and washing clothes. Older people, especially women who have less mobility capacity, are physically weak because of their rigorous work both in the household and in the farming or fishing industry. Some of the families also have a history of violence and fighting where women are beaten severely. All these things impact the overall well-being of older people and older women especially. The effects of these indifferences to these vulnerable groups are amplified during disasters as we have seen in the context of Nepal (Deshar, 2013).

Older People

Due to the progress in medical science and increase in life span the older population around the world is increasing significantly. The study from the United Nations suggests that the population of older people will surpass the population of children as the life expectancy will increase and the fertility rate will decline (UN, 2017). The United Nations (UN, 2017) defines an older person “as a person over 60 years of age”. The age is defined also from the socio-cultural reference, families and communities acceptance. Likewise in Nepal also older people are defined as the population that is above 60 years of age according to the Senior Citizen Act (2006). In Nepal, the commonly used term is elderly for older people.

To address loads of issues and challenges in the future, it is essential to solve the existing issues and problems associated with older people. Older people are considered one of the vulnerable groups whose overall well-being is

oftentimes affected due to different social problems. Around the globe, many countries are prioritizing the needs of older people but Nepal is way behind in addressing the needs of older people. There are limited services and assistance for elderly people. They are believed to be taken care of by their family members but due to modernization and urbanization, the situation has changed. There are a substantial number of older people living alone where their families have migrated to foreign countries, migrated to urban areas within the same countries. Likewise, preference for the nuclear family has also played some role in pushing older people towards isolation (Aryal, 2019).

Identifying the Vulnerable

In the case of Nepal, significant impacts of climate change have been drought, flood, and landslides which happen every year during the rainy season (Adhikari, 2017). The settlements in the riverbank encroached land, and slums areas are usually the ones that are severely affected by these impacts. Often they do not have access to pure drinking water. Their living condition is also precarious where they usually share the small hut/house among 7 or 8 people (Deshar, 2013). Likewise, people living in squatter settlements are oftentimes socially excluded from society (Sharma, 2017). They are considered illegal squatters/settlers who are misusing public property and making society look bad. In some places, these people living in such settlements are not even allowed to fetch drinking water from the public water tap (Deshar, 2013).

Social workers can help these people in identifying who are the most vulnerable. They can assess and monitor the less mobile people, who have weaker immunities and health problems. In this way, the older people who are most prone to be affected by disaster could be identified and help could be provided on a priority basis. They could be resettled in a safer place such as settlements areas away from riverside settlements and flood-prone areas before the actual heavy rain hits their community. There are permanent and

temporary shelters in these kinds of settlements. Similarly, some of the people who are living in hill areas could be more prone to environmental disasters such as landslides and soil erosion (Deshar, 2013). Thus, if they are not willing to change permanent settlements, they need to be preventively evacuated.

In some of the places and settlements, the discharge of toilets could be seen directly going to the river. There is a practice of open defecation. About that, people could be using drinking water from the river where there could be contaminations that could cause waterborne diseases. Older people due to their weaker immunity could be more susceptible to waterborne diseases, communicable diseases, and hazardous diseases in times of disasters (Adhikari, 2017). So older people and small children must be given more priority in keeping them in safe places and providing them safe food, drinking water, and sanitation facilities.

In this type of scenario, a social worker can shed light and awareness on the people living in settlements regarding the health issues that they could have. Social workers can encourage them to use different sources of drinking water, guide them in resettlement plans linking to resettlement NGOs working in Nepal (Bowles et al., 2018).

Furthermore, climate change affects the food ecosystem and creates a great challenge for food security. This affects those who are engaged in food production and supply such as farmers, fisherfolks, and those involved in agricultural businesses. The impact of climate change can be already seen in a lot of countries. It reduces the productivity of the land reducing the amount of food and quantity of production (Deshar, 2013; Bowles et al., 2018). So, if the social worker and the necessary group of individuals could map out and identify the risk area and risk group, the government, respective NGOs and community-based organizations can work together in helping the older people fight the problems created by environmental disasters.

Advocating and Making Resilient Livelihoods

Environmental risk because of climate change brings catastrophes that are difficult for people to recover from. Sea level rise affecting the coastal area of many countries poses severity in tsunamis, typhoons, and cyclones. In these kinds of situations, older people are not able to escape these kinds of situations as quickly as the youth or young adult might be able to (Pyles, 2017). Social workers have seen advocating and working with the government to implement programs and training for better livelihoods (Pyles, 2017; Schmitz et al., 2012).

Social workers in Nepal can replicate the same strategies. They can help to shed light on the issues of environmental disasters and their impact on older people to the state, government offices, local authorities, municipalities, local groups, and CBOs (community-based organizations). Social Worker can advocate awareness of people in safe drinking water, hygiene, and safe sanitation. A social worker can give a session where they inform the people through pre-disaster training, educating people to be ready during times of disaster. Singh and Singh (2015) sheds light on some examples of how some older people should be given more priority because in countries like Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka some of them are living alone and don't have anyone who can help them or assist them in times of disasters. Similarly, there are already issues of food security, economic crisis, political instability, and conflict present in Nepal affecting the daily livelihood of the older people and when there are environmental disasters on top of that, the difficulties of these people are amplified (Adhikari, 2017; Deshar, 2013; Alston, 2015).

Older people who don't have any other source of income and only have agriculture for survival would face challenges when floods, change in the pattern of weather, precipitation patterns, hail storms, extreme weather events, and soil erosion affects their agriculture and animal husbandry (Deshar, 2013; Adhikari, 2017; Bhatta, 2020; Ramsay & Boddy, 2017). Poverty in these situations adds a significant amount of problems as many

people are also living in poverty which is the reason they are living in temporary shelters. The issues of food and water insecurities will affect a lot for people who don't have access to drinking water (Alston, 2015).

Sometimes the issues are bigger when there is no support group within the communities. The social worker can help in forming the help group among these kinds of settlements and risk groups. The help group could be inclusive of local authorities, community-based organizations, and activists from the community (Sharma, 2017). The social worker can help by telling the stories of these people and bringing them to the mainstream in the eyes of private institutions, corporates, media, and government officers. This will surely add some help to the people affected by environmental disasters (Ramsay & Boddy, 2017; Dominelli, 2014; Alston, 2015).

Reshaping the Policies and Practices

Social Worker has a strong position and role in reshaping policies and practice in favor of service users. Dominelli (2014) explains well how the practices and policies can be changed in terms of creating cultural equalities and environmental justice. Similarly (Rambaree et al., 2019) highlights the importance and possibilities of Local and Global Linkages in helping the communities to fight the challenges of environmental disaster. So social workers in Nepal can play an important role at the local level as well as the global and national levels in reshaping the policies.

For example, in Nepal, People who don't have any entitlements to land are deprived of many human rights because of their inability to present identity. The government sector and local authorities do not allocate funding for these communities. In most cases, these are the communities that are prone to this disaster impact. In a situation where people don't have any land, it creates the situation of exclusion from the rest of the community increasing inequalities within that community. So social workers can help in raising the issues of Human Rights Violations of these people (Sanderson & Bruce, 2020). They

should be given the recognition, and other basic facilities of food, clothes, and shelter which they are not getting right now (Alston, 2015). They don't have access to drinking water, electricity, proper drainage to the sewage system. Some of the children are not even allowed to enroll in education facilities (especially in the Terai and hilly region of Nepal where discrimination still prevails in terms of higher caste and lower caste).

Even in this scenario, older people specifically those who are living in slums, who are refugees or asylum seekers, who don't have any ownership to land and are part of squatter settlements are the one who is most affected (Sanderson & Bruce, 2020; Campanini & Lombard, 2018). The social worker can amplify their voice as part of the mainstream activist in the frontline areas. These are the issues of human rights violations and should be investigated very seriously and social work can advocate these situations and difficulties of older people. Certainly, social workers have some responsibility in this part of their practice and contribute to changing the policies. (Dominelli, 2014; Schmitz et al., 2012). Social workers have an important role to play in helping older people concerning environmental disasters (Levy et al., 2017; Boetto & Bell, 2015).

The practice of social work would be better if it is more connected to the local level in these kinds of problems (Nikku, 2011) The social worker can work with local authorities, local activists, youth groups, and CBOs to shed some light on them and be aware of them rather than being centralized in the organization in the capital and headquarters of the country, which is more in case of Nepal.

Recommendations

Everyone should have access to environmental justice where one can enjoy the quality of life with safe living, environment, sanitation, and hygiene. But there are thousands of people living in disaster-prone areas. These show the

loophole in environmental justice in the practice for social workers (Schmitz et al., 2012).

There are settlements in disaster-prone areas which accommodate several numbers of older people. These settlements are oftentimes neglected by the government in regards to providing services and necessary survival support. Therefore, social work practice should provide the necessary support for the people living in areas that are prone to environmental impact. This support could be awareness, disaster preparedness materials distribution, resettlement in safe areas, and lobbying to the government.

There needs to be proper planning for mitigating the impact of environmental crises on older people living in disaster-prone areas in Nepal. Participation and service user involvement are critical parts in addressing the social problem. Many times the user is not involved in the planning phase which fails to identify the vulnerable group and assess the needs in the society. Participation and co-production in social work help to make the context assessment clearer, cultural context, and socio-political context. Designing is one of the major parts which has a high chance of making strong mitigating processes and plans (Ramsay & Boddy, 2017) suggest that it is necessary to understand and develop the concept of environmental social work practice depending upon the global-local context as culture and locality are different.

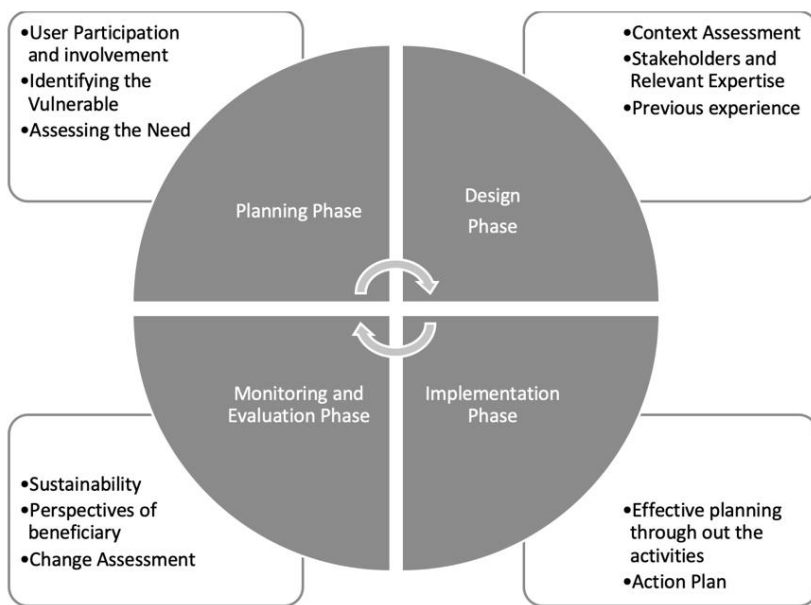


Figure 1: *Recommended Model for Mitigating Practice and Project for Environmental crises*

It is necessary to create resilient and equal societies where everyone has access to resources and basic human rights. Therefore, effective planning throughout the mitigating process should be clearly defined with an Action Plan. This will help to make the project more efficient, effective, and budget-friendly. Monitoring and evaluation will play a significant role in highlighting the relevance and sustainability of the project. Change assessment is necessary for any practice of mitigation as social work stands on the principles of social justice and one needs to identify the change, assess if the justice has been done and if the older people are adopting, mitigating well (Rambaree, 2020).

The social worker can contribute a lot and provide significant help to government and respected NGOs by identifying the most vulnerable older

people who are at higher risk. The proper planning, designing, and implementation will create a sustainable project, plan, and resiliency among the community. This co-production can also play a significant role in helping the vulnerable group, as a whole, such as older people, children, and youth in raising awareness, communicating necessary information regarding environmental disasters, and linking them with the society (creating inclusive collaboration and unity in the community).

Similarly, in-country such as Nepal where the profession of social work itself is not licensed or professionally recognized, not regulated by the government, the social worker can still add a lot to reshape/ influence the policies, advocate for human rights, or help in amplifying the needy and vulnerable voices to reach the human rights agencies and improve in contemporary social work practice in Nepal.

Conclusions

This paper has tried to highlight the relation of environmental disasters, climate change, and their effects on vulnerable people, particularly older people living in disaster-prone areas. It also presented how social work can work to make people resilient and help older people who are more vulnerable (Zeleney, 2016). Climate change has already shown the evidence of calamities happening worldwide both in the global south and global north affecting older people and children more with the extreme weather events such as drought, bushfires, flash floods, storms, and alteration of precipitation (Schmitz et al., 2012; Bowles et al., 2018).

In this kind of situation, Eco-Social Work/Environmental Social work acknowledges and recognizes the connections of living beings and their connection to the ecosystem. Eco-social work/Green Social Work share the common concepts in one of the aspects of people's values, beliefs, acts, and ways of life that are always correlated to the societal and environmental impact. These situations being worse or better are very much determined by

socio-economic and political structures and the dynamic of both community and society. Social work has a significant role in helping service users for fighting these impacts from environmental crises.

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Exotic Universalism & The New Petite Bourgeoisie: An Analysis of Yoga Marketing on Instagram

Colin H. Simonds

Abstract

This paper works towards an understanding of how modern postural yoga is promoted in new media and the role of class therein. The paper analyzes the content of four yoga Instagram profiles to discern how the contemporary postural practice is marketed on social media. In doing so, it demonstrates how yoga practitioners and organizations position their practice as both exotic and universal. This twofold movement establishes their product (yoga classes and studios) as unique yet accessible in the marketplace of spirituality and fitness. While these two processes of exoticisation and universalisation seem contradictory, this paper argues that this dissonance is emblematic of the values of the *new petite bourgeoisie*, a socio-economic class which serves as the main source of cultural capital in contemporary neoliberal societies.

Keywords: yoga, modern postural yoga, spiritual-but-not-religious, new media, Instagram, new petite bourgeoisie

As consumers spend an increasing amount of time on social media, it is only natural for businesses to begin marketing on these platforms (Graham 2021). The obvious form of this marketing is in paid advertising that appears on user's content feeds. However, individuals and organizations are also subtly

creating more personal content to make users *want* to continuously engage with their brand. Should these profiles create and maintain a level of high quality aesthetically pleasing and engaging content people will want to actively seek out their brand such that consumers go to the advertiser rather than advertisers go to the consumer. This is true for online services, television programs, and, interestingly enough, spiritual practices. Indeed, contemporary postural yoga is marketed quite aggressively through Instagram in ways that often elude the non-critical observer's advertising radar. Both individual and organizational brands create culturally relevant and appealing content on social media in order to promote a continuous engagement with their goods. In general, Carrette and King (2005) identify yoga as marketing through an appeal "to the exoticism and 'counter-cultural cachet' of yoga as a key selling-point – except in those cases where to appear too 'mystical', 'religious' or 'ethnic' might put off customers looking for some light relief from the stresses of their busy urban lives" (p. 119). While this statement is basically true, yoga's promotion on Instagram contains slightly more nuance. In this paper, I will advance the claim that the visual portion of Instagram posts typically appeal to the exotic aspects of yoga, while their captions often use a universal language to make the image accessible to a wider audience. In doing so, I will show how this contradictory assemblage of exotic and universal caters to the logic of what Veronique Altglas (2014) calls the "New Petit Bourgeoisie" – a socio-economic class not only able to hold these dissonant values at once but performs its identity through this contradiction.

Modern Postural Yoga

In order to understand how yoga is being marketed on Instagram it is important to understand what is meant by the term 'yoga'. In its original Sanskrit, the term means 'to yoke' or to be in 'union' or 'contact' with something (MacDonnell, 1965). However, this is certainly not how the term is employed today. Generally speaking, modern Anglophone use of the word is informed by Patanjali's *Yogasutras* which has "become the primary text for anglophone yoga practitioners in the twentieth century" (Singleton, 2010, p.

26). In this text, yoga means “to go to trance, to meditate” in an effort to achieve a state of “contemplation (Samadhi, trance)” (Patanjali, 1998). Today, Patanjali’s style of yoga is understood as ‘*rajayoga*’ or ‘classical yoga’ (largely categorized and popularized by the 19th century proselytizer Swami Vivekananda) which can be contrasted with *asana* (postural) based yoga. This latter form of yoga is what is most popularly practiced today even if, as Singleton (2017) points out, it was historically “subordinate to other practices like *pranayama* (expansion of the vital energy by means of breath), *dharana* (focus, or placement of the mental faculty), and *nada* (sound), and did not have health and fitness as [its] chief aim”. Indeed, Singleton (2010) has shown many of the postures practiced today derive from Scandinavian gymnastics and YMCA-centered bodybuilding (pp. 86-92). All of these influences came together in the figure of T. Krishnamacharya, the “Father of Modern Yoga” who headed the Mysore *yogaśālā* in the early 20th century (Singleton & Fraser, 2014). He is given this epithet largely because of the wide influence of his students B.K.S. Iyengar, K. Pattabhi Jois, Indra Devi, and T.K.V. Desikachar who made his style of postural yoga a global phenomenon.

Nonetheless, contemporary anglophone proponents of yoga stress the ‘Indian-ness’ of the tradition and refer to the historical Sanskrit names or find Sanskrit equivalents for each (new) *asana*. For example, the downward dog pose (*adho mukha svasana*) was only first taught in a 1928 text called *The Ten Point Way to Health: Surya Namaskars* which enumerated a sequence of poses derived from Danish “primitive gymnastics”, and yet it is given a Sanskrit title to assimilate it into the greater yogic context (Pratinidhi, 1928; Singleton 2010, pp. 180-182). Many also maintain that yoga is not simply an exercise program but is a holistic practice involving body, mind, and spirit with ancient roots (Vergeer 2019; Montavon 2014). Indeed, despite its quite stark break from *pranayama*, *dharana*, *nada*, and so forth, Meera Nanda (2011) notes that “yoga’s presumed antiquity and its connections with Eastern spirituality have become part of the sales pitch.” And even if yoga has become primarily a postural practice, its key texts nonetheless refer back to

Patanjali's *Yogasutras* and situate themselves within an Indian religious framework. This can be clearly seen in B.K.S. Iyengar's (2015) *Light on Yoga*, a foundational text of modern transnational anglophone yoga. Even if, as Carrette and King (2005) observe, Iyengar "downplays the religio-philosophical dimensions of such practices, in favour of their more physical aspects" (p. 118), he nonetheless begins his book by explicating the eight limbs (*ashtanga*) of Patanjali's yoga. Further, in his explanation of *asana*, Iyengar (2015) purports that not only will postural practice bring "lightness and an exhilarating feeling in the body" and a "feeling of oneness of body, mind and soul", but, in doing *asana*, the practitioner's body "assumes numerous forms of life found in creation – from the lowliest insect to the most perfect sage – and he learns that in all these there breathes the same Universal Spirit – the Spirit of God" (pp. 38-39). And yet, after he roots his practice in a historical tradition from which he can draw authenticity (and after he contextualizes postural practice in an Indian religious framework), Iyengar turns to a rhetoric of health and wellness to promote his teachings and even goes so far as to prescribe particular *asanas* for particular physical and mental health issues (pp. 413-433). This rhetoric has come to characterize what Singleton (2010) refers to as the "international *asana* revolution that got into full swing with B.K.S. Iyengar" (p.4). It is precisely this "*asana* revolution" that is referred to by the term 'yoga' in the popular parlance, and it is precisely this manifestation of yoga that is marketed on Instagram.

Yoga Business and the Constraints of Marketing

However, before turning to Instagram specifically, one must understand the more general business of the modern posture practice. Yoga practice does not hold a monopoly in either the realms of fitness or spirituality but must compete with practices from CrossFit to mindfulness meditation. In the modern landscape of yoga, authority (and hence patronage) no longer comes from the transmission of guru to disciple but from branded teacher training programs (Jain, 2014, p. 74). As such, these brands become central to how yoga is promoted in the neoliberal marketplace. Andrea Jain (2014) states:

“Yoga entrepreneurs and organizations seek to disseminate yoga to the general populace. To do that, yoga needs to stand out in the marketplace among available products and services by being branded or ‘packaged’ in ways that make it seem *valuable, accessible, and unique*” (pp. 75-76). While this is true for the general yogic milieu, these considerations are also relevant to small businesses and individuals who not only compete with other practices in the spiritual marketplace, but with one another in the growing field of yoga. As such, yoga is marketed in such a way that it will stand out from yet be compatible with other spiritual practices and products. To these ends, yoga performs a delicate balancing act (*vrkṣāsana?*) between the exotic and the universal.

The ‘unique’ quality identified by Jain in the previous quotation is, of course, essential to the marketability of yoga. Within the yogic context studios might try to stand out from one another by offering practices such as “rave yoga”, “beer yoga”, or “goat yoga”, but what is more important is how yoga as a whole distinguishes itself from other fitness and spiritual programs. As Carrette and King (2005) note, those promoting yoga appeal to its exotic character in an effort to present it as unique and, in turn, give it a high degree of cultural capital (p. 119). Often, this will manifest in how a studio, teacher, or institution designs their name, logo, atmosphere, or other identifiers to set them apart from others in the spiritual marketplace. However, Jain (2014) notes that this can go even further when she writes: “Branding requires marketers to uniquely package their products by ‘mythologizing’ them, a process that serves to ‘position’ them in consumers’ minds” (p. 79). This mythologization can be as simple as claiming that yoga is a five-thousand-year-old practice or bookending a practice with a “*namaste*” and an “*om*” to situate it in a Hindu religious context. It could occur in the subtle placement of a statue of Ardhanārīśwara or Buddha at the front of the studio or through quoting Buddhist (clumsily conflated with Hinduism in the anglophone postural milieu) and Hindu teachers in class and in marketing writeups. Or, it could be an overt hagiography of a founding teacher that becomes literally

mythologized in a text like Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* (1971) or the oral hagiography of Swami Kṛpālvānanda in the Kripalu organization (Goldberg, 2014). While mythologization as a marketing method is not unique to yoga, its origins in and association with the Hindu tradition (itself rife with myth) gives it the opportunity to lean heavily into this mode of marketing.

However, this proliferation of mythologization (both overt and subtle) and the resulting exoticization is tempered by the necessity of yoga's need to appeal to the accessibility of its potential clientele. Since patronage is based not on faith (as historical yogic traditions were) but is constrained the global materialist and consumer-capitalist worldviews it must remain accessible lest those vaguely interested yet uncommitted potential clients browse other spiritual wares. As Jain (2014) writes:

[the] various renditions of yoga were compatible with the underlying logic of consumer culture. [B.K.S. Iyengar, Bikram Choudhury, and John Friend] marketed forms of yoga that did not privilege any religious, ethnic, or national metanarrative, replacing those forms with ones that facilitated individual choice... All of this amounted to them responding to a transnational market in which wares were most successful when they could be easily fit into individualized lifestyles. (p. 66)

Thus, although the exotic nature of yoga is exploited for marketing purposes, there is a limit to just how exotic of a connection can be made. Yoga marketing must toe the line between exotic and universal such that its product is unique enough to stand out amongst like goods while still being accessible to a broad consumer base. It situates itself in the spiritual-but-not-religious marketplace while simultaneously (and consciously) distancing itself from the religious in order to appeal to a broad consumer base.

Yoga and the New Petite Bourgeoisie

This movement towards assimilating yoga into neoliberal socio-economic contexts and, in particular, the way in which it does so through dissonant means (universalisation and exoticisation) can be seen to reflect the values of a particular social class: the new petite bourgeoisie. This term is used by Veronique Altglas (2014) to describe those who:

Tend to exert “new or renovated professions,” such as those “involving presentation and representation” (Marketing, advertising, public relations, fashion and design) and the production of symbolic goods and services (medico-social professions, counselors and therapists, individuals working in media, craft workers and artists). In short, the new petite bourgeoisie plays the role of cultural intermediaries and tastemakers; the production and control of symbolic goods are therefore vital for its reproduction. (p. 319)

There is a reason for this importance of symbolic goods to the new petite bourgeoisie: often these individuals have “a high cultural and educational capital that is not translated in their material achievements. They accordingly express a desire to raise themselves ‘above’ an unfulfilling position” (Altglas, 2014, p. 290). Thus, their meaning becomes tied to immaterial or idealized goods which they have the social and financial capital to access. It is *precisely* this symbolic, idealized form of value that yoga and other actors in the spiritual milieu are able to cater to. According to Altglas (2014), “exotic” practices such as yoga “allows the new petite bourgeoisie to display cultural competence and maintain their role in the game of cultural and symbolic struggle” (p. 321). These are practices which may have moderate financial buy-ins but require quite large amounts of cultural, symbolic knowledge to be able to fully engage. While they may not have the material basis for upwards financial mobility, the new petite bourgeoisie differentiate themselves from others in their economic class (and those both under and above them) by their ability to engage in the exotic cultural caches of practices like yoga which they can wield as sources of cultural power. There’s an

overused joke that goes: “How do you know someone does CrossFit? They’ll tell you.” In the case of yoga, we might ask, “How do you know someone does yoga?”, to which the answer would be, “There’s a picture of them doing dancers pose on a mountain on their Instagram.” But if they overheard us, they might correct us saying, “Actually, it’s *natarajasana*.”

However, despite looking to symbolic and cultural commodities to give themselves value, the new petite bourgeoisie are *still the petite bourgeoisie* and hence ascribe to the logic of consumer capitalism. As such, we see practices such as yoga and mindfulness (largely disseminated through those in this class) change and adapt to conform to this system. Altglas (2014) writes that these “exotic religious beliefs and practices are decontextualized, constructed, disseminated, and appropriated in ways that reflect desires and expectations that were initially external to them” (p. 323). However, through this domestication these practices are universalised to be able to work towards new non-soteriological goals of health and wellness. While many early yoga proponents claimed that yoga was indeed a part of a universal religion, its traditional goals of *moksha* or *kaivalya* (liberation) do not necessarily appeal to those who hold a capitalist, materialist worldview. However, through this domestication these practices are universalised to be able to work towards new non-soteriological goals of health and wellness – major concerns of the new petite bourgeoisie. While it would be nice to think that the concerns of the yogic tradition would be a marked departure to the consumerism of the western world, rather than present a radical challenge to this socio-economic status quo it becomes universalized and itself commodified. As such, the exotic aspects of yoga are domesticated to be less threatening to non-Indian populations while still maintaining a perceived sense of ‘otherness’.

On the surface, this concurrent practice of universalism and exoticism may appear contradictory. Those propagating postural yoga in the anglophone world espouse its accessibility while, at the same time, maintaining a barrier to the practice in the form of learning (and pronouncing) Sanskrit names,

adhering to a particular quasi-ritualized yoga studio etiquette, and so forth. However, I claim that it is by holding these dissonant positions that the new petite bourgeoisie performs its very identity. Their neoliberal attitudes towards race, sexual preferences, gender identity, and so forth compel them to package yoga in such a way that it is accessible to any who wish to practice, but their status as “cultural intermediaries” and the cultural capital provided by engaging in symbolic value outside of the popular discourse compels them to maintain the exotic nature of the practice. Their ability to navigate the various cultural signifiers present in yoga practice (and other similar symbolic traditions) imbues them with cultural capital, yet the universalisation of the practice allows them to fit it into their spiritual bricolage without conflicting with their core neoliberal values.

#yogagram

All of these socio-economic and class factors come to express themselves quite clearly in how the postural yoga tradition is presented on Instagram. Accounts representing practitioners, teachers, studios, and broader organizations express these trends of exoticization and universalism in their portrayal of the practice and the way they attempt to attract patrons. Perhaps unpredictably, a large slice of yoga’s marketing on Instagram comes in the form influencers. These are personalities who “have an accumulated following, are actively involved in social media, create compelling content and also exert influence over those that follow them” (“Boost Your Business”, 2015). In the world of marketing, these personalities are particularly valuable because “they have the ability to elicit a response or action from their readers” (“Boost Your Business”, 2015). There are many stock examples of this in the yoga world, but what is more interesting is how brands become influencers. The nature of postural yoga is such that a teacher or organization’s particular approach to teaching (and hence their personality) is what differentiates one offering from another. Essentially, one’s personality (and the way one expresses oneself through social media) *becomes* the brand such that seemingly benign personal posts actually serve an individual or corporation’s economic

ends. Something as simple as a posting one's dinner engages particular cultural signifiers that construct brand identity and attracts particular kinds of clientele. As Jain (2014) states, "yoga brands [signify] the dominant physical and psychological self-development desires and needs of many contemporary customers," and play to what consumers felt valuable which, in this case, includes "certain persons deemed to be paragons of virtue or style" (p. 94). This is precisely the way in which Instagram is used. It presents itself as a way of addressing universal issues of mind, body, and spirit while at the same time engages in a process of exoticization in order to appeal to the style of the new petite bourgeoisie.

Exoticism and Yoga on Instagram

To give some examples of this process at work, we can look at a small cross-section of North American yoga Instagram accounts: Karma Shala, a small-scale yoga studio in Mont Tremblant, Quebec (@karmashalatremblant); Yoga Journal, the yoga industry's leading monthly publication (@yogajournal); Jaime Tully, a Canadian yoga teacher and blogger (@jaimetully), and; Brian Miller, a Montreal-based travelling yoga teacher and entrepreneur (@brianmilleryoga). These accounts were chosen to represent both organizations and individuals with both small and large social reaches in order to create a representative sample of the general trend of yoga professionals on Instagram. When these samples were archived in April 2017, Karma Shala had a follower count of 425, Yoga Journal had 584000, Jaime Tully had 9088, and Brian Miller had 52600. Of course to extrapolate the findings informed by these accounts on to every yoga professional on Instagram would be problematic. However, these samples might be used to paint a general picture of yoga Instagram accounts from which additional findings can come. Thus, these four accounts will be used to show that the processes of universalization and exoticization occur in various yoga contexts (studio, publication, small-scale teacher, and large-scale teacher respectively).

To begin, these four accounts all play to yoga's exotic quality to distinguish themselves from other Instagram accounts and employ the symbolic capital of yoga for their own benefit. For example, Karma Shala's name is Sanskrit for "action house" – a roundabout way of saying 'yoga studio' which immediately separates itself from others in the anglophone spiritual and fitness marketplaces. This exoticization is also reflected in its content which often contains bodies twisting into difficult poses. The inverted eagle pose (*viparita garudasana*) in figure 1 not only presents a break from normative Instagram content but also separates itself from other spiritually-oriented posts by displaying a physically impressive posture. The contortion of the body in an unusual way gives Karma Shala a way to promote its product through an aesthetic of exoticism by leaning into yoga's early associations with Indian contortionist fakirs in the Western imaginary (Singleton, 2010, pp. 56-57). Similarly, this marketing through visually striking and difficult postures is key to Brian Miller's success. He practices a great number of challenging inversions that sets him apart from like yoga personalities and, again, leans into the western view of the yogi as a contortionist with masterful control of the body (fig. 2). He uses his strength and flexibility to garner a following through which he subsequently promote his yoga classes, the festivals he participates, and his own brand of superfoods.

Moreover, like Karma Shala, Brian Miller incorporates certain symbols such as the Sanskrit "om" into his posts in order to associate his brand with established cultural signifiers that nonetheless require a degree of cultural competence to understand. In doing so, he plays to the new petite bourgeoisie's occupation of symbolic cultural reproduction such that they will positively respond to the implicit associations of these images. This approach is also used by Jaime Tully whose profile consists of a number of difficult yoga poses, travel pictures, and lifestyle photos that integrate her business as a yoga teacher with her personal life. While her photos are often minimalist and simply framed, she also uses exotic elements to brand her profile. For example, figure three shows her performing a *mudra* in front of

a piece of street art. While yoga practitioners would be able to identify the *mudra* as a part of a larger hatha yoga system and are themselves signifiers of the exotic, the elaborate wings in the background serve to position her yoga within the larger spiritual discourse. In the western imaginary, wings are typically associated with the Judeo-Christian angel archetype (Cobb 1992, p.32). Thus, by using this symbol as a background, she is tempering the exotic nature of this gesture (and its religious connotations) by allowing it to coexist with a familiar, non-threatening set of symbols. Nonetheless, the aesthetics of this image maintain a level of exoticization such that the simple gesture of a *mudra* gives her a degree of cultural capital which she can then use to market her classes and retreats.

Such a marketing strategy can also be seen on Yoga Journal's Instagram account. A post that effectively demonstrates an appeal to the exotic can be seen in figure four where a woman assumes ten arms in various hand gestures while sitting in a tropical environment. The post is visually striking and aesthetically exotic in and of itself, but equally important is how this picture can be interpreted by members of the new petite bourgeoisie. This picture recreates the western stereotype of a Hindu deity such as Durga or Vishnu who has more limbs than an ordinary individual. However, for one to know what these many arms are in reference to one needs a fair degree of cultural competency. Therefore, this image can be seen to be functioning similar to Brian Miller and Karma Shala through the reproduction of symbolism. Alone, this picture might be enough to market Yoga Journal's wares to a general audience. However, the amount of cultural capital one assumes by knowing the reference and meaning of this image gives it specific appeal to the new petite bourgeoisie. In doing so, it reinforces the values of the new petite bourgeoisie and allows them to maintain control over this form of cultural capital through their consumption of this yogic practice and its associated media.

Universalism and Yoga on Instagram

While these Instagram accounts certainly use yoga's exotic imagery and symbolism to their advantage, they also use a universal language to ensure this exoticism does not restrict their potential consumer base. Some of the rather esoteric symbols, poses, and other visual content in these posts is tempered by captions that attract those unfamiliar with these particular yogic signifiers. In doing so, they follow Jain's (2010) observation of the general economics of yoga and do "not privilege any religious, ethnic, or national metanarrative" (p. 66) For example, Karma Shala and Brian Miller downplay both the exotic nature of yoga as well as the difficulty of these postures through their photo's captions: "If the true teacher is the present moment, everything is practice" (fig. 1), and; "Balance is not something you find. It's something you create" (fig. 2). While you might be able to read something explicitly religious into the former statement, both captions successfully demystify the photo and make the post as a whole accessible to a general audience. A similar process occurs in Yoga Journal's post (fig. 4). Its caption reads: "'How you vibrate is what the universe echoes back to you in every moment.' ~ Panache #vibratehigher". While this is clearly using a spiritual language, it avoids any reference to the Hindu religious elements of the photo (yogi/nis performatively mirroring a multi-armed Hindu deity) and places itself square within the boundaries of the greater spiritual-but-not-religious landscape. It therefore dilutes the established religious significance of the image and assimilates it into the logic of neoliberal spiritual bricolage. And yet, despite this dilution, this spiritual (but not Hindu) language requires a certain degree of cultural competency to render even slightly coherent. Thus, even in this process of universalization, the caption directly appeals to the new petite bourgeoisie's role as cultural brokers.

Another way this universal rhetoric is implemented is through the classic inspirational quote (fig. 5). These photos are common to yoga Instagram accounts and often reference popular religious leaders such as, in this case, Tibetan Buddhist nun Pema Chodron. Thus, while a certain degree of

authority is derived through these exotic religious personalities, the quotes shared are consistently universal in their language. In addition to Jaime Tully's post (fig. 5), this can be seen in Yoga Journal's quote of Ram Dass saying, "Your problem is you are too busy holding on to your unworthiness" (fig. 6). These quotes demonstrate a clear decontextualization of these exotic religious resources in order to make the goods promoted by these Instagram accounts more broadly accessible. Quotes such as these are shared precisely because of their universal language that easily fit into the individualized lifestyle of the reader. It eschews religious language in favor of accessibility while nonetheless maintaining its authority by coming from exotic religious leaders. While the individuals and concepts in these captions and quotes may originate from a specific cultural moment tied up with religious, ethnic, or nationalistic agendas, they are promoted through a universal language that neuters these concepts for general consumption (Jain, 2014, p. 66). The exotic aesthetic of the photos become universalized through their captions and thus reflect the values and priorities of the new petite bourgeoisie.

Conclusion

This investigation into the marketing function of yoga Instagram accounts confirms the findings of a number of scholars. There is evidently a trend in the content of both yoga individuals and organizations that exploits yoga's exotic quality in photos while decontextualizing and universalizing these photos in the captions. This process reflects Andrea Jain's (2014) observations on how yoga is sold by making it appear "valuable, accessible, and unique" (pp. 75-76). It also supports Carrette and King's findings on the spiritual milieu in which yoga is promoted through an appeal to its "exoticism and 'counter-cultural cachet'" while being cautious to not appear "too mystical", 'religious' or 'ethnic'" (Carrette & King, 2005, p. 119). Furthermore, when these Instagram profiles are analyzed with respect to Altglas's concept of the 'new petite bourgeoisie', it is evident that their content reflects the values of this class of "cultural brokers" (Altglas, 2014, p. 321). These practices are marketed through a heavily symbolic language and

aesthetic that requires a particular set of cultural understanding to fully engage with. However, because these practices are mediated by the *petite bourgeoisie*, they dissonantly maintain that yoga is a universal, accessible, and commodifiable practice. Moreover, I have argued that it is in this dissonance that the *petite bourgeoisie* establishes and maintains its class identity. Thus, while this paper's sample size was small, there appears to be strong identifiable trends in how yoga is marketed on Instagram that parallel similar accounts both in the general yoga movement and the greater spiritual-but-not-religious marketplace.

Appendix 1: Instagram Samples



Figure 1: Karma Shala Yoga



Figure 2: Brian Miller.



Figure 3: Jaime Tully 1.



Figure 4: Yoga Journal 1.



Figure 5: Jaime Tully 2.



Figure 6: Yoga Journal 2.

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Narrative Writing as Reflective Practice: Its Therapeutic Relevance

Dr. Kshitiz Upadhyay Dhungel

Abstract

Reflection refers to an activity or process in which our lived experience is recalled, considered, and critically evaluated. Reflective practice is an increasingly accepted methodology for professional development. Such practice develops an ability of continuous learning while creatively applying current and past experiences along with reasoning to unfamiliar events as they occur. Reflective practice helps doctors to maintain their professional competence on existing knowledge, attitude and behavior. Narrative writing, in this regard, is one of the several ways of reflective practice in which practitioners regularly write reflections about their situation, thought, and action.

The reflective practice, also known as 'Narrative medicine', has been widely used in medical field. Such practice of narrative medicine can lead to produce more 'humane' doctors who can improve the treatment satisfaction in both, the doctors and patients. Hence, narrative writings can improve the treatment and increase the professional competence of the doctors.

Keywords: Reflective Practice, Narrative Writing, Narrative Medicine, Narrative

Reflective practice: an Introduction

Reflection or “critical reflection” refers to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated (Richards, 2010). Moon defines reflective practice as “a set of abilities and skills, to indicate the taking of a critical stance, an orientation to problem solving or state of mind” (as cited in Hinnert, 2002, pp 5). The theory of reflective practice is attributed primarily to Donald Schon, whose work is based on the study in wide range of professionals. He argues that formal theory acquired through professional preparation is often not useful to the solution of the real life “messy, indeterminate” (Kaufman, 2003) problems of practice. Most of the event in professional life is unexpected events or surprises, which may trigger two kinds of reflections. The first, “reflection in action,” occurs immediately. It is the ability to learn and develop continually by creatively applying current and past experiences and reasoning to unfamiliar events while they are occurring. The second, “reflection on action,” occurs later. It is a process of thinking back on what happened in a past situation, what may have contributed to the unexpected event, whether the actions taken were appropriate, and how this situation may affect future practice (Kaufman, 2003).

Reflective practice as means to develop professionals:

Reflective practice is an increasingly accepted methodology for professional development. There is much agreement in the literature that reflective practices are critically important in an ongoing learning of professionals. Therefore, it has been extensively used in the West and developed world by educators, medical and nursing professionals, managers and other professionals for their own professional growth (Chivers, 2003; Clouder, 2000; Gnawali, 2008; Greenall, 2004; Levine, Kern, & Wright, 2008). Reflection involves thinking explicitly on thought, experience, or action and has profound implications for medical education (Epstein & Hundert, 2002, Levine, Kern, & Wright, 2008).

When we speak of 'reflective practitioners' we are referring to adult learners who are engaged in some kind of activity (often professional) which they can use to reflect on their strengths, weaknesses, values and areas for development (UK Centre for Legal Education, 2010). Reflective practice in which an individual will critically think about a thought, experience, or action represents a means to increase self-awareness and professional competence. This has also been used as a part of different professionals training (Gnawali, 2008, Levine, Kern, & Wright, 2008, Butani et. al., 2017). Increasing self-awareness means to understand their own feelings, values, prejudices, and methods of relating, influences how they react to situation and decision they make (Epstein & Hundert, 2002).

Reflective learning is shown to occur at different levels. Betts (2004) identified the levels as: recording, responding, relating, reasoning and reconstructing. Each level shows the gradual movement of the practitioners from surface to deep learning. Deep learning is taking place where students: display understanding of why things have occurred; connect events with feelings, emotions and actions; explore the relationship between theory and practice; and apply previous learning (Betts, 2004; cited in Stewart, Keegan, & Stevens, 2008). Reflection in professional practice, gives back not what it is, but what *might* be, an improvement on the original (Cowan, 1999; cited in UK Centre for Legal Education, 2010). The importance of reflecting on what you are doing, as part of the learning process, has been emphasized by many investigators. There is much agreement in the literature that reflective practices are critically important in the development of professional and ongoing learning of professionals (Chivers, 2003; Clouder, 2000; Gnawali, 2008; Greenall, 2004; Levine, Kern, & Wright, 2008, Butani et. al., 2017).

Narrative writing as reflective practice:

Narrative writing is one of the several ways of reflective practice in which the practitioners will write reflection in regular or interval basis about their situation, their action and thoughts. Writing about ones' reflection on critical

and powerful situations might help to explore ones emotions and reactions related to those particular experiences. Such reflective practice allows critical observation of self and makes them think what they would have done (Levine, Kern, & Wright, 2008).

Narrative writing belongs to the second type of reflection ie. 'Reflection on action' as described by Schon. Narratives as a reflective writing is used as one of the tools of Reflective practice. Bolton (2001) clarifies the role of narrative writing as a tool of reflective practice by stating:

'Reflective practice through writing is a way of expressing and expressing and exploring our own and others stories: crafting and shaping them to help us understand and develop. These stories or narrative writing are data banks of skill, knowledge and experiences. This emphasizes the role of narrative writing as a reflective practice.' (p. 13)

Reflective writing as narratives is a response to past experience and involves conscious recall and examination of the experience as a basis for evaluation and decision-making and as a source for planning and action (Richards, 2010). Reflection involves thinking explicitly on thought, experience, or action and has profound implications in medical education too. (Levine, Kern, & Wright, 2008).

As different departments in medical institution struggle with provider burnout and feelings of being overwhelmed and disconnected, strategies like a reflective writing may be a means to improve support and inspire clinicians and learners to feel fulfilled (Veno, Silk & Savageau, 2016). Reflective writing (narratives) in medicine allows for the opportunity to analyze, interpret, and learn from clinical experiences. Reflection through narratives has become an important tool for physicians and other medical practitioners (Murphy, Franz & Schlaerth, 2018, Veno, Silk & Savageau, 2016).

Narrative practice in medicine:

Truly speaking, the entire medical practice is about narrative practices. The patient comes to the doctor with complain about their health. He narrates why s/he is there to see doctors. If proper communication takes place between them, only then the doctors will come to the probable diagnosis and with some laboratory investigations and appropriate communication with some experts, he will come to the confirmed diagnosis and will be able to reply the patients narrative query like: ‘What is wrong with me?’, ‘Why did this happen to me?’ and so on.

Medicine is completely a professional course. A professional is one who is categorizing or conforming to the technical or ethical measures of a profession. A doctor must have knowledge, skill, self-confidence, and commitment to service; even so, just owning these features will not make him a professional doctor. S/he is the one who has to deal with the life of patients. S/he may be on continuous stress in his/her work. One mistake can cost a life of a patient. Sometimes s/he has to take very tough and quick clinical decisions. They often have to act by tacit knowledge (intuition, pattern recognition) (Charon, 2001a). Through reflective practice, they can develop such professional competence. So, it is always good for a professional like doctors to be reflective practitioners.

In west or in developed world, there is a practice of writing medical fiction, novels, autobiographies etc. by medical doctors. In those writings they express their problems, interesting experiences, and their weakness as human and as a doctor, their failures, and learning process (Charon, 2001b). They share their relationship with patients, patient parties, fellow workers, other health professionals, with the society and even with themselves (as doctor and self). By this act, they are reflecting and sharing their thoughts to others so that others (doctors, medical students, junior and even seniors) and they themselves can learn something from those narrative writings.

Self-reflection through narrative writing enables physicians to think critically on thoughts, events, experiences which may in turn help them to listen attentively to patients' distress, recognize their own errors, refine their technical skills, make evidence-based decisions, and clarify their values so that they can act with compassion, technical competence, presence, and insight (Epstein, 1999). This practice helps ones to construct professional competence on existing knowledge, attitude and behavior. Reflection involves thinking explicitly on thought, experience, or action and has profound implications for medical education (Levine, Kern, & Wright, 2008).

As discussed in Wlodarsky and Walters (2007), reflective thinking and teaching have also been defined as metacognition or self-monitoring based on cognitive-meditational theories of learning. Metacognition is "thinking about one's own thinking," and relates to this study of reflection as the researchers have attempted to operationalize the internal thought processes and external experiences which collectively become or contribute to "metacognition."

Doctor has sometimes problem in their life regarding their personnel life and their professional life. Sometimes they are compelled to choose the decision that may not be good as professional. If they are able to present that in free style then they really know what exactly they want from their life. And they may know that the decision was wrong and may correct next time. This can be achieved by practicing writing narratives. This may lead to personnel growth and professional competence.

The day-to day activity of doctors not only includes dealing with patient, but also carrying out researches, teaching juniors and students and interacting with colleagues. It is only with narrative competence that treatment possible, research proceeds, teaching succeeds, clinical collegueship achieves its goals, and the profession of medicine remains grounded in its timeless, selfless

commitment to health (Charon, 2001b). Narrative competence and reflection can be enhanced by practicing narrative writing. Narrative writing which is a reflective practice can improve the treatment and increase the professional competence of the doctors.

Narrative medicine a new field in medicine:

Realizing the importance of narrative writing and reflective practice, Columbia University have started an MD and PhD courses in narrative medicine. Professor Dr. Rita Charon is the founder of that department (Greenhalgh, 1999; BMJ, 1999). According to Charon (2001), Narrative medicine is just an addition of art (of narration) into medicine. Practice of narrative medicine can lead to produce more ‘humane’ doctors. She feels that narrative medicine is not the opposite of evidence based medicine: rather it’s an essential accompaniment (Charon, 2001). This field includes writing exercises of medical training, stories from practice, medical fiction, the lay exposition and medical autobiography. Narrative practices prompt deeper reflection and encouraged practitioners to reconsider priorities and values, such practice enhanced self-awareness and emotional outlet, provides motivation to improve, increases awareness of progress over time. (Rachel 2008). Charon. R (2001a, 2001b) has described narrative medicine as medicine practiced with narrative competence. Narrative competence means competence that human beings use to absorb, interpret and respond to the stories. Such practice enables the physician to practice medicine with empathy and professionalism.

Very few universities have used this narrative medicine as a part of medicine curriculum but it is gaining popularity day by day. Whosoever have practiced narrative medicine believe that this field will emerge as a new forms in which practitioners will examine, reflect on and enact ongoing commitment to patients (Butani, 2017, Charon, 2001a, Charon, 2001a, Murphy, Franz & Schlaerth, 2018, Veno, Silk & Savageau, 2016).

Conclusion

Narrative writing has been used to develop reflection and self-awareness in different professions. It is a form of reflective practice which has been extensively used as one of the tools for professional development and career growth in different professions such as teacher, nurses, doctors, and managers. Narrative writing as a reflective practice can improve the treatment, and increase the professional competence of the doctors. Therefore, reflective practice now-a-days has been used a new field in medicine: 'Narrative medicine'. Practice of narrative medicine can lead to produce more 'humane' doctors which can improve the treatment satisfaction among doctors and patients.

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Teacher Engagement with Young Children: A Case Study on Early Childhood Development Center of Nepal

Bibek Dahal, Meenakshi Dahal and Sanam Maskey

Abstract

The Government of Nepal's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has a provision for an Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) center in each school. Accordingly, schools are managing early childhood education and development centers in order to provide a better early learning and development environment for young children. However, the availability of quality human resources is still a critical issue. Keeping the existing reality in view, this study explored how early childhood teachers engaged with their young children (students) by implementing varied early learning activities. We deployed a case study approach and analyzed the cases of two teachers who have worked as early childhood teachers for more than five years. Observation and in-person in-depth interviews were conducted for both cases in this study. Single unit analysis for two cases was applied to analyze and draw meaning and implications of the study. This study finds that in order to engage young children in early learning, the teacher-directed approach could be useful, with the teacher taking multiple roles: as a planner, as an environment creator, as a decision maker and as a transformative practitioner.

Keywords: Young children, teacher engagement, early learning

Introduction

‘Teachers are guides who show us the way we are to take’ is a well-known Nepali saying. Teachers have held a respected role in society since ancient times in Nepal. In that sense, teachers used to take a central position in the classrooms and beyond, to command authority, as well as provide direction, support and care. With the development of educational theories and practices in pedagogy, much debate has focused on student-centered classrooms, where the role of teacher is said to be that of a facilitator. This argument seems valid, but at the same time the subjective role of the teacher in the process of fostering learning and development of young children cannot be denied. The engagement of teachers through different activities with such young children facilitates improvement in their early learning and development in an age-appropriate manner (MoEST, 2016). Every teacher engaging with young children has a vital role in creating a contextualized and effective learning environment, by understanding development psychology, and the unique ability and age-specific interest of each child.

Access and opportunities for quality early childhood development environment and learning activities play crucial roles in children’s overall education. It is important that children at an early age receive appropriate stimulation to develop their motor, cognitive, linguistic and socio-emotional capacities. Learning begins at birth but certain skills and connections can still be developed in later years. In this regard, Young (1996) states that the early childhood development stage is a crucial one, because the most important aspects of brain development take place in infancy. It is challenging to create an environment that supports children for their age-appropriate development. Creating an appropriate environment for learning and development is the joint responsibility of the parents, teachers, community and nation as well. Recognizing that teachers play a vital role in this process (see Dahal, 2016), the purpose of this study is to explore the nature of teachers’ engagement with young children in the early childhood development centers; and the implications of teacher directed early learning

activities in children's socioemotional growth and learning. We have explored and analyzed two cases of teachers facilitating young children in early childhood development centers in two community schools in Lalitpur, Nepal.

Early Childhood Education in Nepal is still fairly new, with an official and comprehensive education system only instituted after 2000 AD. Since then, the government has been working continually to reduce dropouts in early childhood and continuation towards primary school education for children across the country. The Government does recognize that investment in education, specifically in early childhood, can reduce inequalities, reduce public spending costs, and help generate a more dynamic economy (MoEST, 2016). However, in order to improve quality early learning, educational investment towards early childhood development and education should be increased at all levels of the government. Among other aspects, teachers' capacity development and its proper implementation in the workplace is challenging in a culturally diverse community structure such as Nepal. In spite of many difficulties and obstacles, teachers dedicate their valuable time and effort to create an appropriate early learning and development environment. Some of the teachers are applying unique approaches and techniques to engage and support young children's early learning and development. Exploring such efforts can provide insights for other teachers in their transformative teaching and learning practices in similar contexts.

Generally, there are three approaches for engagement with young children; teacher-directed, child-directed and child-dominated (Kimer et al., 2016). These three approaches have their own strategies. All approaches have specific contributions to the early learning and development of young children. The Nepalese teaching-learning approach is predominantly the first approach, providing little space for the second and none for the third one (Dahal, 2018; Singh, 2015). Each child is unique and capable of performing an age-appropriate activity - something teachers need to understand.

Children can engage more in specific activities when the peers play together without any disturbance from teachers and other children, but the teachers must be nearby (Singer et al., 2013; Hong et al., 2020). In such cases, the role of a teacher is expected to be that of a facilitator. Children can learn while playing freely by planning, managing and applying appropriate rules and regulation themselves. They can communicate with living and non-living things by creating their own medium of communication and also develop their perception towards things. These all are their own way of understanding and adjusting within their real-world and surroundings. In all of these early childhood learning activities, teachers' engagement, planning and communication with children have implications upon their learning and growth. Therefore, this article analyzes how teachers' engagement and support influences the natural learning environment in the formal classroom settings.

Methodology

The study was premised on the philosophy of interpretivism and therefore is principally qualitative, using a case study approach. The study is based on a particular setting or context and time boundaries where the teachers and their young children are spending their real-life together to socialize and learn (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The daily basis of togetherness of the teachers and young children creates phenomenon according to the specific context. However, the study does not have clear boundaries between the phenomenon and context (Yin, 2003) because more than one case is selected for the same issue, which is also called a collective case study (Zainal, 2007). To explore the teacher's engagement with their young children, the cases of two teachers engaging with young children through varied activities in their respective early childhood development center are taken for this study.

Each teacher has their own phenomenal context where they are engaging with their students in a different way, but they have the same purpose of engagement i.e., to support early learning and development of young

children. The study is located in the urban contextual setting of Lalitpur Metropolitan City. It focuses on observation and then interpretation of the process of teachers' engagement with their young children through varied early learning activities (Baxter & Jack, 2008). For that, with the consent of the teachers, we observed the ECED teachers engagement with young children and then interviewed them individually. The generated information from observation and interview were thematically coded and rhetorically analyzed to construct potential meanings and implications. At the same time, the corresponding literature related to the teacher engagements were reviewed and we reflected on the observations.

Cases

For methodological consideration, a collective case study approach was applied to explore cases on teacher's strategies to engage with their young children in early childhood education and development centers. The two cases presented below have been chosen for this study. To analyze these cases, a single unit of analysis is deployed (Yin, 2003) because both cases have similar phenomenal context and same purpose of studying the teachers' engagement. Only two cases are taken, as Yin (2003) states the two-case case study has higher significance of presenting and exploring the cases better, compared to a single-case. Further, these cases slightly differ in context, but the internal notion of these cases are common and applicable to both. This study intended to explore day to day activities of teachers engaging with their young children - i.e., teacher directed activities in early childhood development centers that actively facilitates learning among young children. From the observation and interview with respective teachers, the synopsis of the two cases is as follow:

Case –I

It is a sunny day but with four windows on both sides of a room and an open door, the class is a bit parky. Well managed rooms with various early learning materials such as drawing kits, child literature, blocks, musical instruments

and a learning center for different subjects in each corner of the room looks impressive. The room has sufficient space for indoor play and 12 young children are sitting in four groups. A teacher named Sarita (name changed) is sitting beside them. Each child has a drawing paper and pencil and it seems they are about to draw something. The teacher asks them to draw anything and starts drawing along with them. Each child shows their drawing to her. After this, the teacher hands them a paper and asks them to write the name of the food they had before coming to the Early Childhood Education Development (ECED) center. Then she asks them to play blocks in four groups and she also engages herself in their block play moving between groups, questioning what they were building and how they could build it. The children are enjoying and constructing different structures from the blocks and she admires their creativity. After an hour, some children have some discussion among themselves and the teacher initiates another activity.

After a short recess, she requests all the children to sit in a semi-circle and she sits in front of them. She has a book in hand - 'Mero Ghar' - and is showing the cover of the book. She reads all the information written in the book. Children are listening attentively and watching her face and at times at the book as she reads the contents loudly. After the reading, they interact actively then she requests them to read a book from the book corner. While children are reading the book, she goes to the children individually and asks them about the story and participates in discussion with them. At 1:00 pm, children have their day meal and then are involved in subject-wise learning centers. Two groups participate in the language learning center and the other two participate in the mathematics learning center. They spend more than one hour in the center and she provides different tasks to the respective groups. All of the children are actively engaged with the teacher. They are learning about numerical literacy through math games, and language and phonics competency through language games. Now it is 2:15 pm, the time for music and movement. The teacher plays the music and starts dancing and the children join her. They seem to be enjoying it a lot. At 3:00 pm children

are ready to go home. Some go with their parents and some are with their siblings. The teacher manages the room, sits down for tea and reflects on the activities and incidents of the day. She plans for tomorrow's activities and leaves the ECED center and heads towards her home.

Case II

A room with floor seating is heavenly for those young children who are learning to socialize with peers and adults. The room is bright and beautifully decorated with different learning materials for the young children. Four corners and four sides of the room are specified for specific activities, they are sorted accordingly for morning meeting, songs and rhymes, mathematics activities and language and phonics including child literature. Similarly, one side of the room has blocks and the second side has materials for role-play, such as puppets. The third side is where the teacher puts her belongings and the fourth side has a bed for children to sleep. The classroom agreement made by the teacher and young children is also hanging on the wall of the room. Fifteen children and a teacher named Sona (name changed) are in the room. Students along with the teacher read aloud the classroom agreement. She asks the class who has made this agreement? Who is the implementer of the agreement? Who is responsible to follow the agreement? After this activity, she requests all the children to sit in the corner of the daily morning meeting. All of the children are in their specific place and the teacher asks them some questions related to their family, food, and travel from home to the ECED center. Children enthusiastically share about themselves according to their level and she respects their sharing with 'thank you', 'how nice' and so on.

Now it's time for the block play. Children divide themselves into 3 groups and start playing. The teacher is looking at their creative work and actively supporting their activities while children are enjoying. After more than an hour and a half of their active engagement with blocks, she requests them to come for the day meal. Students follow her. After the meal, she requests the children to participate in role-play activities. In this activity, the teacher is

holding a dog and cat puppet in each hand and creating a conflict scenario then trying to solve their anger and conflict. Finally, she conveys the resolution of conflict by showing the love between dog and cat. It is really interesting for me as an observer because all of the children are laughing and enjoying the activity with full engagement. It is 1:00 pm and it's time for learning center activities. Two groups of children are sitting in the two corners of the room, one group in the language and phonics learning corner while another group sits in the mathematics learning corner. The teacher facilitates them in math and language games. The young children are actively involved in such games by interchanging their placement. After an hour, she plays songs and rhymes and all the children sing along. Parents of the young children arrive in the ECED center to receive their children at 3:00 pm. After cleaning the room and managing all the materials, Sona prepares for tomorrow's lesson. She talks to her colleagues about the children's progress, discussing her experiences of the day, reflecting on the children's response to the activities and how she could make the activities even more interesting for the next day. Sona also leaves the ECED center for her home.

Analysis and Discussion

The above presented two cases have different contextual phenomena for the same purpose where the two teachers are engaging with their young children through varied activities. In both the cases, the activities among the young children are similar and are focusing on learning by playing with application of a teacher-directed approach. However, these cases may not represent all early childhood education and development centers, functioning in every public/private preschool of Nepal. These cases give insights to analyze how teacher-directed teaching - learning approaches with varied activities related to play, are creating or hindering effective early learning and development environment among young children. The debate on the approaches of early learning varies from either teacher directed or children centric (Kimer et al., 2016). Both approaches have their own unique importance and significance in young children's learning and development. However, the central focus of

early childhood education is to create an environment where young children can get varied opportunities for their age-appropriate physical (motor), social, emotional, psychosocial and cognitive development (Terreni, 2019). The critical examination of these two cases demonstrates four thematic domains: teacher as a planner, teacher as a facilitator for learning environment, teacher as a decision-maker and teacher as a transformative practitioner. From the discussion above in the introduction section and the theoretical linkages within the cases, we argue that early learning happens when these domains are considered as important aspects of teaching - learning approach in early childhood education.

Teacher as a Planner

Scaffolding requires constant assessment of students' needs and instead of limiting oneself to a 'passive facilitator', teachers need to actively engage in understanding where children need assistance and how learning can be facilitated in a creative way with inquisitiveness. Teachers, especially in early childhood classrooms, take the position of a planner, decision maker and manager in the classroom to facilitate the learning process. Turnšek and Pekkarinen (2009) suggest that plurality, equity, and participation are the three key characteristics that make teachers visible in the class. Plurality concerns itself with the notion of freedom of choice, alternatives and co-existences. It determines how the teacher creates a learning environment with children by providing alternatives of activities, accepting the differences of understanding and variety of choices to make decisions. In the ECED centers, we could observe teachers providing young learners with a variety of activities which were carefully planned according to their learning needs and interest, however most of the choices on activities were mostly teacher directed.

“Each child has a drawing paper and pencil and seems like they are about to draw something. The teacher asks them to draw anything and starts drawing along with them. Each child shows their drawing to her. After this, the teacher

hands them a paper and asks them to write the name of the food they had before coming to the ECED center.” (Case I)

Teachers can be managers in the classroom as they actively engage in planning and making use of the available space and materials in the classroom to facilitate effective learning. Along with the physical environment, creating a 'respectful' environment (DeMeo, 2013) and one of 'trust' among teachers and children, is supportive for continuous early learning. The respectful environment in early childhood development centers make children feel physically and emotionally safe and respectful of who they are and what they are doing (Wessler, 2003). In the ECED centers, we noticed how teachers provided choices for young learners in terms of what they could draw instead of providing them with a strict direction. Teachers were patiently listening to the opinions of young learners which provided them with space to express themselves and also encouraged an environment of trust between the teacher and learner. Such practices help young learners pursue their own interest as well as reflects the respectful environment that the teachers are trying to construct. A respectful environment should be a critical aspect of early learning environments (Miller & Pedro, 2006), as it involves how teachers view early childhood pedagogy and reflects their understanding of early childhood psychology. However, the early childhood teachers need to be skillful to organize the early learning environment in order to support children's innovation, investigation, exploration and socialization.

“... then they are involved in subject-wise learning centers. Two groups participate in the language learning center and the other two participate in the mathematics learning center.” (Case I)

“Two groups of children are sitting in two corners of the room, one group in the language and phonics learning corner, while another group is in the mathematics learning corner. The teacher facilitates them in math and language games.” (Case II)

Place allocation for specific learning activities supports teachers to organize lesson plans, helps children stay organized and gives children opportunities to explore and learn independently, providing equal space for all the children to explore and learn. The subject-wise learning center allocation in a classroom (as in the cases I & II) is a way to stay organized in the learning process, which also helps teachers to create an effective learning environment.

Another important characteristic is equity, which is embedded in the values, such as enabling equal opportunities for all children, respecting their rights, without discrimination and supporting an inclusive classroom. The division of groups by the children themselves is supporting their right to choose, as independent learners (Case II) and inspires respect and trust. Similarly, participation creates an environment for involvement, dialogue, cooperation and shared responsibility between an individual child, teacher and the education management (Turnšek & Pekkarinen, 2009). The participation discourse emphasizes the role of children as social and political actors holding special rights in decision-making. The teachers plant the early seeds of cooperation, peer respect and valuing teamwork, as well as respecting and accepting diversity in the group, all of which facilitate socialization and effective learning process.

Teacher as a Facilitator for a Learning Environment

Teachers engage with children in various ways during the teaching learning process. In every engagement however, teachers are required to think of ways to address the socioemotional growth of the children. Learning is phenomenal as well as a social process where the learner must be engaged and socialized during the learning process. The teacher can set the 'stage' for facilitating learning as per the interests and needs of learners. The cases explored through this study present teachers as creators of early learning stages for their young children in the respective early childhood development centers. Observation from both the cases show that teachers are actively

engaged in setting up a child friendly learning classroom with plenty of materials.

“A well-managed room with various early learning materials such as drawing kits, child literature, blocks, musical instrument and learning center for different subjects in each corner of the room looks impressive. The room has sufficient space for indoor play ...” (Case I)

The early learning environment is not only limited to the management of social relation between children and teacher but management of the physical environment in the classroom (Sahin et al., 2011). Well managed and physical environment-conscious classrooms have significantly contributed to young children’s development and learning outcomes in early childhood development centers (Berris & Miller, 2011). Well managed rooms with access to age-appropriate early learning materials, arouse curiosity in children to use the materials in their process of learning by playing. The proper placement of those materials makes children responsible for sorting things as well. The cases above show that the children did not have the freedom of choice for the activities and the use of materials. The cases have presented teachers as a means of creating learning environment, demonstrating cohesion between the indoor and outdoor environment, teacher and children’s activities and materials and their management. However, the teacher-directed activities may not provide ample learning opportunities as per the desire of students as the interactions between children and environment are limited by the preset activities.

“The room is bright and beautifully decorated with different learning materials for the young children. Four corners and four sides of the room are specified for specific activities, they are sorted accordingly for morning meeting, songs and rhymes, mathematics activities, and language and phonics including child literature.” (Case II)

The “well-managed classrooms can be seen as a harmony of decisions and physical factors” (Sahin et al., 2011, p. 187), which supports children to be independent learners in future. The teachers have significant roles and responsibilities as one who ‘sets the stage’ for an early learning environment. According to Burden (2003), teachers’ actions to create a physical environment for early learning of young children support positive social interaction, self-motivation and active engagement with human beings and non-human things in early childhood development centers. The environment for learning consists of place, learners (children), teachers and materials. The effective discourse between these four entities makes early learning happen among young children in ECED centers. The environment for teaching - learning in ECED centers is a phenomenon created by mobilizing the available resources effectively.

“One side of the room has blocks and the second side has materials for role-play, such as puppets. The third side is where the teacher puts her belongings and the fourth side has a bed for children to sleep.” (Case II)

The teaching - learning environment considers contextually-appropriate management of the available resources in the classroom. Both the teachers and children are responsible to manage the resources in a way where children can use them as per their learning interest and needs. If the teacher alone decorates the class as per his/her interest, it may not be supportive to all the children who have different interests or backgrounds. Each child has his/her own way of socializing and vary in terms of learning attitudes. This requires the teacher, as an adult supporter, to have adequate and appropriate knowledge and skills to engage with the young children, to create an environment and support them to socialize with it. The teacher as a facilitator can use different props and sounds to attract children towards the learning environment.

“She has a book in hand - ‘Mero Ghar’- and is showing the cover of the book. She reads all the information written in the book. Children are listening attentively and watching her face, and at times at the book, as she reads the contents loudly. After the reading, they interact actively then she requests them to read a book from the book corner.” (Case I)

The positioning of the teachers as an adult supporter may create assertive (or unassertive) roles in the socializing process and learning competency of the young children. Teachers need to position themselves as a scaffolder (Vygnotsky, 1978) in the socializing and learning process of the young children. The teachers’ support to young children from the sociocultural learning perspective is essential in their learning transformation and for age-appropriate early learning as well.

Teacher as a Decision Maker

Early learning takes place through a process of scaffolding. This occurs when teachers provide support through a process of engagement with young children in varied activities (Heritage, 2010). In the cases above, teachers are actively engaging with children and creating the environment to engage children in the learning activities. Teachers are required to decide the point of intervention, which can be unique for every child. However, the activities implemented by the teachers are not sufficient to address the individual needs as per their age and development status (Cases I&II). The nature of intervention and the way such guidance or support is to be provided also varies with each individual child's need. The teacher creates the learning environment in relation to their attitude towards diversity of the classroom. Each child needs unique remedial support from a senior or capable peer to choose the right way in the span of their socializing and learning process.

“.... she asks them to play blocks in four groups and she also engages herself in their block play, moving between groups, questioning what they were building

and how they could build it. The children are enjoying and constructing different structures from the blocks and she admires their creativity.” (Case I)

“... she requests the children to participate in role-play activities. In this activity, the teacher is holding a dog and cat puppet in each hand and creating a conflict scenario then trying to solve their anger and conflict. Finally, she conveys the resolution of conflict by showing the love between then dog and cat.” (Case II)

Teachers have to be positioned as a decision maker, as his/her decision to provide 'scaffolding' for the potential development is important for facilitating learning and growth. For example, the teachers need to decide at what point of the lesson to provide hints or prompts to the learner, in order to facilitate the child to move progressively in the learning process and objectives. Though the children are actively taking parts in all the teacher-designed activities, it seems like they are trained to follow the teachers' direction.

“They spend more than one hour in the center and she provides different tasks to the respective groups. All of the children are actively engaged with the teacher. They are learning about numerical literacy through math games, and language and phonics competency through language games. Now the time is 2:15 pm which is for music and movement. Teacher plays the music and starts dancing and the children join her. They seem to be enjoying a lot.” (Case I)

As a 'conductor' in the musical symphony takes central position in the stage and directs the musicians to perform, teachers in early childhood centers constantly provide direction and engage with children. However, in such case, the teacher is required to understand the needs and interest and their developmental stage of the young learners and direct the learning accordingly. Such understanding is mostly missing in the teacher-directed classrooms (Case I&II). Teachers have multiple roles and responsibilities. They need to take varied roles such as that of a guide, as a questioner, a listener, an instructor, a motivator, a decision maker, a leader, a researcher and as a

resource person among young children (Phajane, 2014). All of these roles facilitate the young learners' learning process.

"While children are reading the book, she goes to the children individually and asks them about the story and participates in discussion with them." (Case I)

Learning agency refers to something that people do for others, or more importantly, teachers' self-motivation and engagement to ensure early learning happens among young children (Priestley et al., 2015). It has multiple nature, such as temporal and relational. The teachers as an agent temporally plays a scaffolding role in the process of early learning. But, the performance as an agent is relational, where the teacher acts in accordance to the context, available resources, needs and interests of the young children or according to the background knowledge and experience of the teachers.

"... All of the children are in their specific place and the teacher asks them some questions related to their family, food, and travel from home to the ECD center. Children enthusiastically share about themselves according to their level and she respects their sharing with 'thank you', 'how nice' and so on." (Case II)

Teachers in this study have utilized the available resources and space as much as possible to play scaffolding roles in the process and activities of young children's early learning. While engaging with young children in their learning progression and development, nonetheless, the activities were more teacher-centric. Teachers were found to have been more curious than children initially and it created opportunities among the children to learn questioning skills and made them curious towards learning new things.

The teacher is a kind of medium between the interests of young children and available resources to facilitate learning in early childhood development centers. Further, the teachers have affirmative roles towards the activities conducted by their young children through their self-regulation. Both the cases were found to be successful in these activities. The teacher can motivate

children to participate in early learning activities, not only by inviting children's contributions, but allowing them to construct a new path of learning sequences as per their needs and interests (Church & Bateman, 2019). The teachers as agents have a significant role for both cognitive and non-cognitive development of the young children.

“Now it's time for the block play. Children divide themselves into three groups and start playing. The teacher is looking at their creative work and actively supporting their activities while children are enjoying. After more than an hour and a half of their active engagement with blocks,she requests the children to participate in role-play activities.” (Case II)

The above activities supported the critical thinking, problem solving, social skills, creativity, self-control, and ethical/moral awareness, which are essential components of socio-emotional development of the children, corresponding to non-cognitive development. By creating such an environment (Case I&II) the early childhood teachers have created agentic capacity to be 'agents of change' in children's early learning and development (Sang, 2020). Moreover, the teachers as agents still need to work on their competence to understand children's developmental needs and interests first, then plan and regulate actions in educational contexts to ensure that the learning takes place effectively. The structured routine may help children to follow the teachers' plan, but it may hinder their creativity and limit the opportunities to express their emotional need.

Teacher as a Transformative Practitioner

'Scaffolding', which involves ways in which adults or more experienced or knowledgeable peers provide support for children as they learn (Zurek et al., 2014), has to be unique, recognizing that the levels of learning, the cognitive ability, learning style of every child is unique. It requires that teachers bring out innovative ways, reflect on the used methods and their effectiveness, and in so doing transforms his/her own frame of reference as well. In this light,

teachers practice transformation for themselves as they engage in unique ways with children.

“She talks to her colleagues about children’s progress, discusses her experience of the day reflecting on the children’s response to the activities and how she could make the activities even interesting and better for the next day.” (Case II)

Onks (2009) argues that encouraging teachers to engage in continuous, systematic collaborative reflective practice helps teachers innovate themselves as they turn their reflections into action-oriented efforts in their classrooms. We could observe that based on their experience with students, teachers were eager to bring about changes or rather improvements so that they could make their engagement with students even more meaningful and supportive of children’s learning.

Teachers’ engagement with children of early childhood is possible when teachers believe ‘teaching is a transformative practice’. More precisely, the early childhood teachers are transformative practitioners. They are reflective learners because they learn from their young children to imply age-appropriate teaching and learning strategies. Teaching in early childhood is a process of learning by doing as well as learning by reflecting on the experience teachers have with the learners.

“Students along with the teacher read aloud the classroom agreement. She asks who made this agreement? Who is the implementer of the agreement? Who is responsible to follow the agreement? After this activity, she requests all the children to sit in the corner of the daily morning meeting.” (Case II)

As a transformative practitioner, in this case, the teacher created such an early learning environment where these young children played and behaved with her as a peer. Being an active member of early learning activities, the teacher performed as an adult supporter and transformative practitioner in the learning process of young children (Case II).

“... 12 young children are sitting in four groups. A teacher named Sarita (name changed) is also sitting beside them. Each child has a drawing paper and pencil and seems like they are about to draw something.” (Case I)

Here, transformation also indicates doing the same activities differently among the young children. Knight (2008) states the strategies in early childhood education are demonstrated behavior and modelling through varied early learning activities such as songs, art making, read-aloud, games etc. Teachers' practices of teaching and engaging with young children were reflective and transformative in the sense of applying varied activities such as drawing, playing applying multiple approaches (Case I). Meaningful engagement with young children is a process of critical reflexivity. Critical reflexivity refers to the examination of teachers' belief towards their self-capacity to engage with young children through different early learning activities.

The teacher in early childhood education is a person who plays a dynamic role to improve the early learning capability of the children. Further, on the basis of critical reflection of the cases above, these teachers played transformative practices to ensure effective early learning among young children. Teachers sitting with children while engaging in different activities made them closer to each other as a friend. Further, the teachers actively participated in children's activities and played a vital role as adult supporter in their learning progression and development (Kimer et al., 2016).

“Teacher plays the music and starts dancing and the children join her. They seem to be enjoying a lot.” (Case I & II)

Motivation is essential for both teachers and children. Teachers' motivation to perform as a transformative practitioner with young children significantly adds value in early learning. Both the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors for both teachers and children, ensure that early learning happens

through varied activities (Hill, 2015; Manyara & Murungi, 2018). The children's motivation to engage with the teacher as a friend or peer was also remarkable to understand the teacher's transformative practices in ECED centers.

Conclusion

Early childhood development is a critical stage. Teachers, parents and communities have important role in creating an early learning environment, not only in the ECED centers, but in all other immediate environments. The single unit analysis of the two cases insights agentic roles and responsibilities of the early childhood teachers in early childhood development centers. However, early childhood teachers have essential responsibilities to create an accessible and feasible early learning environment in the given settings. The teachers' role is even more critical and challenging in creating a quality early learning environment for all young children. The cases explained that the teachers tried to engage children based on the children's interests and needs, however, the teachers applied teacher-directed transformative learning approach in their early childhood development centers. Even though they were aware of the notion of transformation in their existing practices, these teachers could have engaged their students by providing freedom of choice, self-directed activities and balance between indoor and outdoor activities understanding their multiple roles; planner, facilitator, decision maker, and a transformative practitioner.

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Technology Integration for Quality Education: A study for Equity and Justice

Amrit B. Thapa

Abstract

There is a long history of more than six decades of technological development and its incorporation in education. A large volume of literature and research focuses on the importance of technology integration in order to create an educational environment conducive to a higher-order learning opportunity. Adaptation of technology became more pertinent in the present context of COVID-19 pandemic. However, there are concerns about whether all learners worldwide are getting equitable access to technology in learning. In this context, this paper studies some policy documents from Nepal to explore how technology is integrated to enhance learning. Further, this paper compares Nepal's technological integration based on the common core state standards from the United States. This literature review identifies that Nepal's educational authorities need serious attention to invest in technological infrastructure and prepare for technology integration in education. This paper aims to inform and evoke policymakers, school/college leaders, teachers, and parents to put an effort to incorporate technology as one of the inevitable means to quality education.

Keywords: Technology, Software, Technological Integration, Fidelity, Equity, Justice, Technological Infrastructure

Introduction

There is a vast amount of literature stressing the rapid development of technology and the benefits of its incorporation in teaching and learning. Also, there are ample educational software and platforms to support teaching and learning; and many of them are either entirely free or are free for basic features. In this paper, I present a brief history of educational technology development and its integration in education. Further, I bring in literature that discusses integrating technology in education at the policy and practice level.

This paper aims to explore the state of technology integration in vision, policy, and day-to-day teaching and learning in Nepal. I will investigate the vision and plan expressed in the National Curriculum Framework for Education in Nepal and the grade nine curriculum for compulsory mathematics.¹ I am taking compulsory mathematics as a representative of other courses at the high school level in Nepal. Further, I will study how the Teacher Guide (commonly known as Sikshyak Nirdeshika in Nepal) and the government-published text-books follow the vision for technological integration. For reference, I will review the vision and recommendations of Common Core State Standards of the USA. The discussions will be based on equity and social justice perspectives.

Progression of Technologically Enhanced Education

Suppes (1966) discussed around 55 years ago that computer technology is increasing and taking calculation and information processing to a new level of speed and complexity. He indicated that computer technology's evolution

¹ *Compulsory Mathematics is a mandatory mathematics course for all students in Nepal, and there is additional mathematics commonly known as 'Optional Mathematics'.*

would benefit the day-to-day human rituals, and it will be a marvel to education. He says,

... the - processing and the uses of information are undergoing an unprecedented technological revolution. Not only are machines now able to deal with many kinds of information at high speed and in large quantities but also it is possible to manipulate these quantities of information so as to benefit from them in entirely novel ways. This is perhaps nowhere truer than in the field of education. (p.207)

He envisioned that school children around the globe would benefit from the vast innovations in technology. The use of technology will provide children with a large and easy source of information and knowledge. Computer ability to manipulate information will make it possible to use a computer for the representation of information and their interaction which may be complex to understand or visualize without technology. And visualization supports higher-order thinking and imagination. Suppes further indicated that the evolution of computers would have an enormous impact on the instructional approaches. He further says, "This role of the computer is scarcely implemented as yet but, assuming the continuation of the present pace of technological development, it cannot fail to have profound effects in the near future" (p.207). He stresses that there will be a severe impact on how the instruction takes place in the classroom. Moreover, he is highly optimistic about the profound positive effect on teaching and learning.

Kaput (1992) contends that it is no more useful to discuss whether computer technology is valuable. He argues that computer modes of children's learning do an excellent job supporting children's intellectual power to mathematical achievement. We need to discuss further how to enhance it. Foley (1990) wrote a paper, an extension of a conference workshop, 30 years back, about using hand-held graphing computers in teaching mathematics. He stressed that hand-held graphing computers facilitate interactive experimentation and

support in concept development. He further said, “Hand-held graphing computers with their in-teractive graphics capabilities have profound implications for what we can and should teach and how we should teach it.” (p.36). Today’s children need to imagine and think beyond the memorization of facts, and to do so, we need to relieve them from the mere process of reproducing facts (Roschelle et al., 2017). As teachers understand the range of ways students learn in a technological environment, teachers can conceptualize the nature of discourse and organize learning accordingly. More the teachers learn technology and experience it in teaching, lower will be the anxiety of using it (Heid et al., 2002).

Faith in Technological Tools and Educational Integration

Dick (2008) talks about fidelity in his chapter ‘Fidelity in Technological Tools for Mathematics Education’; he refers to three basic principles, pedagogical fidelity, mathematical fidelity, and cognitive fidelity. By pedagogical fidelity, he refers to the fact that technological tools are not developed for education or are not developed by educators. Technological tools and software need to be designed and programmed to facilitate learning and align with the curriculum’s goals. It should also not pose a problem with cosmetic features or demand extra hardship to learn its technicalities. So, it has to be user-friendly for both teacher and student. Mathematical fidelity refers to the alignment of the processes, representations, and concepts that technological tool carries out should align with mathematical facts. There may be technical limitations in the tools that may hinder the actual learning that should take place. Technical difficulties need not pose an additional problem in the learning process. Definitely, technological development is an ongoing process, but this has to be well communicated with teachers who are the designers of the lessons. Finally, Dick explains cognitive fidelity as the resemblance of the computer’s process of results needing to surpass the thinking process. In many cases, it is observed that the computer’s solution is sophisticated than the learner, and it makes learners feel less intelligent and or get confused when relating to real-world problem-solving.

What the Future Looks Like?

Michio Kaku is a professor of theoretical physics and has written various popular books. In his book 'The Future of Humanity' (2018), he writes,

The next target may be to record the memories of patients suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Then we can place a "brain pacemaker" or "memory chip" on their hippocampus, which will flood it with memories of who they are, where they live, and who their relatives are. ... We will need to study and refine this technique, but by the late twenty-first century, it is conceivable that we might be able to upload complex memories into our brain. In principle, we might be able to transfer skills and abilities, even entire college courses, into our brain, enhancing our capabilities almost without limit. (p.343)

He explains how technology is advancing and changing the way we live. He provides an extensive explanation as to why we need to advance to escape extinction as dinosaurs did due to an inability to evolve. He presents scientific proofs and logic to stress that technological innovation is inevitable. We are heading towards innovations to stretch our life span, robotic and automated transportation, more advanced communication systems, new ways to energy generation, and space travel.

Elon Musk, entrepreneur and co-founder of companies such as SpaceX and Tesla, shares his ongoing projects such as fully automated vehicles and 3D tunnel networks (TED, 2017). Technological innovations are changing our lives in new ways that we would find difficult even to imagine. Furthermore, the question is, are we preparing our children to be intelligent to work in this direction? Are our schools providing enough opportunities and exposure to students for it? Are our children preparing to fit onto the jobs that will be vastly different due to these innovations? STEAM education (Shatunova, et al., 2019) is becoming popular in addressing these requirements.

Equity, Social Justice, and Educational Technology

Dunham and Hennessy (2008) define digital equity as, "Digital equity is a social justice construct that includes access to educational technology (machines, software, and support) as well as to high-quality curricular and pedagogical resources that provide opportunities for using technology to facilitate learning for all students" (p.348). The authors discuss different forms of equity issues in technological integration, such as equal opportunity to learn, access to computers and the internet, and access to hand-held technology.

The authors contend that even though technology accessibility has significantly improved, this is still inaccessible to students of color, ethnic groups, and students who live in economically deprived communities. And, this is more evident in the contexts of underdeveloped countries. Another part of it is that computer technology availability is not enough, and it is essential whether the resources are functional and are effectively used in teaching purposes. For effective teaching, the curriculum should incorporate technology as an inherent component than a supplemental tool. In addition to this, teachers, school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders need to be well informed, motivated, and prepared to support it.

Grant & Eynon (2017) discuss how and why technology-enhanced learning can both support social justice and become a part of injustice in itself. They say,

Digital inequality is a social injustice itself, but some research also explores how technology-enhanced learning might offer opportunities to address other social inequalities. ... No form of technology-enhanced learning can therefore be seen as a sure-fire route to overcoming social injustice, but there may be some ways in which it can play a supporting role when it is developed with an understanding of, rather than assumptions about, the particular people the intervention is aiming to support. (pp.162-163)

In the context of economically deprived countries like Nepal, where schools are poorly funded, and many children are out of school, access to technology for all the children is difficult to imagine. However, a highly encouraging aspect of technology integration is that it can provide cheap and easy access to those out of school or poorly supported in their learning. Digital resources are easily transportable, and a massive amount of them can be accessed for free. We are in the complex mode of conversation about social in/equity. We cannot deprive young citizens of having access to technology and prevent them from becoming global citizens. At the same time, we have an onerous responsibility to bring those far away from the digital world.

Policy Study between USA and Nepal

In this section, I will present a study of documents from the USA and Nepal to compare and contrast the educational policy on technological integration in education and its implementation. US government does not have a specific publication for all the schools in the country, so I will analyze the Common Core State Standards, a primary reference for what and how education occurs. However, different states may have their standards based on the common core state standards. In the case of Nepal, I will analyze Nepal Government's policy and implementation documents 'National Curriculum Framework for School Education in Nepal', 'Teacher Guide, Mathematics, Grade 9', and 'Mathematics Book, Grade 9'. I believe that these documents will provide significant information about the vision and implementation of technological integration in education.

Common Core State Standards

Common Core State Standards (CCSS, abbreviation) is a common standard developed by the state education chiefs of the United States of America for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language, arts, and mathematics. This initiative started in 2010. I present some aspects of vision and recommendations the common core state standards (National Governors Association, 2010) has offered. The Common Core State Standards states,

"... all students must have the opportunity to learn and meet the same high standards if they are to access the knowledge and skills necessary in their post-school lives." (p.4). The standards stress that all the students must be provided with equal opportunity to participate in educational activities to achieve the knowledge, skills, and attitude to succeed in post-school life. To ensure maximum participation of students with special needs, it suggests using screen reader technology or other assistive devices such as scribe, computer, or speech-to-text technology.

Here, to provide a glimpse of the current situation, I choose to analyze the state standards on Mathematics specifically for high school. CCSS has set 8 standards for mathematical practice, and the sixth standard is, "Use appropriate tools strategically". It says,

Mathematically proficient students consider the available tools when solving a mathematical problem. These tools might include pencil and paper, concrete models, a ruler, a protractor, a calculator, a spreadsheet, a computer algebra system, a statistical package, or dynamic geometry software. Proficient students are sufficiently familiar with tools appropriate for their grade or course to make sound decisions about when each of these tools might be helpful, recognizing both the insight to be gained and their limitations. (p.7)

The standards recommend different tools that facilitate mathematical learning. Including traditional mathematical tools such as paper and pencil, concrete model, and a protractor recommends using technological tools such as a calculator, a spreadsheet, a computer algebra system, a statistical package, and dynamic geometry software. It is important to note that CCSS has listed the technological tools as an essential teaching and learning tools. It further stresses that students must be exposed to experimentation and develop strategic use of technology to play with data or tools to build models, predict, practice, and learn problem-solving skills. Use technology for higher-order thinking and understand mathematics at a deeper level. It does not talk

specifically about using the technology until grade 8, but it provides specific recommendations for different topics for high school.

CCSS specifically mentions using technology to visualize how the solving of two functions means. It expects students to learn to draw graphs by hand and then explore technology for different forms of graphs and see and analyze how these systems of functions work in more complex situations. It presents much emphasis on the use of technology in mathematical modeling and statistics. It says,

Modeling links classroom mathematics and statistics to everyday life, work, and decision-making. Modeling is choosing and using appropriate mathematics and statistics to analyze empirical situations, understand them better, and improve decisions. Quantities and their relationships in physical, economic, public policy, social, and everyday situations can be modeled using mathematical and statistical methods. When making mathematical models, technology is valuable for varying assumptions, exploring consequences, and comparing predictions with data. (p. 72)

CCSS emphasizes the importance of modeling and statistics in the context of a data-driven world. Technology can help understand simple to complex models of day-to-day, social, political, and scientific phenomena. It states that manual skills are insufficient to understand and present complex interaction of variables, and technological assistance is a great way to address it.

Overall, Common Core State Standards has placed technology as an essential medium for understanding mathematics better and to ensuring engagement in higher-order thinking and problem-solving. It has provided explicit instruction to policymakers, teachers, and other stakeholders about the importance of technology integration in teaching mathematics.

National Curriculum Framework for School Education in Nepal

National Curriculum Framework (2007) mentions 'ICT based education in the list of 19 different contemporary curricular issues and challenges identified, 'information and communication technology' is mentioned in the category 'Principles of curriculum development'. This indicates the National Curriculum Framework (NCF)'s the identification of technology as an essential aspect of education. NCF says,

In the context of 21st century human rights, child rights, peace, gender, and social equity, population education, and environment conservation, including global information and communication technology have become the emerging needs. Therefore, it is necessary to spell out the vision of education. Rights to quality education for all can only be ensured if education is taken as the major tool for social transformation and economic, cultural and political advancement. (p.6)

NCF laces information and communication technology as one of the 21st century human rights. It considers ICT as emerging needs for education and education for social, economic, cultural, and political transformation. NCF also has placed ICT in the five major areas to be addressed. This realization of NCF is also a good indication of NCF's inclination towards technology integration in Nepal's education.

NCF says that it understands 21st-century human civilization has entered the era of information and communication technology. It also acknowledges that ICT is an important tool to facilitate education.

Challenges in incorporating ICT in education

Besides recognizing the importance of technology, NCF has listed four main challenges incorporating ICT in Nepal's education. The four challenges are:

- ICT has not been properly addressed by the curriculum.

- ICT as a subject or as a tool of teaching-learning has not been clearly defined.
- No vertical consistency of technical subjects including computer education from
- lower to a higher level of education.
- Lack of adequate physical infrastructure, conducive environment, and efficient
- resource persons (p.18)

It is essential to note NCF has recognized that the curriculum does not address ICT; while text-books, teacher development, and classroom practices must be developed accordingly. Another challenge NCF mentions is the lack of distinction of ICT as a subject and as a teaching-learning tool. If it is simply included as another subject, then the prospect of benefits will be limited.

One of the most critical aspects of the technological challenge NCF noted is the lack of adequate technical infrastructure in school systems. It also points to the lack of resource persons who can educate teachers and support in designing lessons for effective implementation. Though the document states 'conducive environment,' it does not discuss much. It appears that the concept of ICT use in teaching is not well conceptualized.

Instructional Approach

NCF realizes that there is a need for rethinking the instructional approach. This framework admits that the current practices are teacher-centric, focusing primarily on text-book-centric teaching that relies mostly on teacher instruction and memorization. It also stresses that the current instructional approach ignores the use of technological tools. In this regard, NCF says,

... the challenge of the day is to develop and implement curricula and curricular materials in good coordination with stakeholders to transform teaching into learning, establish collaborative learning, design child-centered instruction by

using information and technology, learning through project work and group work. (p.22)

NCF stresses that technology can enhance transforming teacher-centric teaching into student-centric. It mentions using project work and group work as new approaches to education. However, it does not explain how technology may strengthen the project's development and meaningful discourse for deeper thinking. It does not provide a guideline or concrete support for educators.

National Educational Objectives

Part-three of the NCF talks about national educational objectives, the vision of school education, and curricular principles. It says, "Prepare globally competent human resources knowledgeable to modern information technology and use it" (p.31). It is appreciable that technology has a place in the list of objectives. However, there is no clear indication of whether the technology is expected to be used for the teaching purpose or just teaching it as a subject matter. It has used a separate title with 'Information and Communication Technology' as a symbol of showing importance. In this section, it says,

The curriculum will make special room for Information and Communication Technology. In the context of globalization, it is essential to incorporate ICT education in school curricula; however, in our context it is not that convenient. If this new area of learning is not included in the curriculum, the youths will be deprived of today's global educational reality. Thus, the curriculum will be designed by acknowledging ICT education as a subject or medium in order to bring educational transformation. (p.36)

NCF has tried to emphasize its attention to the value of using information and technology for educational purposes. It is essential to mention here the choice of words 'subject or medium'; this indicates that NCF realizes its

intention to recommend using ICT as a subject and a medium of teaching. Further, it says, "Information and communication technology and self-learning materials will be developed to facilitate open education system." (p.38). This statement indicates that NCF thinks of using technology to develop distance learning programs and promote self-learning. However, it does not discuss much about the current technological infrastructure and progression towards integration to education.

Overall, the document shows that NCF has identified technology as an essential part of education in the present global context. However, the discussions appear to be *wishful thoughts* than a strategic plan to develop and implement. There is confusion about defining technology as a subject matter to study or a tool to enhance teaching and learning, or both. The framework does not discuss enough about the current situation of technological use in the school system in Nepal. Most importantly, this framework does not show or indicate a clear path or strategy for developing technological infrastructure (Kaput et al., 2007), and creating a conducive environment for technological integration in curriculum and pedagogy.

Teacher Guide, Mathematics, Grade 9

Here I review the document 'Teacher Guide' for grade nine mathematics teachers (Ministry of Education, 2020) to explore the extent to which it tries to encourage and facilitate the incorporation of technology in classroom teaching. Interestingly, the word search tool recognized two words with 'प्रविधि' (Technology) in the whole book of the instructional guide of 183 pages. And these words are also not used to indicate technological use in instructional purpose but are in the word problems that consisted of the technical term in the context. The guide nowhere tries to aware, encourage, guide, suggest, or recommend teachers for technology use. This document neither talks about any technological infrastructure nor mentions or suggests any software or tools used for the teaching purpose. Neither is there any discussion or explanation about the possibility of using any technological tools, nor are

there any examples or teaching samples that would motivate teachers to use technology.

Mathematics Book, Grade 9

Here, I try to explore the extent to which the text-book (Ministry of Education, 2018), published by the Ministry of Education of Nepal, incorporates technological integration. Interestingly, the word search tool returns only two results when searched for the word 'Technology' and returns 'Computer' with only one result. Technology first appears in the 'Preface' of the book that talks about how mathematics relates to different learning aspects, indicating mathematics is useful for communication and technology. Secondly, it appears in the topic 'Household Arithmetic,' which deals with word problems that relate arithmetic to household activities or requirements such as electricity bills, water bills, and telephone bills. It says,

The customer can get information and pay the bill of electricity, water and telephone etc., from their houses by using information and communication technology (ICT). For example: to know about the amount of bill of PSTN, we can dial 1606 using the same telephone. The main objectives of introducing ICT is that to make customer used paying their bills through online but not in the queue (line). (p.35)

In this paragraph, the book presents ICT as a context of the problem, but it does not link to technology for teaching purposes. The text-book does not provide any recommendation or support for teachers to use technology in teaching mathematics. There are no examples that use technology to demonstrate patterns or make visualization easy, nor are there recommendations for teachers about using any useful tools or software that would enhance teaching. There is no indication of any kind that would support or inspire teachers for technology use.

Discussion

The study of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), Teacher Guide for Mathematics, Grade 9, and the coursebook 'Mathematics Grade 9' shows no policy and strategic plan of action for technological integration in education, in Nepal. NCF has repeatedly mentioned its seriousness in the integration of technology. However, there is no clear path or strategy to develop infrastructure and to develop teachers for it. The teacher guide and text-book do not say anything about technological integration for instructional purposes. Neither of these documents provides any sample activities or suggests technological tools to help teachers use technology for instructional purposes.

Comparing the policy documents of Nepal and Common Core State Standards (of USA), there is a massive gap in the use of technology in education. Common Core State Standards not only has a clear vision of technological integration, but it has a clear recommendation for the use of software in teaching and learning. However, the Ministry of Education of Nepal neither has a clear vision for technology integration nor a clear infrastructural development plan. This digital divide must be a severe issue for the global community to research and address the inequity (Dunham & Hennessy, 2008) created due to the digital divide (Kalolo, 2019). Lack of technological integration compromises the depth of learning that can happen through technology and prevents new generations from countries like Nepal from entering into the global world of intelligence, which is taking a leap to a multi-planetary being. On the simplest level, lack of technological exposure will keep the learners away from lucrative jobs and careers in the market. So, technological integration in education is necessary (may not be sufficient though) for social equity and social justice. Though there are challenges, it is an inevitable journey.

Recommendation

The literature review shows a severe lack of the Nepal Government's vision and action plan towards integrating technology in education. While one part of the world aims to transform human life systems beyond planetary humanity, another part of the world, like Nepal, is lost in the old teacher-centric paper and pencil instruction. People in policymaking, educators, and other stakeholders need to act fiercely towards 21st-century education (UNESCO, 2017). Following are the list of recommendations:

- We must develop both short and long-term vision and policy for a technologically enhanced education.
- We must set a minimum standard of technological infrastructure for government, public, and private institutions.
- We must revise the curriculum to a technologically enhanced curriculum and develop teacher development programs accordingly.
- We must seek support from the international community both for knowledge and infrastructure.
- The international community must initiate concrete programs to encourage and support economically deprived nations for equitable access to technologically enhanced education.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed all of us to envision new and alternative ways of the traditional approach to teaching. Teachers all over the world experienced enormous possibilities of transformation that technology can bring. Teachers, students, and parents got to see the use of technology for education beyond social media and entertainment. Specifically, teachers have explored a vast amount of ready-to-use and useful to use digital materials freely available on the web. Clearly, there are numerous challenges in harvesting digital resources for equitable access to all. Central and local governments, educational organizations, business corporations, and other stakeholders need to come forward to support the development of technological infrastructure. In addition to this, an initiative from institutional leaders, teachers, and parents can make a difference in this process.

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लेखनाथ पौड्याल र तरुण तपसीको वैचारिक पक्ष

डा. रामचन्द्र पौडेल

सार :

यो लेख लेखनाथद्वारा रचिएको तरुण तपसीको वैचारिक पक्ष भन्ने विषयमा केन्द्रित छ । यसमा उनको जीवनी पनि प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । यसका अतिरिक्त प्रस्तुत लेखमा विषय प्रवेश, पौड्यालको जीवन यात्रा र 'तरुण तपसी' को वैचारिक पक्षलाई क्रमिक रूपमा विश्लेषण गरिएको छ । वैचारिक पक्षको विश्लेषण गर्दा उनले व्यक्त गरेका आध्यात्मिक, सामाजिक र आर्थिक जस्ता विषयहरू पनि यसमा समाविष्ट छन् । उल्लिखित विषयहरूलाई १५ वटा शीर्षकमा विभाजन गरी क्रमशः प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ ।

कुञ्जी शब्दहरू: कविशिरोमणि, मनोवृत्ति, नैराश्य, करुणा, विधाता

१. विषयप्रवेश

प्राणीहरू धर्तीमा जन्मने र मर्ने क्रमलाई प्रकृतिको नियम मानिन्छ । त्यसैले संसारको उत्पत्ति भएदेखि नै यस संसारमा प्राणीहरू जन्मने र मर्ने प्रक्रियाको क्रम पनि नियमित रूपमा चल्दै आएको छ । संसारमा जन्मिएका प्राणीहरू मध्ये मानिस पनि एक हो । अन्य प्राणीका तुलनामा उसलाई उत्कृष्ट प्राणी मानिन्छ । किनकी अन्य प्राणी र मानिसका बीचमा खानु, निदाउनु, डराउनु, जैविक आनन्द लिनु जस्ता सामान्य व्यवहारहरूमा समानता छ ।^२ तथापि अन्य प्राणीभन्दा मानिसमा पृथक खालको व्यवहार हुन्छ । त्यसलाई हामी धर्म भन्छौं जसले कर्तव्य र अकर्तव्य के हो भन्ने कुराको बोध गराउँछ । ती कुरालाई छुट्याउन सक्ने क्षमता मानिसमा हुने भएकाले उसलाई चेतनशील प्राणी भनिएको हो । चेतनशील भएर नै उसले जीवन यात्राका क्रममा थुप्रै कार्यहरू गरेको हुन्छ । मानिसले गरेका ती कार्यहरूले गर्दा बाँचुन्जेलसम्म ऊ प्रशंसाको पात्र बन्छ । प्रशंसनीय कार्यको कारण मृत्युपछि पनि उसलाई भावी पुस्ताले स्मरण गर्दछन् । त्यसैले मानिस संसारबाट विदा भए पनि ऊ बाँचेकै सरह हुन्छ । मरेपछि पनि व्यक्तिलाई

^२ आहार निद्रा भयमैथुनञ्च सामान्य मेतद् पशुभिर्नराणाम् ।

धर्मोहि तेषामधिको विशेषो धर्मणहीना पशुभिः समानाः ॥ (हितोपदेश, मित्रलाभ, श्लो. २४ पृ. १६)

सम्भि रहने कुरा भनेको उसले जीवनमा गरेको सत्कार्य नै हो नकि भौतिक शरीर । त्यसैले संस्कृत सूक्तिले पनि “कीर्तिर्यस्य स जीवति” भनेर उक्त कुरालाई पुष्टि गरेको छ । विशेष गरी मानिस जीवित छुँदा आर्थिक, सामाजिक, साहित्यिक, धार्मिक इत्यादि क्षेत्रमा संलग्न हुन्छ । उसले गरेको ती क्षेत्रप्रतिको समर्पण नै पछिसम्म उसलाई चिनाउने माध्यम हो ।

परिचयका माध्यम पनि विभिन्न हुन्छन् । ती मध्ये मानिसले गर्ने काव्य सिर्जना पनि एक हो । संसारको इतिहासलाई अध्ययन गर्दा धेरै पहिलेदेखि नै विभिन्न व्यक्तिहरूले काव्य सिर्जना गरेर महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिएको कुराको उल्लेख छ । नेपाली कविताको इतिहासअनुसार प्राथमिक, माध्यमिक र आधुनिक कालका कविहरूले विभिन्न काव्यहरू रचेर आफूलाई पछिसम्म चिनाउन सफल भएको कुरा उल्लेख छ (त्रिपाठी र अरु, २०४६ : २) । प्राथमिक कालीन साहित्यको काव्य विधामा कलम चलाएर आजसम्म पनि नेपाली पाठकहरूले स्मरण गर्ने कविहरूमा क्रमशः सुवानन्ददास, शक्तिबल्लभ अर्ज्याल, रघुनाथ पोखरेल, भानुभक्त आचार्य, विद्यारण्य केशरी लगायत छन् । उनीहरूले वीर रस एवं भक्तिरसमा विभिन्न काव्यहरू लेखेको बुझिन्छ । वासुदेव त्रिपाठीका अनुसार माध्यमिक कालीन कविहरूले विशेष गरी श्रृङ्गारिक धारामा प्रवृत्त हुँदै विभिन्न काव्यहरू लेखे । श्रृङ्गारिक धाराका कविहरूमा मोतीराम भट्ट, शम्भुप्रसाद ढुंगेल, कृष्णप्रसाद रेग्मी, रामजीप्रसाद अर्ज्याल, शिखरनाथ सुवेदी लगायतका कविहरू चर्चित भएका छन् भन्ने कुराको जानकारी पाइन्छ (शर्मा र श्रेष्ठ, २०४६ : ४८) ।

आधुनिक कालका नेपाली कविहरूमा लेखनाथ पौड्याल, बालकृष्ण सम, लक्ष्मीप्रसाद देवकोटा, सिद्धिचरण श्रेष्ठ, गोपालप्रसाद रिमाल, माधवप्रसाद घिमिरे लगायतको काव्य रचना परम्परामा उल्लेखनीय योगदान रहेको देखिन्छ । आधुनिक कालका उल्लिखित कविहरू मध्ये लेखनाथ पौड्याल अग्रज कवि हुन् । उनले बाँजुनेलसम्म सिर्जनात्मक क्षेत्रमा समर्पित हुँदै मानवलाई नैतिक, अध्यात्म र सदाचारको बाटो अवलम्बन गर्न सदैव आग्रह गरी रहे । लेखनाथ आज भौतिक रूपमा यस संसारमा छैनन् । तथापि उनले नेपाली साहित्यमा पुऱ्याएको योगदानको कारण साहित्यानुग्राहीहरूले सदैव कविशिरोमणिका रूपमा उनको स्मरण गर्दै आएका छन् । सिर्जनात्मक र अध्यात्म क्षेत्रका अग्रणी साधक लेखनाथ पौड्यालको प्रतिभा नेपाली कविताको फुटकर, मझौला र महाकाव्योन्मुख जस्ता रचनामा मात्र सीमित छैन । अपितु उनको प्रतिभा नाटक, अनुवाद र पूर्वीय अध्यात्मदर्शनको क्षेत्रमा पनि फैलिएको छ । यस्ता व्यक्तित्वका धनी लेखनाथ पौड्यालको जीवनी र सिर्जना हामीहरूका लागि एउटा रोचक एवं तथ्यगत दस्तावेज बन्न पुगेको छ । प्रस्तुत आलेखमा पौड्यालको जीवन यात्रा र तरुण तपसी नव्यकाव्यमा पाइने वैचारिक पक्षको विषयलाई क्रमशः अनुशीलन गरिएको छ ।

२. लेखनाथ पौड्यालको जीवन यात्रा

कविशिरोमणि लेखनाथ पौड्याल लामो जीवन बाँचन र जीवनलाई सिर्जनात्मक काममा लगाउन सफल भएका व्यक्ति हुन् । उनले आफ्ना रचनामार्फत् नेपाली समाजलाई

सकारात्मक सन्देश दिने अथक प्रयास गरेको पाइन्छ। लेखनाथले जीवन यात्राका प्रारम्भिक क्रममा अनेकौं सङ्घर्षसित जुध्न परेको थियो। त्यसका बाबजुत पनि उनी अनेकौं कृतिहरू रचना गर्नमा संलग्न रहेको बुझिन्छ। उनीद्वारा रचिएका रचनाहरू मानवलाई सत् पक्षको अनुशरण गर्नका लागि प्रेरक तत्व बनेका छन्। त्यति मात्र नभई लेखनाथका कृतिहरूले उनको जीवनीका विविध पाटाको उद्घाटन गरेको छ। त्यसैले उनको कृति र जीवनीका बीचमा अन्तर्सम्बन्ध रहेकाले यथार्थको गहिराइमा पुग्नका लागि पनि उनको जीवनीसम्बन्धी अध्ययनको आवश्यक छ। पौड्यालले आफ्ना रचनामा जीवन यात्राका क्रममा आफूले भोगेका आरोह अवरोहका अनुभवलाई वर्णन गरेका छन्। यहाँ लेखनाथका कृतिहरूका अध्ययनबाट प्राप्त जीवनीसम्बन्धी तथ्यलाई केलाउने प्रयत्न गरिएकाले उनको जीवन यात्रालाई क्रमशः प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ।

३. जन्म र जन्मस्थान

लेखनाथ पौड्याल आधुनिक नेपाली साहित्यका अग्रणी प्रतिभा हुन्। उनको जन्म सौरमानअनुसार वि.सं १९४१ साल पुस २६ गते हो भने चान्द्रमानअनुसार उनको जन्म पौषशुक्ल एकादशी हो। उनी पं. दुर्गादत्त पौड्याल र वसुन्धरा देवीका जेठा सन्तान हुन्। उनी जन्मिएको ठाउँ कास्की जिल्लाको अर्घौँ अर्चले, पौवा गाउँ, (शमी डाँडा) नामले प्रसिद्ध छ। यो ठाउँ माछापुच्छ्रे हिमशिखरको काखमा अवस्थित छ। जुन पोखरा उपत्यकाभित्र पर्दछ। अहिले संघीय गणतन्त्र नेपालको भौगोलिक संरचनाअनुसार गण्डकी प्रदेशमा पर्दछ। लेखनाथ पौड्याल जुन ठाउँमा जन्मिएका थिए, पहिले त्यो अर्घौँ पण्डितपुरीको नामले प्रसिद्ध थियो भन्ने कुराको उल्लेख छ (त्रिपाठी, २०३४ : २)। यसै ठाउँमा उनको शैशव र बाल्यकाल पनि बितेको बुझिन्छ।

४. शिक्षा

सामान्य अर्थमा शिक्षा भनेको ज्ञान प्राप्त गर्नु वा कुनै नयाँ कुरा सिक्नु हो। यो यस्तो अटूट प्रक्रिया हो जुन जीवनभरि चलिरहन्छ। शिक्षाशास्त्रीहरूको धारणा अनुसार— “शिक्षा कोकोबाट सुरु भई चिहानमा अन्त्य हुन्छ।” यसलाई निश्चित घेराभित्र राखेर परिभाषित गर्न कठिन हुन्छ। प्रत्येक समय, परिस्थिति र वातावरणअनुसार यसको अलग-अलग रूपमा व्याख्या विश्लेषण र प्रयोग हुँदै आएको छ (शर्मा, २०५७ : १)।

मानिसलाई ज्ञानको ज्योति देखाउने मुख्य साधन भनेको शिक्षा हो (शर्मा, पूर्ववत्)। अर्थात् शिक्षाले नै मानिसलाई सभ्य र सुसंस्कृत बनाउनुका अतिरिक्त सिर्जनात्मक कार्यमा लाग्नसमेत बाटो देखाउँछ। त्यसैले मानिसलाई बाल्यकालदेखि नै मातापिताले शिक्षा प्राप्त गर्नका लागि प्रेरित गर्दछन्। यसै परिप्रेक्ष्यमा लेखनाथले पाँचवर्षको उमेरमा पिता दुर्गादत्त पौड्यालबाट अक्षरारम्भ गरेका हुन्। अक्षरारम्भ पछि उनले गङ्गा-गणेशस्तोत्र, अमरकोश र सप्तशती (चण्डी) का केही अध्यायहरूका अध्ययन पनि पिताबाटै गरेका थिए। लेखनाथको बाल्यकाल बित्दै जाँदा उनलाई घरमै परम्परागत शिक्षाको अध्ययन गर्ने अवसर मिलेको अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ। लेखनाथ १५ वर्षको हुँदा

पढ्न भनी काठमाडौँ रानीपोखरीस्थित संस्कृत पाठशालामा आएको बुझिन्छ । वासुदेव त्रिपाठीका अनुसार उक्त पाठशालामा भर्ना पाउनका लागि लेखनाथलाई ज्यादै सङ्घर्ष गर्न परेको थियो । भर्नापछि, रानीपोखरी स्थित संस्कृत पाठशालाबाट उनको औपचारिक शिक्षा प्रारम्भ भएको हो । यही पाठशालाबाट उनले मध्यमासम्मको अध्ययन गरेका थिए । नेपालमा परीक्षा नियन्त्रण कार्यालय स्थापना नभइसकेका कारणले तीन धारा संस्कृत पाठशालामा पढेका विद्यार्थीहरू अन्तिम परीक्षा दिनका लागि भारतको बनारस जाने गर्दथे । लेखनाथ पौड्याल पनि मध्यमाको अन्तिम परीक्षा दिनका लागि बनारस गएको बुझिन्छ । उनले मध्यमाको परीक्षा दिए तर न्यायमुक्तावलीको दर्शनपत्रमा उनी अनुत्तीर्ण भए । लेखनाथले उक्त दर्शनपत्रको पुनः परीक्षा दिएनन् । उनको औपचारिक अध्ययनको श्रृङ्खला यहीबाट टुटेको प्रतीत हुन्छ ।

५. विवाह

हिन्दू धर्मावलम्बीहरूको विवाहसम्बन्धी अवधारणा र व्यवहार अत्यन्त उदात्त (उच्च) र आदर्श स्वरूपको रहेको देखिन्छ । वैवाहिक सम्बन्धका आधारमा नै हिन्दूहरूको सम्पूर्ण जीवनपद्धति उच्च र आदर्शरूप हुन सकेको हो । यसैका आधारमा हिन्दूहरूको कौटुम्बिक (पारिवारिक) सुसम्बन्ध र सामाजिक संरचनासमेत सुदृढ हुन सक्ने बताइएको छ । समाजका प्रत्येक व्यक्तिको सर्वाङ्गीण विकासका निम्ति हिन्दू आदर्शविवाह अत्यन्त लाभप्रद र अनुशरणीय मानिएको छ । यसैबाट समाजमा धर्म, नैतिकता, कर्तव्य, अनुशासन, त्याग इत्यादि मानवसमाजलाई भौतिक, मनोवैज्ञानिक र आध्यात्मिक रूपमा उन्नत पार्न नभई नहुने गुणहरू पनि विकसित हुन सक्छन् । धर्मशास्त्र र कौटिल्यको अर्थशास्त्रमा पनि विवाहका ब्राह्म, दैव, आर्ष, प्राजापत्य, गान्धर्व, आसुर, राक्षस र पैशाच गरी आठ भेद देखाइएको पाइन्छ । तीमध्ये पैशाच विवाहलाई अत्यन्त निन्दनीय मानिएको छ । महाभारतको अनुशासन पर्वमा भने ब्राह्म, क्षात्र, गान्धर्व, आसुर र राक्षस पाँच प्रकारका विवाहको उल्लेख छ । यीमध्ये अधिल्ला तीन ग्राह्य र पछिल्ला दुई त्याज्य मानिएका छन् । वस्तुतः आठै प्रकारका विवाह उक्त पाँच प्रकारकै विवाहमा अन्तर्भूत हुन्छन् भन्ने कुरा 'राक्षस' भन्नु पर्ने ठाउँमा 'पैशाच' पनि भनिएकोबाट थाहा पाइन्छ । अन्य ग्रन्थहरूमा पनि विवाहका प्रकारका बारेमा फरक फरक कुराहरू उल्लेख भएका पाइन्छन् । मुख्यतः आठ प्रकारकै विवाह स्मृतिपुराणहरूमा प्रसिद्ध देखिन्छन् । वेदमा पनि यिनको सङ्केत भेटिन्छ । सबै जातिका लागि सबैथरी विवाह ग्राह्य मानिंदैनन् । फरक फरक जातिका निम्ति फरक फरक विवाह उपयुक्त मानिन्छन् । उपर्युक्त आठ विवाहहरूमध्ये अधिल्ला चार प्रकारका विवाह मात्र प्रायः सबै मुनिहरूका मतमा प्रशंसनीय र धर्मसम्मत मानिएका छन् (कौण्डिन्यायन, २०६३ : ६९-७१) । विशेष गरी ब्राह्मणका लागि यिनै चार प्रकारका विवाह मात्र प्रशंसनीय मानिएको पाइन्छ । सोहीअनुरूप क्षत्रिय र वैश्यका निम्ति भने आसुर, गान्धर्व र राक्षसविवाह पनि ग्राह्य मानिन्छन् ।^१

^१ आसुरो द्रविणदानाङ्गान्धर्वः समयान्मिथः ।

लेखनाथ पौड्यालको विवाह दुईपटक भएको उल्लेख छ । उनको प्रथम विवाह १४ वर्षको उमेरमा (थर, गोत्र र नाम) प्राप्त नभएकी त्यतैतिरकी कुनै ब्राह्मण कन्यासँग भएको प्रतीत हुन्छ । लेखनाथ १४ वर्षको हुँदा विवाह भएको र उनी २० वर्ष पुग्दा अर्थात् वि.सं.१९६१ तिर पत्नीको निधन भएको उल्लेख छ । एकातिर कान्तावियोगको शोक र अर्कातिर आर्थिक सङ्कटले गर्दा लेखनाथको हृदय ज्यादै आहत हुन्छ । त्यसैले उनी सन्यासी हुने उद्देश्य लिएर स्वर्गद्वारी महाप्रभुको आश्रममा पुगेको कुरा उल्लेख छ (त्रिपाठी, २०३४ : ४) । स्वर्गद्वारी महाप्रभुले संभाएपछि उनी सन्यासी नभएको बुझिन्छ । धेरै समयपछि मात्र बिधुर लेखनाथको सत्यदेवीसित दोस्रो विवाह भएको जानकारी पाइन्छ ।

६. लेखनाथका सन्तान

लेखनाथ पौड्यालकी दोस्रो पत्नी सत्यदेवी पौड्यालबाट पहिला दुईवटी छोरीको जन्म हुन्छ । एउटी छोरीको नामचाहिँ पुण्यप्रभा (हुंगाना) हो । अर्कीचाहिको नाम प्राप्त हुन सकेन । वासुदेव त्रिपाठीका अनुसार लेखनाथका एक मात्र पुत्रको जन्म भयो, जसको नाम नवीन पौड्याल हो । (त्रिपाठी, २०३४ : ४) ।

७. पेसा

लेखनाथ पौड्यालको घरको आर्थिक स्थिति ज्यादै दयनीय भएको कुराको वर्णन छ । एकातिर मध्यमा परीक्षामा असफल हुनु र अर्कातिर घरको आर्थिक अवस्था नाजुक भएकाले पनि उनलाई कुनै पेशामा आबद्ध हुन आवश्यक थियो । किनकि लेखनाथ परिवारका जेठा सन्तान थिए । पारिवारिक आर्थिक अवस्था ज्यादै कमजोर भएकाले अर्थोपार्जन गर्नुपर्ने उनको बाध्यता पनि थियो । त्यसैले उनले मध्यमाको 'न्यायमुक्तावली' दर्शनपत्रको पुनः परीक्षा नदिई धन कमाउनेपट्टि लागेको बुझिन्छ । परीक्षामा असफल लेखनाथ आफ्नो पहाडघर पोखरा अघाँअर्चले नगई नेपालको पूर्वी तराईको सप्तरी जिल्लामा पर्ने छप्कीतिर लागे । किनकि छप्कीमा पोखरेलहरूको ठूलो मौजा थियो । उनका पिताम्मा (हजुरबुबा) ले पनि पहिले छप्कीका पोखरेलहरूकै मौजामा जागीर खाएका थिए । लेखनाथ पनि हजुरबुबाको नाम लिँदा आफूलाई पनि कुनै जागिर मिल्छ कि भन्ने आशाले त्यहाँ गएका हुन् भन्ने उल्लेख छ । लेखनाथले छप्कीका पोखरेलहरूका सन्तानलाई पढाउने जागीर पाएका थिए (त्रिपाठी, २०३४ : ५) । तर लेखनाथको छप्की बसाइले निरन्तरता पाउन सकेन, किनकि मौजाको विषयलाई लिएर पोखरेलहरूका पारिवारिक कलह बढ्न थाल्यो । कलहले गर्दा पोखरेलहरूका परिवार दुई पक्षमा विभाजित हुन पुगे । लेखनाथलाई पनि दुई पक्षमध्ये कुनै एक पक्षको निर्णय लिनु पर्ने बाध्यता पर्‍यो । उनले दुई पक्ष मध्ये एक पक्षलाई समर्थन गरे । समर्थन नपाउने पक्षले

लेखनाथको अपमान गर्‍यो । अपमानित लेखनाथ आफ्नो नैतिकताको कारण त्यहाँ बस्न सकेनन् । उनी आफ्नो घर पोखरातिर नगई जागीरको खोजमा मुग्लान (भारत) पसे भन्ने कुराको उल्लेख छ (त्रिपाठी, पूर्ववत्) । भारतको असाम गएका लेखनाथले योग्यता अनुसारको जागीर नपाएका लेखनाथ कहिले सेठ र कहिले राजा रजौटाकहाँ बसेको बुझिन्छ । यी कामबाट लेखनाथले अर्थोपार्जन गर्न सकेनन् । बाध्यतावश उनी केही समय असाममै गाईगोठालो पनि भए भन्ने वासुदेव त्रिपाठीको कथन छ । त्यस कामबाट पनि लेखनाथले आर्थिक आम्दानी गर्न सकेनन् । अन्त्यमा निराश भई अनेकौं युक्ति लगाई नेपाल फर्किएको बुझिन्छ ।

भारतबाट फर्किएका लेखनाथ आफ्नो घर पोखरातिर नगई काठमाडौं आए । किनकि उनलाई जसरी भएपनि अर्थोपार्जन गर्ने पर्ने बाध्यता थियो । काठमाडौं आएका लेखनाथलाई कतैबाट आम्दानीको स्रोत जुट्न सकेन । त्रिपाठीकै भनाइलाई आधार मान्दा लेखनाथले जीवन धान्नका लागि काठमाडौंमा कठिन परिस्थितिको सामना गरीरहे । यसै बेला उनको काशीवासी पितामह (हजुरबुबा) को निधनको खबर आयो यो खबरले पनि उनलाई अझ दुःखी बनायो । यसरी लेखनाथमा एकपछि अर्को संकट आई प‍यो । यिनै विभिन्न संकटसँग जुधेका लेखनाथले लैनचौरको चौतारमा बसेर कयौं रात रुई बिताएका थिए भन्ने कुराको पनि उल्लेख छ । समय बित्दै जाँदा एकदिन लेखनाथले आत्मनिवेदन र भीमशमशेरको स्तुतिमा आधारित दुई वटा कविता लेखी बाटामा आउँदै गरेका उनै भीमशमशेरको बग्गीमा पुग्ने गरी हत्याइदिए । तत्काल ती कविताको प्रतिक्रिया केही पनि आएन । तथापि त्रिपाठीकै भनाइअनुसार केही समयपछि ती कवितामा उल्लेख भएका बेहोरा सदाशिव आचार्य दीक्षितले श्री ३ भीमशमशेर समक्ष प्रस्तुत गरे । दीक्षित भीमशमशेरका हजुरिया पण्डित थिए । कविताद्वारा लेखनाथका वास्तविकतालाई बुझेका भीमशमशेरले उनलाई केही महिनासम्म सदाशिव आचार्य दीक्षितकहाँ नै बस्ने प्रबन्ध मिलाएको बुझिन्छ । पन्ध्र महिनासम्म लेखनाथले सदाशिव आचार्य दीक्षितकै घरमा बसी उनका छोराहरूलाई पढाएका थिए भन्ने कुराको उल्लेख छ । यसबाट लेखनाथको काठमाडौंको बसाइ र आर्थिक अवस्था केही सहज भएको अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ । दीक्षितबाटै लेखनाथले दरबारमा पालना गर्नु पर्ने नियमहरूका तालिम लिएको वर्णन छ । तालिम प्राप्त लेखनाथलाई दीक्षितकै परामर्शमा भीमशमशेरले टंगाल दरबारमा बोलाएका हुन् । टंगाल दरबार प्रवेश गरेका लेखनाथलाई भीमशमशेरका नातिहरूलाई पढाउने जागीर मिल्नुका साथै हजुरिया पण्डितको जिम्मेवारी पनि थपिएको बुझिन्छ । टंगालदरबारको प्रवेशपछि मात्र लेखनाथको आर्थिक अवस्था र काठमाडौं बसाइको सुनिश्चितता सुदृढ भएको भन्ने त्रिपाठीको धारणा छ । लेखनाथका आश्रयदाता भीम शमशेरको शासनकाल लामो समयसम्म रहेन । अर्थात् उनको निधन चाडै भयो । भीमशमशेरको निधनपछि टंगाल दरबारको पारिवारिक अन्तर्विग्रहले उग्र रूप लियो । जसले गर्दा लेखनाथको घरवासको व्यवस्था हुन सकेन । यस्तो परिस्थितिबाट गुञ्जिरहेका लेखनाथलाई लालदरबारका कुवेरतुल्य तेजशमशेरबाट घरवासको लागि आर्थिक सहायता प्राप्त भएको थियो भन्ने कुराको उल्लेख पाइन्छ (त्रिपाठी, २०३४ : १०) । घरवासको व्यवस्था पछि जीवनको उत्तरार्द्धमा उनलाई पर्सा जिल्लाको **औलिया** भन्ने ठाउँमा नेपालसरकारबाट पनि पर्ति

जग्गा प्राप्त भएको थियो भन्ने कुराको जानकारी पाइन्छ । प्राप्त जग्गालाई आबाद गरी कृषि कार्यमा संलग्न हुँदै उनले बाँकी जीवन व्यतीत गरेको बुझिन्छ ।

८. प्रेरणा र सिर्जना

लेखनाथ पौड्याल जुन ठाउँमा जन्मिए, त्यो ठाउँको वातावरण पठित थियो भन्ने कुराको सहजै अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ । त्यति बेलाका अधिकांश ब्राह्मण परिवारहरू परम्परित रूपमा पढाइदै आएको दुर्गाकवच, सप्तशती, रूद्री, लघुकौमुदि, ज्योतिष लगायत् विषयहरूका अध्ययनमा अभ्यस्त थिए भन्ने प्रतीत हुन्छ । संस्कृत पढ्ने ब्रामणहरूका अतिरिक्त अन्य जातका मानिसहरूले पनि अलिअलि भाषा सिलोक (श्लोक) पढ्ने र कण्ठस्थ गर्ने प्रवृत्ति बढ्दै गएको अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ । लेखनाथ पौड्यालको जन्म भएको वर्षमै नेपालमा पनि मुद्रण व्यवसायको थालनी भएको कुराको उल्लेख छ (शर्मा र श्रेष्ठ, २०४६: ४८) । मुद्रण व्यवसायको थालनीले नेपाली भाषामा लेखिएका भानुभक्तद्वारा रचित रामायण र मोतीरामकृत गजेन्द्रमोक्ष जस्ता कृतिहरू पनि प्रकाशित भइसकेका थिए । यी दुई कृतिहरूलाई कण्ठस्थ गरेर वा सुनेर आनन्द लिने प्रवृत्ति नेपाली समाजमा विस्तारै बढी रहेको थियो । लेखनाथ पौड्यालले पनि गोठालो र अन्य काममा जाँदा सानैदेखि नेपाली भाषामा लेखिएका भानुभक्त र मोतीरामका कृतिहरूलाई पढ्न थालेको बुझिन्छ । यसरी लेखनाथमा बाल्यकालमै भानुभक्त र मोतीरामकृत नेपालीमा लेखिएका कृतिहरूको गहिरो छाप परेको स्पष्ट छ ।

लेखनाथ पौड्याल १४ वर्षको हुँदा काठमाडौँको रानीपोखरी स्थित संस्कृत पाठशालामा अध्ययन गर्न थालेका हुन् । पाठशालामा अध्ययन गर्दाखेरि नै उनमा काव्य सिर्जना गर्ने इच्छा जागृत भएको बुझिन्छ । काव्य सिर्जना गर्ने सन्दर्भमा उनलाई अग्निधर शर्माले ज्यादै अपमान गरेको कुरा उल्लेख छ । शर्माबाट अपमानित र निराश भएका लेखनाथलाई दधिराम मरासिनीबाट काव्य सिर्जना गर्नमा प्रेरित र सहयोग मिलेको कुरा वासुदेव त्रिपाठीले 'लेखनाथ पौड्यालको कवित्वको विश्लेषण तथा मूल्याङ्कन' भन्ने ग्रन्थमा उल्लेख गरेका छन् । मरासिनीकै सतीर्थ प्रेरणाले लेखनाथ पौड्यालले वि.सं.१९५२ सालतिर संस्कृत भाषामा लेखिएको 'पाकशाला विशाला' शीर्षकको कविता रचना गरेका हुन् । उनका 'शृङ्गारपच्चीसी' र 'मानषाकर्षिणी' नामक दुई कविता पहिलोपल्ट 'कविताकल्पद्रुम' कविता सङ्ग्रह (१९६१/६२) मा प्रकाशित भएका थिए । यस सङ्ग्रहका सम्पादक पं.दुर्गाप्रसाद शर्मा हुन् । प्रस्तुत कवितामा माध्यमिक कालीन श्रृङ्गारिक धाराको गहिरो प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । यस प्रकार लेखनाथ पौड्याल दधिराम मरासिनीको सहयोग र प्रेरणाले काव्य सिर्जनामा प्रेरित भएको उल्लेख छ । उनलाई हलन्त बहिष्कार भाषिक आन्दोलनको थालनी गर्ने राममणि आचार्य दीक्षितको सहयोग र प्रेरणा पनि काव्य सिर्जना गर्ने सन्दर्भभमा प्राप्त भएको थियो । यिनका अतिरिक्त लेखनाथ पौड्याल संस्कृत साहित्यका व्यास, वाल्मीकि, भारवी, श्रीहर्ष, भर्तृहरि, कालीदास, चाणक्य लगायत् कविहरूका रचनाबाट पनि अत्यन्तै प्रभावित भएको स्पष्ट छ । यसलाई पुष्टि गर्ने आधार उनीद्वारा रचिएका काव्यहरू नै हुन् । लेखनाथमा महाकवि कालीदासको उपमालङ्कारको गहिरो प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । कालीदासको

उपमाअलङ्कारबाट मात्र नभई उनमा 'ऋतुसंहार' को पनि प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । फलस्वरूप उनको 'ऋतुविचार' खण्डकाव्य त्यसैको उपज हो । लेखनाथका कतिपय रचनामा साङ्ख्य, योग, वेदान्त दर्शन र उपनिषद्को प्रभाव परेको पाइन्छ । यिनका अतिरिक्त उनी बाङ्गला र हिन्दी साहित्यमा देखा परेको साँस्कृतिक र सामाजिक पुनर्जागरणको लहरबाट पनि प्रेरित छन् । विशेष गरी बाङ्गला साहित्यका बङ्गिमचन्द्र चट्टोपाध्याय, प्रसिद्ध हिन्दी लेखक भारतेन्दु हरिश्चन्द्र तथा मैथिलीशरण गुप्तको साँस्कृतिक आवाज पनि लेखनाथसम्म आइ पुगेको देखिन्छ । विश्वमा चलेको मानवतावादी आन्दोलनको प्रभाव पनि लेखनाथमा परेको छ । यस कुराको ज्वलन्त प्रमाण 'तरुण तपसी' नव्यकाव्य हो ।

अतः लेखनाथले नेपाली कविताको पूर्वपरम्परा, माध्यमिक कालको उत्तरार्ध र उनैद्वारा प्रवर्तित आधुनिक कालको द्वितीयचरणका अन्य कविहरू, संस्कृतसाहित्य, पूर्वीयदर्शनका साथै विदेशी विचारक एवं साहित्यकारबाट पनि प्रेरणाप्राप्त गरेको देखिन्छ ।

९. सम्मान तथा पुरस्कार

लेखनाथ पौड्यालले बाँचुन्जेल उत्कृष्ट खालका काव्य रचना गरे । उनीद्वारा रचित काव्यहरू समकालीन अवस्थामा पनि उत्कृष्ट थिए, वर्तमानमा पनि त्यतिकै उत्कृष्ट छन् । लेखनाथ तत्कालीन नेपाल राजकीय प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठानका आजीवन सदस्य पनि हुन् । त्यसैले उनलाई तत्कालीन श्री ५ महाजाधिराज त्रिभुवनले वि.सं.२००८ साल असार २९ गते आफ्नो जन्मोत्सवका दिन कविशिरोमणि पदले विभूषित गरेका हुन् । उनलाई राजा त्रिभुवनबाट तक्मा, दर्जा र प्रतिमहिना रु २००-। का दरले पाउने गरी भत्ता पनि प्रदान गरेको बुझिन्छ । लेखनाथको सम्मानको ऐतिहासिक क्षण साहित्यकारहरूका सक्रियतामा उनको रथयात्रा गरिनु हो । वि.सं.२०११ साल पौष शुक्ल एकादशीका दिन उनको जन्मतिथि पारेर काठमाडौँका साहित्यकार र उच्च व्यक्तिहरूद्वारा तात्कालिक 'गोरखापत्र' मा उल्लेख भएअनुसार रथयात्राको कार्यक्रम सम्पन्न भएको हो । यसै दिन उनलाई नागरिक स्तरबाट पनि अभिनन्दन गरिनुका साथै रु ५०००।- (पाँच) हजारको थैली प्रदान गरिएको बुझिन्छ । साहित्यकारहरूबाटै लेखनाथग्रन्थ तयार पार्ने संकल्प पनि गरिएको उल्लेख छ । लेखनाथको निधनपछि पनि उनकै घरमा साहित्यकारहरू भेला भई उनको जन्मजयन्ती मनाउने परम्परा रहँदै आएको छ । वि.सं.२०१९ सालमा तत्कालीन श्री ५ को सरकारले उनको नाममा चित्राङ्कित १५ पैसै हुलाक टिकट पनि प्रकाशित गरेको पाइन्छ । लेखनाथ पौड्यालले मरणोपरान्त त्रिभुवन प्रज्ञा पुरस्कार पनि प्राप्त गरेको देखिन्छ ।

१०. निधन

आधुनिक नेपाली काव्यजगतका अथक साधक एवं स्रष्टा लेखनाथ पौड्याल जीवनको अन्तिम प्रहरमा आएर सिकिस्त विरामी परेको कुराको वर्णन छ । वासुदेव त्रिपाठीका—

अनुसार विरामी परेपछि लेखनाथले एकेडेमीको सदस्यताबाट राजीनामा दिएका हुन् । प्रारम्भमा उनको उपचार काठमाडौँमा भए पनि उनको स्वास्थ्यमा कुनै सुधार नआएपछि हिउँद महिनामा जाडो छल्ल भनी उनलाई तराई लगियो । त्यहाँ पनि उनको उपचारको क्रम चलि नै रह्यो । सुरुमा वीरगञ्ज, रक्सौल र भरतपुर अस्पतालमा लगेर उनको उपचार गरिएको बुझिन्छ । लेखनाथले स्वदेशमै देहत्याग गर्ने इच्छा देखाएकाले अन्तिम अवस्थामा उनलाई देवघाटको नारायणी र कालिको संगममा रहेको आश्रममा लगेको उल्लेख छ । उनको विर्गदो स्वास्थ्यवस्थालाई बुझेर तत्कालीन श्री ५ महाराजधिराज महेन्द्रबाट उनको उपचारार्थ नगद रु १०,०००- (दश) हजार प्रदान गरिएको कुराको उल्लेख छ (त्रिपाठी, २०३४ : १७) । काठमाडौँका साहित्यिक मण्डलले पनि भरतपुर गई उनको स्वास्थ्यको लाभको कामना गरेको जानकारी पाइन्छ ।

त्रिपाठीकै अनुसार अन्ततः २०२२ साल फाल्गुन ७ गते महाशिवरात्री पर्वको राती २:३० बजेतिर लेखनाथले शिवसायुज्य प्राप्त गरे । उनको यो दुःखद निधनले नेपाल सरकार र प्राज्ञिक जगत् स्तब्ध बन्यो । फागुन ९ गते देशका सम्पूर्ण शिक्षण संस्थाहरू बन्द भए भने सम्पूर्ण सरकारी कार्यालयहरू पनि आधा दिनबाट बन्द भए । लेखनाथको निधनमा तत्कालीन श्री ५ महाराजधिराज महेन्द्रबाट शोकसन्देश व्यक्त गरिएको बुझिन्छ । राष्ट्रिय पञ्चायतको बैठकमा पनि प्रधानमन्त्री सूर्यबहादुर थापाले लेखनाथको निधनमा शोकप्रस्ताव पेस गरेकोमा सो प्रस्तावलाई सर्वसम्मतले पास गरेको उल्लेख छ । नेपालबाट प्रकाशित हुने धेरै जसो पत्रपत्रिकाहरूले आफ्नो सम्पादकीयमा लेखनाथ पौड्यालको निधनको विषयलाई प्राथमिकतामा राखेर समाचारहरू प्रकाशित गरेको बुझिन्छ । नेपालमा मात्र नभएर भारतका दार्जिलिङ, सिक्किम, असम लगायत विभिन्न प्रान्तहरूमा रहेका नेपाली साहित्यिक प्रतिष्ठान र साहित्यकारहरूले पनि लेखनाथको निधनमा शोक मनाएका थिए भन्ने कुराको उल्लेख छ । आधुनिक नेपाली साहित्यका अग्रज प्रतिभा लेखनाथ पौड्याल संसारबाट बिदा भएको आज ५६ वर्ष बिति सकेको छ । तथापि प्रत्येक वर्ष उनको पुण्यस्मरणको क्रम पनि चलिनै रहेको छ । त्यति मात्र नभई उनको संभनामा काठमाडौँको ठमेलको लैनचौर मार्गलाई लेखनाथमार्ग भनी नामकरण पनि गरिएको छ ।

११. निष्कर्ष :

पोखराको अर्घौँअर्चले पण्डितपुरी भन्ने स्थलमा जन्मिएका लेखनाथ पौड्यालको जीवन यात्रा विभिन्न आरोह अवरोहकाबीच गुञ्जिएको पाइन्छ । यति हुँदाहुँदै पनि उनले नेपाली काव्यक्षेत्रमा अतुलनीय योगदान दिएको स्पष्ट छ । उनका कृतिहरू गुणात्मक र परिमाणका हिसाबले विगतमा पनि अत्यन्तै उत्कृष्ट र सान्दर्भिक थिए भने आज पनि त्यत्तिकै उत्कृष्ट छन् । लेखनाथद्वारा रचिएका काव्यहरू देशका विभिन्न विद्यालय र विश्वविद्यालयका पाठ्यक्रममा समावेश गरिएका छन् । कविशिरोमणि, नागरिक समाजबाट अभिनन्दित, मरणोपरान्त त्रिभुवन पुरस्कारबाट सम्मानित लेखनाथ पौड्यालले आफ्नो प्रतिभाद्वारा नेपाल र नेपालीको गौरव बढाएको देखिन्छ । उनी भौतिक रूपमा आज यस

संसारमा छैनन् । तथापि उनले नेपाली काव्यक्षेत्रमा जुन योगदान दिए, त्यसैले उनी नेपाली काव्यानुरागीहरूका माझ सदैव स्मरणीय र वन्दनीय छन् ।

लेखनाथ पौड्याल तत्कालीन राणाहरूका बीचमा चलेको कुनै पनि गुटको शक्तिसंघर्षमा नलागी निरन्तर काव्य साधनामा तल्लीन रहे । उनले आफ्ना सहकर्मी र सहपाठीका माझमा विशिष्ट स्थान हासिल गर्नुका साथै उच्च प्रतिष्ठा पनि आर्जन गरे । त्यसैले लेखनाथको जीवन यात्रा सबैका लागि अनुकरणीय हुन पुगेको छ । समाजमा रहेका कोही व्यक्ति कसैको कार्यको लागि सहयोगी हुन्छन् भने कोही असहयोगी प्रकृतिका हुन्छन् । यसैले कुनै पनि व्यक्तिलाई राम्रा काम गर्नका निमित्त उचित खालको सहयोग र वातावरणको जरुरी हुन्छ । लेखनाथ पौड्याललाई जीवनको प्रारम्भिक प्रहरमा निकै नै कठिनाई आइपरेको बुझिन्छ । यति हुँदाहुँदै पनि महान् प्रतिभाशाली लेखनाथलाई उदात्त कर्म गर्नबाट कसैले रोक्न सकेन । उनले आफ्नो साहित्यिक साधनामा अटल रहँदै काव्य साधनामा सिद्धता प्राप्त गरेका हुन् । उनको कवित्वको निर्माणमा तत्कालीन तीनधारा पाकशाला, संस्कृतपाठशाला र त्यहाँ अध्ययन गर्ने सहपाठीहरूका विशेष भूमिका रहेको पाइन्छ ।

समग्रमा उनको जीवन धर्म, संस्कृति, शिक्षा आदिको गम्भीर अध्ययन गर्दै संस्कृत र नेपाली भाषा साहित्यको श्रीवृद्धि गर्नमा उद्यत रहेको देखिन्छ । लेखनाथले उच्च आदर्श र आचरणको पालना गर्दै, नेपाली समाज, नेपाल र भारतका असाम, दार्जिलिङ, सिक्किम लगायतका बौद्धिक वर्गमा सम्मानित हुने स्थान निर्माण गरेका छन् । उनले आफ्नो जीवनकालमा नेपालीभाषी काव्यानुरागीहरूलाई बौद्धिक खुराक दिन सफल भएका छन् ।

१२. लेखनाथ पौड्यालको काव्ययात्रा र प्रवृत्ति

लेखनाथ पौड्याल नेपाली कविताको इतिहासमा आधुनिककालको सूत्रपात गर्ने कवि हुन् । तथापि लेखनाथ वि.सं.१९५६-५९ देखि नै काव्य सिर्जनामा उन्मुख भएका हुन् । उनले माध्यमिककालीन श्रृङ्गारिक धारामा प्रवृत्त भई संस्कृत र नेपालीमा विभिन्न कविताहरू रचेको पाइन्छ । पौड्यालद्वारा रचिएका ती कविताहरू समस्यापूर्तिका थिए । जुन समयमा लेखनाथले कविता लेख्न थाले, त्यो समय नेपाली कवितामा मोतीराम भट्टद्वारा थालनी गरिएको नखशिखवर्णनमा केन्द्रित भई कविता लेख्ने प्रवृत्तिले चरमोत्कर्ष प्राप्त गरेको थियो । लेखनाथको यसै अवधिमा श्रृङ्गारिक कविताका अतिरिक्त 'पाकशालाविशाला' शीर्षकको कविता सोमनाथ सिग्दालद्वारा सम्पादित बनारसबाट प्रकाशित हुने 'सुन्दरी' पत्रिकामा वि.सं. १९६१/६२ को बीचमा प्रकाशित भएको देखिन्छ । संस्कृतमा लेखिएको उक्त कविता लेखनाथको छात्रावस्थाकै उपज हो । उनका विभिन्न श्रृङ्गारिक कविताहरू 'सुन्दरी' पत्रिकामा प्रकाशित भएको बुझिन्छ । विशेष गरी लेखनाथको कविता प्रकाशन शृङ्खला 'कविताकल्पद्रुम' (वि.सं.१९६१-६२) कविता सङ्ग्रहमा सङ्ग्रहित 'शृङ्गार पच्चीसी' र 'मानषाकर्षिणी' दुई कविताबाट थालिएको पाइन्छ (त्रिपाठी र अरू, २०४६: १४०) । संस्कृत साहित्यशास्त्र र साहित्य सिर्जनाबाट विशेष रूपमा प्रेरित लेखनाथ

बङ्गलासाहित्यमा देखापरेका हिन्दू पुनर्जागरणबाट पनि प्रेरित भएको कुरा उनका कृतिहरूले पुष्टि गरेका छन् । लेखनाथ पौड्यालका काव्यहरूमा हिन्दी साहित्यका हजारीप्रसाद द्विवेदी, अयोध्याप्रसाद सिंह, हरिऔध र मैथिलीशरण गुप्ताजस्ता कविहरूका रचनाको प्रभाव आंशिक रूपमा परेको देखिन्छ । लालित्य (संयुक्त कवितासङ्ग्रह) वि.सं.१९६९ मा ‘कविकवितालाप’ कविताको माध्यमबाट माध्यमिककालीन श्रृङ्गारिक कविता धाराको विपरित दिशातर्फ उन्मुख नयाँ कविता धाराको घोषणा गरेका लेखनाथको सार्वजनिक कविता यात्रालाई मुख्यतः तीन चरणमा विभाजन गरेर अध्ययन गर्न सकिन्छ:

क. पहिलो चरण (वि.सं.१९६९-१९९०)

ख. दोस्रो चरण (वि.सं. १९९१-२००७)

ग. तेस्रो चरण (वि.सं.२००८-२००८)

क. पहिलो चरण

पहिलो चरणमा लेखनाथ पौड्यालले माध्यमिककालीन श्रृङ्गारिक परम्परालाई पन्छाउँदै स्वच्छन्दतावादी भावधारालाई आंशिक रूपमा स्पर्श गर्दै मूलतः परिष्कारवादी भावबोधको आह्वान गरेका छन् । यस चरणमा लेखनाथद्वारा रचिएका कृतिहरू निम्न छन्—

वर्षाविचार (वि.सं.१९६६), लालित्य संयुक्तकवितासङ्ग्रह (वि.सं.१९६९), शोकप्रवाह (वि.सं.१९७०), ऋतुविचार (परिवर्तित) (वि.सं.१९७३), बुद्धिविनोद (वि.सं.१९७३), सत्यकलिसंवाद (वि.सं.१९७६), गीताञ्जली (वि.सं.१९८६), गोरखाशिक्षा बाल पाठ्यपुस्तक भाग १-४, (वि.सं.१९७२-८०) ।

लेखनाथले माथि उल्लिखित कृतिका अतिरिक्त ‘गोरखाशिक्षा बाल पाठ्यपुस्तक भाग १-४’, (वि.सं.१९७२-८०) मा परेका अनेक फुटकर कविताहरूका माध्यमबाट पनि आधुनिक नेपाली कविताको क्रमिक परिवर्तनमा अग्रसरता देखाएको पाइन्छ । वि.सं.१९७४ को ‘सूक्तिसिन्धु’ सम्मका उनका केही कविताहरूमा श्रृङ्गारिक प्रवृत्ति पाइन्छ । तथापि त्यस पछिका दिनमा उनका कविताहरूमा परिष्कारवादी चेत सलबलाएको स्पष्ट छ । हलन्तबहिष्कार मूलक लेख्य व्याकरणको अनुशासनतर्फ उन्मुख रहँदै छन्, ढाँचा, भाषा, लय, अलङ्कार एवं शिल्प संरचनाको सौन्दर्यात्मक परिष्कृति जस्ता प्रवृत्तिहरू उनका यस चरणका कविताहरूका प्राप्ति हुन् । यसै गरी हिन्दू पुनर्जागरणको स्वर र आध्यात्मिक चेतना, प्रकृतिप्रेम, सामाजिक व्यङ्ग्य, धार्मिक भावनाको पुनर्व्याख्या जस्ता नवप्रवृत्तिहरू यस चरणमा रचिएका रचनामा फेला पर्न सकिन्छ । नेपाली कविताक्षेत्रलाई परिष्कारवादी धाराको माध्यमबाट आधुनिक युगमा प्रवेश गराउनु लेखनाथ पौड्यालको यस चरणमा रचिएका कृतिहरू महत्वपूर्ण प्राप्तिका रूपमा रहेका छन् ।

ख. दोस्रो चरण (वि.सं. १९९१-२००७)

दोस्रो चरणमा लेखनाथ पौड्याल प्रकृतिकाव्य ऋतुविचारलाई परिमार्जन र परिष्कार गर्दै आफ्नो कविता यात्रा तय गर्छन् । लेखनाथको 'ऋतुविचार' र 'त्याग र उदयको युगलप्रकाश' जस्ता कृतिहरूको प्रकाशन भएको यस चरणको उत्कर्ष प्राप्तिबिन्दुमा ऋतुविचार (खण्डकाव्य) पुगेको छ । उनका यस चरणका कवितामा खारिएको आध्यात्मिक चेत, लय, भाषा शैलीमा कसिलो परिष्कृतिको उत्कर्षता जस्ता प्रवृत्तिहरू प्राप्त गर्न सकिन्छ । यस चरणमा उनमा प्रथम प्रहरका परिष्कारवादी कवित्वभिन्न रहेको आंशिक स्वच्छन्दतावादी चेत तिरोहित हुँदै गएको पाइन्छ । यस चरणका उनका फुटकर कविताहरूमध्ये 'सत्यसन्देश' उत्कृष्ट नमुनाको रूपमा देखा परेको छ । यस चरणमा प्रकाशित पौड्यालका कविता निम्न छन् :

ऋतुविचार खण्डकाव्य (वि.सं.१९९१), सप्तप्रश्नात्मक बुद्धिविनोद (वि.सं.१९९४), त्याग र उदयको युगलप्रकाश (वि.सं.२००२), सत्यसन्देश (वि.सं.२००२) ।

ग. तेस्रो चरण (वि.सं. २००८-२०२२)

कवितायात्राको तेस्रो चरणमा लेखनाथ आध्यात्मिक भावनालाई युगसापेक्ष सामाजिक चेतसँग समन्वय गर्दै अगाडि बढेका छन् । उनी भावना र बौद्धिकताको संयोजन गर्दै लय र भाषाशैलीमा सहज परिष्कृततर्फको उन्मुखता जस्ता प्रवृत्तिहरू अँगाल्न पुग्छन् । यस चरणमा उनीद्वारा रचिएका 'अमरज्योतिको सत्यस्मृति', 'तरुणतपसी', 'मेरो राम', 'लालित्यभाग १' 'लालित्यभाग २', 'कविशिरोमणि लेखनाथ पौड्यालका प्रतिनिधि कविता' र 'लेखनाथका प्रमुखकविता' इत्यादि कृतिहरू प्रकाशित भएका देखिन्छन् । लेखनाथद्वारा यस चरणमा लेखिएको **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यलाई उत्कृष्ट प्राप्तिका रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ । यस चरणमा लेखनाथ पुनः स्वच्छन्दतावादी धारातर्फ आंशिक उन्मुख हुनुका साथै राष्ट्रिय सांस्कृतिक चेततर्फ उन्मुख हुँदै साङ्ख्य योग, वेदान्त-दर्शन र युगीन चेतनाप्रति पनि सचेत देखिन्छन् । यसै चरणमा उनले गङ्गागौरी (२०१८-२०२२) महाकाव्यको रचना गरे पनि त्यसलाई पूरा गर्न नसकेको बुझिन्छ । 'आखिरी' शीर्षकको कविता उनको अन्तिम रचना हो । यसलाई लेखनाथको ६ दशकभन्दा लामो कवितायात्राको अन्तिम निशानी मानिन्छ । उनका माथि उल्लेखित कविता यसप्रकार छन् :

अमरज्योतिको सत्यस्मृति (वि.सं. २००८), तरुणतपसी (वि.सं.२०१०), मेरो राम (वि.सं.२०११), लालित्य (कवितासङ्ग्रह, भाग १ : वि.सं.२०१०), लालित्य कवितासङ्ग्रह, भाग २ : वि.सं.२०२५), कविशिरोमणि लेखनाथ पौड्यालका प्रमुख प्रतिनिधि कविता (कवितासङ्ग्रह : वि.सं.२०२०४१), गङ्गागौरी महाकाव्य अपूर्ण वि.सं.२०१८-२०२२) आदि ।

यसरी नेपाली कविताको आधुनिक युगका परिष्कारवादी धाराका महान् स्रष्टा लेखनाथ पौड्याल नेपाली वर्णमात्रिक छन्दका मूर्धन्य व्यक्ति हुन् । उनको प्रकृतिचक्रको वर्णन

गरिएको 'ऋतुविचार' जस्तो खण्डकाव्य र मानवताको वकालत गरिएको 'तरुणतपसी' जस्तो नव्यकाव्य प्रकाशित भएको देखिन्छ । त्यस्तै पौड्यालका 'सत्यसन्देश', 'कालमहिमा' र 'मेरो कैशेर' जस्ता फुटकर कविताहरू पनि प्रकाशित छन् । लेखनाथका कविताहरूमा प्रकृतिप्रेम, सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक पुनर्जागरणको स्वर व्यक्त भएको देखिन्छ । मानववादी चेत, आध्यात्मिक भक्तिभावनाको पुनर्व्याख्या, सामाजिक सुधारको चेतना, नैतिक-औपदेशिक जस्ता विशेषताहरू पौड्यालका कवितामा पाइन्छन् । उनका कृतिमा साङ्ख्ययोग तथा वेदान्तदर्शनको कवितात्मक प्रस्तुति पनि पाइन्छ । त्यस्तै उनका रचनामा राष्ट्रप्रेमको भावना सशक्त रहेको छ । परिमार्जित र लेख्य व्याकरणसम्मत सहज, सरल भाषा शैलीको प्रयोग उनका कवितामा पाइने मूलभूत विशेषता हुन् ।

समष्टिमा लेखनाथ पौड्याल नेपाली कविताको माध्यमिक कालीन श्रृङ्गारिक धारादेखि उदाएर प्रयोगवादीधारामा अस्ताएका कवि हुन् । पौड्यालले माध्यमिक कालीन अतिश्रृङ्गारिकताका विरुद्ध नैतिक एवम् धार्मिक-आध्यात्मिक चेतको पुनर्स्थापना गरेका हुन् । लेखनाथले लेख्यव्याकरणको अनुशासनमा रहेर कविताको गुणस्तर र स्तरीयताप्रति चासो राखेको देखिन्छ । उनले आधुनिक नेपाली कविताको आमन्त्रण गरेर ऐतिहासिक योगदान दिएका छन् । आधुनिक नेपाली कविताको आमन्त्रण गर्ने लेखनाथ पौड्यालले संस्कृत काव्यतत्त्वलाई अँगालेको देखिन्छ । उनले पूर्वीय आध्यात्मिक चेतकै पृष्ठभूमिमा रहेर बाङ्गला र हिन्दी साहित्यका शास्त्रीय कविता धाराबाट प्रेरणा लिएको देखिन्छ । पौड्यालमा रहेको उच्च कालिगडी व्यक्तित्वका कारण वर्णमात्रिक छन्दलाई अत्यन्त सरल र सहजका साथ खेलाएको देखिन्छ । त्यसैले उनले नेपाली कविताको काव्यभाषा निर्माण गर्दै परिष्कृतिका साथ परिष्कारवादी धाराको आमन्त्रण गरेका हुन् । तसर्थ उनी परिष्कारवादी काव्यधाराको प्रवर्तक, सम्बर्द्धक र केन्द्रीय कविका रूपमा स्थापित हुन पुगेका हुन् भन्ने कुरा स्पष्ट छ ।

माध्यमिक कालीन श्रृङ्गारिक धाराको चूडान्त कविताहरूको सङ्ग्रह सूक्तिसिन्धु (वि.सं. १९७४) मा प्रकाशन भएको उल्लेख छ । पौड्यालले वि.सं. १९७५ बाट आधुनिक नेपाली कविताको आमन्त्रण गरे पनि सुन्दरी (वि.सं.१९६३) पत्रिकाका कविताबाट क्रमशः फुत्कदै आफ्नो नयाँ कविता धारा खोजी गरेको देखिन्छ । लेखनाथले हलन्तबहिष्कार आन्दोलनतर्फ उन्मुख भई कविता पथको खोजी गरेको भेटिन्छ । **कविकवितालापका** माध्यमबाट माध्यमिक कालीन श्रृङ्गारिक कविताधाराको विपरित दिशातर्फ उन्मुख हुँदै आफ्नो नयाँ कविताधाराको घोषणापत्र प्रस्तुत गरेको पनि देखिन्छ । **गोरखाशिक्षा** का विभिन्न भागहरू (वि.सं.१९७२-८०) मा सङ्कलित कविताद्वारा उनले प्रकृतिको सौन्दर्य, सामाजिकता, नैतिक चेतना र आध्यात्मिकता जस्ता अपेक्षाकृत नयाँ विषय क्षेत्रतर्फ कवितालाई डोर्न्याउँन खोजेका छन् । उनले यी विषयगत परिष्कारका साथै भाषाशैली, शिल्प, अलङ्कार, कथनपद्धति र समष्टि संरचनालाई परिमार्जन र परिष्कार प्रदान गरेको पाइन्छ । तिनका अतिरिक्त नवीन कविता सौन्दर्य र स्तरीयतालाई पनि पौड्यालले निम्त्याउन खोजेको देखिन्छ । यसै प्रसङ्गमा उनले ऋतुविचार (वि.सं.१९७३) जस्तो प्रकृतिकाव्य र बुद्धिविनोद (वि.सं.१९७३) जस्तो बौद्धिक काव्य रचना गरे । वि.सं.१९६५ देखि १९७४ सम्मको एक दशकमा यी प्रयास गर्दागर्दै सूक्तिसिन्धु (वि.सं.१९७४) पछि

नै उनले आधुनिक नेपाली कविताको मिमिरे प्रथम प्रहरको आमन्त्रणसँगै परिष्कारवादी कविता धाराको प्रवर्तन गरेका हुन् ।

उपर्युक्त सन्दर्भमा कविताका भाव र कलापक्षको परिष्कृतिका साथै कवित्वको स्तरीकरणको जुन गुरुतर प्रयास पौड्यालले गरे, त्यसबाट उनी आधुनिक नेपाली कविताका प्रवर्तकका साथै परिष्कारवादी धाराका अग्रणी कविका रूपमा प्रतिष्ठित हुन पुगे ।

१३. तरुण तपसीको वैचारिक पक्ष

लेखनाथ पौड्यालका काव्ययात्राका क्रममा विभिन्न काव्यहरू प्रकाशित भएको कुरा चरणगत विभाजनको सन्दर्भमा उल्लेख भइसकेको छ । उनको काव्ययात्राको तेस्रो चरणको क्रममा प्रकाशित विभिन्न काव्यमध्ये **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्य (२०१०) पनि एक हो । प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यले आधुनिक नेपाली काव्यको इतिहासमा विशिष्ट स्थान प्राप्त गरेको कुराको उल्लेख छ त्रिपाठी र अरु, २०४७: ७ । उक्त काव्यमा लेखनाथ पौड्यालको वैचारिक पक्षको प्रस्तुति सशक्त रूपमा व्यक्त भएको देखिन्छ । प्रस्तुत लेख लेखनाथद्वारा **तरुण तपसीमा** व्यक्त भएका वैचारिक पक्षले के-कस्ता विषयलाई आत्मसात् गरेको छ भन्ने कुरामा नै केन्द्रित छ । लेखनाथले सामाजिक असमानताप्रतिको व्यङ्ग्य, बहुदो पूँजीवादी अर्थतन्त्रले निम्त्याएको आर्थिक विषमता र धार्मिक अन्धविश्वास जस्ता कुरामा सुधारको आवश्यकता छ भन्ने कुरालाई **तरुण तपसी** मा जोड दिएका छन् । उल्लिखित विषयहरूलाई लेखनाथले यथार्थवादी दृष्टिकोणबाट प्रस्तुत गरेका छन् (शर्मा र श्रेष्ठ, २०४६ : ५३) । प्रस्तुत लेख पौड्यालद्वारा व्यक्त गरिएका ती विषयहरूलाई आधार मान्दै 'तरुण तपसी' नव्यकाव्यमा पाइने वैचारिक पक्षको अनुशीलनमा केन्द्रित छ । **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा लेखनाथले आफ्नो विचारलाई भावमा ढाल्दै शिल्पको माधुर्यका साथ प्रस्तुत गरेका छन् । त्यसैले 'तरुण तपसी' को मूलस्वरूप विचारपरक हुँदै भावासिक्त र रचनामोहक विचारयात्रा बन्न पुगेको देखिन्छ । प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यको वैचारिक धरातलको अनुशीलन गर्दै जाँदा यसमा पूर्वीय दर्शनको प्रभाव गहिरो रूपमा परेको देखिन्छ । किनकि लेखनाथ उक्त दर्शनको अध्येता पनि हुन् । उनमा (वि.सं.१९९२) सालदेखि नै दार्शनिकता प्रखर रूपमा मुखरित हुँदै आएको पाइन्छ । त्यसको प्रभाव उनका काव्यमा देखिनु स्वभाविकै हो । काव्य रचनामा तल्लीन लेखनाथमा पूर्वीय अध्यात्म दर्शनको मोह ज्यादै रहेको देखिन्छ । त्यति मात्र नभई उनले युगदर्शनलाई पनि आत्मसात् गरेको कुरा उनका रचनाको अध्ययनबाट पुष्टि हुन्छ । स्वदेशी वातावरण र दीर्घसाधनाको फलस्वरूप उनको अध्यात्मवादी व्यक्तित्वले सांसारिकताप्रति वितृष्णा, सामाजिक न्यायको वकालत गरेको देखिन्छ । उनी नयाँ युगप्रति बढी सचेत हुँदै गएका, उमेर र अध्ययनबाट आध्यात्मिकताप्रति डुब्दै जाने क्रम उनको पचास वर्षोत्तर जीवनका समानान्तर घटनाका उपज हुन् । आध्यात्मिकता उनको जीवनको सहज अनुभूति बनिसक्यो भने नयाँ युगचेतना उनको अपरिहार्य अपेक्षा भइदिन्छ । उनको यही आध्यात्मिकता र युगचेतना बीचको सन्तुलन एवं संश्लेषणको विशिष्ट उपलब्धि **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्य (२०१०) हो । त्यसैले पौड्यालको 'तरुण तपसी' नव्यकाव्यलाई

अध्यात्म र मानवताको समीकरण हो भन्ने आधार तयार भएको छ। यो प्राचीन चिन्तन र नयाँ युगबीचको सन्तुलनको रेखा हो वा समाज र अन्तस्करणको विशिष्ट संश्लेषणको बिन्दु पनि हो। **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यको रचनाको आधारशीला पूर्वीय अध्यात्म दर्शन नै हो। किनकि यसमा साङ्ख्य, योग र वेदान्त दर्शनको गहिरो प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ। यिनलाई ग्रहण गर्ने आधारग्रन्थहरू वेद, उपनिषद्, पुराण र गीता हुन्। लेखनाथले यी पूर्वीय अध्यात्म दर्शनलाई विचार वा दर्शनका रूपमा प्रस्तुत नगरी कवितात्मक संश्लेषणद्वारा काव्यात्मक रूपमा प्रस्तुत गरेका छन्।

लेखनाथ पौड्यालको **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्य प्रकाशित हुनुभन्दा धेरै पहिलेदेखि नेपालको छिमेकी देश भारतमा हिन्दू पुनर्जागरणको लहर चलेको बुझिन्छ। त्यस क्रममा पूर्वीय दर्शनको आधुनिक पुनर्व्याख्या र पुनर्मूल्याङ्कनको थालनी भएको हो भन्ने कुराको वर्णन विभिन्न व्यक्तिहरूले आफ्ना लेखहरूमा उल्लेख गरेका छन्। लेखनाथ पनि उक्त जागरणबाट प्रभावित हुँदै **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा आध्यात्मिक चेतनाको निर्माण गर्न पुग्छन्। त्यसैले उनी पूर्वीय आध्यात्मिक संस्कारका नयाँ नेपाली गायक बन्दै **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा आध्यात्मिक पुनर्व्याख्या गर्न पुग्छन्। प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा लेखनाथले कुनै आध्यात्मिक विषयलाई आदिबाट थालेर अन्त्यसम्म पुगेको स्थिति छैन। त्यसैले यसको आध्यात्मिकता विकासप्रक्रियाको निष्कर्ष हो, आदि र अन्त एउटै निष्कर्षको विस्तार होइन। वस्तुतः **तरुण तपसी** आध्यात्मिक स्थापनाको शृङ्खला मात्र नभई कविको आध्यात्मिक जीवनको चाप-प्रतिचापको पूर्व विकासको कथा पनि हो।

तरुण तपसी को आध्यात्मिकताको मूल उपलब्धि भनेको यसको युगानुकूल व्याख्या नै हो। यसै आधारलाई टेकेर लेखनाथबाट आध्यात्मिक चेतनाकै सन्दर्भमा मानव सभ्यताको ऐतिहासिक विकास, वर्तमान युगको बोध र भविष्यप्रतिको मूल्याङ्कन गरिएको छ। **तरुण तपसी**मा आध्यात्मिकताको पुनर्व्याख्या पनि भएको देखिन्छ। वास्तवमा आध्यात्मिकता र सामाजिकताको सन्तुलन संश्लेषणबाटै यसको वैचारिक धरातल निर्मित छ।

लेखनाथले **तरुण तपसी**मा सांसारिकताबाट मुक्त हुँदै आध्यात्मिकतातर्फ उन्मुख हुन मानिसहरूलाई आग्रह गर्दछन्। उनका अनुसार मानिसको बहिर्मुखी आशक्ति वा तृष्णा नै सांसारिकता हो। यसबाट मुक्त भई अन्तर्मुखी उज्यालो वा ज्ञान प्राप्त गर्नु आध्यात्मिकता हो। सांसारिकता शिथिल भई आध्यात्मिकता प्राप्तितर्फ बढ्नु सांसारिकता र आध्यात्मिकता बीचको सन्तुलनको बिन्दु हो भन्ने उनको ठम्याइ छ। प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा यसै सन्तुलन बिन्दुको विकास र विस्तारमा लेखनाथले नयाँ युगका सचेततालाई आत्मसात् गरेका छन्। अर्थात् नयाँ युगका अपरिहार्य प्रवृत्तिलाई सांसारिकता र काम्य प्रवृत्तिलाई आध्यात्मिकतामा समावेश गर्नु नै **तरुण तपसी** को वैचारिक पक्ष हो।

लेखनाथले प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा 'श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता' ले बताए भैं मान्छेका अन्तर्मुखी प्रवृत्ति र बहिर्मुखी व्यवहारमा आसुरी तथा दैवी गुणको चर्चा गरेका छन्।^३ उनले

^३तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।

मान्छेमा हुने हिंसा, परपीडा, लोभ, स्वार्थ, शोषण, मदमोह वैषम्य इत्यादि कुराहरूलाई आसुरीप्रवृत्ति भनेका छन् । पौड्यालका अनुसार दैवी प्रवृत्तिभित्र दया, त्याग, परार्थसेवा, क्षमा, ज्ञान, समता, भ्रातृत्व इत्यादि कुराहरू पर्दछन् । लेखनाथले आसुरीवृत्ति वा सांसारिकतालाई त्यागी दैवी प्रवृत्ति वा आध्यात्मिकतातर्फ उन्मुख हुन मानव समुदायलाई आह्वान गरेका छन् । उनी मान्छेले आशक्तिलाई छोडी निष्काम अनाशक्तकर्मद्वारा परार्थमा ढल्किनुमै वास्तविक जीवनमार्ग हो भन्छन् । सांसार यी दुवै प्रवृत्तिको समन्वयतर्फ गएको छ, यो मान्छे र मानव-समाजभित्रै केन्द्रितछ भन्ने कुरा **तरुण तपसी**मा आएको देखिन्छ ।

लेखनाथले मानव समाजमा व्याप्त हिंसा, शोषण, अन्धविश्वासलाई सांसारिकता हो भनेका छन् । उनले माथि उल्लिखित कुराको स्रोत पूँजीवाद र सामन्तवादलाई मानेका छन् । उनले ती कुराबाट निस्कने नकारात्मक असरबाट सचेत रहन सबैलाई आग्रह पनि गरेका छन् । लेखनाथले प्रस्तुत काव्यमा समता, मानवता, भ्रातृत्व, मानवसेवा, अहिंसा, दया र परार्थतालाई आध्यात्मिकता हो भनेका छन् । यसतर्फ बढेको मानव समाज स्वस्थ, निर्मल र कोमल हुनेमा उनको विस्वास छ । लेखनाथले व्यक्त गरेका यिनै कुराबाट आध्यात्मिकता मानवतावादमा केन्द्रित हुन्छ भनी विश्वास गर्न सकिन्छ । सांसारिकता र मानवतावाद आध्यात्मिकतामा अर्थिनुनै **तरुण तपसी**को दार्शनिक समीकरण हो ।

लेखनाथले **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा कर्म, संन्यास, पूर्णअध्यात्म एवं पूर्ण सांसारिकता दुवै कुरालाई स्वीकार गरेको देखिदैन । अपितु उनको विचारमा सांसारिकता र अध्यात्म बीचको सन्तुलनमा देखापर्ने अध्यात्म नियमित हो भने निष्काम कर्म अनाशक्त हो । यो उनको वैचारिक निष्कर्ष भएकाले लेखनाथका तपसी वृद्ध नभई तरुण तपसी वा नयाँ ऋषि हुन् । कविले यो वैचारिकतालाई प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा मूर्तरूप दिएका छन् । त्यसैले लेखनाथको **तरुण तपसी** संसार निरपेक्ष सन्त्यासी नभई मानवतासचेत मुक्तात्माका रूपमा देखापरेको छ ।

तरुण तपसी मा लेखनाथले ईश्वरलाई स्वर्गपरक मानेका छन् । उनी तिनलाई मान्छेका कर्म, व्यवहार र प्रवृत्तिका सन्दर्भमा मानव अन्तस्करणभित्रै उपलब्ध हुन्छ भन्छन् । त्यसैले उनी मान्छेकै अन्तस्करणको परिष्कार र परिमार्जन आवश्यक रहेको औल्याउँछन् । त्यसो भएमात्र ईश्वर प्राप्त हुन्छ भन्नेमा उनी विश्वस्त छन् । मान्छेको सांसारिकता सामाजिक कर्ममा प्रवृत्त हुनुपर्नेमा उनको जोड छ ।

लेखनाथका विचारमा अतीत र वर्तमानको सापेक्षतामा मानवसमाज रोगी छ । मानवसमाज रोगाडुनुमा सांसारिकता वा तृष्णा-आसक्तिबाट उब्जिएका पर-पीडा,

भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।

अपानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थसंपदमासुरिम् ॥ (श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता, अ. ३, श्लो. ३-४, पृ. ९१)

हिंसा, शोषण, अज्ञानता र स्वार्थ वृत्तिमा हुर्किएको जडवादलाई उनले दोष दिएका छन्। त्यसैले **तरुण तपसी** का लेखनाथ आध्यात्मिकताले मान्छेको अन्तस्करणलाई परिष्कार-परिमाजन गरेर उसको वास्तविक उपचार गर्न सकिन्छ भन्नेमा उनी विश्वस्त छन्। लेखनाथका अनुसार विज्ञानले सुखसुविधाका साधनद्वारा मानवलाई सुख दिए पनि मानवअन्तस्करण निर्मल पार्न सक्दैन। अत एव **तरुण तपसी**को वैचारिकताको केन्द्रबिन्दुमा मानवतावादी आध्यात्मिकता नै रहेको छ। लेखनाथ मान्छेको शोचमा परिवर्तन चाहन्छन्। फलस्वरूप उनले **तरुण तपसी** मा मानिसलाई सांसारिक आसक्तिबाट आध्यात्मिक अनासक्ति र आध्यात्मिक उज्यालोबाट सांसारिक उज्यालोतिर लैजाने प्रयत्न पनि गरेका छन्। यसलाई **तरुण तपसी**मा पाइने हरित क्रान्ति ऋषिको संवाद/तपसीको मानवतावाद/कर्मयोगीको संसार सचेतता भनिन्छ। यसरी व्यापक मानवीय सामाजिक युग सन्दर्भमा आध्यात्मिकता र सांसारिकता बीचको सन्तुलन नै **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यको वैचारिक धरातल हो।

तरुण तपसी को आध्यात्मिकता र सांसारिकता परम्परागत र युगानुसार छ। परम्परागतमा वेद, उपनिषद्देखि पुराण गीतासम्मको प्रभाव छ। त्यसरी नै साङ्ख्य, योग, वेदान्त दर्शन, ईश्वर, स्वर्ग, नरक तथा जगत्सम्बन्धी पौराणिक प्रभाव पनि यसमा परेको देखिन्छ। हिन्दू नवजागरणले दिएका पुनर्व्याख्या र पुनर्मूल्याङ्कनको प्रेरणा पनि प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यले प्राप्त गरेको छ। तिनका अतिरिक्त कविको स्वकीय चिन्तन पनि यसमा प्रकट भएको छ। समयानुसार लेखनाथले भूगोल, इतिहास, राजनीतिशास्त्र र अर्थशास्त्र आदिको प्रभावलाई पनि यसमा ग्रहण गरेका छन्। उनमा विश्वमा फैलिदै गएको र भारत हुँदै नेपालमा आइरहेको पूँजीवाद, साम्यवाद, मानवतावाद, मूर्तिपूजाविरोध, विज्ञानविरोध र नवअध्यात्मवादी मान्यतालाई उनले आत्मसात् गरेको देखिन्छ। लेखनाथले आफ्नै देशको राष्ट्रिय परिस्थिति र विश्वस्थितिको बोध आफूलाई भएको अभिव्यक्ति नव्यकाव्यमा दिएका छन्। नयाँ रूपमा प्राप्त वैचारिक बुँदालाई पुराना वैचारिक बुँदासँग समावेश गर्दै पुराना र नयाँ चिन्तनको समीकरण गर्नु नै **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यको प्राप्ति हो। सांसारिकता भन्नाले पूँजीवाद, धार्मिक अन्धविश्वास, विज्ञानको बढ्दो प्रभाव, वर्गीय भेद इत्यादिलाई बुझाउँछ। प्रथम र द्वितीय महायुद्धले पारेको नकारात्मक प्रभावबाट विश्वका सबै देश एकआपसमा त्रसित भएको कुरालाई लेखनाथले प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा चर्चा गरेका छन्। आध्यात्मिकतामा मानवतावाद, समता, विश्वभातृत्व अन्तर्मुखी ज्ञान, विश्वात्मबोध, मानवसेवा र मानसिक क्रान्तिको विकास हुन्छ भन्नेमा उनको विश्वास छ। पूर्वीय विचार प्रणालीमै पनि उपर्युक्त नयाँ भनिएका विचारको छनक नपाइने होइन। तथापि लेखनाथले **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा यी पूर्वीय विचारलाई युगानुरूप विश्लेषण र नवीकरण गरेका छन्। माथि उल्लेख गरिएका कुराहरू नै **तरुण तपसी**को वैचारिक पक्ष हो।

अतः माथि विश्लेषण गरिएका विचारलाई निम्न बुँदाहरूमा वर्गीकरण गर्नु उपयुक्त हुन्छ।

क. आध्यात्मिकता

लेखनाथ पौड्यालले **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यको रचना गर्दा वेद, उपनिषद्, विभिन्न पुराण र श्रीमद्भगवद्गीताबाट पनि प्रेरणा लिएको देखिन्छ। तिनका अतिरिक्त प्रस्तुत काव्यमा साङ्ख्य, योग र वेदान्त दर्शनको प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ। लेखनाथ पूर्वीयदर्शनका अध्येता भएकाले तिनको छाप **तरुण तपसी**मा पर्नु स्वभाविकै हो। उनले पूर्वीय अध्यात्मदर्शनको पुनर्व्याख्या, चिन्तन, ईश्वर, मान्छे, सृष्टि र स्वर्ग नरकसम्बन्धी धारणालाई नयाँ आयामबाट छलफल गर्ने प्रयत्न पनि गरेका छन्। उनले सांसारिक यात्रा गर्दा मानबले गर्नु पर्ने सङ्घर्षलाई तरु तपसीका माध्यमबाट व्यक्त गर्दै उसमा रहेको आसुरी प्रवृत्ति अन्त्य हुनु पर्छ भनेका छन्।

ख. सामाजिक दृष्टि

प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा पूँजीवादी अर्थतन्त्रले नेपाली समाजलाई बिस्तारै आफ्नो प्रभावमा पारेकोप्रति लेखनाथ सन्तुष्ट छैनन्। जसले गर्दा समाजमा धनी र गरीबबीचको असमानता बढ्दै गएकोमा उनी चिन्तित छन्। उनले समजका केही व्यक्ति अजिर्णले मर्ने र केही व्यक्तिलाई विहान बेलुकाको छाक टार्न मुस्कल परेको अवस्था आउनुमा सामाजिक विकृतिलाई दोष दिएका छन्। यसलाई उनले शोषक र शोषितबीच बढ्दै गएको द्वन्द्वको उपज हो भनेका छन्। लेखनाथ धर्मका नाममा हुने अनेकौँ रुढीवादी क्रियाकलापले समाजलाई विकृत पारेकोतर्फ पनि सचेत देखिन्छन्। पौड्यालका अनुसार धर्म मानवलाई सही बाटोमा हिडाउने तत्व हो। तर केही मानिसले यसलाई गलत ढङ्गले व्याख्या गर्दा समाजमा अर्कै सन्देश प्रवाहित भइ धर्मलाई विकृत पारेकोमा उनले चिन्ता प्रकट गरेका छन्। त्यस्तै विश्वमा बढ्दो विज्ञानको दबदबालाई पनि लेखनाथले राम्रो मानेका छैनन्। विज्ञानले प्राप्त गरेको उन्नति क्षणिक र नाशवान् छ, ज्ञान नै मानवकल्याणका लागि सहायक सिद्ध हुन्छ भन्नेमा उनी दृढ छन्।

लेखनाथ हिंसारहित समाजनिर्माणको अपेक्षा राख्छन्। त्यसैले प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा गान्धीवादी चिन्तनको प्रभाव पनि रहेको छ। फलस्वरूप यस नव्यकाव्यमा मानिसको आसुरी प्रवृत्तिको अन्त्य र दैवी प्रवृत्तिको उदयमा विशेष जोड दिएका छन्। लेखनाथले प्रस्तुत काव्यमा प्रकृतिलाई मानवीकरण गर्नुका अतिरिक्त प्रकृति नै परमात्माको स्वरूप हो भन्दै समाजले प्रकृतिको संरक्षणमा ध्यान दिनुपर्छ भनेका छन्।

ग. आध्यात्मिकताको विश्लेषण

क्रमशः उपर्युक्त बुँदाको अन्तरङ्ग विश्लेषणद्वारा आध्यात्मिकताको पुष्टि दिन सकिन्छ। **तरुण तपसी**को चौधौँ विश्रामको ११ र सोह्रौँ विश्रामको १४ पद्यमा ऋग्वेद, उपनिषद्को अनि सोममय भाव आभासित भएको देखिन्छ। यी कुरा निम्न पद्यबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ :

कुनै घुम्थे छुदै फुल, मकन दायौतिर गरी
 कुनै ढोम्थे पुष्पाञ्जलि-सहित भेटी पनि धरी ।
 बढ्यो एवं रीत्या प्रतिदिन ठूलो पूजन-कला
 पुजारी भै लुट्थे पटुपुरुष नैवेद्य मसला ॥

(चौधौ विश्राम, पद्य ११)

चमत्कारी शोभा चमचम सबैतर्फ छरियो
 धराको छातीमा अमृतमय माधुर्य भरियो ।
 विना यस्तै नेता धरणीतलमा वा मुलुकमा
 प्रजा अन्धो दुःखी कसरि रहला शान्ति-सुखमा ॥

(सोह्रौ विश्राम, पद्य १४)

प्रथम विश्राममा भुवन कुटियाको धारणा एवम् यजुर्वेदीय धारणा पनि प्रकट भएको देखिन्छ । सत्रौ विश्राममा ऋग्वेदको प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । प्रथम विश्रामको अठारौ पद्यमा वेदान्तको 'तत् त्वमसि' को प्रभाव परेको पाइन्छ । जस्तै :

सुधाको त्यो भर्ना, कवि हुन गए सीकर सरी
 थियो त्यो शोभाका जलधि कविजी मञ्जु-लहरी ।
 मिठो त्यो त्यो मिश्रिको रस, मधुर मिश्री कवि थियो
 हा ! कस्तो कस्तो अगम छविमा तन्मय भये ॥

(प्रथम विश्राम, पद्य १८)

सत्रौ विश्रामका 'प्रथम कवि' उपनिषद्का 'कवि पुराणसितारम्' का प्रभावमा विकसित बनेका छन् । चौधौ विश्राममा आस्तिकता-नास्तिकताको वर्णनमा उपनिषद्को गहिरो प्रभाव परेको पाइन्छ । 'मनन' का प्रसङ्गमा उपनिषदले भनेको 'आत्मा बारे मन्तव्यः' र 'मन्तव्यं श्रुतिवाक्येभ्यः' जस्ता प्रख्यात सूक्तिका प्रभाव सातौ विश्रामको छब्बीसौ पद्य र उन्नाइसौ विश्रामको पन्ध्रौ पद्यमा देख्न सकिन्छ । आठौ विश्राममा मुमुक्षु वा साधकको हृदयग्रन्थी भेदनको प्रसङ्ग आएकाले पनि उपनिषद्कै प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । एघारौ विश्रामको बीसौ पद्यमा मानिसलाई जीविकोपार्जनका लागि पैसा चाहिन्छ, तर पैसाकै लागि मरिमेट्ने मानवीय प्रवृत्तिको बारेमा कविले तीक्ष्ण व्यङ्ग्य गरेकाले उक्त पद्यले उपनिषद्कै भावलाई ग्रहण गरेको पाइन्छ । प्रथम विश्रामको पन्ध्रौ र उन्नाइसौ पद्यमा ब्रह्मको सत्ता पाउन नसकी 'नेति नेति' भन्ने उपनिषद्को सूक्तिको प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । प्रथम विश्रामकै तेह्रौ पद्यमा ब्रह्मको प्रसङ्ग छ । ती कुरालाई तलका श्लोकले प्रमाणित गरेका छन् :

हावा चल्लै-आयो सिरिसिरि पछिल्लो पहरमा
बजायो तन्द्राले मधुर मुरली मस्त सुरमा ।
भुकाई त्यै बेलामा अगम दहराऽऽश-विचमा
पुगेछन् ती भित्री अमरपदवीको नगिचमा ॥

हरायो कान्ताको विरह, तपको कौतुक गयो
अकस्मात् त्यो बाधा विकल मुटुको दूर धपियो ।
बिचैमा भेट्याये मधुर उनले दिव्य सुषमा
डुवे ती चुर्लुम्मै निमिषभर तत्काल उसमा ॥

सुधाको त्यो भर्ना, कवि हुन गये सीकर सरी
थियो त्यो शोभाको जलधि, कविजी मञ्जु-लहरी ।
मिठो त्यो मिश्रीको रस, मधुर मिश्री कवि थिये
आहा ! कस्तो कस्तो अगम छविमा तन्मय भये ॥

(प्रथम विश्राम, तेह्रौं पद्य, पन्द्रौ पद्य, उन्नाईसौं पद्य)

माथि उल्लिखित कुराहरूका कारणले **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा उपनिषद्को गहिरो
प्रभाव परेको पाइन्छ । त्रिगुणमयी प्रकृतिको वैषम्य नै प्रकृतिको हो । त्यसको साम्यवस्था
केवल्य हो भन्ने कुरालाई पौड्यालले यस नव्यकाव्यमा वर्णन गरेका छन् । उनले **तरुण**
तपसीमा साङ्ख्यदर्शनको प्रभालाई पनि दर्शाएका छन् । जस्तै :

न वा आकाशैमा निविड तम उम्मीकन बस्यो
न वा त्यो आकाशै तमजलधिमा गैकन पस्यो ।
मसीमा चोबिन् वा प्रकृति-जननीले गगन यो
बिलायो वैषम्य-थिति, सकल एकाम्मय भयो ॥

(बाह्रौं विश्राम, तेस्रो पद्य)

समै भित्री श्रद्धा, सम अतिथि-सत्कार-विधि त्यो
सबै प्यारो चौकीमय चहकिलो शान्ति-निधि त्यो ।
थला मारी भुल्यें म पनि ममताकै रहरमा
थियो बहदो चहदो तर विषमता विश्वभरमा ॥

जगद्धात्री देवी प्रकृति-जननीमा विषमता
हुनाले भुल्केको भुवनविच के मिल्छ समता ?
भनी मेरो भित्री श्रवणविच भदैँ सनसनी
हवा दौड्यो, हल्ल्यो फरफर जटामण्डल पनि ॥

(आठौं विश्राम, पाँचौ-छैटौं पद्य)

साङ्ख्यदर्शनले प्रकृतिलाई जननी भनेको छ । त्यस दर्शनअनुसार सम्पूर्ण प्राणीको जननी प्रकृति हो । प्रकृति र पुरुषको संयोग रहुन्जेल सिर्जनप्रक्रिया चलि नै रहन्छ । ती दुईको वियोग हुनासाथ पुरुष भोक्ता नभई द्रष्टा बन्दछ, र सृजनातर्फ निवृत्ति हुन्छ । निम्न पद्यबाट उक्त कुराको पुष्टि हुन्छ :

खिँचतानी हेर्दै गरम पसिनाको छक परी
भुल्केको मौकामा प्रकृतिजननीले शिर भरी ।
गुतायिन् त्यै फेरी फल र फूलको दीर्घ पगरी
जुटे जस्ले गर्दा अतिथि अधि भैं लाखन थरि ॥

लुछे, लाछे उस्तै किसिमसित त्यो दीर्घ पगरी
जती जस्ले पायो भरशक लुछ्यो लालच धरी ।
म उस्तै नङ्गा भै अबुझ दुनियाँको चलनमा
उदेकायें खाली नलिइ अथवा दर्द मनमा

गरी यै ढाँचाले परहित सदा भक्ति-सहित
बिते मेरा सुस्तै विजन-पथमा वर्ष बहुत ।
भयो फुस्रो धुस्रो तन पनि कडा काल-गतिले
सबै लुर्का फुर्का मकन दिन छोडिन् प्रकृतिले ॥

(चौधौँ विश्राम, दोश्रो पद्य, चौथो पद्य, पाँचौ पद्य)

त्रिगुणमयी प्रकृतिमा तम र रजका समुद्र तरेर सत्व गुणमा पुगेपछि, अहङ्कार रूपी भरिया ढल्दछ र द्रष्टात्व प्राप्त हुन्छ, भन्ने साङ्ख्यदर्शनको कुरालाई कविले यस काव्यमा वर्णन गरेका छन् ।

योग दर्शनले बताएको 'चित्तवृत्ति निरोध' हो । यसै सन्दर्भमा 'त्राटक' प्रक्रियाको विवेचना गरिएको छ, भने 'तण तपसी' मा पनि चित्तवृत्तिको निरोध त्राटक प्रक्रिया प्रस्तुत छ, । जस्तै:

सुति लेटी मिल्ने सुख-सयल जानें न त रति
नता कोही तीर्थ-भ्रमण सुख भोगें अलिकति ।
जहाँ जन्मेको हूँ, विधि-वश उही उही छू अझ खडा
सही लाखौँ चर्का विषद अथवा सङ्कट कटा ।

(प्रथम विश्राम, तेतिसौँ पद्य)

जुघाँ दाढी तान्ने सरल शिशु जस्तै पथिक ती
म-सम्भन्थें, हुन्थें प्रणयरसलेसद्गद अति ।
बित्यो एवरीत्या समय, वयले उन्नति लियो
रसिलो छायामा प्रणय-विधुको कान्ति फिँजियो ॥

(सप्तम विश्राम, पच्चीसौँ पद्य)

यस नव्यकाव्यको ठाउँठाउँमा देखाइएको समाधि स्थितिको समाधि योग प्रक्रियाको उपलब्धि हो । समाधिको मार्ग गुरुद्वारा प्राप्त हुन्छ भने योग दर्शनमा गुरु स्वयं परमात्मा हुन् तरुण तपसीका गुरु शिष्य र गगन गुरुले यही कुरा गर्दछन् । तलका पद्य यी स कुराका साक्षी हुन् :

म त्यो प्युँदा प्युँदै सुखमय जुनेली रसभरी
डुबेंछु चर्लुम्मै हृदय-दहमा गद्गद परी ।
वहाँ पुग्नासाथै ठकमक भयो जीवन-कलि
मुटुले भेटायो गगन-गुरुको रूप सकली ॥

(सोह्रौँ विश्राम, अठाईसौं पद्य)

यति भनिकन लम्बा शास फेरेर फेरी
कवितिर अति तीखो नेत्रले खूब हेरी ।
मुनिवर चुप लागे, लागिहाल्यो समाधि
जलधि अचल भैगो, के रहन्थ्यो उपाधि ?

(प्रथम विश्राम, चौतीसौं पद्य)

यसै गरी प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यका अन्य पद्यमा पनि योगदर्शनको प्रभाव परेको देखिन्छ । उनले संस्कृत महाकवि व्यासबाट र पौराणिक विस्तृत प्रसङ्गबाट पनि 'तरुण तपसी' मा भावग्रहण गरेका छन् । यसमा जताततै 'परोपकार पुण्य र परपीडा पाप हो' भन्ने धारणा प्रकट भएको देखिन्छ । त्यो व्यासकै वचनद्वारा प्रभावित छ, निम्नपद्य त्यस कुरालाई प्रमाणित गर्ने आधार हुन् :

विचार-ज्योत्स्नाले जुन जति थियो दोष मनको
सबै धोयो, ल्यायो अभिरुचि तपोरूप धनको ।
विपद्, बाधा, निन्दा, स्तुति, कठिन शीतोष्ण सब त्यो
सही बस्ता केही समय अथवा जीवन बित्यो ॥

(चौथो विश्राम, चौधौं पद्य)

थियिन् पैले पैले जुन वसुमति जङ्गलमयी
उनैलाई पायो मनुजगणले मङ्गलमयी ।
कठै ! जान्दो हो ता नियम परपीडा हरणको
छुटी-जान्थ्यो यस्को कठिनतम पीडा मरणको ॥

(नवौँ विश्राम, सत्ताईसौं पद्य)

मार्कण्डेय पुराणकै 'दुर्गा सप्तशती'बाट 'तरुण तपसी'को प्रथम विश्रममा प्रतिपादित सृष्टि प्रक्रियाको मेल खान्छ । यसमा दुई दनुज मधु र कैटभको बधको प्रसङ्गलाई सृष्टिप्रक्रियासँग जोडिएको छ । यस कुरालाई कविले यसरी वर्णन गरेका छन् :

पुरी मेदै माटो दनुज दुईको सागर भरि
हवादारी गारो चिनिकन दिशाको वरिपरि ।
सफा नीलो तारा-जडित छादन कसी
बनाएको राम्रो भुवन-कुटियाको म तपसी ॥

(प्रथम विश्राम, तीसौं पद्य)

तरुण तपसीका १५ औं विश्रामका लोकलोकोत्तर वर्णन र स्वर्ग नरक परिकल्पना पौराणिक प्रभाव र प्रेरणाको नवनिर्माण हो ।

व्यासकै 'श्रीमद्भगवद् गीता' बाट पनि **तरुण तपसी** असाध्यै प्रभावित छ । गीताको सोह्रौं अध्यायबाट दैवी र आसुरी प्रवृत्तिको धारणा प्रभावित देखिन्छ ।^५ यसरी **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा विभिन्न वैचारिक पक्षहरू प्रकट भएका छन् ।

१४. निष्कर्ष

लेखनाथ पौड्यालका अन्य प्रकाशित काव्यहरूका तुलनामा **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्य उत्कृष्ट काव्यका रूपमा परिचित छ । उनका अनुसार मानवले समाजमा व्याप्त हिंसा, शोषण, लगायत् आसुरीप्रवृत्तिको अन्त्य र दैवी प्रवृत्तिको अनुशरण गर्नु पर्ने कुरा प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा बताएका छन् । **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यमा प्रस्तुत भएका विचारपक्ष सामाजिक र आध्यात्मिक हो । यसलाई केन्द्रविन्दुमा राख्दै लेखनाथले आफूले जीवनमा देखे भोगेका अनुभूतिलाई काव्यात्मक शैलीमा प्रस्तुत गरेका छन् । उनी जीवनमा आफूमाथि आइपरेका घटनालाई वाच्यार्थ मार्फत् प्रस्तुत नगरी लक्ष्यार्थ मार्फत् प्रस्तुत गर्छन् । अर्थात् आफूले भोगेका जिन्दगीका भोगाइलाई आफै व्याख्याता नबनी **तरु तपसी** (रूख) लाई मुखपात्र बनाएर लेखनाथले प्रस्तुत गरेकाले यहाँ व्यञ्जनार्थ प्रधान छ । सामान्य रूपमा हेर्दा तरु वा रूखले जीवन यात्रा (शैशव, बाल्य, कौमार, किशोर, तारुण्य र वृद्ध अवस्था) को क्रममा भोग्नु परेका विभिन्न कठिनाइलाई कविले व्यक्त गरेका छन् । यसरी तरुण तपसी वा तरुण तपसीका जीवनका हरेक मोडहरूलाई व्यक्त गर्दा लेखनाथको वैचारिक पक्ष सशक्त रूपमा सत्त्वलाएको देखिन्छ । यसको वैचारिक पक्षको आधारभूमि वेदका विभिन्न सूक्ति, उपनिषद्, श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता र पुराणादि हुन् । प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा वर्णन भएको विषय 'तरु तपसी' को आत्मकथा मात्र नभएर 'तरुण तपसी' वा लेखनाथकै आत्मगाथा पनि हो । पौड्यालले जीवन गाथाको वर्णनका

^५ प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।

नशौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥ (श्री.भ.गी. अ.१६, श्लो.७)

माध्यमबाट समाजमा व्याप्त ठालुवादी प्रवृत्तिको निन्दा र निम्न वर्गप्रति सहानुभूति राखेको देखिन्छ। तिनका अतिरिक्त समाजमा व्याप्त अन्धविश्वास, रुढीग्रस्त चिन्तन र विसङ्गतिबाट उत्पन्न हुने परिस्थितिबाट जोगिनका लागि मानवलाई यस नव्यकाव्यमार्फत् आह्वान गरेका छन्। लेखनाथको प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्य वि.सं. २०१० सालमा प्रकाशित भएको हो। जति बेला **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्य लेखिएको थियो, त्यसमा व्यक्त भएका लेखनाथका विचारहरू सान्दर्भिक थिए। अहिले पनि त्यतिकै त्यतिकै सान्दर्भिक छन्। त्यसैले वर्तमानको परिवर्तित राजनैतिक, सामाजिक, आर्थिक र धार्मिक परिवेशमा पनि लेखनाथले **तरुण तपसी**मा व्यक्त गरेका विचारले समाजलाई सही बाटोमा हिड्न प्रेरित गर्छ भन्ने विश्वास छ।

तरुण तपसी नव्यकाव्यमा सूक्ष्म आख्यानको प्रयोग भएको छ। तथापि यसमा उठान गरिएका विषयवस्तुलाई कविले संस्कृतको **शिखरिणी** छन्दमा वर्णन गरेका छन्। यस काव्यमा शब्द र अर्थ दुवै अलङ्कारको प्रयोग भएको पाइन्छ। अलङ्कार भनेको काव्यलाई सिँगारी त्यसलाई मनोहर एवं रुचिकर तुल्याउने उपादान हो (उपध्याय, २०३० : १९७)। प्रस्तुत काव्य शब्दालङ्कार अन्तर्गतको **अनुप्रास** र अर्थालङ्कार अन्तर्गतका **उपमा**, **रूपक** र **उत्प्रेक्षा** इत्यादि अलङ्कारले सिँगारिएको देखिन्छ। त्यसकारण अलङ्कार प्रयोगको हिसाबले लेखनाथ पौड्याल यस नव्यकाव्यमा सफल देखिन्छन्। लेखनाथ पौड्याल नेपाली मातृभाषी कवि हुन्। त्यसैले यो काव्यको रचना नेपाली भाषामा भएको छ। तथापि उनमा संस्कृतभाषाको ज्ञान पनि निकै भएकाले संस्कृतशब्दका प्रयोग पनि अत्यधिक मात्रामा भएको छ। यसका अतिरिक्त आगन्तुक शब्दका प्रयोग पनि **तरुण तपसी**मा अधिक मात्रामा भएका छन्। यसर्थ भाषा प्रयोगका हिसाबले यो काव्य उत्कृष्ट छ। भाषाका अतिरिक्त काव्यमा रसको प्रयोग पनि आवश्यक ठानिन्छ। तदनुसार प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यमा विभिन्न रसको प्रयोग भए तापनि मुख्यरसका रूपमा शान्त रस आएको छ। यस रसको स्थायीभाव चाहिँ शान्ति हो। यसका अलवा **तरुण तपसी**मा **करुण** रसका अतिरिक्त अन्य रसहरू गौणरसका रूपमा उपस्थित भएका छन्। प्रस्तुत नव्यकाव्यको रचना गर्दा लेखनाथले प्रसाद गुणको उपयोग गरेका छन्। काव्यमा कविले हलन्तबहिस्कारवादी भाषिक आन्दोलनको प्रभावलाई सहजै आत्मसात् गरेको देखिन्छ। माथि उल्लिखित कुरालाई **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यको निष्कर्षका रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ।

१५. सारांश

अन्त्यमा लेखनाथ पौड्यालको **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यको वैचारिक पक्षको विश्लेषणबाट समाजमा व्याप्त आसुरी प्रवृत्तिबाट उत्पन्न भएका खराब पक्षको अन्त्य भई दैवी पक्षको उदय हुनुपर्छ भन्ने सार निस्कन्छ। उनले **तरु** वा आफ्नो जीवन गाथाको माध्यमबाट समाजमा रहेका स्वार्थी, दम्भी मानिसहरूका शठताप्रति तीखो व्यङ्ग्य गर्नु नै **तरुण तपसी** नव्यकाव्यको रचनाधर्मिता रहेको कुरालाई यहाँ प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ। पौड्यालले समाजमा व्याप्त विकृतिका कारक तत्व अरु कुनै नभएर मानिसमा भएको आसुरी प्रवृत्ति नै हो भन्दै लक्ष्यार्थ मार्फत् सामाजिक विकृतिप्रति व्यङ्ग्य गरेका छन्। त्यसका अतिरिक्त उनले विभिन्न कथ्यको पुष्टिका लागि सादृश्विधान पनि गरेका छन्। पौड्यालले केही

संस्कृतका रचनालाई नेपालीमा अनुवाद गरेको पाइन्छ । नेपालीमा लेखिएका उनका फुटकर रचना र खण्डकाव्यहरू प्रकाशित छन् । उनले ती काव्यहरूलाई वर्णमात्रिक छन्दमा रचेको देखिन्छ । लेखनाथले ती रचनाहरूमा कला र भावपक्षलाई बढी महत्त्व दिएका छन् । उनका प्रकाशित काव्यहरूमा भावको गाम्भीर्य, बौद्धिकता, तार्किकता, छन्दोबद्धता तथा कसिलो र परिष्कृत प्रस्तुति पाइन्छ । काव्यलाई श्रुतिमधुर बनाउनका लागि उनले विभिन्न अनुप्रासको राम्ररी उपयोग पनि गरेका छन् । प्रस्तुत लेखमा पौड्यालद्वारा रचित **तरुण तपसी**को वैचारिक पक्षको विश्लेषण गर्दा देखिने यस्ता र अन्य विशेषता तथा तिनका प्राप्तिहरूको मूल्याङ्कन गरिएको छ ।

लेखक:

डा. रामचन्द्र पौडेल काठमाडौँ विश्वविद्यालयको भाषा तथा आमसञ्चार विभागका सहप्राध्यापक हुनुहुन्छ । पत्राचारका लागि ईमेल: ramchandra@ku.edu.np

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